

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Zechariah*  
*Message 16 God is Jealous for Jerusalem*  
*August 18, 2013*



Entry into Jerusalem by Pietro Lorenzetti cir. 1280-1348

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# Pentwater Bible Church

**The Book of Zechariah**  
**Message Sixteen**  
**God's Love & Promises to Jerusalem**  
August 18, 2013  
Daniel E. Woodhead



Painting by Sharlene Lindskog-Osorio

## PRACTICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

Zechariah 8:1-8

*<sup>1</sup>And the word of Jehovah of hosts came to me, saying, <sup>2</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. <sup>3</sup>Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, The holy mountain. <sup>4</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age. <sup>5</sup>And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. <sup>6</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith Jehovah*

*of hosts. <sup>7</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; <sup>8</sup>and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness (ASV 1901).*

#### GOD'S GREAT LOVE FOR ISRAEL AND JERUSALEM

##### Zechariah 8:1-2

*<sup>1</sup>And the word of Jehovah of hosts came to me, saying, <sup>2</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath (ASV 1901).*

Jehovah God continues His direct communication to the spirit of Zechariah bypassing his ears and eyes to begin a comforting message to His people. In the last chapter there was a long oracle on the fast with a strong rebuke for the Jews fasting without obeisance to God. Their fasts were primarily directed at themselves for the problems in their lives. God was saying to them that it was their own fault that these things like the Babylonian captivity happened to them. He described the outcome of their actions, which was a deportation to Babylon. The present group, returning to Jerusalem from the captivity was in danger of suffering the same consequences if they did not turn to Him in love, trust, and obedience. This chapter is a continuation of the last one but with a very positive message. God is telling the nation Israel that he will change their fasts into feasts if they will obey Him.

The nation Israel had been promised good blessings from the Lord (Leviticus 26:4-13 etc.). But for them they were always conditional on their obedience to God's Word.

##### Exodus 19:4-5

*<sup>4</sup>Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. <sup>5</sup>Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine (ASV 1901).*

##### Leviticus 26:3-4

*<sup>3</sup>If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; <sup>4</sup>then I will give your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit (ASV 1901).*

It is important to see that obedience to God's Word is paramount to our blessings. Without obedience to Him He will not provide blessings. God promised the Jews a full kingdom blessing but this was only contingent upon their spiritual change of heart. A renovation, if you will, of their spiritual condition as a nation. Without this change of heart they will not get His full blessings. Only in the future after the Great Tribulation will they corporately cry out to God in belief that Jesus is their Messiah and be allowed to reign with Christ on

the earth in the Millennial Kingdom. Until then their blessings will be limited to the level of belief they have in His Word.

God is addressing Himself as “Jehovah of Hosts” or the “Lord of Armies.” This personal address and position in the celestial realm is found fifteen times in this section of Scripture. He uses it thirty-six times in the entire book of Zechariah. God refers to Himself as the supreme head of all the celestial beings, cherubim, seraphim and common angels. They do His bidding, surround Him, and carry out His will for a time against the fallen angels who obey the evil one, Satan. The promises, which are given in this chapter, are only credible to those who have a strong belief in God and know the Whole Counsel of God. These are wonderful promises, which provide a blessed assurance of a bright future for Jerusalem and the nation Israel. God is going to positively answer the question of the fasts that the delegation from Bethel asked in the last chapter.

Chapter eight is a highly prophetic blending of both near and far term prophecies. It provides the Jews with a blessing in the present partial restoration (518 B.C.), which will have much trial, poverty, and hardship, which is the precursor to the final establishment of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom. The hope of the millennial blessings provides the basis for the immediate encouragement for the Jews returning to Israel after the Babylonian captivity. While their blessings are contingent upon their obedience God continues to fulfill His promises to them in smaller increments than He would if they obeyed Him. If they would confess that Jesus is their Messiah their blessings would vastly increase and they would be in a position of running the government of the world under King Jesus. Since the Bible prophecies that this will not happen until the end of the Great Tribulation they will not get the full measure of their blessings until then.

Deuteronomy 28:13

*And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do [them] (KJV).*

He says he is jealous for Jerusalem (Zion). Zion became a synonym for the entire city of Jerusalem as is apparent from other areas of the Old Testament (Isaiah 2:3; 4:3; 33:20; Amos 1:2; Micah 3:10, 12). Zechariah frequently uses the two terms synonymously (Zechariah 1:14, 17; 8:3; 9:9). The jealous zeal of God is another aspect of His purposeful intensity. It is the passion that He brings to all He does and to all that He purposes to do. Nevertheless His wrath is directed against those who would take advantage of and persecute the Jews even if He allowed it. Because His love for Zion is so great, He is jealous for the Jews and Jerusalem in particular. Therefore His anger is directed to the Gentile nations, because when He was but “a little displeased” and gave over “the dearly beloved of His soul” for a time into the hands of her enemies (Jeremiah 12:7), the nations among whom they were scattered “showed them no mercy.” What they did we saw expressed in the first chapter. They went way to far in their persecution of them. As a result they have been taken off the earth. They don’t exist any more. The covenant that

God made with Abraham still holds true to the nations of this world; *“I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse”* (Genesis 12:3). History is replete with examples that clearly show God’s jealous anger and hot displeasure against the nations, because of their oppression and cruelty to Israel. The great nations of antiquity who have lifted up their hands against the Jewish people are no longer in existence or greatly disabled. Many have already recognized this prophetic fulfillment. Benjamin Disraeli, Great Britain’s only Jewish Prime Minister for example in an address to parliament in 1854 said,

“There is no country in which the Hebrew race has been persecuted which has not suffered, whose energies have not withered, whose political power has not decayed, and where there has not been evident proofs that the Divine favour has been withdrawn from the land. The instances of Spain, and Portugal, and Italy are obvious.”<sup>1</sup>

#### GOD WILL RETURN TO LIVE IN JERUSALEM

Zechariah 8:3

*<sup>3</sup>Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, The holy mountain (ASV 1901).*

God left the Temple in Jerusalem sometime between 597 B.C. and 586 B.C. due to the excessive sins of the Jews and the Kohanime who were responsible for the purity of the Temple and its practices. God allowed the prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel chapter 8) to see what abominations they were committing in the Temple and why He must leave. Chapters one and two of Ezekiel describe the Cherubim lifting the Shekinah Glory up and out of the Temple as a result. He did not return and dwell in the Second Temple as He had in the first (II Chronicles 5:13-14). The next time the Shekinah Glory would appear in the Temple was when the Lord Jesus was brought in on the eighth day of His life to be circumcised (Luke 2:27-28). The next time that God’s Glory enters Jerusalem will be after the Campaign of Armageddon when Jesus returns to set up the Millennial Kingdom.

God’s special jealousy will cause Him to return to Jerusalem and it will be called the city of truth. It will be radically transformed during and after the Tribulation. Only truth will prevail in the world government with Jesus on the throne in Jerusalem.

It will be upon the highest elevation in the world (Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-2) and all the Jews will go there for worship (Isaiah 27:13). It will also become a place of prayer for the Gentiles too (Isaiah 56:6-7). King Jesus will be on David’s Throne ruling the government (Isaiah 9:6) of the world from Jerusalem (II Samuel 7:8-19; Revelation 20:6). Jerusalem is

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<sup>1</sup> Makovsky, Michael *Churchill’s Promised Land-Zionism and Statecraft*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007. 42

the most important city in the world and it is apparent from the volume of world press it receives and the contention between the peoples of the world desiring control over it.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF MILLENNIAL JERUSALEM

Zechariah 8:4-5

*<sup>4</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age.  
<sup>5</sup>And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof (ASV 1901).*

Finally the holy city, and the greater metropolis of Jerusalem will be peacefully repopulated. The transformation will include a repopulation of the city and suburbs to the fullest extent. Through the use of merism, (figure of speech where a single group is referred to by a part) the prophet looks to the day when the oldest and the youngest (i.e., the citizenry as a whole) will inhabit the city. This was not the case in Zechariah's time during the postexilic migration. There were only about 50,000 of the refugees who returned home. Even in Nehemiah's day, eighty years later, he had to conscript enough residents from the countryside to give the city an adequate population (Nehemiah 7:4; 11:1–2). The population will safely and slowly age. This is a scene of security and happiness as Jesus rules the earth in truth.

Isaiah 65:20

*<sup>20</sup>There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed (ASV 1901).*

#### THE ASTONISHMENT OF THE TRANSFORMATION

Zechariah 8:6

*<sup>6</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith Jehovah of hosts (ASV 1901).*

Interestingly God says that the people returning will be skeptical of such an astounding transformation as just described. This is because it is nothing short of miraculous. In anticipation of the skepticism that this message would surely elicit, Jehovah says that just because the whole prospect is difficult for human perception it is not difficult for Him. Further He is describing the Millennial Kingdom blessings. Even the saved remnant, contemplating the actual Millennial fulfillment of these wonderful promises, will exclaim, "This is Jehovah's doing" (or, lit., "*This is of Jehovah*"; for by no human or natural means could this have been brought about)—"it is marvellous in our eyes" (Psalm 118:23). God said the same thing to Abraham when Sarah laughed as she heard

she was going to have a child in her ninetieth year (Genesis 18:13-14). There the text states that “Sarah laughed within herself” when she heard the Angel of Jehovah give the promise to Abraham of the birth of Isaac. Natural means of childbirth rendered Sarah much too old to bear a child. But “Jehovah said to Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is anything *too hard* (or ‘wonderful’) *for Jehovah?*” All skepticism regarding the promises of God will be eradicated when the Church has been removed from the earth signifying the Tribulation is near and seven years later the Millennial Kingdom blessings will be realized.

#### THE FINAL RESTORATION

#### Zechariah 8:7-8

*<sup>7</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; <sup>8</sup>and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness (ASV 1901).*

God is saying through a recognized Hebrew idiom (from the east country and the west country) that He will bring people to Jerusalem from all parts of the world. The same idiomatic phrase is used elsewhere in the Bible (Psalm 50:1, 113:3; Malachi 1:11, etc.). Only after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple in seventy AD did the world wide dispersion become a reality. The dispersion in Zechariah’s day was only to Babylon. This is one additional insightful characteristic of God’s Word letting us know that the reference here is to the Millennial Earthly Kingdom. The promise here is a divine summary and recapitulation of the same promise made by Jehovah through other prophets. Isaiah 43:5-6 says “*Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; 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*”; and will be fulfilled when “*Jehovah shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people; . . . 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*” (Isaiah 11:11-12)

That the restoration spoken of here is yet future, is proved also by the fact that it is to be followed by Israel’s national conversion, which has not yet yet taken place. “*And they shall be My people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.*” This final verse verifies the characteristic of a relationship with God, Truth and Righteousness. So it will be in the earth during the Millennial Kingdom.

NEXT WEEK: GOD RESTORES HIS FAVOR PART II

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**

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