

Zechariah 2:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.

Analysis

Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon. The urgent imperative himmalet (הַמְלַט, deliver yourself/escape/save yourself) intensifies the call to flee. Tziyon (צִיּוֹן, Zion) addresses Jews by their covenant identity—you are Zion's people, not Babylon's residents. The phrase yoshev bat-Bavel (יֹשֵׁב בְּבָבָל, dwelling with the daughter of Babylon) indicates inappropriate intimacy or comfortable settlement among God's enemies.

"Daughter of Babylon" personifies the empire as a woman, consistent with prophetic imagery (Isaiah 47:1, Jeremiah 50:42). Dwelling with her suggests adopting her ways, becoming comfortable in her culture, intermarrying with her values. God calls His people to radical separation—physically returning to Judah and spiritually rejecting Babylonian culture.

The self-deliverance command doesn't suggest salvation by works but urgent response to God's provision. He opened the door (Cyrus's decree), now they must walk through it. Remaining in Babylon when escape is possible constitutes choosing bondage over freedom, judgment over blessing. This parallels Paul's command to "work out your salvation" (Philippians 2:12-13)—actively appropriate what God provides.

Historical Context

The exiles faced a choice: comfort in Babylon or covenant faithfulness in Jerusalem. Many chose Babylon's prosperity over Zion's ruins. Like Lot's wife looking back at Sodom (Genesis 19:26), they couldn't release attachment to the world they knew. Yet God warned that Babylon would fall—don't be there when it happens.

This command finds New Testament application in 2 Corinthians 6:17, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord," and Revelation 18:4, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." God's people must maintain distinct identity, not assimilating into godless culture. While in the world, we are not of it (John 17:14-16).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. In what ways might you be 'dwelling with Babylon'—comfortable in worldly systems when God calls you to separate?
2. How do you balance being 'in the world but not of it' with God's call to flee Babylon?
3. What does self-deliverance from Babylon look like practically for a believer today?

Interlinear Text

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 48:20 (References Babylon): 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.

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.

Isaiah 52:11 (Parallel theme): Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.

Acts 2:40 (Parallel theme): And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

Jeremiah 51:6 (References Babylon): 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 recompence.

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.

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