

Zechariah 2:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.

Analysis

For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her. God Himself promises to be chomat esh saviv (חומת אש סביב, a wall of fire round about). Fire symbolizes both protection and judgment—enemies cannot penetrate it without being consumed. Unlike stone walls that can be breached, God's fiery presence provides impenetrable defense. The circular imagery (round about) indicates complete protection with no vulnerable point.

U-le-khavod ehyeh betokha (עַל כָּבֵד אֲהֵיה בְּתוֹךְךָ, and for glory I will be in the midst of her). Kavod (כָּבֵד) means glory, honor, or weighty presence—God's manifest presence dwelling among His people. The contrast between external protection (wall of fire) and internal glory (God in the midst) shows comprehensive divine provision: defended from without, glorified from within.

This promise echoes the wilderness wanderings when God appeared as pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21), providing both guidance and protection. It anticipates the New Covenant when God's glory dwells not in a temple building but among His people through the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16, Revelation 21:3, 22-23).

Historical Context

For post-exilic Jews living in vulnerable, partially ruined Jerusalem without walls, this promise provided crucial assurance. They couldn't yet rebuild walls

(accomplished later under Nehemiah), but God pledged His own fiery protection. The glory that filled Solomon's temple (1 Kings 8:10-11) but departed before exile (Ezekiel 10:18-19) would return—not in the smaller second temple building but dwelling among the people themselves.

Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment: Immanuel (God with us, Matthew 1:23), the glory of God dwelling among humanity (John 1:14, 'we beheld his glory'). The church becomes God's temple, protected by His presence and radiating His glory to the nations. Eschatologically, the New Jerusalem needs no temple because 'the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it' (Revelation 21:22).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does knowing God Himself is your wall of fire affect your response to threats or opposition?
2. What does it mean for God to be 'the glory in the midst' of His people, and how should this shape church life and worship?
3. How does this promise find fulfillment in Christ dwelling among us and ultimately in the New Jerusalem?

Interlinear Text

א שׁ ח וּמֹתָן יְהוָה הַנָּאָם לְהָאֵת אֲהַיָּה תְּאֵן
H589 H1961 H0 For I saith the LORD will be unto her a wall of fire
H5002 H3068 H2346 H784

סְבִיב בְּתִזְכָּרָה אֲהַיָּה הַלְּכָבָד וְדַבְרָי
round about and will be the glory in the midst
H5439 H3519 H1961 H8432

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 4:5 (Glory): And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.

Psalms 3:3 (Glory): But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

Zechariah 9:8 (Parallel theme): And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

Revelation 21:23 (Glory): And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

Isaiah 12:6 (Parallel theme): Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

Psalms 48:3 (Parallel theme): God is known in her palaces for a refuge.

Isaiah 33:21 (Glory): But there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

Psalms 48:12 (Parallel theme): Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof.

Luke 2:32 (Glory): A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

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