

Book of Zechariah

Chapter 8:1-23

¹Then the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying, ²“Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘**I am exceedingly jealous** for Zion, yes, with great **wrath** I am jealous for her.’

Keil and Delitzsch > In this chapter we have the second half of the Lord's answer to the question concerning the last-days, which promises to the people the restitution of the former relation of grace, and the future glorification of Israel, on the simple condition of their observing the moral precepts of the law.

Barker > In the preceding section Israel was to repent and live righteously after the punishment of her captivity; here she is to repent and live righteously because of the promise of her future restoration.

I am exceedingly jealous > (Barnes) Literally, "I have been and am jealous for"

Constable > The English word "jealous" derives from the Latin *zelus*, "zeal."

Wrath > (Strong's) heat, rage

³Thus says the LORD, ‘**I will return to Zion** and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then **Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth**, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts will be called the Holy Mountain.’

I will return to Zion > (Barnes) God had symbolized to Ezekiel the departure of His special presence, in that the "glory of the God of Israel" which was over the temple, at "the very place where they placed the image of jealousy, "went up from the Cherub" Ezekiel 8:4-5, whereupon it was, "to the threshold of the house" Ezekiel 9:3; then "stood over the Cherubim" Ezekiel 10:4, Ezekiel 10:18; and then "went up from the midst of the city and stood upon the mountain, which is on the east side of the city" Ezekiel 11:23, so removing from them. He had prophesied its return in the vision of the symbolic temple, how "the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate looking toward the East, and the Spirit took me up and brought me into the inner court, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house" Ezekiel 43:4. This renewed dwelling in the midst of them, Zechariah too prophesies, in the same terms as in his third vision, "I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem" (Zechariah 2:1-13 :14, Hebrew (Zechariah 2:10 in English)).

Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth > (Keil) Jerusalem did not acquire this character in the period after the captivity, in which, though not defiled by gross idolatry, as in the times before the captivity, it was polluted by other moral abominations no less than it had been before. Jerusalem becomes a faithful city for the first time through the Messiah, and it is through Him that the temple mountain first really becomes the holy mountain.

⁴*Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Old men and old women will again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each man with his staff in his hand because of age. ⁵ And the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in its streets.'*

Constable > In other words, Jerusalem would become a place of tranquillity, long life, peace, prosperity, and security for even the most defenseless of her citizens (cf. Isaiah 65:20-25). These conditions await the return of Jesus Christ at His second coming.

⁶*Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'If it is **too difficult** in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be too difficult in My sight?' declares the LORD of hosts.*

Too difficult > (Strong's) to be surpassing or extraordinary

Petterson > The word translated 'it will be incredible' (yippālē') has the sense of wonder or miracle as well as impossibility (cf. Gen. 18:14; Job 42:2; Jer. 32:17, 27). The promised prosperity of Jerusalem may seem 'incredible' to the remnant in 'those days' (i.e. the future), but it is certainly not beyond God's power.

We need to look at the following passages:

- **Numbers 11:23** > ²³*The LORD said to Moses, "Is the LORD'S power limited? (KJV > Is the Lord's hand waxed short?) Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not."*
- **Matthew 19:26** > *And looking at them Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."*
- **Jeremiah 32:27** > *"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?"*
- **Luke 1:37** > *"For nothing will be impossible with God."*
- **Mark 10:27** > *"Looking at them, Jesus said, "With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God."*

⁷ Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Behold, I am going to save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west; ⁸ and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.'

The land of the east and from the land of the west > (Pettersen) lit. 'the land of the rising and from the land of the setting of the sun'.

I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem ... > (Baron) "This is one of the greatest and most comprehensive promises in reference to Israel's restoration and conversion to be found in the prophetic Scriptures."

⁹ "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Let your hands be strong, you who are listening in these days to these words from the mouth of the prophets, those who spoke in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid, to the end that the temple might be built.'

¹⁰ For before those days there was no wage for man or any wage for animal; and for him who went out or came in there was no peace because of his enemies, and I set all men one against another.

For before those days > (Constable) Before the returnees began to rebuild in earnest, there was severe unemployment, so there were no wages for many of the people (cf. Haggai 1:6). Even the animals were not earning their keep. There was also no peace because the enemies of the Jews oppressed them (cf. Ezra 4:1-5; Haggai 1:6-11; Haggai 2:15-19). The Lord Himself was ultimately responsible for the antagonism that existed then.

Haggai 1:6 > "You have sown much, but harvest little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes."

Ezra 4:4, 5 ⁴Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and frightened them from building, ⁵and hired counselors against them to frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

No wage for man > (Barnes) Literally, "hire for man came not to pass."

¹¹ But **now** I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days,' declares the LORD of hosts. ¹² 'For there will be peace for the seed: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things.

Compare verse 12 to **Haggai 1:9-11** (written only 2 years previously) > ⁹"You look for much, but behold, it comes to little; when you bring it home, I blow it away. Why?" declares the LORD of hosts, "Because of My house which lies desolate, while each of you runs to his own house. ¹⁰"Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce. ¹¹"I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands."

¹³ It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, **O house of Judah and house of Israel**, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.'

O house of Judah and house of Israel > (This is very important!!) (Perowne) "Not only the two tribes [of Judah] but the ten [of Israel]. This has never yet been fulfilled."

¹⁴ "For thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Just as I **purposed** to do harm to you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath,' says the LORD of hosts, 'and I have not **relented**, ¹⁵ so I have again **purposed** in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear!

Purposed > (Strong's) to consider, purpose, devise

Relented > (Strong's) to be sorry, console oneself

¹⁶ These are the things which you should do: speak the truth to one another; judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates. ¹⁷ Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all these are what I hate,' declares the LORD."

Speak the truth to one another; judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates. > The key phrase here is the last one > "in your gates" ... the place of judicial decisions. If you will remember the sins revealed way back in Micah it was the oppression of those who had no defense.

For all these are what I hate > (Barnes) > Literally, emphatic, "For they are all these things which I hate."

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, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth months will become joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.'*

Unger > "The manifestation of the kingdom will be attended by such a fullness of salvation that Judah will forget to commemorate the former mournful events and will only have occasion to rejoice in the benefits of grace bestowed by God."

²⁰ *"Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'It will yet be that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities.*

Isaiah 2:3 > *And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

Micah 4:1, 2 > ¹*And it will come about in the last days that the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, and the peoples will stream to it. ²Many nations will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD and to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us about His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

²¹ *The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, "Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go." ²² So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.'*

Feinberg > "The prophecy teaches, then, that Israel will be the means of drawing the nations of the earth to the Lord in the time of the Messiah's reign of righteousness upon earth."

²³ *Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."'"*

Feinberg > "By way of summary ... we can see the purpose of the Spirit through the prophet in answer to the question concerning fasting. It was a twofold objective: a present and a future one. For the time then present the Spirit pointed out the sham in the fastings, the need for reality and sincerity, the vivid warning from the past sins of the forefathers, and the imperative demand for righteousness in all the relationships of life. With reference to the future Zechariah was directed to point to a day of glorious promise for Israel when the Lord would dwell in her midst, when prosperity and peace would characterize her land, when her dispersed ones would be gathered back to their homeland, and ... when her fasts would be turned into feasts, the glory of the Lord being so manifest in Israel that all the nations would be drawn to Him through His people."