

CHAPTER 3

Vision #3-Zechariah 2:1-13

The Man with the Measuring Line in His Hand

¹ Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. ²So I said, "Where are you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length." ³And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, ⁴who said to him, "Run, speak to this young man, saying: "Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. ⁵For I," says the LORD, "will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst." ⁶"Up, up! Flee from the land of the north," says the LORD; "for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven," says the LORD. ⁷"Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon." ⁸For thus says the LORD of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. ⁹For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me." ¹⁰"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says the LORD. ¹¹"Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. ¹²And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. ¹³Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!"

MEASURING THE TEMPLE OF GOD

Can these Scriptures somehow convey a cohesive message to Zechariah, to us? He has just communicated to us his second vision of the four horns and four craftsmen, and now he views a man with a "measuring line in his hand." Are we missing something here? Well, if you were Zechariah, you'd probably ask the same question: "*Where are you going?*"

Zechariah's just had in his first two visions, an unbelievable picture of the progression of Gentile World Power—even to our present day! But, before God's judgment upon the nations can be executed (Zechariah 6:1-8), there are matters of such spiritual import, which hold eternal significance, without which there can be no judgment, no final reckoning—none of what Zechariah has previously seen makes any sense whatsoever without what comes next.

“The measuring line” or “the measuring rod” – or “the plum line” – normally found in the hand of the architect signifies but one thing in Scripture: OWNERSHIP or possession. Again, let the Scriptures, let the Revelation, unveil to us, and decipher the meaning of the “man with the measuring line” in his hand.

Specifically, what is measured in Zechariah’s third vision is “Jerusalem.” However, in its context it clearly represents the “Jerusalem” which ***“shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it.”*** That is: This “Jerusalem” connotes the people of God, not specifically the immediate environs of Jerusalem proper, the city; however, here we must take note that Zechariah’s understanding of “the apple of His eye” is referred to as a city.

Confirmation of this “land-people-city” connotation is addressed in Zechariah 2:12:

“And the Lord will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem.”

Likewise, I would draw the attention of the reader to the following contrast:

- (1) The “daughter of Babylon” (Zechariah 2:7)
- (2) The “daughter of Zion” (Zechariah 2:10)

This contrast of “daughters” is of immanent interest, for within these “daughters” is the very contrast of the Holy City, Jerusalem (“daughter of Zion”) juxtaposed to the Great City, Babylon (“daughter of Babylon”). Likewise, “daughter” connotes offspring or a future generation—thus, imbedded within the term “daughter” is a prophetic reckoning for all God’s people yet to be; and, conversely, the antithesis of the Holy City, Jerusalem: The Great City, Babylon and its constituents or “daughter of Babylon.”

Having this as the backdrop—for John fully utilizes the imagery as used by Zechariah—let us systematically tackle Revelation 11 and see if we can unravel or decipher the mystery of the third vision of Zechariah:

“Rise and measure the Temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there” (Revelation 11:2a). ***“But leave out the court which is outside the temple (i.e., the Court of the Gentiles), and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they (i.e., the Gentiles) will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months”*** (Revelation 11:2b).

Though Zechariah's focus of measurement is upon the city of Jerusalem—it is still altogether clear that "Jerusalem" in Zechariah's context meant the very people of God! They constituted His "peculiar possession" – His ultimate design was that ***"Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it."*** The Almighty's purposes had to do with the people—to whom He would become ***"a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst."***

Embedded in our imagery is One Who comes to His people—and ultimately, to the very core or being of that people: Their worship or THE TEMPLE. For ultimately, Jerusalem would be nothing if it were not for the significance of its *raison d'être*—the city, the people, the center of worship, the very presence of the Lord is there! He exists for them—they for Him. He is their ***"wall of fire"*** about them and furthermore, ***"I will be the glory in her midst!"*** That's intimacy. How could the Almighty possess that which He has not measured—hence, "get ready – I'm going to expand Jerusalem – the place of my dwelling – in fact, I'm going to measure her width and length – she's mine and I must completely possess her!"

But as the measuring which takes place in Jeremiah 31:39 and in Ezekiel 40:3 and 47:3 expands upon the theme of possession and ownership, it is not until we arrive at Revelation 11 that we become keenly aware of why this phenomenon of "measuring" is so all-encompassing and divinely significant.

Furthermore, and although we have not tackled Zechariah's fifth vision of the Lampstand and the Two Olive Trees, we, nevertheless, must approach Revelation with the understanding of both the Hebrew prophets' understanding of measurement in this "visionary context" as well as understand its bearing upon the meaning and its significant in Revelation 11—for Revelation 11 will shed supreme light upon what is happening in Zechariah 2, because within Revelation 11 there is not only the measuring of the Temple, but there are also the Two Witnesses, the Two Olive Trees and the Two Lampstands—yes, there is a marvelous divine connectivity that we must witness between both Zechariah 2:1-5 and Zechariah 4:1-7 and Revelation 11; but first, to the measuring . . .

"Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, 'Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days,

clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth” (Revelation 11:1-4).

Revelation 11 presents to us a remarkable sight. John is instantly at the Temple of God. Is this the literal Temple spoken by some as a “rebuilt Jewish Third Temple in Jerusalem” which appears during the Tribulation period or during the 70th Week of Daniel’s vision? May I strongly suggest that something much more “cosmic” is going on here—for later the word “allegorical” is clearly used (Revelation 11:8 “spiritually”).

I do not, first of all, wholly disregard such a literal Third Temple to be erected in modern Jerusalem; however, there is a problem here with the issue of **measurement**. Why? For only those at the **temple** are **measured**. Again, numerous Hebrew Scriptures depict “measurement” as a matter of ownership (as in Zechariah 2; Ezekiel 45, etc.). Those who are at the **altar** and who **worship** there (as did Abraham—“the altar and the tent”) are those who have **paid the price** to follow the Lord with their whole heart! They are measured, are owned, or possessed by the Lord.

Zechariah’s third vision is the Vision of the Measuring Line—surely, it is fully connected with the measuring of the Temple which takes place in Revelation 11:1-2:

“Behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. So I said, ‘Where are you going?’ And he said to me, ‘To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length’”
(Zechariah 2:1-2).

This vision of the man with a measuring line in his hand in Zechariah 2 has vast implications. We shall give further exploration in Part 3 of this text of “An Anthology of Israel and the Church” under “Who Are the 144,000 in the Book of Revelation?” In Revelation 21 the one who talked with John and who measured the New Jerusalem with the “gold reed.” But first we must concentrate on the measuring as seen in Zechariah 2 and how it pertains exclusively with that of Revelation 11. It connotes ownership and possession. The Two Witnesses of Revelation are, I firmly believe, connected to the “Holy City” being trodden under foot for forty-two months (i.e., 3 ½ days their bodies will lie in the street of the Great City or the last half of Daniel’s 70th Week) (Revelation 11:2 & 9).

Immediately following the vision of the man with a measuring line in his hand, the visions of both Joshua the High Priest and the vision of the Universal

Lampstand and the Two Olive Trees are given. This particular sequence is not a chronological accident—a casual or inconsequential sequence of visions.

The Two Witnesses of Revelation 11 are inextricably connected to the Holy City and its persecution by that Great City, against whom the Two Witnesses testify. They are, **prior** to their testimony, **measured**—“*measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there*” (Revelation 11:1). Likewise, the measuring of the Holy City in Zechariah 2 precedes the visions of both Joshua and Zerubbabel—the Two Sons of Oil! The similarity of these aforementioned “measuring visions” of the Holy City (Zechariah 2) and of the Temple (Revelation 11), constitute the instruments through whom God would orchestrate His purposes. It would be through the Holy City—owned and possessed by the Almighty—that the Great City/Great Mountain would be judged. For why would Zechariah 2:7, immediately follow the measurement of Jerusalem (i.e., the Holy City, in fullness, protection and prosperity, Zechariah 2:4-5) declare:

“Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon. For thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me’” (Zechariah 2:7-9).

Judgment is to befall Babylon—and this judgment speaks not only of the Babylon of Zechariah’s day, but also of the Babylon to come, that Great City, Babylon the Great. But its final judgment (Revelation 17-19) demands that the Holy City, the Two Witnesses, the Two Olive Trees—under the Anointing Oil and Authority of the Holy Spirit (fully measured by the man with the measuring line in his hand; owned and possessed by Him—having paid the full price to follow Him to the uttermost) shall be called forth for those 1,260 days of testimony and witness!

Today we hear the same call: “*Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues*” (Revelation 18:4). (There is a far more sinister meaning associated with this injunction.) Nevertheless, it clearly demonstrates the “Confrontation of the Ages” which comes between the Holy City (New Jerusalem) and the Great City (Babylon the Great), between the “daughter of Babylon” and the “daughter of Zion.”

It should be pointed out that the Biblical recordation of human civilization initiates upon the Plains of Shinar under Nimrod’s leadership, whose great city of Babel was the focus of that “tower whose top is in the heavens” and of man’s

quest for authority apart from God and of the Serpent's insipid motivation, through man, to ascend unto the Most High. Nimrod built cities—and the Babylonian penchant for building, culture, and all the markings of civilization, with its commerce, societal enhancements, political, military and religious life have only ascended from that abysmal dismissal of Babel by the Almighty to this day.

Furthermore, Abram's call from that same plain cannot be overlooked as the taking of a "brand plucked from the burning" by God Himself! Likewise, that the heinous iniquity perpetrated upon Noah, and resulting in the cursing of Canaan, son of Ham (Genesis 9:20-25) is as much a part of this cosmic confrontation as the Lord's choice of Abram. For it was Cush, also a son of Ham, who was the father of Nimrod; thus, Nimrod's Origins bespeak of that defamation of the Image of God (for man was created in the image of God—and that image Ham/Canaan defamed). Therefore, God chose Abram, and eventually the 12 sons of Jacob/Israel to deal with the 11 sons of Canaan in the "Land of Canaan" – "cursed be Canaan" – and the Lord would find a way to handle His problem!

Throughout the Scriptures, from Abram's battle of the kings in Genesis 14, where Amraphel, king of Shinar (i.e., Babylon) is first mentioned, and their subsequent defeat by Abram, make no doubt—there has always been this antagonism between the seed of Abram and the land of Abraham's birth. What we must come to grips with is the Great City, Babylon vs. the Holy City, Jerusalem—these two from their embryonic beginnings set a theme throughout Scripture that is irrepressible and resounds in prophetic overtones throughout the entire Bible until the Holy City triumphs over the Great City.

The Hebrew prophets were keen on this, and the New Testament validates that forsaking with direct and/or indirect references:

1. Isaiah 48:20 – ***“Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, the Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.”***
2. Isaiah 52:11 – ***“Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence; touch no unclean thing (Perhaps an allusion to the “beautiful Babylonian garment,” along with “silver and gold” discovered in Achan's tent, which resulted in Israel's defeat against Ai; Joshua 7:21); go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.”***
3. Jeremiah 50:8, 9 – ***“Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the goats before the flocks. For lo, I will raise, and cause to***

come up against Babylon, an assembly of great nations from the north country; and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken.”

4. Jeremiah 51:6, 8 – *“Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul; be not cut off in her iniquity: for this is the time of the Lord’s vengeance; He will render unto her a recompense Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed.”*
5. Zechariah 2:6, 7 – *“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. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.”*
6. II Corinthians 6:17, 18 – *“Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”* (Note: Directly quotes Isaiah 52:11).
7. Revelation 18:4 – *“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”*

So, there is this abandonment of Babylon, this forsaking, counting the cost, fleeing and repudiation for all that this Great City stands for, in defiance of the Holy City, God’s City; but there will always be a cost. We will consider that cost and the Testimony of the Two Witnesses who shall yet testify against that Great City in the succeeding segments of this chapter; however, let us ponder, for a moment, what I shall assail as the “Jim Jones Phenomenon,” or deception, that afflicts the faithful.

THE JIM JONES’ DECEPTION – COMING OUT OF BABYLON, BUT BABYLON NOT COMING OUT OF YOU!

There is a pernicious tendency in the minds of some to posit the idea that spiritual utopia can be achieved through physicality—i.e., by escaping Babylon, spiritually AND physically, one can suffice the divine edict to “flee Babylon.” This is especially powerful, in so far as a utopian ideal, in the realization of some manifested accomplishment of the “gospel of the kingdom.” Here, “this gospel of the kingdom” (Matthew 24:14) can only be fully comprehended in its “newness” and experienced in its fullness when one, especially during these apocalyptic times, forsakes, not only the Apostate Church of the last days (along with its compromise with both politics and commerce (i.e., the distorted “gospel of

prosperity”) AND the incursions of the New Age Movement, along with the distortions of human psychology and even sorcery), but the fundamental source of today’s Babylonian corruption: The United States of America.

There is, however, a theological sense wherein “the gospel of the kingdom” (Matthew 24:14) will be preached during the tribulation as a distinctive, apart from the Gospel preached in the Church age. Notwithstanding the tribulation saints and/or the Two Witnesses acclamation of the “gospel of the kingdom,” the gospel currently preached in the Church agrees with the gospel of the kingdom in their soteriological message. The Church will indeed preach the gospel of the kingdom in earnest, heralding the millennial reign of Christ for a thousand years.

The Apostle Paul preached the gospel of the kingdom to Gentiles, as well as to Jews (Acts 20:25; 28:23, 30, 31) and emphasized its immediate presence in the Church (Colossians 1:13).

To “escape Babylon” and, *ipso facto*, its “plagues and sins” (Revelation 18:4), has been the quest of spurious sects from time immemorial. Left inside the “Babylonian cocoon,” a metamorphosis full of “sins and plagues” transforms the image of those “left behind” into a hideous reflection. Separating oneself from the “plagues and sins” of Babylon has been the quest of Monk and Mennonite, from Ruby Ridge to the Waco Compound. In deference to the sincerity of believers who aspired to escape the physicality of her enticements and the contagions of her plagues, many have done so with the purest of intentions—even “Biblical intentions.” Seemingly, some, like the Amish, and similar Pietists, have “come apart” – “escaping the world’s lust” before their faith “came apart!”

In that “*the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one*” (I John 5:19), such immediate disassociation from the “kosmos” seems tenuous at best and beyond the human pale at worst (e.g., witness the suicide in Southern California of “Heaven’s Gate” in their quest to leave this earthly clod). Notwithstanding the exhortations to all seven of the churches in Asia Minor to overcome in the churches in which they find themselves, these modern-day overcomers see little comfort in Daniel’s divine defiance in the midst of Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon, nor of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed Nego’s fiery furnace experience wherein the Son of God appeared in their conflagration and preserved them all, **in the midst of Babylon.**

No, to these Babylonian antagonists, these utopian dreamers, the Church’s deceptions and spiritual innervations are compounded by the world’s sway and by the fulcrum and pivot point of all that bespeaks of Babylon: The USA! Thus, to escape, flee, and arise from Babylon’s clutches is as much a Biblical mandate as

“come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing!”

An old saint once advised me: Wherever you go, there you are! Indeed, leaving the physicality of one place for another guarantees but one thing: You once were in Americana, and now you’re in the “XYZ Holy Ghost Compound” or once you were in Cleveland, but now you’re in Toronto, Canada, or once you were in San Francisco but now you’re in Jonestown, Guyana.

JONESTOWN . . . the very word awakens thoughts of murder and mass suicide on an apocalyptic scale whose memory traumatizes the most impervious heart. Its highly publicized account still leaves us astounded when the story is rehearsed in our ears anew. How could a preacher and healer, who in 1956 in Indianapolis, Indiana, from a congregation which joined a Disciples of Christ denomination, with such pure intentions for the unsaved, and for the poor, get off so far into error that the end product was a human catastrophe that shook the world? Imagine 913 souls perished in utopia in 1978!

Reverend Jim Jones envisioned Jonestown as an egalitarian agriculture community where the “saints had all things in common.” Really, a “socialist paradise” within the context of Christianity! Jones took his flock from the nuclear vulnerable Eastern USA to Ukiah, California (north of San Francisco), a supposedly less likely hit for a nuclear attack in the mid 1960s.

“He preached a ‘social gospel’ of human freedom, equality, and love, which required helping the least and the lowliest of society’s members. Later on, however, this gospel became explicitly socialistic, or communistic in Jones’ own view, and the hypocrisy of white Christianity was ridiculed while ‘apostolic socialism’ was preached.” (Department of Philosophy and Religion, University of North Dakota, *Alternate Considerations of Jonestown and the People's Temple*)¹

Physicality haunted Jones’ every move. Word got out regarding the aberrant practices within his People’s Temple and the cult-like affects espoused by the “Temple” grew increasingly embarrassing to both member and civic proponent. San Francisco’s tolerance for those who care for the poor is legendary, and Jones’ church seemed like the epitome of an urban dream come true. Alas! It was a nightmare in the making.

It was time to move again. This time the charge was heard amongst the faithful that “fleeing Babylon” was their only recourse. Jones knew the Scriptures and he played to his fearful audience well. Commitment was his tool and he used

it adroitly and cunningly. Families were split, jobs forsaken, education interrupted—the price for “fleeing Babylon” far outweighed the curses remaining upon those who held back in rank capitalism gone amok. Babylon was no longer salvageable. The move is on; praise God, the move is on!

Thus was born utopia, thus was birthed a living nightmare, as the faithful drank of the cyanide-laced Kool-Aid, and as Congressman Leo Ryan’s bullet-riddled body lay sprawled on the tiny Port Kiatuma Airfield near paradise.

This author does not deny Babylon’s final manifestation, its physicality. What this writer resoundingly deplors is fleeing Babylon’s demoralizing environs when, in point of Scriptural fact, she sits on “seven mountains” (i.e., every continent on the globe) and she, as that Great City “reigns over the kings of the earth” (Revelation 17:18). Alas! Her fornicating influences are ubiquitous!

You may flee from her midst but if you are determined that your “literalist” approach to her demise in Revelation 17 through 19 is your injunction to remove yourself from her (cf. Revelation 18:4), then you must consider that although she appears indissoluble in her identification with “Civil Babylon,” she (i.e., Civil Babylon) is, nevertheless, determined to devour the apostate whore “attachment” who rides the Beast (i.e., Apostate or Religious Babylon, Commercial Babylon and Civil Babylon are identified in a contiguous manner and appear indistinguishable in Revelation 17 through 19, even as the Holy City, though bearing the names of both Israel and the Church, is but one Bride or one Holy City; however, the ten horns of the Beast (i.e., of Civil Babylon) will hate her, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire (cf. Revelation 21:9-21)), to wit:

“And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire” (Revelation 17:16 . . . This is no mere “observation” on the part of the ten-horned Beast from the Abyss, it is the Beast who devours the Woman who rides the Beast!)

Now, this doesn’t sound to me to be “indissoluble” does it? The obvious devolution of Babylon has commenced. First, the “counsel of peace” (between Church and State which we shall later see in the Coronation of Joshua the High Priest) can never be between the Beast and the Apostate Whore who rides the Ten-Horned Beast from the Abyss. No, “Church and State” and their peaceful cooperation are not consigned to the reign of the Beast!

As a Biblical literalist, the chronology of Revelation 17 through 19, is straightforward:

- (1) The judgment of Apostate Christianity . . . Revelation 17:1-18:3
- (2) The call to ***“Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues”*** (Revelation 18:4) (Note: This very well could be the “Rapture of the Church” of “those that are alive and remain.”)
- (3) The judgment of “Commercial Babylon” (Revelation 18:5-24)
- (4) The judgment of “Civil” or “Political Babylon” (her leadership and armies) (Revelation 19:17-21).

Moreover, as Robert Gundry explains regarding the church’s exemption from God’s “retributive wrath” and of other matters regarding her escape from Babylon’s immediate incineration in Revelation 18:4:

“It is not a point of disagreement whether the Church will ever suffer God’s retributive wrath. She will not (John 3:36; 5:24; Rom. 5:9; 8:1; Eph. 2:3; 5:6; I Thess. 1:10; 5:9). And there are clear indications in the book of Revelation that the bowls of divine wrath will not touch saints, indications in addition to the theological necessity that God’s wrath not touch a saved person. Just as the three woes, which are the last three trumpets, will come upon the “earth-dwellers” (8:13) in contradistinction to the saints, so also the bowls will be poured only upon the wicked. The first bowl will be poured upon “the men who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image” (16:2). The turning of the sea into blood, in the second bowl, does not need to involve saints. The third bowl will be directed against those who “poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou has given them blood to drink” (16:6). The fourth bowl will fall on those who in response “blasphemed the name of God . . . and they did not repent, so as to give Him glory” (16:9). The same will happen under the fifth bowl (16:11). The sixth bowl will concern the kings of the east and the armies which will gather to Armageddon. **The seventh bowl will reach to the very end and have to do with Babylon (out of which God’s people have been called “that you may not receive of her plagues,” 18:4) and the cities of the nations.** The recipients will again respond with blasphemy (16:17-21). It should be evident that the bowls of divine wrath will concern the wicked alone.”²

I concur with Gundry’s exegesis; that is, it is God Almighty Who shall deliver His people from Babylon’s conflagration, just as He has spared his people throughout the pouring out of the bowls of divine wrath. This precise Babylonian deliverance occurs **prior to** Commercial Babylon being ***“utterly burned with fire,***

for strong is the Lord God who judges (or “judged”) her” (Revelation 18:8). Either way you interpret this passage (i.e., God’s people leave Babylon through divine injunction, or they are miraculously spared retributive wrath akin to Israel’s escape of the Angel of Death in Egypt, and of the other plagues that afflicted their taskmasters), the point to made here is “divine intervention”—not human manipulation, no matter how sincere “fleeing Babylon” may sound in the ears of the radical isolationist or the “physicality” of the utopian dreamer. Without God’s supernatural incursion into the apocalyptic drama at the final demise of Babylon, God’s people would undergo divine wrath—divine wrath clearly is not the eschatological prerogative in view here.

On the other hand, it must be noted that the tribulation incurred in the Seventieth Week of Daniel is directly orchestrated by the wrath of Satan, the Antichrist, and the wicked against the saints of the Most High. This divine allowance is distinct and beyond the pale of God’s wrath against the ungodly (Jude 12-15).

The preservation of the saints in the final hours of Babylon’s divine destruction has spared the saints from retributive wrath, but the Savior’s words are clear in so far as “tribulation” in general is concerned:

“In the world you have tribulation” (John 16:33). ***“I, John, [am] your brother and fellow-partaker in the tribulation . . . in Jesus”*** (Revelation 1:9). ***“You will have tribulation”*** (Revelation 2:10). ***“Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God”*** (Acts 14:22). ***“We also exult in our tribulations”*** (Romans 5:3).

Let us clearly delineate that the above tribulation does not refer to the period of Great Tribulation known as Daniel’s Seventieth Week (specifically, the latter half). To ignore the differentiation between “general tribulation” and the horrific tribulation of the Seventieth Week of Daniel, does not, however, militate against the Church’s involvement in the Seventieth Week of Daniel. I Thessalonians 3:3 postulates that the Church has been called to tribulations in general. In point of fact, the Church has, throughout the nearly 2,000 years of her history, been opposed by and suffered at the hands of sundry antichrists (I John 2:18, 22; 4:3). Recognition of this provides assumptive evidence of the Church’s interdiction and endurance within *the* tribulation and final confrontation with *the* Antichrist.

As Gundry again expounds:

“The blessedness of the blessed hope does not consist in exemption from persecution and trial, but in seeing the Savior face to face. If the general persecution predicted by Jesus did not take away that blessedness from the early disciples, neither should the specific persecution predicted for the seventieth week take away the blessedness of the hope for contemporary Christians. Church history testifies that the hope of Christ’s return has burned more brightly for suffering believers than for the comfortable.”³

Likewise, if the Church has fled the immediate environs of Babylon, then who shall testify in the “street of the Great City” if it is not the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11? Today, God is not seeking a “new gospel of the Kingdom” whose differential is the abandonment of Babylon proper. There is no gospel message (“of the kingdom” or “the everlasting gospel” or the gospel of salvation) in the fleeing of Babylon’s present physicality. To the contrary, did not the Almighty employ Daniel and his friends to give such a bold and uncompromised testimony in her midst? Were Daniel and his friends contaminated by her “sins and plagues” as some would have us believe? Are the world’s entanglements less pernicious outside of this “dreadful” enterprise? Has Toronto escaped Babylon on the Hudson? Jonestown’s testament does not bode well for those fleeing Babylon’s citadel! Those who would justify their physical dispositions through literalist use of Scriptures do well to follow Revelation’s chronology, while observing the history of altruistic isolationists and utopians who have sought freedom from divine wrath and the promise of holiness, only to discover my friend’s advice: Wherever you go, there you are!

Let us consider those “left behind” in Babylon . . . what does their future hold:

COUNTING THE COST

In ancient times, you could be thoroughly interested in the God of Israel—and you (as a Gentile) longed to inquire in His Holy Temple. But, alas! As a Gentile you were only allowed to venture “up to” the “Court of the Gentiles.” And, why was this so—for did not the Lord want all peoples to be joined to Him? Yes. Notwithstanding such Gentile sincerity—circumcision was too much for most Gentiles! That’s right—too painful—the cutting away of the flesh was simply **too much** for most Gentiles to bear. Therefore, this special court was provided for them—so close, but in the end: The price was too much to pay!

These Gentiles were not fully sold out for the Lord. They came so close—but would not be measured. Decidedly, they were outside the Temple! Outside

the altar! Outside of those who worshiped! All **outside** are but the Court of the Gentiles. And, what of those who are inside? In reality, they constitute the true Temple of God! That same temple mentioned later in Revelation, wherein it states: ***“The Tabernacle (or Temple) of God is with men”*** (Revelation 21:3). ***“Ye are the Temple of the Living God”*** (I Corinthians 3:16).

Surely, is not this the true Temple of God of which Revelation 11 speaks—for it has to do with measuring those who worship? Those who’ve paid the price to be the Temple of the Living God! Their lives are fully identified with the full burnt offering of our Lord Jesus—***measure the altar!*** And, most definitely, in the crucible of the Tribulation there will be such a price to pay to be God’s Temple (His Dwelling Place); and where true worship takes place **after** the altar has been measured. This is the vision first seen in Revelation 11.

Pointedly, let me inquire: Are you willing to be measured by the Lord? Are you at the altar—that’s the only place that true worshippers can be? Beyond the Court of the Gentiles—within the Temple Square, at the Altar of Worship—ready to be measured, for you are His, wholly His? If so—be prepared, for immediately following your measurement you will hear the cry: ***“Up, up! Flee from the land of the north . . . he who touches you touches the apple of His eye”*** (Zechariah 2:6 & 8). Are you in the ***“apple of His eye”*** – so that if we were to look into His eye we would see YOU? Yes, you will immediately hear the intentions of the Gentiles who have been left out of the measuring: ***“They (the Gentiles) will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.”***

Listen, dear brothers and sisters, for those who have been so measured, who are the apple of His eye—they are His Witnesses, they are those who have so testified and are ready to pay the ultimate price, even with their very lives! Jerusalem, the Holy City, comprised of BOTH Israel and the Church, shall be called upon both to testify (i.e., ***“And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth”***) and then ***“when they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them”*** (i.e., ***“tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months”***) – so, ***“the nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days”*** – yes, this is the last half of Daniel’s 70th Week, the final week of this age – BUT ***“after three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’ And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them”*** (Revelation 11, portions). And, yes, again, this is both the resurrection of the righteous and rapture of the Church!

Yes, you will see these Two Witnesses in Zechariah 4—they are the ones that you will see in Revelation 11. The man with a measuring line in Zechariah 2 is found in John’s Revelation—where the measuring of the Temple takes place—and, you are there! Let us examine more closely this symbolism and its impact upon the elect.

THE PERSECUTION OF THE TWO WITNESSES

“And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months” (Revelation 11:2). These forty-two months have to do with the same expressions as 3 1/2 years; 3 1/2 days; times, time and half a time; 1,260 days or 1/2 of a week as in the 70th Week of Daniel (a 7-day or 7-year week). I cannot go into a lengthy discussion here, but suffice it to say, there are scores of books written on the subject, which will confirm my reasoning in so far as the two halves of the Seventieth Week of Daniel are concerned, viz., the first 1,260 days or three-and-a-half days, and the second half of the week, or forty-two months or the last three-and-a-half days of the Seventieth Week of Daniel’s prophecy.

Furthermore, what is “tread” (or *“trampled under foot”*) for forty-two months is the **Holy City**. I emphasize it to bring to your attention that it is the Holy City (i.e., the same Holy City, Jerusalem, measured in Zechariah 2), which endures such treading by these very same Gentiles—Gentiles who will **not** pay the price to go in all the way to the Temple (to be “measured” as the Temple) who are of the **flesh** and not of the **Spirit**! Now, let us continue with Revelation 11:3: *“And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.”*

Later on we will substantiate in the fifth vision of Zechariah the full identity of the Two Witnesses (i.e., the Two Sons of Oil); but, now we discover in Revelation 11:5-6 that their testimony is so overcoming, so altogether totally **prevailing**—nothing can touch them! Yet, after their 1,260-day testimony is given (for it is **timing** which concerns here), the **Beast** (*who ascends out of the bottomless pit*) makes war against them, overcomes them, and kills them. As it says in Revelation 11:8-9: *“Their dead bodies will lie in the street of the Great City . . . three-and-a-half days.”* Thus, we have a most interesting correlation here:

- (1) The Holy City is downtrodden for 42 months
- (2) The Two Witnesses have prevailing authority for 1,260 days
- (3) The Two Witnesses are persecuted for 3 1/2 days



First, may I suggest that these periods of time are precisely the same! That is—forty-two months are 3 1/2 years (remember, Daniel's vision of the 70 weeks are clearly that each day constitutes a **year**; thus, 3 1/2 days is but 3 1/2 years, and, of course, 3 1/2 years equals 42 months—this is wholly consistent with Scripture; i.e., the hermeneutic is sound!).

Finally, 1,260 days and even “*times, time and half a time*” (Daniel 7:25 & 12:7)—all these “time frames/expressions” refer to a period of 3 1/2 years. However, the prevailing testimony of the Two Witnesses takes place at the commencement of the 70th Week of Daniel (or the **first 3 1/2 years** of the Seven-Year Tribulation Period). After their testimony is given, the Beast (the one who recovered from a wound—i.e., the Antichrist, whose ascendancy upon the earth takes place during the Testimony of the Two Witnesses) will commence the persecution of these Two Witnesses (Revelation 11:7, Daniel 12:1, 5-7). This 3 1/2 day period (or 3 1/2 year period) is known as the **Great Tribulation** of the Seven-Year Tribulation or 70th Week of Daniel).

And, is it any wonder, that “*If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also*” (John 15:20)? His word, His testimony, His speaking is now being spoken through them. So their “word” – their “testimony” – their “prophecy” will be given—and many shall there be who will heed their word!

And, as Paul declared:

“If indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:17-18).

And, yet, ***“Seeing you will not see, and not perceive . . . their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn so that I should heal them”*** (Isaiah 6:9, 10; Jeremiah 5:21; Ezekiel 12:2; Matthew 13:14, 15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:40-41; Romans 11:8 and Acts 18:26-27).

The voices of the prophets are seemingly stilled—who wants their “negativity” in the first place? They remind the world of their folly and of apostate religions’ demise; of Babylon’s pending judgment—upon apostasy, commercial exploitation and, in particular, the Beast with his rebellious, political system: Babylon! And, yet, Paul would have us to be prophesying prophets:

“But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men . . . he who prophesies edifies the church. I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues . . . but if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you . . . for you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets . . . therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy” (I Corinthians 14:3-5, 24-25, 31-32, and 39).

But, alas! ***“Those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these Two Prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth”*** (Revelation 11:10).

And, now you know—that the Two Witnesses are really the Two Prophets—***“for the Testimony of Jesus is the spirit of Prophecy.”***

Once again, we have seen a vision with Zechariah and the other Hebrew Prophets—but its ultimate amplification in the Revelation, is overwhelming, relevant, immediate; its meaning is timeless.

Finally, these two portions of Scripture (Zechariah 2:1-5 and 2:6-12), as they are juxtaposed and amplified in the Revelation (Revelation 11) are written under divine inspiration by the Holy Spirit; indeed, as the Scripture says:

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation (i.e., “Origen”) for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (I Peter 1:21).

Is it not amazing that in Zechariah 2:1-5, when Jerusalem is measured, it most definitely is centered upon the very people of God as the “apple of His eye” (for ***“he who touches you touches the pupil of His eye”***) and that He would be to them as a ***“wall of fire all around her and . . . be the glory in her midst?”*** If this is not total possession and divine obsession, then I do not know what is!

But the future joy of Zion, and of the millennial character of Zion’s role among the nations (Zechariah 2:11) is immediately introduced with these ominous warnings and exhortations:

“Up, up! Flee from the land of the north, says the Lord; ‘for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven,’ says the Lord. ‘Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.’ For thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye” (Zechariah 2:6-8).

The Scriptural sequence is of unmistakable significance: The measuring of the people of God prepares them for any tribulation, any trouble, any test, any forsaking of this present earthly clod, and any confrontation with the daughter of Babylon. Yes, they are enjoined to escape Babylon, to flee from the land of the north, from those that would plunder them, touch them, harm them—but there is One Who is coming, Who will ***“shake My hand against them”*** (i.e., against Babylon, the nations who touch them). Without a doubt, this not only was His promise made to Zion then, but its prophetic implications extend to the very gates of His millennial reign out of Zion:

“Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” says the Lord. Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and they shall

become My people, and I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you. And the Lord will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem” (Zechariah 2:10-12).

Now, as we seek a clearer understanding of the Lord of Hosts’ intentions for His people (and the ultimate revelation of their Messiah—for ***“Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent ME to you”***) we turn to Revelation 11 and see, in sequence, a similar set of spiritual preparations and confrontations. For the reed like a measuring rod, given to John, by the angel who stood by him saying, ***“Rise and measure the temple of God; the altar, and those who worship there”*** immediately declares: ***“leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles—they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months—and I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth”*** (Revelation 11:1-3).

Those who have been consecrated, are sold out, are measured AS the “Temple of God” at the altar of consecration, and who are found there as the Father’s true worshipers in “spirit and reality” (John 4:23) – they will yet testify against that Great City, Babylon—by their lives and by their speaking.

Listen to the very words of Jesus:

“Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:21-24).

The “woman at the well” who heard these words immediately responded to Him, ***“I know that Messiah is coming”*** (*who is called Christ*). ***When He comes, He will tell us all things”*** (John 4:25). And, then, the revelation of the Messiah is given:

“Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am He’” (John 4:26).

This exchange brings us deeper into the Temple of God, to the altar, to the true worshipers—where Messiah is unveiled, where there is an intimacy of fellowship that alone can be considered worship, for it is in ***“spirit and reality.”*** It

is here alone, where the Messiah comes to us in Person, in fellowship, seeking such worshipers—only He, the Spirit of God, can suffice all our thirst, our deepest cravings. No human relationship, though marvelous they may be, can compare to the Water of Life, which is poured out upon us through the Messiah. The Father is seeking such to worship Him—these are the very worshipers found in Revelation 11!

And, just as the woman left her water pot, and openly declared to all the men who would hear her: ***“Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?”*** - we are reminded, that those who are the true worshipers are empowered to testify, to bear witness, to flee Babylon, to declare: Come, see a Man who told me all things I ever did! That is her testimony; that is our testimony and there is no compromise in its broadcast—no equivocation.

In Zechariah’s third vision, we are confronted with this message: ***“For I, says the Lord, will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst”*** (Zechariah 2:5). Here, there is divine protection and even jealousy—***“I am zealous*** (or “jealous”) ***for Jerusalem and for Zion with great zeal*** (or “jealousy”) (Zechariah 1:14). This becomes all the more emphasized in Zechariah 8:2-3:

“Thus says the Lord of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy; with great fervor (i.e., “heat” or “rage”) I am jealous for her. Thus says the Lord: I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the Lord of hosts, The Holy Mountain.”

One has to stand back, realize the Lord of Hosts is communicating with the most intense human emotion—His expressions are so human, designed to grip our deepest emotions, stir our passions for His own. Using terms like “fire,” “heat,” “rage,” “great fervor,” “jealousy for her” – there can be no doubt of the intensity of His love and commitment for the daughter of Zion! Further, as this theme is amplified in Revelation 11, those that are measured are at the altar! Here, the fire consumes everything—undoubtedly, this bespeaks of a “whole burnt offering” unto the Lord.

Friend, do we get the picture here? His Two Witnesses are being measured, are being consumed, and a wall of fire is being placed around them by One Whose possession of their lives is so intense, so committed, that nothing will stop Him from claiming what is His. There is no milquetoast God out there with tepid interest in His own—He’s absolute, utterly driven and expresses His emotion in such human terms as that of a man for His lover, His bride. Frankly, He’s consumed with jealousy for her and that’s that!

There's no compromise on His part—and He doesn't want any compromise on our part—it's all out, complete, resolute commitment with no holds barred. And, just as the fervent and burning jealousy of the Lord surrounds her, He “madly” wants that same fervency of commitment from her. He's through with looking on Zion, His treasured possession, from the outside—no, “*I will . . . dwell in the midst of Jerusalem*” (Zechariah 8:3). In the very midst of her! Listen, here's what He's after: “*THE CITY OF TRUTH, The Mountain of the Lord of Hosts, The Holy Mountain*” (Zechariah 8:3).

These are her titles—Jerusalem, the Holy City, His Holy Mountain, The Mountain of the Lord of Hosts—and His City of Truth! These are amazing names He extends to His people, His City. They bespeak of a depth of reality that is the very fiber of their being. You don't get the impression that something is being done here “without” – but something of His very nature and person is being wrought into His people to such an extent that TRUTH permeates their being, they are His authority, His Mountain, even His HOLY Mountain—utterly separated unto Him!

Isn't this what He's after today in us—this “all-out God” is out to totally possess us, capture us. Like the “hound of heaven” – His love is irresistible and His grace abounds. There is this inexorable, divine passion that demands total fidelity and will not be assuaged until we are wholly His and His alone! The world, the flesh and the devil compete for our hearts—but, the “court of the Gentiles” – though so close to His purpose, is not enough and will NEVER be enough. To God, no matter how far you've traveled, no matter how intellectual your understanding of divine matters is concerned, and no matter what price you have apparently paid to get as far as the court of the Gentiles—you're still not at the altar, you're NOT measurable!

He hasn't possessed your heart—you know and you know He knows it—you're holding back—the pain of circumcision of your heart is just too much. He's given you the Good Land—all that Christ is and has; but you abhor the knife, the cutting away of your flesh and the cost is just too great. You, like the children of Israel under Joshua, had to have their Gilgal experience (“Gilgal” – “the rolling back of the flesh”) before they could go up against Jericho—all that was Egypt, and all its flesh pots, had to be “rolled away.”

There simply is no greater preparation for battle, for testimony in these last days, then to have that experience of His consecration and commitment so worked into our hearts, that all fleshly aspirations and efforts are rolled away, burned at the altar of consecration, as the Man with the measuring rod in His hand measures us fully. You know, and I know, what holds us back—keeps us in the court of the

Gentiles—we've flat run out of excuses. Now, the altar awaits, Gilgal confronts—for the task ahead will overwhelm the fainthearted, those who live in compromise and flirt with the world, cannot have it both ways: Let Him measure you!

And, dear friend, don't think it is not a real experience—an altar-Gilgal-altering experience; it is! When He comes to measure you—He does it individually and corporately, as a City. We are not sufficient for these things—that's why we're at His altar, and that's why we're responding to the intensity of His jealousy and rage! Listen, if you think for one moment, that it is your ability to “pull this off” – forget it.

His pursuit of you and me is what brings us to the altar, to be His City, His Holy City, the Mountain of the Lord of Hosts, the City of Truth. What? You, me, the City of Truth, the Holy Mountain, the Mountain of the Lord of Hosts? Never—until He sets His “wall of fire” around us and comes to measure us Himself. “Lord, finish Your work in me, burn out all that competes with Your love, all that bespeaks of that flesh that refuses to respond to Your jealousy—be in “my midst” – burn in my heart for what you desire is a people who are Yours and Yours alone to fulfill all that Your heart desires!”

So, we end our study of these remarkable and timeless passages in Zechariah's third vision, well aware of their prophetic insights and ultimate fulfillments. The battle lines are being drawn—the intensity of the conflict grows with each unveiling, each vision. Jerusalem, the Holy City, the worshipers at the altar, will confront Babylon, that Great City—but they will do so by the life and power of the Spirit of God, bear the shame, suffer and be plundered. But, as in Zechariah 2:10 and in Revelation 11:15-19 we hear these synonymous encouragements:

“Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” says the Lord (Zechariah 2:10).

“Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Messiah (i.e., Christ), and He shall reign forever and ever!’” (Revelation 11:15).

“Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple” (Revelation 11:19a).

First, the measuring, the consecration, the true worship, the testimony, the suffering, the fleeing—then, the rejoicing, the resurrection and Messiah's

Millennial promise fulfilled. This is the Lord of Hosts' plan and purpose for Israel, for the Church, for the nations—surely, the time is at hand . . .

“Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!” (Zechariah 2:13).

