

Message #5

Zechariah 2:1-13

Not long ago a major study was done to determine the greatest cities in the world. There were five factors that were considered to determine this: A) Architecture; B) Arts & Culture; C) Food; D) Drink; E) Quality of life. Based on those criteria, the top ten cities in the world were:

- 1) New York
- 2) London
- 3) Paris
- 4) Berlin
- 5) Barcelona
- 6) Chicago
- 7) Tokyo
- 8) Istanbul
- 9) Rome
- 10) Sydney

There have been different studies done at different times by different groups, **but one city you never see at the top of any list is Jerusalem**. Jerusalem never shows up in the top great cities of the world, but I guarantee you this, **from God's perspective the greatest city in the world is Jerusalem and one day the entire world will know it and see it and acknowledge it.**

Now today, we will admit, Jerusalem does not look like the greatest God-honoring city in the world that brings great honor to God. Jerusalem has been destroyed 2 times (586 B.C.–Nebuchadnezzar; A.D. 70–Titus); it has been besieged 23 times; it has been attacked 52 times and it has been captured 44 times.

In the city today are 200,000 secular Jews; 350,000 Orthodox religious Jews; 300,000 Arabs. In fact, both the Jews and the Palestinians say it is their capital and their city. What God says here is Jerusalem is My city and one day the entire world will see it and admit it. One day all nations of the world will honor Israel and the glorious capital city, Jerusalem.

Zechariah was given a series of visions and in the first vision, God made it clear that He is “exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem” (1:14). He also made it very clear that He, Himself, would return to Jerusalem with compassion and He will measure the city and bless the city and Jerusalem will be the Divine capital of the world (1:15-16).

GOD PROPHETICALLY PROMISES ISRAEL AND JERUSALEM THAT SHE WILL ONE DAY BE THE DOMINANT NATION AND CITY OF THE WORLD AND ALL NATIONS OF THE WORLD WILL HONOR HER AND HONOR ISRAEL.

This is an amazing prediction. It is certainly relevant in light of events this week. There is much talk about moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem. This may not sit well with the rest of the world, but it sure is consistent with the Word of God. Those who honor Israel, God will honor.

According to **verse 1**, Zechariah lifted up his eyes and saw a man with a measuring line in his hand. Now back at this time, this was typically a measuring rod. When Zechariah saw that, he would have immediately thought of his first vision and the “measuring line that would be stretched over Jerusalem” (1:16). Now this was in a context of God being very angry with the nations (1:15). **God carefully monitors how nations treat Israel.**

According to **verse 1**, Zechariah actually saw a man. The Hebrew text makes it clear that this is a man and not a woman. This is a male, not a female. There are gender distinctions in God’s unseen world. God determines the gender of a person and that gender will give an account to God. This was a man Zechariah saw and he has some sort of measuring survey line “in his hand.”

Now “the man” is probably the same man who was standing among the myrtle trees (**1:8**), who was none other than Jesus Christ appearing as the angel of the LORD.

Now of course when Zechariah saw that, according to **verse 2**, he asked a very logical question based on the fact that he wanted to know what this was all about. His question was “Where are you going”; “What is this all about?”; “What are you going to measure and survey?”

Wise are people who ask God for help to understand Scripture. No one can understand the Bible without God’s help. You could have degrees in all kinds of fields of education, but you cannot understand Scripture without God’s help. You could study Hebrew and Greek and you could study Biblical history and archeology and never truly understand the Bible.

First, you need the Holy Spirit which comes by faith in Jesus Christ. Second, you need to pray to ask God for help. Third, there are gifts God gives to the church and you need to be taught by those gifted by God to teach His Word. Zechariah knew he needed someone to help him figure this out so he could communicate it to the people. So he asked this man/angel.

The man said to Zechariah that He was going to measure Jerusalem to see how wide and how long it actually is. Think of this; you have God speaking to young Zechariah. You think of this; God speaks to you through His Word today.

When David first took Jerusalem, according to Jewish scholars for Biblical Archeology, it was a city of about 15 acres. David added the temple mount area that made the city about 37 acres. About 300 years later, the city was about 150 acres. Today, Jerusalem is about 48 miles square (New York is 304 miles square).

What this means is that this man is measuring Jerusalem that most definitely will be in existence in the future. Jerusalem will continue to exist and God will one day pour out His blessings on Israel. God has a very special divine plan for a divine city. **That one city is Jerusalem.** It is a plan that has been carefully measured and this is what this is all about.

According to **verse 3**, the angel/man who was speaking to Zechariah, went out to meet “another angel.” In fact, in the Septuagint the Greek pronoun “another” (heteros) means another of a different kind, not the same kind. What this means is that the man/angel is different from any other kind of angel. He is, in fact, God.

According to **verse 4**, He said to this other angel, “run and speak to the young man.”

From **verses 4-13** the angel tells him what to say. Dr. S. Lewis Johnson said we don't have girl talk, we don't have boy talk; what we have is angel talk (*Zechariah 2:1-13*, p. 10).

Since the angel says run and tell this to the young man, this will be good news. The Hebrew word “young man” (naar) probably means that Zechariah is in his teens.

There are at least ten joyful messages the angel communicates, which will be a dream come true:

MESSAGE #1 – Jerusalem will be inhabited. **2:4**

Jerusalem will be inhabited by Jews. God says you tell the world that not only will Jerusalem be inhabited, but there will be so many people and cattle in the city that it will be bursting at the seams. The city will be large and it will be full of life and it will be prospering. But the city won't need walls or armed guards. Jerusalem will be a safe city, a blessed city and a prosperous city.

Now if you visit Jerusalem today, you don't see this. What you see are many armed guards and high security.

MESSAGE #2 – God will Himself protect the city and people. **2:5**

Not only will Jerusalem have tremendous prosperity, she will also have Divine protection. She won't need walls or a military. At the time Zechariah gave this prophecy, there was no wall around Jerusalem. The wall would not be built until about 80 years later in the days of Nehemiah. But Israel never felt secure and still doesn't. As Benjamin Netanyahu said, “walls do work for security purposes.” When Christ is here, Jerusalem won't need a wall.

This will be a city of total security. No more threats of terrorism; no more threats from any nation. God, Himself, will be in Jerusalem and He will be protecting her. His glory will literally be in and around that city. God's glory will be visibly seen in Jerusalem. You certainly do not see it now. But this is the promise and this is the prediction.

Now Ezekiel saw God's glory in the Temple (Ez. 43:2-5), but Zechariah sees God's glory in the city of Jerusalem (2:5) and in the entire Promised Land of Israel (14:20-21).

We take prophecy literally. Because if you cannot believe the literal words, then you cannot believe the words that say believe on the Lord and be saved.

MESSAGE #3 – All exiled Jews will flee from the enemies and come home to Jerusalem. **2:6-7**

Jews will flee home from the north, which would include Russia (**2:6**). Jews will flee home from Arab nations (**2:7**), who are the daughter of Babylon. Later in the book we learn that the Jews will know their security is in Jerusalem and in the land (Zech. 8:3-5).

MESSAGE #4 – Jesus Christ will personally destroy and judge those nations who touched Israel, the apple of His eye. **2:8**

Any nation who touches Israel has touched the apple of God's eye. There will be a specific judgment of the nations that will be meted out by God, Himself (**25:31-46**). Jesus Christ will do this to the glory of God. In other words, Jesus Christ will regather Israel and make Jerusalem the most important city in the world for the glory of God.

During this church age, God is saving individuals from different nations; but never has God saved an entire nation as He has promised to do for Israel. God has watched the nations as to how they treat Israel and one day those nations who demeaned Israel will be destroyed by God.

MESSAGE #5- Jesus Christ will cause the nations to become plunder and spoils for the Jews. **2:9**

Jesus Christ will specifically visit nations who have done horrible things to Israel with His judgment. Jesus Christ is God and when He waves His hand in judgment over anyone or anything, it is final. Do you want to know what God will do to the great cities of the world? He will destroy every one of them (Rev. 16:19). But Jerusalem will be honored.

Charles Feinberg said God will eventually make “servants of former masters and masters of former servants” (*The Minor Prophets*, p. 281). When Israel sees all nations honoring her, she will know her Messiah is with her.

MESSAGE #6 – Israel can sing knowing the LORD is coming and will dwell in their midst. **2:10**

Biblical prophecy should cause God's people to sing and rejoice. We know how the story will end. You cannot help but see the LORD does promise to return to Israel and to Jerusalem and live in its midst. Jesus Christ does say He will come back to live in Person in Jerusalem.

MESSAGE #7 – Many nations will join themselves to the LORD and will become My people. **2:11a**

Notice “many” nations, not “all” nations. If you join yourself to the Lord, you must honor the apple of God's eye. Many will love Israel. Many will honor Israel. Many will humble themselves to Israel. Notice the prepositional phrase “in that day.” This is yet future.

One commentator said the greatest missionary agency in the history of the world and in the history of the program of God is Israel. Psalm 102 says that when this happens, all nations of the world will fear the name of the LORD (102:15).

MESSAGE #8 – When this happens, Israel will know that Jesus Christ is the Messiah sent from God. **2:11b**

This is the third time in this one prophecy that God promises to literally dwell and live with Israel (**v. 5, 10, 11**). Finally, the nation Israel will understand who Jesus Christ is and what Jesus Christ did. Jesus Christ is God and one day He will literally live in Jerusalem.

MESSAGE #9 – God will possess the Holy Land and choose Jerusalem. **2:12**

Here is the only place in the Bible where we read the phrase “holy land.” It is the land that God promised to Israel. It is a sacred land and one day all in the world will know it.

Now you cannot call the land of Israel today holy because it is unholy. One commentator said that if he were to take a trip to Palestine, he would say, “I am going to the unholy land” because that is exactly what it is. In fact, just recently in Jerusalem they allowed a parade that honored same sex relationships. One writer said you would never see that in an Arab city. So Jerusalem is not a holy land or holy city today.

But when God takes over that land, it will be holy. He will put Israel in that land and He will establish His kingdom there and it will be holy.

That adverb “again” is intriguing. What that means is God chose Israel once and He will choose her once again. One old writer said, “how odd that God would choose the Jews and then choose them again.” But this is the grace of God.

MESSAGE #10 – The message from God to all mankind. **2:13**

Now here is the message of God to the world—shut your mouth and think seriously about this. All people need to quietly think about what God will do for Israel. He will intervene. He will “again” return. There will come a day when if you ask any person in the world, what is the greatest city in the world, all will say Jerusalem. Jesus Christ lives there.

God’s message to the world is quiet down because God is aroused from His holy habitation and He is coming again.

Wise are those nations and those individuals who bow in silence and awe before the sovereign presence of a sovereign God. Wise are those who believe in Jesus Christ and prepare to meet Him.

Of course, the nations do not do this today. Nations make a lot of noise. They are proud and arrogant and immoral and obnoxious. God says one day I will be aroused and I will shut their mouths. God says My judgment will come. It will be a serious moment. It will be a sacred moment. It will be a moment when every mouth will be shut.

The LORD will return and wise are those who are ready to meet Him.

According to the Apostle John (I John 2:28), when Jesus Christ returns to Rapture the church, there are two ways we may face Him: 1) With Confidence; 2) With Shame.

Which will it be?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS:

- 1. God loves His people and watches over His people even when they are way out of His will.**
- 2. God invites His erring people to return to Him and receive His blessings.**
- 3. God will one day severely punish those who mistreat and misuse His people.**
- 4. God will one day live among His people in Person.**
- 5. Israel is the Apple of God's eye and Jerusalem will one day be the capital of the world.**