

Zechariah: Jerusalem, behold your King!

Chapter 8: Jerusalem the city of God



Chapter 8 continues where seven left off. In chapter seven, the men who came from Bethel arrive in Jerusalem and want to know should they stop fasting, since the Temple is almost complete.

Through Zechariah, the Lord answers their question, rebuking their religious ceremonial fasting, which also occurred before the nation was cast out of the land. The Lord requires a sincere relationship, with his people, not ceremony. For this reason, Jerusalem and

Judah were judged, the city destroyed and the people scattered.

Here in chapter eight, the Lord paints the future relationship He will one day have with his people and the city of Jerusalem. The city looks forward to the Millennium, where the Lord will dwell in Jerusalem with His people in righteousness and truth. His people, the Jewish people, who have returned from the nations, will dwell in fellowship with their King. The people of the earth, the gentiles will then come to the city of Jerusalem to know the Lord God and have a relationship.

The Restoration of Jerusalem

Zechariah 8

- 1 Again the word of the Lord of hosts came, saying,
- 2 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; With great fervor I am zealous for her.'
- 3 "Thus says the Lord: 'I will return to Zion, And dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the Lord of hosts, The Holy Mountain.'
- 4 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Old men and old women shall again sit In the streets of Jerusalem, Each one with his staff in his hand Because of great age.
- 5 The streets of the city Shall be full of boys and girls Playing in its streets.'
- 6 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, Will it also be marvelous in My eyes?' Says the Lord of hosts.
- 7 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Behold, I will save My people from the land of the east And from the land of the west;
- 8 I will bring them back, And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be My people And I will be their God, In truth and righteousness.'

(1) **Again:** This follows on the revelation given in the seventh chapter, regarding the Temple and Jerusalem.

(2) **Thus says the Lord:** These words preface the ten promises in the chapter, the Lord makes these promises in the context of Zechariah's day.

Verse	Promise
2	I am zealous for Zion
3	I will return to Zion
4	'Old men and old women shall again sit In the streets of Jerusalem
5	it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people
7	, I will save My people from the land of the east...west
9	'Let your hands be strong
14	as I determined to punish you When your fathers provoked Me

19	'The fast of the fourth month, The fast of the fifth, The fast of the seventh, And the fast of the tenth, Shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts
20	'Peoples shall yet come, Inhabitants of many cities;
23	'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." ' "

I am Zealous: The Lord here describes His attitude toward the city of Jerusalem, called Zion. The Hebrew word, צַדִּיק *Qana'* is translated both as jealous and zealous. The Lord is zealous regarding the inhabitants of the city, the descendents of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and His eternal plans for the location. He desires a righteous city, reflecting His eternal nature. (Zechariah 1:14, I Kings 14:22).

The passion the Lord demonstrates for the city is amplified in this verse. He reiterates this point three more times in this verse, describing His feeling as "*Great zeal*" then "*Great fervor*", then the Lord repeats His attitude again at the end of the verse, just in case the reader/hearer does not understand "*I am zealous for her*". The Hebrew term *fervor* translates to heat or rage, The Lord's special plans for Jerusalem, would not permit the Lord to tolerate the abominations of idol worship and vain religious ceremony to go unpunished or unchecked.

Zion: Zion is one of the hills upon which Jerusalem was built and is 105 feet higher than Mt. Moriah. The name has come to symbolize Jerusalem.¹

(3) I will return: Here Zechariah looks forward to an event, when the Lord God will dwell visibly in the city of Jerusalem. This special event had both a near and a distant fulfillment. The near fulfillment is pictured in Zechariah 9:9 as the Lord is pictured entering Jerusalem on a donkey. This was fulfilled literally, as Jesus entered and dwelt in the city of Jerusalem. (Matthew 21:4-5, Mark 11:9-10, John 12:13-15). Jesus who entered the city on a donkey was God incarnate, the same one declaring in the book of Zechariah "*I will return*".

9 "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey. Zechariah 9:9

The nations rejection of the Messiah and His death, which paid for the sins of the world, brought the judgment of God against the city and the Temple the second time, following its reestablishment in Haggai and Zechariah days.

The return of the Lord to Jerusalem in the 2nd Coming is also pictured Zechariah 12:10, here we see the one who was pierced, the rejected King who entered Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9), returns in glory and power to the city of Jerusalem, as King and Lord. At the *Second Coming*, Jesus returns in glory and power with the angelic host of Heaven (Matthew 24:30, 25:31, Revelation 19:11-13).

10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. Zechariah 12:10

Dwell in...Midst of Jerusalem: Ultimately Jerusalem, Mt. Zion, will be elevated above every city on earth when the Lord God Himself, makes Jerusalem the city of His rule on earth. This rule follows the return of Jesus Christ, who returns in glory and power, to set up the Messianic Kingdom in the Millennium. The point of God ruling from Jerusalem cannot be under emphasized, this point is made repeatedly in both *Old and New Testaments*.

The most detailed description of the Millennium is in the book of Ezekiel, chapters 40 to 48, detailing Israel, Jerusalem and the Temple in the Millennium. Here we see the King of Jerusalem, the *Glory of the Lord* ruling from the Temple as God Himself, who rebukes the past kings for putting their dead bodies near the Temple.

5 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

¹**Zion** sunny; height, one of the eminences on which Jerusalem was built. It was surrounded on all sides, except the north, by deep valleys, that of the Tyropoeon (q.v.) separating it from Moriah (q.v.), which it surpasses in height by 105 feet. It was the south-eastern hill of Jerusalem.

6 Then I heard Him speaking to me from the temple, while a man stood beside me.
 7 And He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. No more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, they nor their kings, by their harlotry or with the carcasses of their kings on their high places.
 8 "When they set their threshold by My threshold, and their doorpost by My doorpost, with a wall between them and Me, they defiled My holy name by the abominations which they committed; therefore I have consumed them in My anger.
 9 "Now let them put their harlotry and the carcasses of their kings far away from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever.
 10 "Son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. **Ezekiel 43:5-10**

Again, we in the 14th chapter of Zechariah, the King of Jerusalem is none other than the Lord Himself who dwells with His people. The nations come to Jerusalem to worship the King.

8 And in that day it shall be That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur.
 9 And the Lord shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be-"The Lord is one," And His name one.
 16 And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.
Zechariah 14:8-9,16

In the New Testament, Jesus promised His return to the city after it accepts Him as their Messiah (Matthew 23:337-39). Jesus admitted to being the King of the Jews, when He was crucified, he was declared King, at the leaders objection. The King who entered Jerusalem on a Donkey and was crucified will one day rule the city in glory and power.

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" So Jesus said to him, "It is as you say."
 29 When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
 37 And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Matthew 27:11,29,37

City of truth: When Jesus the Messiah, rules the city of Jerusalem, He will rule in truth and righteousness. The name of the city will personify His character and nature. The nature of Christ (Messiah) is *truth*. The city He dwells in would be the city of truth, by its very nature.

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. John 14:6

Mountain...Lord of Hosts: Though Mt. Moriah, where the Temple stands by all accounts is more like a hill than a mountain, when the presence of Almighty God is there, it will be called after Him.

(4) Old....men ..women: The scene presented here is one of contrast to the current situation in Zechariah's day. In the year, Zechariah wrote this; his people were under constant threat from the surrounding peoples. Those who were old would have been relatively few in number. In addition, children playing in the streets, in safety and security would have also seemed impossible to those around Zechariah.

Using this impossible situation, The Lord looks past Zechariah's day, to a day when The Lord would rule over the city of Jerusalem as the King, the Lord of Hosts.

Staff...great age: The staff is symbol of age, the point being made here is not of feeble age, but of great age. The reason the old men have a staves is because they have great age, this is a picture in the Millennium, when the age of those who live on the earth will be great compared to Zechariah's day. The scene in Isaiah sheds light on this image in Zechariah. One hundred will be considered the age of a child.

19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.
 20 "No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.
 21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
 22 They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
 Isaiah 65:19-22

(5) Full of boys...girls: This is a contrasting image from the current situation in Jerusalem, people

are afraid of the foreign forces in Jerusalem and surrounding areas. People would only let their children play outside, when there is security. This scene is added to the picture of men of great age with staves, to present a contrast in the age to come from Zechariah's day, with both children and men of great age both existing.

(6) Marvelous: The image presented by the Lord through Zechariah seems like an impossible event, something to marvel at, the Lord implies what seems impossible for men is not impossible for the Lord.

(7) I will save my people: When the children of Israel were about enter the Promised Land, in the days of Moses, before Joshua assumed leadership, the nation received the covenant promises for obedience and disobedience. If the nation was obedient they would be blessed above all the nations on the earth (Deut. 28;1-2), if the nation disobeyed they would be scattered to the nations and suffer under foreign oppression. (Deut. 28:64-66) Despite their disobedience in the past, the Lord promised to gather His people back into the land of their forefathers, and bless them even greater then before.

4 "If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you.

5 "Then the Lord your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.

6 "And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. Deut. 30:4-6

This will be completely fulfilled following the return of the Messiah (Zechariah 12:10) as those Jews who were scattered and in hiding are gathered following the national conversion of the nation to Jesus Christ who returns in glory in power to rule the nations.

30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Matthew 24:30-31

East...west: Literally, from the *sunrise* (מִזְרַח *Mizrach*) to the *sunset* (מְבֹרַח שֶׁמֶשׁ *Mabow Shemesh*), the east from Israel's perspective is where the sun rises and the west is where it set. In Zechariah's day, the nation had only been scattered to the east in Babylon, but the gathering referred to here is a gathering in the end times. A complete gathering of the people, from the lands where the sun rises to the lands where the sun sets takes place at the end of days.

Bring them back: The gathering of the nation of Israel is one of the most prophesied events in scripture, whole chapters are devoted to the subject. (Ezekiel 36 and 37), (See also Isaiah 11:11-12, Joel 3:1-2, Isaiah 14:1-2, Jeremiah 31:8-10, Hosea 1:10-11, Micah 5:3-4, Zechariah 10:6-12).

In the end of days, the Lord will bring back the descendents of Israel into the land, to fulfill scriptures, which will bring the Messiah in the end of days.

(8) Midst of Jerusalem: The relationship between the Lord and his people will be a direct relationship, they will know the Lord their God. In the Millennium, Jerusalem and the Israel will be the chief city and nation on the earth, as they receive the blessing of obedience promised in Deut. 28:1.

My people: The relationship will be restored as the people living in the land will be the Lord's people. They will know the Lord, He will not reject them for disobedience as in the former years.

The Prosperity of Jerusalem

9 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Let your hands be strong, You who have been hearing in these days These words by the mouth of the prophets, Who spoke in the day the foundation was laid For the house of the Lord of hosts, That the temple might be built.

10 For before these days There were no wages for man nor any hire for beast; There was no peace from the enemy for whoever went out or came in; For I set all men, everyone, against his neighbor.

11 'But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days,' says the Lord of hosts.

12 'For the seed shall be prosperous, The vine shall give its fruit, The ground shall give her increase,

And the heavens shall give their dew-I will cause the remnant of this people To possess all these.
13 And it shall come to pass That just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, So I will save you, and you shall be a blessing. Do not fear, Let your hands be strong.'

(9) Let your hands: The Lord message is one of encouragement, He wants to encourage those who heard the prophets (Haggai and Zechariah). These prophets came on the scene in the year 520 B.C., after the people had lost their incentive to continue with the Lord's Temple, because of difficulty. Since the people would not continue the Lord's work, they suffered in their daily lives. The situation of the people's disobedience is announced in Haggai.

Mouth of the prophets: The people paid attention to the words of Haggai and Zechariah, who urged the Temple completion despite of the difficulties.

(10) Before these days: Before the days the people choose to listen to the prophets and complete the Temple, the land was adversarial to the people. God resisted the people because they resisted Him. Haggai chapter 1, illustrates the condition of the peoples heart toward the Lord.

3 Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying,
4 "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?"
5 Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: "Consider your ways!
6 "You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes."
7 Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Consider your ways!
8 "Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified," says the Lord.
9 "You looked for much, but indeed it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?" says the Lord of hosts. "Because of My house that is in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house.
10 "Therefore the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit.
Haggai 1:3-10

(11) But now: When the people ignored the Temple, they suffered, never having enough and through strife between enemy and neighbor. (verse 10)

(12) For the seed...vine...ground....heavens: Now that the people have obeyed the words of the prophets, and almost finished the Temple and have listened with their hearts, they shall reap the prosperity of spiritual success. Their life will not be adverse as before, they will now prosper.

(13) For...Curse...Blessing: The nation of Israel, the Jewish people are God's covenanted people. Through the descendents of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the Messiah, the Redeemer of humanity was born. Through Christ, the gentile nations can now receive the blessings of God's covenant relationship.

The Jewish people have always been a distinct people amongst the nations, when they were scattered to Babylon, they were there because of a curse, because of disobedience. In the days to come, the nation of Israel will be a blessings to the nations not only because the Messiah came through them, but also because through them the Lord extends His relationship to all humanity by actions of the Jews living in the Millennium.

In the tribulation, the nation of Israel will be a light to the nations, with the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Revelation 7:1-8, 14:1-4) and the 2 witnesses in Jerusalem (Revelation 11:1-11). Through them, the nations will learn the way of salvation in the end of days.

Expectations of Jerusalem

14 "For thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Just as I determined to punish you When your fathers provoked Me to wrath,' Says the Lord of hosts, 'And I would not relent,
15 So again in these days I am determined to do good To Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear.
16 These are the things you shall do: Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace;
17 Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all

these are things that I hate,' Says the Lord."

(14) I determined: The Lord is a just God, who does not let iniquity go unpunished, he not only allowed adversity, He caused the adversity. This is an important point to understand from a personal application, God often will cause adversity in our lives, because He loves us and wants us to return to Him, the Lord chastens those He loves (Hebrews 12:7). Just as the Lord was determined to punish the nation for sin, He is now determined to bless the nation for obedience.

(16) You shall do: The blessing to come is still conditional on the nation's obedience, not in ceremony but in heart. How they treat their neighbors, how they administer justice are all outward expressions of a sincere relationship with the Lord.

Pilgrimage of Jerusalem

18 Then the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying,

19 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'The fast of the fourth month, The fast of the fifth, The fast of the seventh, And the fast of the tenth, Shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts For the house of Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.'

20 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Peoples shall yet come, Inhabitants of many cities;

21 The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, "Let us continue to go and pray before the Lord, And seek the Lord of hosts. I myself will go also."

22 Yes, many peoples and strong nations Shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, And to pray before the Lord.'

23 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." ' "

(19) fast of . . . fourth month--On the fourth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, on the ninth day, Jerusalem was taken (Jeremiah 39:6, 52:6,7). It was therefore made a fast day.

tenth--On the tenth month and tenth day, in the ninth year of Zedekiah, the siege began (Jeremiah 52:4). The siege of Jerusalem that commenced on the 10th day of the month in 588 B.C, so the people mourned and fasted.

Seventh: This month the people fasted and mourned the death of Gedaliah the first Babylonian appointed governor of Judah. Zechariah 7:5

In the days to come there shall be cheerful feasts on these months as the people celebrate.

(20) People... many cities: This scene looks forward into the future, as the Gentile nations will one day know the God of Israel as their own God. The Messiah Jesus Christ was a light to the nations, establishing a relationship, which leads to redemption.

6 "I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles,

7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house Isaiah 42:6-7

This scene looks forward to the day when people throughout the Earth will come to know the God of Israel, when the nations will come to Jerusalem for judgment and guidance.

1 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it.

3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore. Isaiah 2:1-4

(22) Strong nations: In the Millennium, the nations will submit to King Messiah, the strong nations of the earth will bow in worship to the Messiah, who rules in Jerusalem.

8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.

9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' "

Psalm 2:8-9

(23) Ten men... Sleeve of a Jewish man: The knowledge of the Lord will flow from

Jerusalem and Israel, those who are born in the Millennium and seek to know the God of Israel who rules from Jerusalem, will turn to Jews and ask for their help.

In one sense, this was fulfilled in the *first coming*, as the early church was largely made up of Jewish believers, who brought the Gospel to the gentile nations. Paul a Jew, brought the Gospel to the men of Athens who worshipped the unknown God (Acts 17:16-22). This will also be fulfilled in the Millennium, as those born during this period will also turn to those from Jerusalem and Israel, that they may know the God of the earth.

