

Zechariah 2:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.

The double interjection hoy hoy (הֹי הֹי) functions as an urgent call or alarm—attention! Emergency! God calls exiles still in eretz tsafon (ארץ צפון, the land of the north—Babylon/Mesopotamia) to nusu (נעסו, flee/escape). Though Cyrus permitted return (538 BC), many Jews remained in Babylon by choice, having established lives and businesses there.

The reason for urgency: ki kh-arba ruchot hashamayim perashtikhem (כי הארץ רוחות השמים פְּרַשְׁתִּי אֶתְכֶם) for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens). God scattered them to the four directions—comprehensive dispersion as judgment. But now He calls them back. The scattering was divine discipline; the gathering demonstrates mercy. Remaining in Babylon when God calls them home constitutes disobedience and forfeiture of promised blessing.

This urgent call parallels Revelation 18:4's command to flee Babylon before judgment falls. Babylon represents the world system opposed to God—comfortable, prosperous, but doomed. God's people must separate from it to avoid sharing its judgment.

Historical Context

By 520 BC, 18 years after Cyrus's decree permitting return, many Jews remained in Mesopotamia. Babylon offered economic opportunity, established communities, and relative safety. Why risk the journey to ruined Jerusalem? Yet God commanded return—not merely permitted it. Those who stayed chose comfort over obedience, prosperity over covenant faithfulness.

Zechariah's urgency proved prophetic. Though Persia treated Jews well initially, later Persian kings (Xerxes/Ahasuerus) nearly exterminated them (Esther). The vision warned: Babylon will fall, don't be there when judgment comes. Historically, empires that held Israel captive—Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome—all fell. Eschatologically, Revelation 18 depicts final Babylon's fall, calling God's people to flee before sharing her plagues.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What 'Babylons' in your life offer comfort or prosperity but compete with full obedience to God's call?
2. How does God's command to flee Babylon apply to believers today living in worldly systems?
3. What does it mean to be spread to the four winds by God, and how should this shape understanding of the global church?

Interlinear Text

וְיָבֹא הָאָמֵן	וְיָבֹא הָאָמֵן	וְיָבֹא הָאָמֵן	וְיָבֹא הָאָמֵן	וְיָבֹא הָאָמֵן	וְיָבֹא הָאָמֵן	וְיָבֹא הָאָמֵן
Ho	Ho	come forth and flee	from the land	of the north	saith	the LORD
H1945	H1945	H5127	H776	H6828	H5002	H3068
אַתָּה כִּי	רֹוח וְתַּחַת פָּאָרָב עַל	הַשְׁמָן יְמִינְךָ	פְּנֵי שְׁמִינִי	אַתָּה כִּי		
H3588	as the four	winds	of the heaven	for I have spread you abroad		H853
	H702	H7307	H8064	H6566		
תִּאמְךָ יְהֹוָה						
saith	the LORD					
H5002	H3068					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 48:20 (References Lord): 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.

Ezekiel 17:21 (References Lord): And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it.

Revelation 18:4 (Parallel theme): 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.

Genesis 19:17 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

Deuteronomy 28:64 (References Lord): And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.

Ezekiel 11:16 (References Lord): Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have

scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.

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