

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



“From Exile to His Presence”

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Zech. 2:10-17 (2:6-13, NASV); Ex. 3:13-15; Is. 13:11; 14:1-7, 12-15, 26-27; Jer. 51:5-10; Ps. 17:8; Rev. 18:1-4; 8:1

It is possible to become comfortable in a place we were only meant to pass through. We settle in, establish routines, build something that feels secure, and slowly forget that God has called us toward something more. That was the danger facing the Jewish exiles in Babylon. God had instructed them to build houses, plant gardens, raise families, and pray for the peace of the city while they were there. But Babylon was never supposed to become their permanent home. When the time came to return, many had grown comfortable enough that they no longer wanted to leave.

Zechariah's message begins with God calling loudly enough to awaken people who had settled down spiritually: *“Oy, oy! Flee from the land of the north,”* and, *“Oy, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon”* (Zech. 2:10-11). The word translated “oy” carries the sense of an urgent call for attention: “Hey! Listen! Wake up!” God was preparing something larger than they could see. He would be the wall of fire surrounding Jerusalem and the glory in her midst. Therefore, His people needed to come out of the place of exile and return to the place of His presence and purposes.

1. COME OUT OF THE PLACE THAT HAS BECOME TOO COMFORTABLE

God's first word in this passage is direct: *“Flee from the land of the north”* (Zech. 2:10). Babylon had already fallen to the Medes and Persians, and there was no obvious immediate crisis forcing the exiles to leave. The deeper problem was that many of them had become settled. They had homes, vineyards, businesses, and familiar surroundings. Only a portion of the exiles had returned when Cyrus gave them permission. What had once been a place of temporary exile had slowly begun to feel like home.

Babylon represents more than an ancient city. Throughout Scripture, it becomes a picture of the kingdom of this world—the system of pride, self-exaltation, oppression, indulgence, and rebellion that stands against the purposes of God. The call to flee Babylon is therefore not merely geographical. It is a call to separate ourselves from everything that competes with our loyalty to ADONAI. Revelation repeats the same invitation: *“Come out of her, my people, lest you participate in her sins and receive her plagues”* (Rev. 18:4). God does not call us out simply because He wants to take something away from us. He calls us out because He is preparing a place for us in His presence.

2. TRUST THE GOD WHO DEFENDS HIS PEOPLE AND HIS PURPOSES

ADONAI declares that He has sent His messenger to the nations that were plundering His people, *“because whoever touches you touches the apple of His eye”* (Zech. 2:12). The word

translated as “touches” carries the idea of striking, hurting, violating, or afflicting. To come against God’s people is to come against something precious and sensitive to Him—as though someone were striking the pupil of His eye. God identifies Himself so closely with His people that what is done against them is regarded as being done against Him.

This does not mean that chosenness is based on favoritism, superiority, or merit. God chooses people for His purposes. He often chooses the weak, the overlooked, and those who would normally be picked last, so that when the victory comes, no one can credit the team. Everyone must look at the Captain. Israel was chosen so that the light of ADONAI could reach the nations and all the families of the earth could be blessed. Therefore, when someone attacks God’s people, they are attempting to oppose His redemptive purposes. Yet those purposes cannot be drowned in the Nile, buried in Babylon, or destroyed by any earthly kingdom. ADONAI says, *“For behold, I will shake My hand against them and they will be plunder to their servants”* (Zech. 2:13). The oppressor will not have the final word.

3. REJOICE BECAUSE GOD IS COMING TO DWELL AMONG HIS PEOPLE

The passage moves from an urgent warning to a joyful announcement: *“Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and **I will live among you**”* (Zech. 2:14). God was not merely rescuing His people from Babylon; He was bringing them into His presence. The word translated “live” is connected with the *Mishkan*, the Tabernacle—the place where God rested among His people. The greatest promise was not simply that Jerusalem would be rebuilt, the walls restored, or the oppressors defeated. The greatest promise was that the LORD Himself would come and dwell in their midst.

His purpose, however, has never been limited to Israel alone. *“In that day many nations will join themselves to ADONAI and they will be My people, and I will dwell among you”* (Zech. 2:15). Israel’s chosenness was always connected to God’s desire to gather the nations. He was preparing a Jerusalem so expansive that it would be like a city without walls, filled with people and life. Judah would remain His portion, Jerusalem would again be chosen, and many nations would attach themselves to ADONAI. When God arises to complete what He has purposed, all humanity is called to respond in awe: *“Be silent before ADONAI, all flesh, for He has aroused Himself from His holy dwelling”* (Zech. 2:17).

CONCLUSION

This passage carries three clear invitations. Come out of Babylon. Trust the God who defends His people and His purposes. Rejoice because He is coming to dwell among His people. Babylon may appear powerful, permanent, and prosperous, but it cannot withstand the purposes of ADONAI. The kingdom of darkness will not remain forever. The oppressor will cease, the captives will be restored, the nations will be gathered, and the glory of God will fill the midst of His people.

The question is whether Babylon has become too comfortable for us. Perhaps we have settled into compromise, self-reliance, bitterness, fear, pride, materialism, or a way of

living that no longer points people toward God. Today, let's hear His call: "Hey! Wake up! Come out of Babylon and come home." Bring those places honestly before ADONAI. Turn away from everything that competes with His presence, and return to Yeshua with your whole heart. He is not merely calling you away from something; He is calling you toward Himself. Look at Him coming. Let Him become the fire surrounding you, the glory within you, and the One whose purposes shape the direction of your life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why had many of the Jewish exiles become reluctant to leave Babylon, even after they were permitted to return?
2. What does Babylon represent beyond the literal ancient city, and how is that picture developed throughout Scripture?
3. Where might comfort, security, or familiarity be keeping you in a place God is calling you to leave?
4. How does understanding chosenness as purpose rather than favoritism change the way we view Israel, the people of God, and our own calling?
5. What practical step can you take this week to separate yourself from Babylon's values and move more fully toward God's presence and purposes?

CLOSING PRAYER

ADONAI, awaken us wherever we have grown comfortable in places that You never intended to become our home. Show us where the values of Babylon have entered our thinking, shaped our desires, or competed with our loyalty to You. Give us courage to come out, to be delivered, and to return to Your presence and purposes. Thank You that Your plans cannot be defeated and that those who come against Your purposes will not have the final word. Teach us to remember that we are chosen not because of our strength or merit, but so that Your light may be seen and others may be drawn to You. Yeshua, be the fire surrounding us and the glory in our midst. Gather Israel, draw the nations, and make us faithful signposts pointing people toward You. We rejoice because You are coming, and we stand in reverent awe before You.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.