

Zechariah 5:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah?

Analysis

Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah?—Zechariah asks about the destination: 'ānāh hēmmāh mōlīkōt et-hā'ēphāh (אָנָה הֵמָּה מְלִיכוֹת אֶת־הָאֵפָה, 'where are they taking the ephah?'). The prophet wants to understand not just that wickedness is removed but WHERE it goes. The question demonstrates proper curiosity about God's redemptive plans—wanting to know the full story, not just part of it. Zechariah models engaged discipleship: observing visions carefully, asking clarifying questions, seeking complete understanding. The angel will answer (v. 11), but the question itself matters—it shows the prophet processing what he sees and desiring fuller comprehension.

The question 'Whither?' anticipates the answer 'Babylon,' completing the reversal motif. Israel came FROM Babylon; now wickedness goes TO Babylon. The geographic movement symbolizes spiritual reality: the land of exile becomes the land for exiling sin. Babylon, historically the source of idolatry and opposition to God's people, becomes wickedness's appropriate destination—sent back to its source. This previews Revelation's final judgment when Babylon (representing all anti-God systems) falls permanently (Revelation 18:2).

Historical Context

Babylon symbolized everything opposed to God's kingdom—idolatry, pride, violence, economic exploitation. The original Babylon built the tower of Babel in defiance of God (Genesis 11). Neo-Babylonian Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and

exiled Judah (586 BC). In prophetic imagery, 'Babylon' represents the world system opposed to God. Zechariah's vision promises that wickedness will be sent back to where it belongs—away from God's people, to the realm of rebellion.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does Zechariah's question 'Whither?' teach about actively engaging with God's revelations?
2. How does sending wickedness TO Babylon reverse the exile pattern where Israel went FROM Babylon?
3. Where is today's 'Babylon' where economic and spiritual wickedness finds its home?

Interlinear Text

וַאֲמַר	אֶל	הַמַּלְאָךְ	הַדֹּבֵר	בִּי	אָנֹכִי	הַמָּה	מֶלֶךְ
Then said	H413	I to the angel	that talked	H0	H575	H1992	H1980
H559		H4397	H1696				

אֶת	הָאֵיפָה
H853	the ephah
	H374