

Flying Scrolls and Baskets!

Read Zechariah 5:1–11

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. —Psalm 103:12

The book of Zechariah is one of the most quoted books of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Despite this, it is not well known. If you asked someone—“What’s your favorite passage in Zechariah?”—you’re likely to get a blank stare! One reason is that the book contains visions that seem strange to us.

In Zechariah 5, the prophet saw a flying scroll (v. 1). The scroll was huge—thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide (v. 2)! Today we see airplanes towing banners as a form of advertising. That is the idea here. The scroll was unrolled and visible to all. On the scroll were two commands—one against stealing and one against swearing falsely (v. 3). These two commands represent the two tablets of the Law—laws related to relationships with other people and laws related to God. The message is that Israel was still responsible to obey the covenant. If they failed in this, they would be under the curse of the Law (v. 3). Just because the

people had been exiled did not mean the covenant was no longer in effect.

The second vision contains a large basket (v. 6). Inside sat a woman who represented the iniquity of the people (vv. 6–7). Despite the warning of the previous vision, Israel would still not be able to fully obey the Law. The message is that what the people could not do for themselves, the Lord would do. Two angels carried the basket far to the east (v. 11). Their sin would be removed as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:11–12). This points forward to the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross. Praise the Lord that in Christ, “the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people” (Titus 2:11).

Go Deeper

Consider Zechariah’s vision of a basket. Fill it with the sins that weigh you down and then confess those sins to God, praying aloud the words of Psalm 103:11–12.

Pray with Us

Dear Lord, forgive us for our sin. We acknowledge that You alone can provide redemption in our lives. We praise You for removing our sins “as far as the east is from the west” (Ps. 103:12).