

# Zechariah 5:5-11 – The Removal of Mrs Wickedness

Calvin, TSK, HebrewLexicon, Gill, Poole, Geneva, JFB, Phillips, Trapp, Clarke, Henry, INT, Gaebelein, Handfuls, Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: There are times when godly Christian parents have to tell their children: “**If you are going to live in this house, you have to live by the rules of this house.**” You say that because that is what your child needs to hear. God, your heavenly Father, also spoke that way. That is what Judah needed to hear. Remember, God is not a tolerant grandfather. So it was not strange that God spoke the same way when he had to deal with a rebellious nation.

To make his point to the Jews of Zechariah’s day, God used a historical account of what he did to the Jews who refused to live by his rules and how he sent them into captivity.

Our headings are:

**Wickedness Restricted**

**Wickedness Removed**

**Wickedness Returned**

Our goals are: **That you will see the first criterion 规范 for the advancement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ: Sin has to be removed – particularly the sin of corrupted worship. With sin removed, the church will be rebuilt, worship restored, and the people readied for kingdom expansion.**

## **Wickedness restricted**

5 Then the angel who talked with me came out and said to me, "Lift your eyes now, and see what this is that goes forth." 6 So I asked, "**What is it?**" And he said, "**It is a basket that is going forth.**" He also said, "**This is their resemblance 形状** throughout the earth: 7 "Here is a **lead disk lifted up, and this is a woman sitting inside** the basket"; 8 then he said, "**This is Wickedness!**" And he thrust her down into the basket, and **threw the lead cover over** its mouth.

**1. God showed Zechariah a basket with a woman in it leaving Israel. The basket had a lead cover on it.**

### **2. What is the significance of a basket?**

**The basket was about the size of 7 liquid gallons.** It was a big basket. What did the Lord intend to teach? Certainly he wasn't speaking of going to the market to buy cauliflower? Look at how baskets were used in other clear places. Jesus said:

Matthew 23:32 "Fill up, then, the **measure** of your fathers' **guilt 惡貫**."

So **the meaning here is the basket is full of the temptation, sin, and guilt** of Judah. (The flying scroll proved that.) They had **ignored worship through fear or indifference 漠不关心**. The largeness of the basket was a picture of the **greatness of the sins of Judah**.

### **3. Why is a woman in the basket in this historical analogy?**

**God used a woman as the picture of sin because it was a reminder of Eve's sin...the first sinner.** Also, **God used a woman as the picture of sin** because a woman was often viewed as a temptress. Consider how Israel was pictured as the Scarlet Harlot—the picture of the temple prostitute who **went and lured Rome to persecute Christians**. She was wickedness!

Revelation 17:5 And on her forehead a name was written: **MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS 淫婦** AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS 可憎之物 OF THE EARTH.

Revelation 18:2 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "**Babylon the great is fallen**, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!

**So this woman recalled the kinds of lusts in Judah before captivity**...lusts for pleasure, profit, and power, while worship was wanting. The widow, orphan, and stranger were abused, but worship was absent and the Sabbath snubbed.

**4. The Lord said that the people of Zechariah's day looked similar to (resembled) the woman in the basket. They were sinful – terribly sinful as their foreparents before captivity...**

**5. The Lord put a heavy lead cover on the basket. Why?** (If you are carrying chickens to the market, you can understand why you need a cover.) The point was, the wicked Jews were taken away captive because they advanced their own cause rather than the cause of Christ. Their lusts had to be contained- trapped. **She was locked in permanently...like a trapped raccoon 浣熊**. **The Lord's bride was a personification sin – about to be strayed like an unwanted cat.**

**6. This woman was Miss Wickedness.** God's bride had a name change: Wickedness...instead of holy. (What a way to introduce his bride!) And since "wickedness" is a feminine word in Hebrew, it is logical to picture her as a woman.

#### **7. Lessons:**

**a. Make sure that your children learn from the past...the good and the ugly...so they don't make the same mistakes again.** Learn history from the Bible and from secular 世俗 books as well. See God's guiding hand in history. This is priceless knowledge. This is knowledge that can save you from much pain!

**Santayana, the Spanish philosopher** said in well: "Those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it in the future."

**b. If sins that are endemic 地区性 to the church are not removed and temptations rejected, the church can expect the same type of judgment as being sent into Babylon again...dumped by a holy God who cannot look at sin.**

**c. So can those sins go away?** They only go away when the blood of Christ is applied to them. This means **confession of sins**...thoughtfully and totally.

### **Wickedness removed**

9 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were **two women, coming with the wind in their wings;** for they had **wings like the wings of a stork**, and they **lifted up the basket between earth and heaven.**  
10 So I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they carrying the basket?" 11 And he said to me, "**To build a house for it in the land of Shinar;** when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base."

**1. Then God sent 2 women with the wind, with wings like storks, to carry away the sealed basket with the woman in it.**

**2. Who were these women?** These were pictures of the Assyrians (under Shalmaneser and Sargon II), who in 722 BC who took the northern 10½ tribes into captivity, and the Babylonians (under Nebuchadnezzar), who in 586 BC who took the southern 1½ tribes captive. God said that he raised up Nebuchadnezzar for this **expressed purpose-his whip-to punish his people.**

**3. Why were the women described as coming in the wind?** This shows that they were not working in their own strength, but in the strength God gave them. Shalmaneser and Nebuchadnezzar were under God's control. Keep in mind that wind is the same word for Holy Spirit.

**4. Why did the women have wings like a stork?** Storks 鹤 have long strong wings. **So this speaks of the swiftness** and certainty of the judgment that came upon Judah for her sins. God had had enough and could not bear to see the sins of his Bride anymore. And the present threat was imminent 即将来临.

**5. These 2 women then carried the woman in the basket away. The woman represented the whole sinful nation.**

**6. To where did the women carry the basket and the woman—the sin basket?** They carried it to the Land of Shinar. Why Shinar? **Shinar was the place of sin.** It was there that people built the Tower of Babel—the embodiment of rebellion against God.

**Genesis 11:2** And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a **plain in the land of Shinar**, and they dwelt there.

**That was the place where the Jews were taken captive by the Babylonians.** It would have been a daily reminder to the Jews in captivity. But how easily the returners forgot.

**Isaiah 11:11** It shall come to pass in that day *That* the Lord shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant 餘剩 of His people who are left, From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush, **From Elam and Shinar**, From Hamath and the islands of the sea.

**Daniel 1:2** And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he **carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god**; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

#### **7. Lessons:**

**a. God loves his worship and will remove those who pervert it or ignore it and will ultimately destroy those that do!** The worst judgment in the Bible is **reserved for those who ignore or pollute God's worship.** God cannot look at sin.

**b. So learn to love worship, attend worship, and keep worship pure.** Ignore the pressure to do like "those churches down the street are doing." Their worship might be appealing, but that is not the standard God requires. The standard is: Worship me like I told you to worship me!

## Wickedness Returned

### 1. Sadly, Judah did not learn that lesson. So 500 years later, a final time - God saw the wickedness of the Jews and destroyed them.

Judah's lover, Rome, whom they used to target Christians, turned against the Jews. After Rome captured Jerusalem in 70AD, those who were not killed were taken away captive. Revelation 17:3 ...And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was **arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations** **and the filthiness of her fornication.** 5 And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, **BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS** AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

The woman, who represented the Jews, was so bad that she was a stench in God's nostrils.

Revelation 18:5 "For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. 6

**"Render to her just as she rendered 待 to you,** and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her.

### 2. The Jews in Jesus' day feared being taken away captive – removed - and yet did not repent.

John 11:48 "If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the **Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.**"

Their fear came true in AD70, except it was because they rejected Jesus – not because Rome was strong.

### 3. Apostle Paul used a symbolic picture of the basket being filled with sin and guilt– and thus warranting

Judah's expulsion 驱逐 from Jerusalem.

1 Thessalonians 2:16 forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the **measure of their sins**; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

### 4. Lessons:

**a. Warn the church against becoming corrupted even more.** Our basket is full. Worship has become corrupted. It has become entertainment. We almost universally ignore the Sabbath. We have churches that justify homosexuality and decorate their churches to show support of this sin. We use worship as therapy. Worship leaders need to stop thinking outside the box and start thinking inside the Word of God.

**b. This work of rebuilding the temple, restoring worship, and readying yourselves for kingdom expansion starts in your family.** If worship is treated casually, your children will be raised that way. If sin is minimized, your children will minimize it as well.

**c. So what part can you play-small or great? You have to play some part! Give out tracts? Invite people to church. Translate sermons and tracts? Work in the kitchen? Make phone calls? Organize updates for the persecuted church? Listen to others and give advice? Run the youth group? Cook a meal? Play music? Bake cookies? Help with the children? Upload sermons? Teach? Discipline?**

### Conclusion:

God restricted wickedness from among his people and removed the wickedness from the land. God used this warning of what happened in the past to warn Judah against ignoring his worship.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

**1. Thank God that you are in a church where we strive to maintain worship as God requires.**

**2. Pray that where we are weak in our service to the Lord, God will strengthen us. Then support worship through your attendance, through your support, and through your prayer for the elders. Get involved in the life of the church** and not just be a casual observer. **Use your gifts**, whatever they may be, so the body of Christ can be blessed.

**3. When worship is restored and preaching is faithful, then the message of the cross will go out and Christ's kingdom will come.**

Finally: If you are not a Christian, know that God's kingdom is going to come with or without you. Why not surrender to the King of kings? Why not ask him to come into his eternal kingdom and enjoy eternal life? You reject him at your own peril. But know that on the cross Jesus paid the price of your freedom from sin.