**Zechariah: The Lord Remembers**  
Ron Keller  
Week 4

### Touching the Apple of God’s Eye  
Zechariah 2:1-13

**The desire of God for Jerusalem…** There is no city on earth that is more important than Jerusalem; it is called “the city of God” or “the city of the great King” (Psalm 48); Zechariah calls it “the apple of God’s eye” (2:8); the psalmist said that God has desired the mountain of Zion “for His abode” and that He intends to “dwell there forever” (Psalm 68:16); in Psalm 132:13-14: “The LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His habitation. This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it.”

Ezekiel speaks Jerusalem as “the center of the nations” (5:5) and “the center of the earth” (38:12).

**The destiny of the Messiah in Jerusalem…** Jerusalem is where Jesus shed His blood and from where He ascended into heaven and to where He will return to earth a second time (Zechariah 14:4) to sit on David’s throne (2 Samuel 7:16).

**The detailing of the history of Jerusalem…** It was first called Salem or Shalom (Genesis 14; Hebrews 7); later called Jerusalem meaning “foundation of peace;” it existed as a Canaanite stronghold with an alliance with Egypt; 600 years later under Joshua it became a city in the tribe of Judah (Joshua 10,15).

In 2 Samuel, David stormed Jerusalem, which was a fortress for people known as the Jebusites; it became known as “the city of David” and became the capital of Israel, but it did not reach its golden age until the time of King Solomon; on its highest peak called Moriah, Solomon built the temple.

Four hundred years after Solomon it was reduced to rubble by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC; in 536 Cyrus conquered the Babylonians and the he allowed the Jews to return home under the leadership of Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple; 80 years later Nehemiah came to rebuild the walls which he did in 52 days; the city was completed in 396 BC.

In 70 AD the city was captured by Titus Vespasian and the second temple was destroyed; this as a result of a Jewish uprising against Roman subjugation by the Zealots (see Matthew 24:1-2).
In 132-135 AD Simeon Bar-Kokhba led a second revolt and the Romans under Emperor Hadrian crushed this Jewish uprising; 600,000 died and most who survived were scattered; Jerusalem was renamed Aelia Capitolina (Gentile Capital) and no Jews were permitted to live there; Israel was renamed Syria-Palestina; Syria came from Israel’s rule under the Greeks; Palestine came from the Philistines; the land was not called Palestine until 135 AD.

Following Roman control of the city it was ruled by the Byzantines, Muslims, Crusaders, Mamluks, Turks, British, Jordan.

The dispersed Jews began to return to their homeland of Palestine at the end of the 1800s and early 1900s; in 1947 the United Nations General Assembly agreed to a Jewish State and a Palestinian State west of the Jordan river with Jerusalem and Bethlehem under control of the United Nations; when Israel won the War of Independence” in 1948 Jerusalem and Bethlehem came under Jewish control--- except for East Jerusalem which was controlled by Jordan.

In the famous “Six Day War,” June 7, 1967 Israel seized control of East Jerusalem for the first time in 1897 years; the city ever since has been” a heavy stone for all the peoples” (12:3); for the past 2000 years Jews have been going to the wailing wall to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

With this history on the city we come to Zechariah 2; he has received 8 visions from the Lord with “good and comforting words” (1:13) to give the Jewish remnant hope in their rebuilding of the temple; we now come to the third vision: the future glory of Jerusalem.

The Design Proposed (2:1-4)

The surveyor who measures for the rebuilding of Jerusalem... Zechariah sees a man who is a surveyor laying out the future city; at the time the city is in rubble and Zechariah is curious as to what the man in doing; there were no walls; they were not completed until 80 years later under Nehemiah.

The smallness of the city when rebuilt... It was completed in 396 BC; you could walk from one end to the other in 10 minutes; the people did not want to live in the city; genealogical records were reviewed to see who qualified (Nehemiah 7).
The selection of the citizens who occupy the city... At first the population was sparse; they increased it by casting lots; one out of ten living outside the city was to populate it; they even tried to get volunteers (Nehemiah 11); the people had to be compelled to live there.

The vision of Zechariah is not referring to Nehemiah's day, but to a future Jerusalem whose population would extend beyond its walls; modern Jerusalem is an unwalled city of 890,000 people.

The Divine Protector (2:5)

The presence of God as a “wall of fire” around Jerusalem... God has miraculously protected Israel in 5 major wars against odds exceeding 650 to 1.

On May 14, 1948 she was attacked by 5 nations: Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Egypt; the Jews had 35,000 fighting men, 6 tanks, no air force, except for one single engine training plane; the Egyptians alone had 40,000 soldiers, 135 tanks, an Air Force of 60 planes including Spitfires and bombers; the Jordanians had the Arab Legion trained by the British and were led by Englishman Sir John Bagot Glubb, along with 48 British officers; there were many miraculous accounts as to how God gave them victory.

Soldiers in all Israel's wars have reported seeing angels on the battlefield; there was the Yom Kippur War in October 1973 when Egypt and Syria led a surprise attack and they wiped out Israel's entire Air Force; during that war Israeli soldiers were reminded of the words of the psalmist: “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the LORD is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place” (Psalm 66:17).

The power of Israel’s military in prophecy... “...like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves, they shall devour all the surrounding peoples... but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again” (12:6); God is protecting Israel and Jerusalem with “a wall of fire.”

The people who come against Israel in the future... Ezekiel prophesies that in the latter days there will be armies that will come against Israel when she is dwelling securely in unwalled villages (Ezekiel 38:11); the enemy is identified as “Gog, of the land of Magog” (38:2a); Magog is a reference to the Scythians who settled in Southern Russia; Gog is “the prince of Rosh,” the root for the word Russia; Russia is joined by Muslim allies: Turkey, Iran, North Africa which includes Libya (38:5-6); they come to plunder and to carry off loot (38:4-16).
God’s hot anger is aroused and he turns every man’s sword against his brother, and causes great natural catastrophes to overcome the invading enemies as God makes Himself known among the nations (38:17-23); God will make Israel a “wall of fire.”

The Delivered People (2:6-7)

The covenants God made with Abraham and Moses over the land… God made a land covenant with Abraham that his descendants would possess the land of Canaan as “an everlasting possession” (Genesis 17:8); God gave Israel the deed to the land.

The land covenant with Moses was their ability to enjoy and to live peaceably in the land (Deuteronomy 28).

The commitment of God to scatter the Jews worldwide and to leave the land desolate for their disobedience… Moses warned them in the wilderness if they did not honor their covenant with God they would be taken captive by one nation---Babylon (Deuteronomy 28:38-57); if they did not learn their lesson they would be scattered worldwide for further disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:58-68); the land would become desolate (Deuteronomy 29).

The call by God for all dispersed Jews to return home… In the last century God began to regather the people from the four corners of the earth and to transform their land from a wilderness to one overflowing with milk and honey (Deuteronomy 30); Zechariah encourages the Jews still in Babylon to “Come home” (v.6a).

The movement to return to their homeland began the latter 1800s and was later motivated by a Hungarian Jewish journalist, Theodor Hertzl who founded the World Zionist Organization with the goal of establishing a homeland for all Jews in Palestine; he was motivated by the anti-Semitism throughout Europe; the Jews purchased the land from the sparse Arab population by paying an exhorbitant price from 1922 to 1946; Mark Twain visited Palestine in 1867 and declared the land as desolate and deserted; today it is a land overflowing with milk and honey.

The Discovered Person (2:8-9)

The communication from the coming Messiah… Zechariah speaks of Christ’s second coming to earth as the Father sends Him “after glory” (v.8; John 17:5).
The caution from the Messiah not to harm Israel... Israel is the “apple of His eye;” the word “apple” (babah) is the word for “gate” or “hollow” referring to “the opening in which the pupil of the eye is placed;” God looks at all the nations through the eyes of Israel; to touch Israel is to touch God Himself; to harm Israel is to harm God and that does not go well with God; history proves that God brought the most powerful nations down that brought harm to Israel.

The commitment of God to make His name known by defending Israel... God will preserve Israel to demonstrate that He alone is God (v.9); to know that Israel is now living in her land is one of the greatest proofs that God is and that He is faithful to His word.

The Destined Peace and Prosperity (2:10-12)

The reign of the Messiah on earth... Christ is coming to rule on earth (Revelation 20:1-6); it will be a glorious day for Jerusalem (1 Samuel 7:8-16; Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2).

The recognition given Jerusalem when Christ reigns... It will be the political, economic and religious center of the world (Micah 4:1-7); Jerusalem will be lifted to the highest point on earth (Isaiah 40:4; Revelation 6:12; 16:18; Zechariah 14:10).

The future glory of Jerusalem is seen in Isaiah 63:1-7; Joel 3:16-17; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Ezekiel 40-48; Isaiah 4:5-6); the nations will be joined to the Lord and will send delegations to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (Zechariah 2:11; 14:16-21; Ezekiel 48:35).

The Destructive Passion (2:13)

The call for silence as a sign of God’s anger... “be silent...;” God is aroused from His holy habitation; judgment is about to fall; every time God calls for silence He is angry.

The celebration in song over the coming of God in our midst... The thought of God in our midst should cause us to sing and rejoice (2:10); notice the contrast between
verses 10 and 13; church services should not be a funeral dirge, but a celebration; Jesus is not dead! He is alive!

In the meantime our responsibility is to pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6) and let us not forget, God looks at us through the eyes of Israel, for He who touches Israel touches the apple of His eye!