

Zechariah Chapter 2 — Jerusalem Without Walls and God's Dwelling Among His People

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Zechariah Chapter 2 continues the series of visions God gave to encourage His people after their return from Babylonian captivity.

Jerusalem was still weak.

Its walls were broken.

Its population was small.

Its future seemed uncertain.

But God gave Zechariah a vision that revealed something far greater than the present condition of the city.

Jerusalem would grow.

God Himself would protect it.

His glory would dwell within it.

The nations would come to Him.

And the whole earth would one day recognize His sovereign rule.

This chapter moves from **measurement** to **protection**, from **deliverance** to **dwelling**, and from **Jerusalem** to **the nations**.

Its message is one of tremendous hope:

God is not limited by ruined walls, scattered people, or powerful enemies.

He is able to restore, protect, gather, and dwell among His people.

I. THE MAN WITH THE MEASURING LINE

Zechariah 2:1

“Then I looked up and saw a man with a measuring line in his hand.”

Zechariah's next vision begins with a man carrying a measuring line.

In the ancient world, a measuring line was used for surveying land and planning construction.

This image therefore points toward rebuilding and expansion.

Jerusalem had been devastated.

Its buildings were damaged.

Its walls had been destroyed.

But the measuring line suggested that God was not finished with the city.

Cross References in Simple American English

Ezekiel 47:3 — Ezekiel saw a man using a measuring line in a vision connected with God's future restoration.

Jeremiah 31:38 — God promised that Jerusalem would again be rebuilt.

Revelation 21:15 — John saw an angel measuring the New Jerusalem with a golden measuring rod.

Spiritual Lesson

When God begins measuring, He is preparing to build.

Application

What looks ruined to us may already be under God's plan for restoration.

Do not judge the future only by what you see today.

Zechariah 2:2

“I asked him, ‘Where are you going?’ He replied, ‘To measure Jerusalem, to see how wide and how long it is.’”

The man was going to measure Jerusalem.

This was not merely an exercise in surveying.

It symbolized that Jerusalem had a future.

A city that appeared broken and insignificant was being measured for expansion.

God saw something larger than the people could presently imagine.

Cross References in Simple American English

Revelation 21:16 — The New Jerusalem is measured in its length, width, and height.

Ezekiel 45:6 — Land was measured and set aside in God's plans for His people.

Psalms 48:12 — God's people were encouraged to walk around Zion and consider its strength and importance.

Principle

God often sees future potential where we see only present weakness.

Application

Do not allow today's limitations to define what God can do tomorrow.

Zechariah 2:3

“Then the angel who was speaking with me went out, and another angel came to meet him.”

Zechariah again saw heavenly messengers involved in the vision.

The appearance of another angel shows that heaven was actively engaged in communicating God's plan.

Earthly Jerusalem looked weak.

But heavenly activity surrounded it.

Cross References in Simple American English

Daniel 9:21 — The angel Gabriel came quickly to Daniel with understanding.

Genesis 18:2 — Abraham saw heavenly visitors who brought a message from God.

Luke 1:19 — Gabriel told Zechariah that he stood in God's presence and had been sent with a message.

Spiritual Lesson

God's work is often greater than what is visible to human eyes.

Application

Do not assume that silence on earth means inactivity in heaven.

Zechariah 2:4

“And said, ‘Run and tell that young man: “Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the great number of people and livestock in it.””’

The angel was told to run.

The message was urgent.

Jerusalem's future growth would be so great that ordinary walls would not be able to contain the city.

For a people looking at ruins, this must have sounded almost impossible.

Yet God was promising abundance.

The city that had been emptied would again overflow.

Cross References in Simple American English

Isaiah 49:19 — Jerusalem's ruined places would one day become too small because of the number of people living there.

Ezekiel 38:11 — Some future communities are described as living without walls or gates.

Revelation 21:25 — The gates of the New Jerusalem will never need to be shut.

Key Truth

God's restoration can exceed the boundaries of what we think is possible.

Application

Sometimes our plans are too small because our view of God is too small.

Zechariah 2:5

“For I will be a wall of fire around her,” declares the Lord, “and I will be the glory within her.”

This is one of the great promises of Zechariah.

Jerusalem's safety would not ultimately depend upon stone walls.

God Himself would be her protection.

He would be a **wall of fire around her**.

Fire in Scripture can symbolize protection, holiness, judgment, and the presence of God.

But God promised more than external protection.

He also said:

“I will be the glory within her.”

God would protect from the outside and dwell on the inside.

Cross References in Simple American English

Isaiah 60:19 — The Lord Himself will be the everlasting light and glory of His people.

Exodus 14:19 — God's presence stood between Israel and the Egyptian army, protecting His people.

Psalms 34:7 — The angel of the Lord surrounds those who fear Him and delivers them.

Key Principle

The safest place is not necessarily behind the strongest wall.

It is in the presence of God.

Application

Security is never ultimately found in money, government, possessions, or human strength.

Our greatest security is God Himself.

II. A CALL TO FLEE AND BE DELIVERED

Zechariah 2:6

“Come! Come! Flee from the land of the north,” declares the Lord, “for I have scattered you to the four winds of heaven.”

God now called His scattered people to return.

The **land of the north** refers primarily to the region of Babylon, from which invaders had historically approached Judah.

Many Jews had already returned to Jerusalem.

Others had remained behind.

God called them to leave exile.

The scattering had occurred under His sovereign judgment.

Now restoration was being offered.

Cross References in Simple American English

Jeremiah 6:22 — An invading nation was described as coming from the north.

Isaiah 43:5 — God promised to gather His children from distant places.

Deuteronomy 30:4 — Even if God's people were scattered to the farthest places, He promised to gather them.

Spiritual Lesson

The God who scatters in discipline can gather in mercy.

Application

When God calls you out of something, do not remain there because it has become familiar.

Zechariah 2:7

“Come, Zion! Escape, you who live with the daughter of Babylon.”

The call becomes personal and urgent.

Escape.

Babylon had been the place of captivity.

Now God's people were told not to become comfortable there.

A place that had once held them against their will could become a place they chose to remain.

That is spiritually dangerous.

Cross References in Simple American English

Isaiah 48:20 — God's people were told to leave Babylon and announce that the Lord had redeemed them.

Jeremiah 51:6 — God's people were warned to flee Babylon so they would not be caught in its judgment.

Revelation 18:4 — God's people are called to come out of Babylon so they will not share in its sins and judgment.

Principle

Deliverance must be followed by departure.

Application

God may free a person from bondage, but that person must not keep returning to what once enslaved him.

Zechariah 2:8

“For this is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘After the Glorious One has sent Me against the nations that have plundered you—for whoever touches you touches the apple of His eye—’”

This verse reveals how precious God's people are to Him.

The expression “**apple of His eye**” refers to the pupil of the eye, one of the most sensitive and carefully protected parts of the body.

To attack God's people is pictured as touching something precious to Him.

This does not mean God's people never suffer.

They had suffered greatly.

But it means their suffering was never unnoticed.

Cross References in Simple American English

Deuteronomy 32:10 — God guarded Israel like the pupil of His eye.

Psalms 17:8 — David asked God to protect him like the apple of His eye.

Genesis 12:3 — God promised that those who blessed Abraham would be blessed and those who cursed him would face judgment.

Key Truth

God's people are precious to Him.

Application

You may feel forgotten by others.

You are not forgotten by God.

Zechariah 2:9

“I will surely raise My hand against them so that their slaves will plunder them. Then you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent Me.”

The nations that had plundered God's people would themselves be plundered.

This is a recurring biblical principle.

Human power is temporary.

Empires rise.

Empires fall.

Those who abuse others often discover that their power does not last forever.

God's judgment would confirm the truth of His message.

Cross References in Simple American English

Isaiah 14:2 — Those who had oppressed God's people would one day experience reversal.

Exodus 12:36 — The Egyptians gave possessions to Israel as the people left Egypt.

Habakkuk 2:8 — Those who plunder nations will eventually be plundered themselves.

Spiritual Lesson

God can reverse situations that appear completely one-sided.

Application

Never confuse temporary power with permanent victory.

III. GOD’S PROMISE TO DWELL WITH HIS PEOPLE

Zechariah 2:10

“Shout and be glad, Daughter Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you,” declares the Lord.

The chapter now reaches one of its most important promises.

God says:

“I am coming.”

And:

“I will live among you.”

This is the heart of God's covenant purpose.

God's greatest gift is not merely protection.

It is His presence.

Cross References in Simple American English

Zephaniah 3:14 — God's people are told to sing and rejoice because the Lord is with them.

John 1:14 — The eternal Word became flesh and lived among us.

Isaiah 12:6 — God's people are told to shout for joy because the Holy One of Israel is among them.

Christ Connection

This verse points powerfully toward Jesus Christ.

John 1:14 tells us that the Word became flesh and **dwelt among us**.

God's promise to dwell with His people ultimately finds its greatest fulfillment in Christ.

Application

The greatest blessing God can give is Himself.

Zechariah 2:11

“Many nations will be joined with the Lord in that day and will become My people. I will live among you and you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent Me to you.”

God's plan was never limited to one ethnic nation.

Through Israel, blessing would extend to many nations.

People from many nations would be joined to the Lord.

They would become His people.

This anticipates the worldwide scope of the gospel.

Cross References in Simple American English

Isaiah 56:7 — God's house would become a house of prayer for all nations.

Ephesians 2:19 — Gentile believers are no longer strangers but members of God's household.

Revelation 21:3 — God will dwell with His people, and they will belong to Him.

Major Doctrine

God's redemptive plan includes people from every nation.

Application

The gospel is not for one race, one culture, or one country.

Jesus Christ is gathering a people from all nations.

Zechariah 2:12

“The Lord will inherit Judah as His portion in the holy land and will again choose Jerusalem.”

Judah belonged to God.

Jerusalem had suffered judgment.

But rejection was not final.

God would again demonstrate His choice and favor.

The phrase **“His portion”** emphasizes possession.

God was reclaiming what belonged to Him.

Cross References in Simple American English

Deuteronomy 32:9 — The Lord's people are described as His special portion.

Psalms 78:68 — God chose Judah and Mount Zion.

Psalms 132:14 — God declared Zion to be the place He desired for His dwelling.

Spiritual Lesson

God's discipline does not cancel His purposes.

Application

Failure does not necessarily mean God's story with you is finished.

Repentance can become the doorway to restoration.

Zechariah 2:13

“Be still before the Lord, all mankind, because He has risen from His holy dwelling.”

The chapter closes with silence.

After all the promises, warnings, and visions, the proper response is reverence.

God has risen to act.

Human beings are told to be still.

This is not empty silence.

It is awe before divine majesty.

Cross References in Simple American English

Habakkuk 2:20 — The Lord is in His holy temple; all the earth should be silent before Him.

Psalms 46:10 — Be still and know that He is God.

Zephaniah 1:7 — Be silent before the Lord because the day of His action is near.

Key Principle

There are moments when faith speaks.

There are also moments when faith becomes silent before the greatness of God.

Application

We do not always need more words.

Sometimes we need deeper reverence.

IV. MAJOR THEMES OF ZECHARIAH 2

1. God Plans Restoration

The measuring line showed that Jerusalem had a future.

God was not preserving ruins.

He was preparing restoration.

2. God Himself Is Our Protection

Jerusalem's greatest defense would not be stone.

God would be a wall of fire around her.

3. God's Presence Is Greater Than God's Gifts

God did not merely promise prosperity.

He promised:

“I will live among you.”

The presence of God is the greatest blessing.

4. God's People Must Leave Babylon

God called His people out of the place of captivity.

Spiritual freedom requires separation from what enslaves us.

5. God's People Are Precious to Him

Whoever touched them touched the apple of His eye.

God notices what happens to those who belong to Him.

6. God Judges Oppressors

The nations that plundered Judah would eventually experience judgment themselves.

7. God's Plan Includes the Nations

Many nations would be joined to the Lord.

This anticipates the worldwide gospel mission.

8. God Will Dwell with His People

The chapter looks forward to God's presence among His people in a profound way.

This theme reaches its fulfillment in Christ and ultimately in the New Jerusalem.

V. CHRIST IN ZECHARIAH 2

Zechariah 2 contains several themes that point directly toward Jesus Christ.

1. God Comes to Dwell Among His People

Zechariah 2:10 says:

“I am coming, and I will live among you.”

John 1:14 says:

“The Word became flesh and lived among us.”

Jesus is God dwelling with humanity.

2. The Nations Become God's People

Zechariah foretells that many nations will join themselves to the Lord.

Through the gospel, Jews and Gentiles are brought together in Christ.

The church demonstrates that God's salvation reaches every nation.

3. God's Glory Dwells Within

God promised to be **“the glory within”** Jerusalem.

Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God's glory.

John tells us that the disciples saw His glory.

4. God Protects His People

The wall of fire anticipates the divine protection of God's people.

Christ promises that His church will endure and that the gates of hell will not overcome it.

VI. KEY LESSONS FROM ZECHARIAH 2

1. God's plans are bigger than our present circumstances.

Jerusalem looked small, but God saw expansion.

2. God Himself is the greatest protection of His people.

Walls can fall.

God does not.

3. God's presence is the believer's greatest treasure.

He promised not merely to bless His people but to dwell among them.

4. God calls His people out of bondage.

Freedom requires leaving the place of captivity.

5. God's people are precious to Him.

They are described as the apple of His eye.

6. God can reverse the power of oppressors.

Those who plundered would themselves be plundered.

7. God's salvation reaches the nations.

Many nations will become His people.

8. God remains faithful to His purposes.

Judah would remain His portion.

Jerusalem would again be chosen.

9. God deserves reverence.

When He rises to act, all humanity should stand in awe.

VII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Zechariah 2 challenges us to ask:

Am I measuring my future by present circumstances rather than God's promises?

Where am I looking for security?

Have I become comfortable in a place God has called me to leave?

Do I really believe that I am precious to God?

Am I trusting God's justice when others seem to prosper through wrongdoing?

Do I value God's presence more than His blessings?

Do I understand that God's saving purpose reaches people from every nation?

Do I know how to become silent and reverent before God?

VIII. QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What did the measuring line represent?

Answer

It represented God's intention to rebuild, expand, and restore Jerusalem.

Question 2

Why would Jerusalem become a city without walls?

Answer

Because its population and livestock would become too numerous to be contained within ordinary boundaries.

Question 3

What did God promise to be around Jerusalem?

Answer

God promised to be a wall of fire around her.

Question 4

What did God promise to be within Jerusalem?

Answer

He promised to be the glory within her.

Question 5

Why did God tell His people to flee Babylon?

Answer

Because Babylon was a place of captivity and coming judgment. God's people were being called back to the land He had given them.

Question 6

What does the phrase “apple of His eye” teach us?

Answer

It teaches that God's people are precious to Him and that He takes their mistreatment seriously.

Question 7

What would happen to the nations that had plundered Judah?

Answer

God would judge them and reverse their position so that they themselves would be plundered.

Question 8

Why was Zion told to rejoice?

Answer

Because God promised to come and dwell among His people.

Question 9

How does Zechariah 2:10 point toward Jesus Christ?

Answer

It points toward the incarnation, when God the Son came into the world and lived among humanity.

Question 10

What does verse 11 teach about God's plan for the nations?

Answer

It teaches that many nations would be joined to the Lord and become His people.

Question 11

What does Judah being God's portion mean?

Answer

It means Judah belonged uniquely to God and remained part of His covenant purposes.

Question 12

Why does the chapter end with a command to be still?

Answer

Because God had risen to act, and the proper response of humanity was reverence, awe, and silence before Him.

IX. FINAL THOUGHT

Zechariah Chapter 2 begins with a measuring line and ends with the whole earth standing silent before God.

Between those two images is an extraordinary message of hope.

Jerusalem looked broken.

God saw a city overflowing with people.

The walls were gone.

God promised to become a wall of fire.

The temple glory had departed.

God promised:

“I will be the glory within her.”

The people had been scattered.

God called them home.

The nations had plundered them.

God promised justice.

And then God announced something even greater:

“I am coming, and I will live among you.”

That is the heart of the chapter.

God's greatest promise is not simply that circumstances will improve.

His greatest promise is His presence.

For the believer, that truth reaches its fullest expression in Jesus Christ.

God came near.

The Word became flesh.

He dwelt among us.

And one day the promise will reach its final fulfillment when God dwells forever with His redeemed people.

Until then:

Trust His protection.

Leave the places of bondage.

Remember that you are precious to Him.

Rejoice in His presence.

And stand in reverent awe before the God who rises from His holy dwelling.

Key Verse

“For I will be a wall of fire around her,” declares the Lord, “and I will be the glory within her.” — Zechariah 2:5

Key Phrase

God surrounds His people with protection and fills them with His presence.