

**God Remembered**  
**Zechariah 5:5-11**  
**Chapter 8**  
**“The Woman in The Basket”**

**Introduction**

**Seventh Vision: Woman in the Basket**

**Then the angel who was speaking with me came forward and told me, “Look up and see what this is that is approaching.”**

**So I asked, “What is it?”**

**He responded, “It’s a measuring basket that is approaching.” And he continued, “This is their iniquity in all the land.” Then a lead cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting inside the basket. “This is Wickedness,” he said. He shoved her down into the basket and pushed the lead weight over its opening. Then I looked up and saw two women approaching with the wind in their wings. Their wings were like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and sky.**

**So I asked the angel who was speaking with me, “Where are they taking the basket?”**

**“To build a shrine for it in the land of Shinar.” he told me. “When that is ready, the basket will be placed there on its pedestal.”**

**Zechariah 5:5-11**

In the previous vision of the “*flying scroll*”, we see the judgment upon the wicked and their removal from the land. In this vision, we see the removal of wickedness itself from the land. God will ultimately judge not only sinners and sentence them to eternal damnation, but He will also remove every vestige of sin from the earth. This is the long-term fulfillment of Zechariah’s vision. But there is also a short term consideration.

As we have stated before there has been much debate over the visions given in Chapter 5 of this great book. A lot of the debate centers around the use of the word “*erets*” (**vs. 3,6**) in the original Hebrew which is translated as “*land*” in the English *Scriptures*. The discussion is mainly centered around whether the word is meant to describe the land of Israel or the whole earth. If it is meant to describe the land of Israel, then it is only the cleansing of the nation that is in view here. But if it is meant to describe the whole of the earth then, obviously it speaks of the end times when God Himself will judge all the wicked of the world.

My personal conviction is that both of these things are in view at the same time. Obviously, there were issues of wickedness to be dealt with in the time that was contemporary with Zechariah. However, God does have a long term strategy for cleansing the entire world, and not just Israel, from wickedness. We read of these plans in the book of *Revelation*.

It would help us, I believe, to understand the situation in Jerusalem during Zechariah’s tenure in order to fully explain the imagery in this particular vision. The Israelites themselves had just returned after seventy years of Babylonian exile. The reason that they were punished with this captivity to begin with was due to their idolatry. God will not tolerate His people worshipping other things or other Gods.

**I am the LORD your God. Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery.**

**Do not have other gods besides Me.**

**Do not make an idol for yourself, whether in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. Do not bow in worship to them, and do not serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, bringing the consequences of the fathers' iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing faithful love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commands.**

**Exodus 20:2-6**

It was because of their utter disregard for this, the most important of all the commandments, that caused the nation to be led away in chains to the degradation of Babylonian servitude. And it seemed that although God had faithfully kept His promise to preserve them and bring them back to their own country, many of them, including many of the priests, still had not learned their lesson!

The book of *Ezra* tells us that in spite of all they had endured, a great number of the Israelites, including a large number of the Levites, had married foreign women, who had brought into the marriages the worship of foreign pagan gods (***Ezra Chapter 9***). If something was not done to cleanse the land of this evil, then the end result would be the same as before. So, after Ezra confronted them with their grievous sin, the people agreed to send these foreign women back from whence they came, whether, they had married these wives while in Babylonian captivity or from the other surrounding nations. This was done in order to banish any remaining vestiges of idolatry in the land.

Many in Christian circles today have criticized the divorcing of these foreign women as contrary to the teachings of Paul in regards to Christian marriage (***1 Corinthians 7:10-16***). However, it should be understood that even in ancient Israel, those foreigners who were willing to convert to Judaism were allowed and even encouraged to do so. But the women that Ezra speaks of were attempting to bring the worship of false gods into the land, and therefore, their banishment was the only option.

So, with this particular circumstance in view, it is easier for us to understand the imagery of the woman in the basket as she personifies evil within the land. The word that is used here for "basket" is actually "ephah" in the Hebrew, which was the largest unit of measurement the people had for holding quantities of grain. So, in reference to the evil in the basket, it represented the large scale of wickedness that God could "measure" in the nation.

The phrase translated "***This is their iniquity in all the land.***" (***vs. 6***), literally should read, "*This is their appearance*", for the word the angel used is the word for "eye" in the Hebrew. This simply means that their sins were detestable in God's sight, and therefore, must be dealt with or judgement would befall the people. And God promised that this evil would be dealt with. For He Himself would banish it from all the land.

The fact that evil itself is personified as a woman is, of course, not a slur against women in the general sense, but rather, a reference to the seductive nature of wickedness itself. Just as a wanton woman would use her wiles to seduce every man, sin seduces us and then leads us into destruction. Every Believer knows all too well the enticements of our flesh that beguiles us and leads us to sin.

**But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. Then after desire is conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.**  
**James 1:14-15**

On a much grander scale, just as God intended to purge Israel's wickedness in the days of Zechariah, He will also remove its influence from the world, when He brings His righteous judgment. Evil will be forever banished, and Christ shall reign. It is difficult for us even to conceive of what life will be like in the complete absence of sin and temptation. But this is the reality that awaits those who are in Christ

Jesus. When we are saved, we are saved from the *penalty of sin* (**Romans 6:23**), we are delivered from the *power of sin* (**Romans 6:14**), and ultimately, one great day we shall be delivered from the very *presence of sin* (**Revelation 21:27**).

Babylon in *The Scriptures* is synonymous with this world's evil systems. It was in Babylon where idolatry was first introduced into the world. It is Babylon which is mentioned in Revelation as "*the great prostitute who sits upon many waters*" (**Revelation 17:1**). *The Bible* often identifies false religion and idolatry as prostitution, for it is as if those who should have a loyal marriage relationship with God have abandoned Him and chased after other gods, in essence cheating on the relationship. The Word of God says that in the last days, Babylon will rise up and oppose all that is of God and will be brought down as a result of her rebellion (**Revelation 18**). So it is perfectly understandable in Zechariah's vision that the woman in the basket is carried off by demonic spirits to "*the land of Shinar*" (which is another name for Babylon).

The prophet Jeremiah prophesied that once the ancient city of Babylon was destroyed, it would never again be rebuilt (**Jeremiah 51**). But the city itself is merely a symbol in *The Scriptures* of this world's evil system that stands in opposition to God. This system will culminate in its ultimate rebellion during the last days of the anti-christ's kingdom, which will bring about its downfall. This is undoubtedly the meaning behind the angel's prediction in Zechariah, when the prophet asked to where the basket was being carried away:

**"To build a shrine for it in the land of Shinar," he told me. "When that is ready, the basket will be placed there on its pedestal." Zechariah 5:11**

For you see, when the time is right, Satan will make one final push in his war against God. Just as the woman is contained within her confines with a lead cover, sin will not be given its full measure of reign until the time is right. Then she will be completely unleashed. Satan will raise up a world leader, namely the anti-christ, who will embody all that is Babylon. This wicked king will lead the entire world astray, introducing a system of idolatry that compels the world to worship him as god. Multitudes will take his mark and bow before him, but many will also refuse and be willing to die as a result. It is hard for us to imagine that wickedness is now, by any means, being restrained upon the earth, but this is in fact the case. But the day will come when the power of darkness will be fully unleashed upon this world in all its fury. This will occur during the seven year tribulation period, which will be a time of absolute hell on the earth.

**For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but the One now restraining will do so until he is out of the way, and then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Jesus will destroy him with the breath of His mouth and will bring him to nothing at the appearance of His coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8**

This will be the ultimate fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy of the flying scroll and the woman in the basket. God will purge the nation of Israel, as well as, the entire world from the evil that has so corrupted it. Those who choose the wrong over the right will ultimately be judged and destroyed. While those who have been washed clean by The Blood of Jesus will receive everlasting life, far removed from the very presence of evil forever.

So does the vision apply to Israel itself or to the whole world? I will go on record to say that it applies to both at the same time. We know from the *Scriptures* that a remnant of Israel will be saved, when the times of the Gentiles are drawn to a close (**Romans 11:25-27**). But we also know that multitudes of people from every language and tribe will also find salvation as they reject the mark of the beast and lay down their lives for their faith in Christ Jesus at the great tribulation.

**After this I looked, and there was a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands.**

**And they cried out in a loud voice:**  
**Salvation belongs to our God,**  
**Who is seated on the throne,**  
**and to the Lamb!**

**All the angels stood around the throne, and along with the elders and the four living creatures they fell facedown before the throne and worshiped God, saying,**

**Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom**  
**and thanksgiving and honor**  
**and power and strength**  
**be to our God forever and ever. Amen.**

**Then one of the elders asked me, "Who are these people in white robes, and where did they come from?"**

**I said to him, "Sir, you know."**

**Then he told me: These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

**For this reason they are before the throne of God,**  
**and they serve Him day and night in His temple.**  
**The One seated on the throne will shelter them:**  
**They will no longer hunger;**  
**They will no longer thirst;**  
**The sun will no longer strike them, nor will any scorching heat.**  
**For the Lamb Who is at the center of the throne will shepherd them;**  
**He will guide them to springs of the waters of life,**  
**and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.** **Revelation 7:9-17**

And a day is coming when our God will not only judge the wicked of this world, but will also remove every vestige of evil forever!

Truth!!!