

THE MAN WITH A MEASURING LINE (Zech. 2:1-13)

God has an incredible plan for the city of Jerusalem, as the psalmist wrote, the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation (Ps. 132:13). It is like nowhere else on earth for it is where God *has* dwelt, and where He *will* dwell, Ps. 48:1 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. 2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. ... It is unique! Other cities have come and gone, but Jerusalem has not only remained, but it is flourishing. ... It is testimony to God's protection since King David made it his capital over three thousand years ago. ... But its greatest days are yet to come, and that is the reassuring message in Zechariah chapter two.

And yet, in chapter one the people are encased in desperation and grief, helplessly wondering how they can defend themselves when it seems their enemies are in control. At this point, Zechariah in his third vision instructs them to begin building, confident in the marvellous future Jerusalem will enjoy in the plan of God. ... After each of the eight visions, his head droops as he prays and he meditates on what he has been shown, and when the vision was finished, he would look up, 2:1 I lifted up mine eyes again *cf. 1:18; 5:1,5,9; 6:11*, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand. ... This man whose identity is not given, - but it is very probably the Lord Jesus, - was measuring the dimensions of the new city. This develops the previous promise, *Zech. 1:16* Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and *a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.*

As if it was not obvious what the man with the measuring line was doing, Zechariah asked him, Whither goest thou? – where are you going? what are you doing? And the man with the measuring line in his hand answered, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof (v.2). But ... the actual city of Jerusalem was already there! Yes, its

wall and gates had been destroyed, but its basic perimeter remained ... so what Jerusalem was this man in the vision measuring?! ... Zechariah was bewildered! ... Then, the interpreting angel who had been originally speaking with Zechariah went to talk with another angel to confirm what the man with the measuring line was doing, and where he was going.

So, in the vision there is Zechariah, the man with a measuring line in his hand, and two angels speaking with each other. The second angel tells the first - interpreting - angel (v.3), **4** Run, speak to this young man *i.e. Zechariah*, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein ... He is not going to understand what you are saying but tell him! ... inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle. ... Jerusalem will be an extensive and inhabited city without walls, exceeding all limits, during a time of peace, prosperity, and power, **Ps. 46:7** The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. **8** Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. **9** He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. **10** Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

And then, Jehovah speaks directly, **5** For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her [*Jerusalem*] a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her. ... God will live among His people in this new city the man with the measuring rod is surveying, and there will be no need for walls because God Himself will be Jerusalem's 'wall of fire'.

This protection of His people is a theme prophesied by many of the prophets. Hosea, for example, had prophesied 230 years previously, **Hos. 1:10** the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Fifty years earlier, Jeremiah had prophesied, **Jer. 30:18** Thus saith the LORD ... the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. **19** And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. ... **22** And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. Ezekiel prophesied in Babylon concerning the coming Messiah in the end times, **Ezek. 43:2**, behold,

the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east; and his voice was like a noise of many waters; and the earth shined with his glory. ... Zechariah also prophesied it, **Zech. 8:4** Thus saith the LORD of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. **5** And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. **6** Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts. ...

God has *not* abandoned His people, for at the head of the army among the myrtle trees in the valley is the Rider on the red horse, and they are waiting for the moment in God's plan to ascend out of the valley, and into Mount Zion. God would once again honour His people, and the borders of Jerusalem would be extended in the time of peace.

As the excitement increases, Zechariah is summoned to address the Jews who have remained in Babylon, **6** Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD. **7** Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon. ... Babylon is to the east, but the way they will return and re-enter Jerusalem is from the north ... The Lord's message through Zechariah was to come back from Babylon and resettle in Jerusalem! ... Come back to Jerusalem from everywhere you have been dispersed, **8** For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory *Li.e. the glorious return of the Second Coming, I Thess. 4:16,17* hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. ... Notice, "After the glory He hath sent Me" ... the "He" and the "Me" is God ... referring to the Father, and the Son ... After the glory hath he [*the Father – the Sender*] sent me [*the Son – the Sent*] unto the nations which spoiled you ... God the Father is sending His Son to deliver His people, to fight against and defeat their enemies, for the glory of God. It is the same picture when David spoke of the Father and the Son, The LORD [*the Father*] said unto my Lord [*the Son*], Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool (Ps. 110:1). ... The Messiah is in the valley, among the myrtle trees, on His red horse (v.8) ... and He is waiting to be sent to judge those who have afflicted Israel, 'the apple of His eye', His most precious and prized possession! This is the beloved nation of whom God said to Abram, **Gen. 12:3** I will bless them that bless thee, and *curse*

him that curseth thee. ... This is Christ's second coming, to reign from Jerusalem.

Jesus prophesied about this same event, **Mt. 25:31** When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: **32** And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats ... **34** Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: **35** For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: **36** Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. ... **40** And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of *the least of these my brethren [His Jewish brethren]*, ye have done it unto me. ... Through Zechariah, God is promising protection and restoration for His people, **Zech. 2:9** For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them *[I.e. v.8, the nations which spoiled you ... plundered you]*, and they shall be a spoil *[prey, booty]* to their servants: and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me. ... Instead of Israel being a servant of the nations, the nations will serve Israel.

And then a further message of jubilation to the people gathered among the myrtle trees in the valley, **10** Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee *[cf shekinah]*, saith the LORD *[His Presence among His people]*. ... The crowning day is coming when the Messiah will be King ... **11** And many nations *[goyim]* shall be joined to the LORD *in that day*, and shall be my people *[the Jews united with the saved from every nation, cf. Rev. 5:9]*. ... This was what Simeon referred to in the temple, quoting from Isaiah, **Lk. 2:32** A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel ... **Is. 14:1** For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and *the strangers [ger, the invited guests] shall be joined with them*, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. ... The Lord continued speaking through Zechariah, **Zech. 2:11** and *I will dwell in the midst of thee [a repetition of v.10]*, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me *[the Messiah]* unto thee *[His Portion – the land]*. ... cf. Is. 2:2-5; 60:1-3 ... **12** And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the *holy land*, and shall choose Jerusalem again *[His Pride and Prize]*. ... The 'holy land' will only be truly 'holy' when Christ reigns from Jerusalem, **Is. 62:11** Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. **12** And

they shall call them, *The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD*. and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.

But to the enemies of His people, He warns, **13** Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation. ... The God of Israel is on the move, - 'raised up'! He is stirring against His enemies, **Ps. 121:4** Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. **5** The LORD is thy keeper ... **7** The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil ... **8** ... from this time forth, and even for evermore. ... God's judgment is awakened and the enemies of His people must beware! There will be no delays when God begins to judge the nations, for **Ps. 110:5** The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. **6** He shall judge *[execute judgment]* among the heathen *[goyim]*, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. The nations will suffer Divine wrath, and there will be no escape because Jehovah is 'raised up' out of His holy habitation, His holy place.

God is watching the nations and He knows exactly what they are doing and what they are planning. He will ultimately judge them for their mistreatment of His people. Regarding Jerusalem and its inhabitants, He will enact His glorious plan for the saved and redeemed Jews (Rom. 11:26), along with the Gentiles who have been 'grafted into the olive tree' (Rom. 11). Such will be the work of God when His Son returns to reign and restore the glory of His Father on this earth.