

Minor Prophets
Zechariah
Lesson 8

Text: Zechariah 8:1-23

Intro: You will notice in this Chapter, there is a lot of “Thus Saith the Lord” ten times in these verses. 10 is an Hebrew number for excess. Often times when we here it in the bible, it isn't just saying 10, but saying more than needed. For instance when Elkanah was concerned with Hannah obsession over not having a son, he ask her the question “Am I not better than 10 sons?” (I Samuel 1:8). the point there is not OK better than 10, but not 11. the point is I am better than any number of sons. So Zechariah/ God's use of Thus Saith the Lord 10 times is to emphasize the importance of knowing this is the message of God not of man. One of the reasons it would be important to understand it is from God and not Zechariah, this is the nature of the prophecies given. As man we tend to desire the best, and if we are not careful we can write ourselves into a good thing. A lot of people try to find America in the prophecies of the end times, we think, surly a nation as great as us should be there. But, it is dangerous to try to write in our will to the word of God. Zechariah wanted the hearers and readers to understand this is not my desire, but the word of God. So what was those Prophecies about?...

I. Promises About Israels Future,

They were all about the future of Israel, about their place, and about their relationship not only to God but to the rest of the world. Starting with their home, and going from that to the world. It has some very familiar themes like the Christian and the Church has, first in Jerusalem, then in Judea, in Samaria, and the whole world. So this is going to start at home, so let us look at that.

A. I Will Rebuild Jerusalem, Vs.1-6

i. God is Jealous for Zion,

- a) it is reestablished here that God is jealous over Jerusalem,
 - The point was made in **chapter 1, vs.14** “So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.”
 - God desires what is His to be dedicated to Him, and not to another,
 - the illustration that is often made concerning the relationship between Israel and God is that of a husband and wife, and the jealousy that follows when the wife has been unfaithful.
 - The Point is always made that God is always faithful, never breaking His covenant with her.
- b) In **chapter 1**, the Lord points out how others, Not his people are at ease in His city.
 - They cam in and took over, and worse replaced God with their idols and pagan worship. And lead the people of Israel in to idolatry.
- c) God is still a jealous God,
 - not only of the Jewish nation, but also all people,
 - especially Christians, those who have professed His name as Lord.
 - Yet, often times that same person will let another be at ease in their life, rejecting the things of God, and replacing them with idolatry.
- d) So God re makes this point, I am Jealous.

ii. I Am Coming In,

- a) God announces that He is returning to Zion,
- b) this will be fulfilled when Jesus returns,
 - See **Isaiah 1:28; 2:3; 60:14; 62:12**

iii. The Nature of the City at that Time,

- a) remember that the Jerusalem was referred to as a wicked city,
 - **Ezra 4:12** “Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls *thereof*, and joined the foundations.”
 - this was coming from the accusers of Israel, yet this was the thought of Jerusalem.
 - b) But this was all going to change, the very nature of the city will change in that day,
 - but first, how would we describe Jerusalem today?
 - But then: **Isaiah 1:26** calls it a faithful and righteous city, in **60:3** he calls it the Holy City, in **62:12** he calls the people , Holy, Redeemed, sought out, and not forsaken.
 - In **chapter 8** here Jerusalem is told they will be:
 - a city of truth, **vs.3**
 - the holy mountain.
 - A safe city, a city where old men and women can go about freely with no thought of violence,
 - safe for children, they can play in the streets with out worry.
 - c) **Verse 6** tells us, if this looks good to you, just image what it is like for God.
- B. I Will Regather My People, **Vs.7**
- i. **The People were Scattered,**
 - a) **Deuteronomy 28:63&64** “And it shall come to pass, *that* as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.⁶⁴And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, *even* wood and stone. ”
 - this was part of the covenant of God,
 - the conditional portion stated that if the people would follow, God would bless, but if they rebelled, then He would remove His presence from their lives and scatter them. And this is what He did.
 - b) So the Assyrian through the Roman empires were there because of the disobedience of Israel. It was foretold to them, and they didn't take heed.
 - ii. **But, Restoration is Promised,**
 - a) I will save them from the east and west,
 - this is saying from all over, but it is interesting to note who is east and west:
 - So to the east you have, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Greece (all around the Mediterranean sea), to the west there is Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia.
 - Not only are they going to be saved from these country's and brought back, but...
- C. I Will Restore Our Relationship, **Vs.8** (lot's of promises in this verse)
- i. **I Will Bring them In,**
 - a) God is the one doing the work, He will draw them back.
 - There is something supernatural about the desire the Jewish people will have to draw them back to Israel.
 - From their home, and perhaps the only home they have ever known, or their family for generations. But the desire to return is going to be there.
 - **Romans 3:11** “There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.”
 - Only God can place in the heart of man a desire to seek Him.
 - b) They shall dwell in the mist of Jerusalem,

- this would have sounded amazing to the people hearing it for the first time,
 - they were about two years out of having the rebuilt temple finished,
 - so they could almost imagine it, but think about what has happened since:
 - the deceration of the temple again, the complete destruction of it in 72 AD, the occupation by Greece, then Rome, then about 630 AD the Muslims take over the city, 691 the dome of the rock is built on the temple mount, the crusades begin, and the city falls to Jew, Christians and Muslims at different times, (from 1070-1187), then a second crusade was ordered by pope Gregory the 8th, 1189. 1244 the Turks took over, 1492 the Spanish inquisition begins, 1570 the Ottoman empire, 1831 Egypt takes control, 1873 the Russian Alexander the II takes rule of the the area, and allows the Jews to reassemble, somewhat. 1914 WWI, and from this time, there is unrest in Jerusalem between Jews and Arabs of other nations. This is generally the rule of the day until the end of WWII, when in 1947 the UN votes to establish a part Jew Palestinian state. June 5-10 the 6 day war when Israel once again became a nation. But even today if we were to look at it, it may be hard to believe that the Jewish people will one day dwell there in peace.
- But, they will be there one day, but it won't be because of their own power and strength, but the power of God.

ii. They Shall be My People,

- a) God is once again going to establish the Jewish people as His representatives here on earth.
 - They are going to be the ones responsible for presenting God to the world, and holding up the world to God.

iii. I Shall be Their God

- a) the covenant will be fulfilled, God is going to be their God, when they become His people.
- b) The manner which He is to reign is,
 - in truth and Righteousness,
 - but isn't this in accordance with His character anyway, that He is righteous, and abundant in "Truth"

D. I Will Refresh the Land of Israel, Vs.9-13

Vs.12. For the seed *shall be* prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all *these things*.

i. The very land will return to the state God desired it to be,

- a) the land was not desolate because it is bad land, but because the Nation had driven the Lord out,
- b) I want to just think on this for a minuet as we ponder the indication of running God out of schools, or for that matter government, or other areas of our lives?
- c) The land once again will prosper, the seed will bear,
- d) the vine will give fruit,
- e) the rain will come,
- f) and the people will receive of it.
 - All that had happened was because God pulled His presence away, and the elements of the earth and the harshness of the area took over.
 - **Isaiah 5** gives the illustration of a vineyard, and a displeased Lord, but we can

look at that in reverse, if God were to come back, rebuild the wall, clean the vines, and nurture them what would happen?

ii. You were cursed among them, now you will be blessed,

- a) at the time of their captivity, and later in life through today, the Jewish have been the recipients of unmerited hatred,
- b) People have went out of their way in order to bring destruction on them.
- c) But a day is coming, where the people will be blessed of them,
- d) there is (in my opinion, shows how far I still have to go) when someone who has wronged you must come to you for help.
 - The same thing happened to Joseph, his brothers that sold him into slavery one day had to come to him for help.
 - One day other Nations will come to Israel for help, and a blessing.

E. I Will Renewed Command, Vs.14-19

i. Live Justly,

- a) The Lord's desire for His people was always to be good to others,
 - to live justly and walk humbly with God
 - **Micah 6:8** “He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? ”
 - this is nothing new,
 - even in the New Testament, Jesus brings it down to two commandments, Love the Lord, and Love the Neighbor, **See Matthew 22:36-40**
- b) Truth, Judgment in truth, be at peace, don't have bad thoughts about others,
 - read **vs. 16&17** these are the things God hates, they did not all of a sudden become things God hated, but they were.

ii. As for the Fast- (this is the answer to the question they had in Ch.7)

- a) they will be turned to a feast,
 - a time of rejoicing,
 - He leaves the fast of the day of atonement, the day of Christ had not yet come.
 - But the other things would stand as a memorial, but not in a bad way, Because of the forgiveness and Grace of God, they can be used to show what God has bough us out of, and through, and we can rejoice about them.
- b) We need to keep in mind, all that happened to them happened because they refused God, chose other god's and rebelled.
- c) But, the blessings are not just for the Jews...

F. I Will Redeem Gentiles as Well, Vs.20-23

i. 10 men,

- a) once again this is speaking of excess, people from all over the world,
 - note here that God is not forcing them, but they see the blessings of the Jewish people and want in on it.
 - But because they can chose to serve the Lord, they can also reject the Lord,
 - Often I wonder how is it possible to be a revolt after the 1,000 year rule of Christ? But they do.
- b) But these men will come to the Jewish people, take hold of them this time not in bondage, but to be lead to God.
 - Through the History of the bible, Nations feared and revered others when they knew God was with them, it was only after they lost respect and fear that they began to attack them.