

# THE PROMISES OF GOD’S GLORY ON EARTH AND THE RESTORATION OF JERUSALEM: VISION OF A SURVEYOR ZECHARIAH 02:01–13

## *Introduction*

In the time it takes to read this paragraph, thousands of people across this vast planet will die. The real tragedy in this is that the great majority of them will die without ever having known the assurance of true security in their lives. They will die without ever having known the promise of peace in their lives. And they will die without ever having the coveted guarantee of eternal life — the abundant life that Christ offers.

What this tells us is that most people are either living lives of utter despair and hopelessness or living in a fantasy world where they believe everything will turn out all right. Sadly, these people place their hope in things that simply do not last, such as: money, position, fame, education, personal strength or talents, and so on. But as believers of God’s Word, we know there is only one source of lasting hope, one source of true hope, and that is found in God alone. He alone holds the world in His mighty hands. And in His hands lays the destiny of every person on earth.

Like so many today, the exiles living in Zechariah’s day were in desperate need of hope. They had endured 70 years of enslavement by their enemies, living in exile in Babylon and other hostile lands far from their homeland. Haggai and Zechariah had prepared the people to hear the message of God’s great promises — blessings the LORD wished to pour out on their generation as well as all future generations. Remember the first message Zechariah had preached: he called the people to repentance. Repentance was the very first step the people needed to take. If they failed to turn away from their sin and idolatry, they could not inherit the promises of God.

Now that the people had received the call to repent, they were prepared to receive the message of promise. These promises of God are among the greatest ever given to the human race. They provided much-needed hope to the generation of exiles living far from home in Zechariah’s day. God’s promises also aroused great hope in the returned exiles who were struggling to restore the LORD’s temple in Jerusalem. And these same promises have provided hope to all of God’s people living throughout the generations, including today. This is the stirring subject of the present Scripture, *The Wonderful Hope God Gives His People*, Zechariah 1:7-2:13.

- I. The hope of God’s watchful care: vision 1 — God’s angelic horsemen (vv. 1:7-17).
  - II. The hope of victory over all enemies: vision 2 — the horns and craftsmen (vv. 1:18-21).
  - III. The hope of God’s glory on earth and the restoration of Jerusalem: vision 3 — a surveyor (vv. 2:1-13).
-

***Zechariah 02:01–13 The Promises of God's Glory on Earth and the Restoration of Jerusalem: Vision of a Surveyor***

Further hope is offered to God's people — the hope of God's glory and presence on earth, and hope for the restoration of Jerusalem. This is the third of Zechariah's visions. Note the two glorious promises revealed in this vision: first, Jerusalem will be rebuilt beyond its former size and splendour. Second, the LORD will be like a wall of fire around the Holy City, filling and protecting it with His glory and presence. This is the promise of the Kingdom of God and of the New Jerusalem. The Holy City will be the capital of the world, and God's justice and righteousness will spread from the city throughout all the earth. Jerusalem will not only be a symbol of perfect peace and justice, but will actually establish and spread Christ's peace and justice to all the world.

In light of these two promises, all of God's people are called to flee from the lands where they have been scattered and join the Messiah in His kingdom. Note the Scripture and outline:

1. The explanation of the third vision was wonderful: a surveyor was going to measure the boundaries of Jerusalem (vv. 1-2). When Zechariah saw a man with a measuring line in his hand, he naturally asked the man what he was doing. The surveyor responded that he was actually measuring the boundaries of Jerusalem.
2. The message was of such critical importance that the angel was told to run (not walk) and share it with the prophet (vv. 3-5). The young prophet and his generation desperately needed the hope that this message would give them. It was an urgent message, one meant to encourage and motivate God's people to return to Jerusalem to complete the great task God had assigned them — that of rebuilding the Holy City and the LORD's temple. Note what is declared about Jerusalem:
  - a. Jerusalem will become a great city without walls. It will be secure and have a large population with an abundance of food (livestock) (v. 4). In addition to being rebuilt and re-inhabited, it will be greatly blessed by God. There will be safety and plenty for all. In fact, the new city will overflow its former boundaries, becoming larger and even more prosperous than before. It will actually be too large for walls to contain; but on the other hand, there will be no need for walls because of the LORD's presence and protection.
  - b. Jerusalem will be protected by the fire of God's holy presence and filled with His glory. Note that God's presence is described as a wall of fire — a holy fire — that will surround and protect the city. Not only will the LORD's presence surround the city, but His presence will be the glory within it. God's glory (*kabod*), His splendour and honour, will make the city known throughout the whole world. Because of the LORD's presence, Jerusalem will be honoured among all nations (see Isa 2:2-3; Mica 4).
3. The LORD issued a strong call to His people: flee the comforts and pleasures of pagan society (Babylon) (vv. 6-9). What should any people do who have received such

wonderful promises? The answer is evident: flee the world (Babylon) and return to Jerusalem. Many of the people had become comfortable and complacent in the foreign lands where they had been exiled. For some of the Jewish exiles, Babylon was the only place they knew. The Babylonians had resettled the people and allowed them to engage in trade and commerce; therefore, many had grown attached to their new worldly society and its prosperity. Many lived in luxury compared to the more rugged life awaiting them back in Judah. Thus, when the first command to return to Jerusalem had come several months before, only about 50,000 exiles heeded the call. The majority stayed behind, preferring the pleasures of pagan society to their own former culture and religion. It was to these complacent exiles that the LORD now appealed. They were unaware of the LORD's plans to judge Babylon and the utter necessity for them to flee. Note why it was so critical for them to flee:

- a. The people needed to flee because their sins had already caused God to judge and scatter them once. If the people remained in Babylon, they would continue to enjoy the worldly, sinful lifestyle of the Babylonians. As a result, they would incur God's judgment again. This was not stated explicitly, but clearly implied. The LORD reminded the people that He had scattered them to the four winds, or like the four winds. That is, as a result of God's judgment, the Jews had been exiled to many hostile nations — most recently throughout the nations of the Babylonian Empire, but throughout the Assyrian Empire before that. Both Babylon and Assyria resettled conquered nations. Therefore, the Jewish exiles had truly been scattered in every direction. Woefully, many of the exiles had even adopted the pagan customs and false gods of their conquerors. They were engaging in idolatry or false worship. In other words, they were continuing to commit the very same sins for which earlier generations had been judged. The exiles' only hope for escape from such bondage was to flee Babylon and return immediately to their homeland.
- b. The people needed to flee the worldly environment in order to escape the coming judgment (v. 7). Judgment was coming against the pagan society of Babylon and all the unjust societies of the world, that is, all nations that oppressed God's people. The LORD had already judged Babylon using the Medes and Persians. But further judgment was coming, and ultimate judgment would come at the end of the world. Therefore, God's people must flee from all foreign lands (a picture of the world) in order not to suffer with those nations being judged. Whatever temporary, short-term pleasures the people were enjoying, they would not be worth the cost of God's wrath.
- c. The people needed to flee because the Messiah — after spending a period of time in glory — will be sent against the nations (v. 8). He will come to judge the nations because they reject the LORD and oppress the apple of God's eye, His people.

Although there is some uncertainty about who is speaking in verse 8, it seems likely that it is the Messiah, Christ Himself. The Messiah — in this scene appearing again as the angel of the LORD — said He would be sent by the LORD against the

nations that had plundered or spoiled His people. This judgment would have its ultimate fulfilment after Christ has spent time in glory, probably a reference to His glorification after ascending to and sitting at the right hand of His Father (see 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 8:1; 1 Pet 3:22). Thus, these enemy nations would not only face judgment in the near future and be plundered by the nations they had plundered, but would also face their ultimate judgment when Christ returns to judge all nations. Because of the coming judgment, all of God's people needed to flee the foreign lands of their captivity. They needed to quickly return to the promised land — the only place they could live in permanent safety (a symbol of heaven).

Note that Christ referred to God's people as the "apple of his [the LORD's] eye." The LORD had referred to His people in the same way in Moses' day (see Deut 32:10). The Hebrew word, translated *apple*, refers to the pupil of the eye, which is its most important and vulnerable part. Hence, this was a term of endearment expressing God's great love and desire to protect His dear people.

- d. The people needed to flee because the day is coming when the Messiah will raise His hand of judgment (v. 9). The angel of the LORD continued to warn of coming judgment. He declared that He will raise or shake His hand at the nations that have plundered His people. He will cause them to be plundered by their own slaves, the very people or nations they had conquered and subjected under their rule. Israel has often been oppressed and plundered by other nations. But the day is coming when Christ will strengthen His people, will plunder the very nations who oppressed and plundered them. This promise was a reminder to God's people that all who had persecuted them would be judged by God. God's true followers would be avenged. The promise guarantees that God will bring about justice in this world — every individual will reap what he or she has sown. Christ's reference to His people's plundering their enemies foretells the day of His kingdom, when God's people will inherit not only the promised land but the lands of all their enemies. God's people will again enjoy the riches that have been stolen from them — and far, far more.

In God's final act of vengeance and justice, the truth that Jesus Christ is the Messiah will be established once and for all. Everyone will know that God sent the Messiah to both save and judge the world. The display of His power — the victory He secures for His people — will make it perfectly clear that He is the Son of the living God. He is the only Messiah, the true Saviour and Judge of the world. This fact will be undeniable and the whole world will know the truth.

4. Zechariah conveyed yet another great promise of God to His dear people: the reality and glory of Christ's coming kingdom, the Messiah's kingdom on earth (vv. 10-12). Again, this promise was given to encourage the remnant of exiles. In these verses, there appears to be a perfect melding of the identities of Father and Son — the LORD God and His Messiah, Jesus Christ. It seems that Christ and the LORD are speaking

as one: "I will dwell in the midst of thee...", "shall be my people...", and "shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me." The last part of verse 10 seems especially to join the voice of the Father and Son together: "I will dwell in the midst of thee, says the LORD." When coupled with the following statement, "the LORD of hosts has sent me," there seems to be no distinction between the identities of Christ and His Father, the Messiah and the LORD God. This is significant because we learn from the New Testament that Christ and the Father are *one* (John 10:30; see 14:9-11); and that before Abraham lived, Christ existed — He always was ("before Abraham was, I am," John 8:58). This speaks to the eternal nature of Jesus Christ. He was with the Father in the beginning and has always existed. This is why Christ is also called the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and End of all things. These potent verses are a reminder of the truly awesome and supreme nature of our LORD.

Note also five significant promises made at the close of this third vision.

- a. The Messiah will come and live within Jerusalem (v. 10). God's people were commanded to shout and be glad because the LORD was coming to live among them. He would live among them as the promised Messiah, their eternal King. This was a millennial promise. When Christ establishes His kingdom on earth, He will rule from Jerusalem and dwell with His people forever.
- b. The nations will trust or join the LORD and become His people (v. 11a). Long ago the LORD had promised to bless all nations through His chosen people, Israel. Here, the promise was made again. Christ the Messiah will unite many nations to the LORD; that is, many people will be joined to God because of Jesus Christ. This was a great promise to the Gentile nations and peoples, those not a part of Israel. The Messiah would unite all people to God through His death and resurrection — and He has indeed reconciled man to God (Rom 5:10). Thus, a person who trusts in Jesus Christ is joined to the Father; he or she is adopted as a child of God and becomes part of God's family (Gal 3:26; 4:5-6). Additionally, in the last days, people from every nation who submit to Christ's rule — trusting Him for their deliverance and salvation — will be joined to the LORD and become part of Christ's kingdom. All people who trust in Christ are the ones the Father promised the Son, the very people whom the Father has given as an inheritance to His Son (John 17:6; 18:9).
- c. The LORD promised to live among His people (v. 11b). Whether it was the Father or the Son speaking is difficult to determine. In truth, it could have been both since Father and Son are truly one in purpose and spirit. We know that Jesus Christ is the manifestation of the LORD on earth and that the Father fully dwells in the Son (Col 2:9; see Col 1:15-16). Therefore, the LORD will surely live among His people in all fullness and glory. Through Christ, the Kingdom of God will fill the whole earth and the earth will be filled with the LORD's presence. This was the great promise God gave to His beloved people, the same promise He gives to everyone who believes in the one He sent, His only Son, Jesus Christ.

- d. The people will know that God sent Christ — the Messiah — when He comes to live among God's people (v. 11c). Tragically, many people deny that Christ is the Messiah. Even more tragic are those who deny the need for a saviour of any kind. Nevertheless, in the last days when Christ comes to judge the world and to live among His people, the whole earth will know that He was sent by God the Father. The evidence will be indisputable.
- e. The LORD will receive the land of Judah (all Israel) as His inheritance and will choose Jerusalem to be His capital (v. 12). Obviously, the LORD already owns the land of Judah as well as the rest of the earth, for He created it. But through sin, the human race has polluted and taken over the land and God's rule. However, Christ is coming again to take back that which is His and to establish God's rule once and for all. At that time, the people of Judah, Israel, and all others who have come to know the LORD will be given to Christ as His promised inheritance. The land of Israel, the people of Israel, and the promised seed of Abraham — that is, all believers — will be Christ's inheritance. He will rule the land with perfect justice and righteousness and will protect every individual. Not one of the dear people given to Him by the Father will be lost (see Mat 18:14; John 18:9).

As noted previously, the LORD promised to choose Jerusalem to be the capital of the world (see Micah 4). This choice would have a significant eternal impact but, at the same time, it was meant to encourage and motivate the wavering exiles of Zechariah's generation. The promise continues to encourage believers today and will do so until Christ returns to earth to establish God's kingdom. The presence of the LORD on earth will bring...

- peace and security
- justice and equality
- fairness and equity
- health and prosperity
- the end of sin and guilt
- the end of corruption and exploitation
- the end of tyranny and oppression
- the end of disorder and strife
- the end of confusion
- the end of fear and anxiety
- the end of purposelessness and despair
- the end of hopelessness and depression
- the end of tears and sorrow

This is what it will be like to inherit the Kingdom of God. Christ's kingdom will bring an end to everything evil and undesirable and will bring to fulfilment everything that is desirable and good. Perfect peace and security, eternal joy and prosperity — all are coming to earth. This is the great promise of Christ and His kingdom, the promise given to every true believer,

5. In the closing words of this vision, the LORD gave a strong warning to the human race: everyone must be silent before the LORD because His holy judgment is about to be aroused (v. 13). His judgment had been aroused against His enemies — all those

who had mistreated His people and all who would later reject the Messiah, His Son. Therefore, the entire human race, every human being, was warned to keep silent. This is a sensible and appropriate response to the awesome promises just made by the sovereign LORD. But more than just the enormity of these promises, the LORD Himself inspires awe and silence in all who encounter Him. And all were about to encounter Him in judgment. Because of His awesome presence and promises, the whole world was to be silent before Him.

A second view of this verse sees in it another promise of the coming Messiah: the LORD was aroused — raised up, awakened — from His holy habitation (heaven). He roused Himself from heaven to visit the earth. The LORD Himself was coming in human flesh to live and suffer among His people. Their hands would put Him to death and He would suffer far greater than they ever had. He would take upon Himself not only their sins but also the sin of the whole world. Furthermore, He would pay the penalty for their sins: He would die for them. He would pay the ultimate price for their rebellion and salvation, suffering the condemnation and judgment that was due them. By His own death and suffering, He would bring salvation and eternal life to all who had gone astray.

**Thought 1.** Both of these messages are equally compelling, that is, both should have led the exiles and everyone since that time to God. Both the LORD's judgment and His mercy are intended to bring us to repentance. God's wrath and His grace are meant to turn us away from sin and back to the LORD. Whether we are compelled by God's judgment or by His grace makes no real difference. The most important thing is that we seek the LORD for salvation. We must seek and grab hold of the eternal life He so graciously offers us in Christ Jesus. The LORD has been roused from His holy temple...the Messiah has already come...and He will soon come again. He will come for both salvation and judgment — both are the promises of God. Which promise we inherit is up to each one of us. Therefore, we must each make a choice. Which promise do we seek? Will we choose life or death?

**2 Cor 6:2** *I tell you, now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation.*

**Josh 24:15** *But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.*

**Deut 30:19** *This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.*

**Rom 10:12-13** *For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

**1 Tim 2:3-5** *This is good, and pleases God our Saviour. Who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*

**1 Kng 18:21** *Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing.*

**Isa 45:22** *"Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other."*

**Isa 55:1** *"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost."*

**Thought 2.** All the promises of God are fulfilled in Christ (2 Cor 1:20). These include the promises of...

- the coming Messiah
- the blessing of all nations (through Abraham's seed)
- the salvation of all peoples (believers from all nations)
- the establishment of God's kingdom on earth
- the restoration of Israel (in Christ's kingdom)
- eternal life
- abundant life
- peace on earth
- prosperity on earth
- justice on earth
- a truly righteous society

In other words, Christ is God's answer to every problem on earth — and to every longing of the human heart. All of God's promises to the human race have been or will be fulfilled through Jesus Christ. Christ is the only hope given to a lost and dying world, a world crumbling apart due to sin and corruption. Thus, Christ is God's answer to sin. In fact, He is the answer to every human need. Listen to the promises of God's Word concerning the Messiah, Jesus Christ:

**Mat 1:23** *"The virgin [parthenos] will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" — which means, "God with us."*

**Luke 19:10** *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

**John 1:10** *"He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him."*

**John 1:14** *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

**John 5:22** *"Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son."*

**John 5:27** *"And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man."*

**John 7:42** *"Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David's descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?"*

**John 8:58** *"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"*

**John 10:10** *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."*

**Acts 13:23** *From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Saviour Jesus, as he promised.*

**Acts 17:31** *For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man [Christ] he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."*

**Rom 15:8** *For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed.*

**Rom 15:12** *And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope."*

**Gal 4:4-7** *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.*

**2 Cor 1:20** *For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.*

**Heb 7:3** *Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.*

**Heb 9:15** *For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

**Heb 13:8** *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

**1 Pet 1:20** *He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.*

**2 Pet 3:13** *But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.*

**1 John 1:1-3** *That which was from the beginning [Christ], which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*

**1 John 2:25** *And this is what he [Christ] promised us — even eternal life.*

**Gen 22:17-18** *I will surely bless you [Abraham], and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies. And through your offspring [Christ] all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.*

**Gen 35:11** *And God said to him [Jacob], “I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will be among your descendants [David, all the kings of Israel, and most importantly Jesus Christ].”*

**Isa 7:14** *Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

**Isa 9:6** *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

**Isa 9:7** *Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

**Isa 11:4** *But with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.*

**Isa 42:6** *“I, the LORD, have called you [Christ] in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles.”*

**Isa 53:10** *Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.*

**Micah 5:2** *“But you, Bethlehem Ephrata, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”*

**Jer 23:5** *“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.”*

**Zec 9:9** *Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

**Thought 3.** Both God's grace and His judgment lead people to repentance. Both are part of His wondrous work in the world, His work on behalf of sinners. In

other words, the LORD is merciful and just — He both judges and forgives sin. God promises forgiveness to those who repent and who trust Christ for their salvation, and such forgiveness is possible only because Christ paid sin's penalty. He promises judgment for those who do not repent. By refusing to repent and trust Christ, we forfeit our right to God's salvation. Therefore, God's promises of judgment and mercy are each intended to bring us to repentance. Which of these methods we choose — whether it be grace or judgment — depends on us. Yet, only the LORD knows which we need most at a particular time in life. The point to remember is that He uses both judgment and mercy in our lives to turn our sinful hearts back to Him.

(1) Listen to what God's Word says about the LORD's mercy:

***Micah 7:19*** *You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.*

***Rom 3:25*** *God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.*

***Rom 12:1-2*** *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

***Eph 2:4-7*** *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*

***Heb 4:16*** *Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

***2 Pet 3:9*** *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. (See also Rom 2:4; 9:15; 10:21.)*

(2) When people refuse to repent despite the LORD's patience, mercy and repeated warnings, He often sends judgment in a final effort to bring about their repentance. Some people do repent as a result of these judgments; however, tragically, many do not. Listen to what God's Word says about judgment:

***Lev 26:21-24*** *If you remain hostile toward me and refuse to listen to me, I will multiply your afflictions seven times over, as your sins deserve. I will send wild animals against you, and they will rob you of your children, destroy your cattle and make you so few in number that your roads will be deserted. If in spite of these things*

*you do not accept my correction but continue to be hostile toward me, I myself will be hostile toward you and will afflict you for your sins seven times over.*

**Prov 1:22-29** *How long will you who are simple love your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? Repent at my rebuke! Then I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings. But since you refuse to listen when I call and no one pays attention when I stretch out my hand, since you disregard all my advice and do not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh when disaster strikes you; I will mock when calamity overtakes you — when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you. Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me, since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD.*

**Mat 18:9** *“And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.”*

**Rom 2:5** *But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.*

**1 Th 5:3** *While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labour pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.*

**Heb 2:3** *How shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.*

**Heb 4:7** *God again set a certain day, calling it “Today.” This he did when a long time later he spoke through David, as in the passage already quoted: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.”*

**Heb 12:25** *See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?*

(See also Mat 11:20; 21:32; Jer 7:13; Amos 4:6; 4:10.) ■