

Divine Measurement

Zech. 2: 1-5; Eph. 3: 17-19; Rev. 21: 15-16.

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In the verses we have read together we see what God, in Christ, has established for His glory in heaven, and what He will also establish on earth for His glory. For in the counsel of God there is not only the thought of the heavenly company secured in association with Christ in glory, but in the vastness of the divine inheritance we are assured that God will head up in Christ all things that are in *heaven* and all things that are in *earth*.

In our readings from Nehemiah the earthly side of things has been largely before us, and some may have said, What is the application to us as a heavenly people? I think we have gathered that divine principles in essence never alter; if God called a people on earth, He had grace and power to sustain that call in order that His people might answer to it intelligently, for His glory, and be able to minister to Him for His pleasure. So in relation to the heavenly calling as outlined in the Epistle to the Ephesians, God has called us in grace, and with that call we have the power which enables us to intelligently apprehend it, to walk in relation to it, and to minister something for the pleasure of God now.

If in the days of Nehemiah the earthly service of God had been allowed to fall into decay because of the failure of His people, through exercise of heart there was so great a restoration that a note of gladness was struck such as had not been known since the days of Joshua. It is possible that in Nehemiah's day there might have been more appreciation of the things of God, more reality, and thus more for God in that small recovered company than in the days of Joshua. There are other Scriptures which suggest a similar thought. We read in Zechariah 4: 10, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" And yet again in Haggai, the Lord said to those feeble people who were engaged in the construction of a very minor representation of that wonderful temple which Solomon had built, "The glory of this latter house, shall be greater than of the former," (ch. 2: 9). It is abundantly possible that, in the present day of weakness and in spite of the fact that much is still being let slip, if there is with us the desire to hold the things that God has made known to us in the power of the Holy Spirit and in felt feebleness and humility, there can be that in our midst that will delight the heart of God. We would not claim that we are today ministering more to the pleasure of God than early brethren or saints of many hundreds of years ago did, but we see the intense delight to the heart of God when after major breakdown He secures a response if only small, from His recovered people. We see too the delight that God had in His people, and the encouragement which He ministered to them by assuring them that what they had done ministered delight to Himself.

In the Scriptures we have read we see the thought of divine measurement; in Zechariah the earthly; then in Revelation the heavenly; and in Ephesians we see both the heavenly and the earthly gathered together.

Zechariah's prophecy dates many years before the days of Nehemiah, and was in relation to the rebuilding of the temple. In verse 1 of our chapter we read "I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand." In 2 Cor. 10: 13, we find the expression "the God of measure" (New Translation). In our humble circumstances today, God is still the God of measure, He has the measure of every one of us; the ability of each has been carefully measured by God Himself. It

is of this the apostle is speaking in that chapter. Today God is looking for just such people as you and I. If God wanted people greater than we are, as the God of measure He would secure them; but He has measured you and He has measured me, and has left in our hands for the moment the responsibility of seeking to do that which God has given us the ability to do. We are to hold what God has graciously made known to us, and to hold it for His pleasure. We admit our feebleness, and would desire to be preserved in humility, but the God of measure has brought us in, each in our day, in order that we may hold the precious truth which has been given us, and hold for the pleasure and the glory of God.

Zechariah sees a man with the measuring line in his hand. "Then said I, Whither goest thou? and he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof." When this prophecy was given, the building of the walls of Jerusalem had not begun; it was the temple which was in view for the moment, but Zechariah is allowed to see this man who tells him that he is about to measure the *city* Jerusalem, "to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof." The idea in the measuring is, of course, that he was taking account of it. And God assured the prophet, and no doubt it was to be fully seen at a later date, that He was interested in every detail of that city, the breadth and the length; that city in its entirety was coming into remembrance before God. And God has His eye upon the whole sphere today, He has the measure of every one of us, from whatever locality we may have come, He has the measure of us all. If He was interested in the divine territory as seen in the earthly Jerusalem in that day, we may be assured that He is just as interested in the heavenly character of divine territory to which we belong today. But in Zechariah we see the length and the breadth of the earthly city coming into remembrance before God. Faithful hearts were moving in relation to God in His interests, and God would assure them by the prophetic word that there was not one inch of that territory which was not under His eye.

Then we read, "The angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man." The aged and the elders have their place in the sphere of divine interests, but this word is, "Run, speak to this *young* man." Beloved it is a blessed thing to take up divine interests in energy and in exercise in our youth! God would have us to be growing up in these things, interested in the divine circle from the very moment we are spiritually born into that circle. "Run," he says, "speak to this *young* man, saying Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein; 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." Is it not worth while labouring in relation to a city like that? Nehemiah thought it was, and how God encouraged him in relation to it. He certainly did build the wall in his day later, but that wall could be broken down, and it *was* eventually broken down again. God in all His glory, and in all His majesty is committed to its protection. In Nehemiah, chapter 11, we see that the people had to cast lots in order that one in every ten should go and inhabit Jerusalem, but few though they were, feeble though they were, God said in effect, I will take care of you, "For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about." That would be in relation to the attack of the enemy, and all that might come in. Moreover He says, "And will be the glory in the midst of her." Oh! to have this confidence of heart, this confidence in God, that He will preserve that which is dear to Him however feeble it may be, and at the same time attract us to Himself, displaying Himself to us as the God of glory. "For I, saith the LORD, will be the glory in the midst of her." Let us ever remember that the walls *externally* were to preserve the glory of God *internally*; and if we speak of recovery in measure today, let us never forget that the reason God does support those who wish to go on in devotion to Himself, is that His glory might be revered and appreciated, and that those who belong to Him might answer to it as found here for His pleasure.

In Revelation 21, we have the heavenly side, "The Holy City, New Jerusalem," and we read in

verse 15, "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof and the walls thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal." There is no height in relation to the earthly Jerusalem; there is length and there is breadth, and God was interested in all. He is still interested in it, so interested that what we read of in such prophecies as Zechariah will certainly be brought to pass in the world to come; of that there is not the slightest doubt. But in the present time God has introduced that which is heavenly and spiritual, and in a very large measure, eternal. We know that there are features which will come to light in the world to come which will not go into eternity, but there *are* features being wrought out today which are spiritual, heavenly, and eternal. And as John sees the angel with the reed, he, the angel that was talking with him, measures the city. There was not only length and breadth, there was height in relation to it; and it stood, that perfect cube, equal in all God's dealings in relation to it, for of this city it is said "having the glory of God" (Rev. 21: 11). The glory of God is seen shining through those walls, for the city has the glory of God. But it is a city, not of length and breadth only, it is also a city of height; this heavenly Jerusalem, this Holy city. And in the world to come, on the heavenly side, the glory of God will be seen shining through those walls, and filling the universe with the light of the knowledge of that glory, a glory centred *now* in the face of Jesus Christ.

In Ephesians, chapter 3, where in the second great prayer of the apostle, which has for its objective divine Persons rather than the divine inheritance, Paul says in verse 17, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height." The full measurement is seen here, for the complete counsel of God is in view. Breadth and length in the earthly city; length, breadth and height in the heavenly city; but breadth and length and *depth and height* in this wonderful circle in Ephesians 3. Surely this has the whole universe in mind, not as a square, not as a cube, but as a circle embracing all; and Christ at the very centre of that circle, the One who will shine out in glory, when the glory of the heavenly city overshadows the glory of the earthly city, and whose glory will flow out to the uttermost bounds of the earth. Such a wealth of the glory of God is here, with Christ Himself as the divine centre, that whether breadth or length, or depth or height, He will fill it all, heaven and earth, to the delight of the heart of God.

And then we read, "And to know the love of Christ." There is not only the display of glory, but what is going to permeate that scene is the love of the Christ. As we learn a little of these dispensational things, learn to distinguish between what is heavenly and what is earthly, do we not feel, as moving in this circle of divine love, that it is this love which is forming our affections now? It is this divine love formed now in our affections that will shine out not only in the world to come, but will also go right on into that eternal state, where God shall be all in all. "The fulness of the Godhead," in Colossians, is not the fulness mentioned here; we could not be filled with that. That is in the realm of divine Persons, but the fulness of God referred to in verse 19 of Ephesians 3 is the fulness of the scope of the divine revelation.

As having this wonderful circle of divine love and glory before us, let us seek to be growing and increasing in the knowledge of the love of God, with the love of the Christ at the very centre of our being. When this wonderful vessel is manifested in a blaze of glory, it is the love of Christ that will permeate it, particularly in that heavenly side to which we belong, and the universe will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God. The Lord help us to understand a little more of the scope of this breadth and length and depth and height, that thus we may be formed in the divine nature, in the light of it *now*, for the pleasure of God, whilst we are being formed in relation to the world to come and for

eternity.