

Zechariah 2:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand.

Analysis

I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand. Zechariah's third vision introduces ish (ישׁ, a man) holding chevel middah (חֵבֶל מִדָּה, a measuring line/rope). This figure intends to measure Jerusalem (v. 2), assessing its dimensions for rebuilding. The measuring rope symbolizes planning, construction, and restoration—Jerusalem will be rebuilt according to divine specifications.

The man with the measuring line may represent an angel, a prophet, or symbolically the community's hope for restoration. His activity echoes Ezekiel's temple vision where an angelic figure measures the eschatological temple (Ezekiel 40-48). Measuring indicates divine ownership and purposeful design—God isn't randomly restoring Jerusalem but rebuilding it according to His exact plan.

Yet the subsequent angelic message (v. 4-5) reveals that human measurements prove inadequate. God's plan for Jerusalem exceeds any human blueprint—the city will be inhabited as unwalled towns, too populous for physical boundaries (v. 4). God Himself will be a wall of fire around it (v. 5). This teaches that divine restoration surpasses human expectations and planning.

Historical Context

In 520 BC, Jerusalem lay largely in ruins from Babylon's 586 BC destruction. Returned exiles faced the daunting task of rebuilding without resources or

manpower. Nehemiah wouldn't arrive to rebuild walls until 445 BC—75 years future from Zechariah's vision. The man with measuring line represents the community's hope and planning for restoration.

The vision addresses discouraged returnees who wondered if Jerusalem would ever regain former glory. God's answer: My plans for Jerusalem exceed your measurements. Don't limit restoration to your expectations—I will make it greater than before. This encouraged perseverance in rebuilding efforts while directing hope beyond immediate circumstances to eschatological fulfillment in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:15-17, where an angel measures the heavenly city).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the image of measuring Jerusalem for rebuilding encourage you when facing tasks that seem overwhelming or impossible?
2. What does God's promise that Jerusalem will exceed human measurements teach about divine plans surpassing human expectations?
3. How should this vision shape your prayers for church renewal or spiritual restoration—do you limit God to your measurements?

Interlinear Text

וָאֲשׁוּ אֶ	עֵינַי י	וְאֶרְאֶה	וְהִנֵּה	אִישׁ יֹשֵׁב	וּבְיָדוֹ
I lifted up	mine eyes	again and looked	H2009	and behold a man	in his hand
H5375	H5869	H7200		H376	H3027

בְּ	מִדָּה:
line	with a measuring
H2256	H4060

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 40:3 (Parallel theme): And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.

Zechariah 1:16 (Parallel theme): 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.

Revelation 21:15 (Parallel theme): And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

Revelation 11:1 (Parallel theme): And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

Ezekiel 47:4 (Parallel theme): Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins.

Ezekiel 40:5 (Parallel theme): And behold a wall on the outside of the house round about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six cubits long by the cubit and an hand breadth: so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.

Zechariah 1:18 (Parallel theme): Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns.