

Title: **THE GOSPEL CHURCH
GOD'S HOLY MOUNTAIN**
Text: Zechariah 8:1-6
Date: Sunday Morning — August 27, 2006
Reading: *Isaiah 11:1-12:6*
Tape # Zechariah #37

Isaiah 11

1. And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:
2. And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;
3. And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:
4. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.
5. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.
6. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.
7. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
8. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.
9. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.
10. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.
11. And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.
12. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.
13. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.
14. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil them of the east together: they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.
15. And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make *men* go over dryshod.
16. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

Isaiah 12

1. And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.
2. Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH *is* my strength and *my* song; he also *is* become my salvation.
3. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.
4. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name *is* exalted.
5. Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this *is* known in all the earth.
6. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great *is* the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

INTRODUCTION

The title of my message is **THE GOSPEL CHURCH — GOD'S HOLY MOUNTAIN**. Our text is Zechariah 8:1-6. In this passage God's prophet is describing the goodness and grace of God to his people in this Gospel day, using Zion, Jerusalem, and the people of Israel as typical pictures of his Church.

Let me tell you something that will help you immensely as you read and study the Old Testament. **Any time you read a gracious promise from God** made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to Israel, Judah and Jerusalem, read it as a promise to God's elect, to his Church. Better yet, if you are a believer, read it as a promise of God made to you specifically. **Any time you read of something glorious concerning the nation of Israel, Jerusalem, Zion, or the house and temple of God, apply the promise to the Church of God.** That is always the intent of the passage. The New Testament makes this fact abundantly clear.

- In the New Testament, as God the Holy Spirit explains that which he caused to be written in the Old Testament, **he calls the Church of God's elect** — "*the Israel of God*" (Gal. 6:16), — "*Jerusalem*" (Gal. 4:26), — "*Mount Zion*" (Heb. 12:22), — "*the Temple of God*" (1 Cor. 3:17), — and "*the House of God*" (1 Tim. 3:15).
- **The physical seed of Israel**, Abraham's physical descendants were only typical of "*the Israel of God*," the spiritual "*children of Abraham*." — "*If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise*" (Gal. 3:29).
- **And we are plainly told that "all the promises of God" are in Christ**, and "*in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God*" (2 Cor. 20). — **The blessings and promises of God's grace do not come by man's pedigree, but by God's decree** (John 1:12-13; Rom. 9:16).

(John 1:12-13) "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: (13) Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

(Romans 9:16) "So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy."

With that in mind, I want us to look at Zechariah 8:1-6. **The prophet of God is here commanded of God to proclaim rich, precious promises of grace and glory to his chosen people, the Church of his elect**, here called "*Zion*," "*Jerusalem*," "*the Mountain of the Lord*," and "*the Holy Mountain*."

(Zechariah 8:1-6) "Again the word of the LORD of hosts came *to me*, saying, (2) Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. (3) Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain. (4) Thus saith the LORD of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. (5) And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. (6) Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts."

PEOPLE OF GOD'S INTEREST

The first thing I want you to see is that there is one group of people in this world who are of interest to the triune God, one Nation to which the Almighty is devoted, one City he makes to be his home. That is Zion, Jerusalem, the Church of his elect, the City of God (Ps. 46:4; 48:1; Zech. 8:1-2).

(Zechariah 8:1-2) "Again the word of the LORD of hosts came *to me*, saying, (2) Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury."

The Lord Jesus Christ is jealous for no one else. He is completely, totally and singularly devoted to his espoused Bride. She alone is the object of his love.

- **He did not love** all people; but he “*loved the Church*” with an everlasting love.
- **He did not choose** all people; but he chose his Bride, the Church.
- **The Son of God did not die for**, redeem, and purchase all people; but he died for his Church, redeemed his Church, and purchased his Church with his own precious blood (Acts 20:28).
- **The Lord of Glory is not concerned about** all nations and all people. His concern is for one nation, called his “*Holy Nation*,” the Church. He has no concern for anyone else. In fact, he plainly tells us that **he does all things for his Bride**, the Church alone (Rom. 8:28; Eph. 1:10-12). For her he raises up all others. For her he uses all others. For her he sacrifices all others (Isa. 43:1-7).

(Isaiah 43:1-7) “But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. (2) When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. (3) For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. (4) Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. (5) Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; (6) I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; (7) *Even* every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.”

The Lord Jesus Christ is jealous for the everlasting salvation of his chosen Bride, zealous with great fury to have her (Isa. 9:6-7; 37:31-32; Jer. 29:11-14).

(Isaiah 9:6-7) “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (7) Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

(Isaiah 37:31-32) “And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward: (32) For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.”

(Jeremiah 29:11-14) “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. (12) Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. (13) And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. (14) And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.”

Jerusalem was a city God had chosen. He says, “*In Jerusalem will I put my name...In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever*” (2 Kings 21:4, 7). — “*And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them*” (Num. 6:27). Jerusalem was the place of his house, the temple, the place of the ark, the mercy seat, and the memorials of his power and goodness throughout the history of Israel. That city had been destroyed by the Babylonian invaders. But, instead of losing interest in His persecuted people, his feelings were intense concerning them. He said, “*I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.*” And he still is.

THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

In verse 3 the Lord God describes his Church as it is in this Gospel day and shall be eternally as the place of his residence, “*a city of truth*,” “*the Mountain of the Lord of hosts*,” and “*the Holy Mountain*.” — “*Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain.*”

What a blessed description God here gives of his Church! All that is said here about the Church of God is true of his Church universal and shall be true of his Church in heavenly glory. But I want you to see that it is **true of every true Gospel church**, every true assembly of believing sinners today. It matters not whether the church is a large, flourishing, well-known metropolitan congregation, a small, unknown rural assembly, or a church made up of two or three believing people meeting in a private home to worship and serve our Savior. — **Every local church, every body of believing sinners is precious to God. Each is fully and equally precious to God, and ought to be precious to us.**

GOD’S RESIDENCE

Every Gospel church, every gathered assembly of believers is **the place of God’s residence**, “*the house of God*.” The Lord Jesus Christ declares, “*I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem*.” As the prophet Isaiah wrote, “*The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob*” (Isa. 59:20; 2:3; Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 3:16-17).

(Isaiah 2:3) “And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”

(Matthew 18:20) “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

(1 Corinthians 3:16-17) “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (17) If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.”

Every time we gather in our Savior’s name, he returns to Zion, he gathers with us, making this local assembly “*an habitation of God through the Spirit*,” showing himself by his Word, revealing his will, nourishing and cherishing our souls, and sending out his Gospel, his word of grace into all the world. This is the place of God’s Shechinah, the place where he reveals his glory and from which he sends out his Word upon the earth. — “*Thou, O God, hast prepared thy goodness for the poor. The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it*” (Ps. 68:10-11). When you absent yourself from the assembly of God’s saints, you absent yourself from...

- The presence of your Savior.
- The revelation of his grace.
- Food for your soul.
- Comfort for your heart.
- Reproof for your shame.
- The message he sends by his servant
- The fellowship of your family.
- The worship of God.

(Hebrews 10:25-27) “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. (26) For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, (27) But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”

This is the house of God, the place of his desire, the place of his tender care, the place of his goodness.

THE CITY OF TRUTH

Next, the Church is called "*the City of Truth.*" In 1 Timothy 3:15 the Holy Spirit calls the Church of God "*the pillar and ground of the truth.*" Here he calls her "*the City of Truth.*" **And those are true, accurate descriptions of every true Gospel church.**

- Every true church receives and embraces **Christ who is the Truth.**
- Each one embraces the **Gospel, the whole Truth of God.** — We do not invent truth, improve truth, or qualify truth. — We embrace and publish the Truth. — "*Salvation is of the LORD!*"
- Every Gospel church, embracing and loving the Truth, is **the means by which God graciously preserves his Truth** in this world, generation after generation.
- In this place, "*the City of Truth,*" **we worship God in Spirit and in Truth.** — By the power and grace of his Spirit, according to revealed Truth, in Christ who is the Truth, and in truthfulness and sincerity. — "*The City of Truth*" is "*The City of Righteousness, the Faithful City*" (Isa. 1:26).
- The citizens of this City of Truth are called "*the faithful in Christ Jesus.*"

ELEVATING GRACE

When the Lord Jesus comes to chosen, redeemed sinners in the saving operations of his grace and plants them in his Church and Kingdom, they find that his saving grace is elevating grace, for Zion, the City of Truth, the Church of God is here called "*the Mountain of the LORD of Hosts.*" The Lord Jesus comes to the sinner humbled and abased by his Spirit, who presumes not to take the lowest place, and says, "*Friend, go up higher...For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted*" (Luke 14:10-11). **Isaiah gives us a very similar word of prophecy concerning this Gospel age** (Isa. 2:1-5).

(Isaiah 2:1-5) "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. (2) And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. (3) And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (4) And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (5) O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD."

In these verses Isaiah speaks of the great glory, excellence, and benefit of the gospel church, which is Zion, the spiritual kingdom of Christ. This is "*the word,*" the message of God, "*that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw,*" perceived and understood, by the revelation of God the Holy Spirit, "*concerning Judah and Jerusalem,*" the church and people of God.

LAST DAYS

Isaiah begins his sermon by telling us that it concerns the last days. It is a prophecy of the glory of Zion in the last days. — "*And it shall come to pass in the last days.*" Here is something else that will help you to understand the Old Testament prophets: Whenever the "*last days*" are mentioned, the reference is to this Gospel age in which we now live. — This "*is the last time*" (1 John 2:18). — The last days began with the coming of Christ and the dissolution of Judaism and Mosaic economy (Hab. 2:3; Heb. 1:2). There is no future day of grace to come, no future tribulation period or millennial age, in which men will be saved by their works, or by a return to Jewish worship! There is no grace but that which is to be found in the gospel (Gal. 1:8-9). When Christ comes the second time, "*Then cometh the end*" (1 Cor. 15:24).

In these five verses Isaiah prophesied of the great glory of the gospel age, the spiritual kingdom of Christ, the glory of Zion, by foretelling six things that characterize the church and people of God.

1. **The Establishment of the Church** — "*The mountain of the LORD's house shall be established*" (v.

2). The prophet is here telling of Christ building his church and establishing his kingdom in this world. The church of God is here called "*The mountain of the Lord's house; established in the top of the mountains.*" What does this mean?

- **The Church is again called the house of God** (1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Cor. 3:16; Mt. 18:20). — It is built by the Lord himself (Matt. 16:18). — He dwells here. — He will beautify, glorify and exalt it. — The materials of this house are living stones, true believers, built upon Christ, the Foundation (1 Cor. 3:11, Eph. 2:19-22). — The only door of entrance into the house and kingdom of God is Christ himself, who is the Master over his own house (John 10:9; 3:5-7).

- **The kingdom of Christ and the gospel of it is to be openly preached and professed.**

The church of God is "*established,*" prepared, "*in the top of the mountains,*" in clear view and hearing of all. This is no secret society with secret orders. — Our Lord compared his church to **a City set upon a hill**, which cannot be hid (Matt. 5:14). — Christ himself spoke openly to all the world (John 18:20). — The gospel preached by the apostles was not done in a corner (Acts 26:26).

That which was everywhere spoken against had been everywhere spoken of. **The message we preach is a banner to be lifted up, a standard to be held high.** It is not something to be hid. Let the whole world hear and every man know the wonderful works of our God (Matt. 28:18-20).

- **The church and kingdom of God is firmly fixed, immovable, and sure to prevail, as the majestic mountains.**

It is built upon the Rock, Christ Jesus. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. **John Gill** puts it this way. — The church of God is immovable, "being secured in the everlasting and electing love of God, and in the unalterable covenant of grace, founded on the Rock, Christ, and guarded by the mighty power of God."

- **And Isaiah here declares that the church and kingdom of God shall be exalted above all the hills of the earth.**

The truth of God shall prevail. The kingdom of Christ shall be exalted. — Exalted **above Mt. Sinai and earthly Jerusalem** (Heb. 12:18-24). — Exalted **above all the religions of antichrist** (Rev. 11:11-12). — Exalted in the esteem of chosen, redeemed, and called sinners. — Exalted above all the creation of God (Rev. 21).

2. **The Universality of the Church** — "*And all nations shall flow into it*" (v. 2).

It was never our Lord's intention that his kingdom be limited to the Jewish nation alone. From the beginning he was determined to have a Bride, a Church made up of men and women of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue for the praise of his name. The Church of God is a universal family, a universal kingdom, and a universal body. — Christ has broken down every wall of partition that naturally separates men from one another in this world (Eph. 2:11-18; Col. 3:11).

- The Door of God's church is open to all.
- All who enter in, enter in upon the same grounds.
- All who enter in by Christ the Door are equals.
- And all who enter in are brethren.

"*All nations* (all nationalities) *shall flow into it.*" — Like streams of water from the four corners of the earth, God gathers his elect into his kingdom by almighty grace. Yet, no one is forced in. All who come, come willingly. They flow into Zion upon the river of grace. To Christ shall the gathering of the people be (Ps. 110:3; Gen. 49:10; Isa. 60:1-5). I do not in anyway lessen the importance of the local assembly. But one great aspect of the church's glory is its universality.

3. The Unity of the Church (v. 3).

Here Isaiah describes the mutual love, encouragement, help, and assistance God's people give to one another. — *"And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his path."* — No wonder David sang, *"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD"* (Ps. 122:1).

- Here is **evangelism** at its best. — *"Come ye, let us go up to the house of God."*
- Here is **the object of public worship**. — *"He will teach us of his ways."* — God himself is our Teacher. — He teaches us of his ways. — His Way of Grace — His Way of Providence — His Way of Obedience.
- Here is **the resolute determination** of every renewed heart. — *"We will walk in his paths."* — If he will show us his way, by his grace, we will walk in his paths.

That church is truly united in Christ which is united in seeking the salvation of God's elect, seeking the instruction of God the Holy Spirit, and seeking obedience to the will of God.

4. The Power of the Church (v. 3).

The means by which God saves his people, teaches them his ways and leads them in his paths is the preaching of the gospel. — *"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."* The power of the Church is not its size, its wealth, its talents, or its pastor, but the Gospel of the grace of God which we preach (Rom. 1:15-16).

- The Gospel of Christ is the law of His kingdom (1 John 3:23). — The law of faith. — The law of love. — The fulfilling of the law.
- The Gospel of Christ is the Word of God by which men are saved and born into His kingdom (1 Pet. 1:23-25).
- This is the rod of his strength sent out of Zion into all the world (Ps. 110:2).

(Psalms 110:2) *"The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies."*

5. The Head of the Church (v. 4).

Isaiah saw Christ exalted as Head over all things for his church (Eph. 1:21-23). — *"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people."* He whose Word goes forth out of Zion shall by that Word subdue his enemies to himself and rule them.

- In wisdom and justice, Christ Jesus orders and rules all the affairs of this world for the good of his church.
- He rebukes and restrains everything and everyone that opposes the interests of his kingdom.
- And by his Spirit, he makes his enemies to be his servants, converting them by his almighty grace (John 16:8-13).

6. The Peace of the Church (v. 4).

Here Isaiah describes the great peace that comes upon men and women by the gospel, when the prince of peace rules among them. *"They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."* This is not a dreamy-eyed prophecy of some Utopian millennial age. This is a prophecy of that which is experienced right now in the kingdom of God. The gospel of Christ makes peace and slays enmities. The gospel of Christ reconciles those who are natural enemies.

Illustration: Cherokee! — Jamaica! — Mexico!

The gospel of Christ makes men peaceable, softens their hearts, and sweetens their spirits. The love of Christ, when it is shed abroad in the hearts of men and women, constrains them to love one another (John 13:34-35).

“O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD” (v. 5). Here the prophet of God issues a call to all the house of Jacob, those men and women who are chosen, redeemed, saved and kept by the grace of God. Whatever others may do, in the light of what our God has done for us, *“Let us walk in the light of the LORD.”* — Walk circumspectly as the children of light. — Walk humbly in the light of his grace. — Walk peaceably in the light of his peace.

THE HOLY MOUNTAIN

Let's go back to Zechariah 8:3. Not only does the grace of God elevate us above the darkness, death and curse of the law and of nature, in the last line of Zechariah 8:3, we are told that God's Church is *“the Holy Mountain.”* The inhabitants of the City of Truth, the Mountain of the Lord are a holy people, made righteous and sanctified by his grace. They are holy because of their union with Christ, the Holy One (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

(1 Corinthians 6:9-11) “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, (10) Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (11) And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

Near, so very near to God,
Nearer I could not be;
For in the person of His Son,
I am as near as He.

Dear, so very dear to God,
Dearer I could not be;
For in the Person of His Son,
I am as dear as He.

I with Christ am truly one;
And Christ is one with me.
The love with which God loves His Son,
That is His love for me!

CITY OF PEACE

Just as we saw in Isaiah 2:4, Zechariah tells us that the Church of God, the City of Truth is a city of blessed security and peace (vv. 4-5).

(Zechariah 8:4-5) “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. (5) And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.”

Living with the Lord Jesus, living in his presence and under his wings causes people to live in peace. The aged believers, resting on their Staff, Christ Jesus, from the blessed influence of grace, long known and long enjoyed, by his Spirit dwell in peace, *“looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”* And the young are found in the streets of the city, rejoicing under the awakenings of his love, living in saving union with him who is their Salvation. As long as we are in this world we will have our enemies, those who oppose and persecute us, Satan will roar against us, and the flesh will war against the spirit; but there is no danger. Nothing shall hurt any in the Holy Mountain. This is what we read in Isaiah 11:6-9.

(Isaiah 11:6-9) "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. (7) And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. (8) And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. (9) They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

NO MARVEL

Now, look at verse 6 for just a moment, and I will send you home rejoicing. — "*Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts.*" It is as if the Almighty had said, The creation of such a blessedness, the making of such a city, with you may seem to be an impossibility; but it is not so to me. Never cease to marvel at God's goodness; but never imagine that his salvation is incredible. The salvation of our souls, the building of Zion is no marvel with him. It is altogether the work of his free grace; and "*the works were finished*" before the world began (Heb. 4:3; Rom. 8:29-32).

(Hebrews 4:3) "For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world."

(Romans 8:29-32) "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be conformed* to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. (31) What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us? (32) He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

"Zion stands by hills surrounded,
Zion, kept by pow'r divine;
All her foes shall be confounded,
Though the world in arms combine;
Happy Zion, what a favored lot is thine!

Every human tie may perish;
Friend to friend unfaithful prove;
Mothers cease their own to cherish;
Heav'n and earth at last remove;
But no changes can attend Jehovah's love.

In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence to bring thee forth more bright,
But can never cease to love thee;
Thou art precious in His sight;
God is with thee—God, thine everlasting Light."

That which God purposed God will perform. Every chosen sinner shall be with Christ in Glory. So far from preventing or even hindering it, all things work together by the rule of his good providence to secure it (Rev. 14:1).

(Revelation 14:1) "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."

"*Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel;...I shall bring again their captivity; The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness*" (Jeremiah 31:23). And so it shall be.

Amen.