

Zechariah 1-8 Oh What a Night (The Minor Prophets)

How many of you have reoccurring dreams?

A) Know a gal – stress dream - teeth falling out –

B) My mom – used to have this dream – Spider coming down over her bed.

C) I had a weird dream a few weeks ago – Jon Courson was on our staff. – Staff meeting

D) Dreams can be Bazaar and weird – Result of too much pizza – stress

1) A stressful movie

E) But Dreams can be helpful when they are from the Lord!

That is an example what happens to Zechariah:

A) Here's the background... After 70 years in Babylon – The Persian King Cyrus – issued a decree – Go back and rebuild

B) Led by **Governor Zerubbabel, and the High Priest Joshua, 50,000 Jews**, returned to the land of Judah to resurrect the nation Israel...

C) Started with a bang – Foundation got laid
1) Opposition came – THEY STOPPED

D) Sidetracked – Own houses – 16 yrs past

The temple of God laid in Rubble: 16yrs – they actually grew accustomed to worship amidst the rubble.

A) **BUT then** -God sent them messages from the prophets Haggai and Zechariah-

B) Haggai is Older – He is short and to the point – second shortest book in all of the Old Testament

C) He gets out there and says what he means and means what He says –

1) He hammers the people with the in your face Word- **And the people responded**

D) Zechariah is completely different- His help comes from a series of Dreams

1) It would be a night that Zechariah would never forget

In one night God gave the prophet a sequence of eight dreams.

A) One stunning vision after another kept waking him up.

B) Tonight we are going to look **at all 8 of those dreams and their meaning:**

1) Way we are going to do it is to summarize and focus in on the key verses of each one.

C) We will break up the book of Zechariah into 3 sections

❖ **Section 1 Chapters 1-8** – the Dreams and their meanings

❖ **Section 2 Chapter 9-11** – Prophecies regarding the first coming of Christ

❖ **Section 3 Chapters 12-14** Prophecies on the 2nd coming of Christ

The First 6 verses of Chapter 1 serve as an intro to the book – the time the setting and the problem.

In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, ²“The LORD has been very angry with your fathers.

The timing of Zechariah's prophecy sets it two months after Haggai's first prophecy (Haggai 1:1)

A) and within a month after another prophecy of Haggai (Haggai 2:1).

B) This was between October & November of 520 B.C.

C) **Zechariah's message is one of encouragement.**

1) But he was aware that not all the returned remnant were fully sincere in their desires to serve God,

D) So Zechariah therefore counseled them to repent of sin and return to God with all their hearts and minds.”

³ Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: **“Return to Me,” says the LORD of hosts,** “and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts. ⁴“Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds.”’ But they did not hear nor heed Me,” says the LORD.

⁵ “Your fathers, where *are* they?
And the prophets, do they live forever?

6 Yet surely My words and My statutes,
Which I commanded My servants the prophets,
Did they not overtake your fathers?

“So they returned and said:

‘Just as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us,
According to our ways and according to our
deeds,
So He has dealt with us.’

Zechariah begins his prophecy with a call to repentance, Return to Me . . . and I will return to you:

A) Adverse circumstances discouraged God’s people, and they wondered why God seemed so far away.

B) The land was still desolate after 70 years of neglect

- The work was hard to rebuild and restore
- They didn’t have a lot of money or manpower
- They suffered crop failures and drought
- Hostile enemies resisted the work (Ezra 4:1-5)
- They remembered easier times in Babylon

C) Each of these circumstances made them feel that God was far away;

1) Through Zechariah God assures them that He is *not* distant.

2) They would **return** to Him, He would **return** to them.

Zechariah’s words remind us of James 4:8: Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

A) Story of the Prodigal son – Son returns – Father ran out to meet him.

B) God promises to meet us running when we return to Him.

C) V.7 – Introduces us to Dream 1:

1) In Dream One, Zechariah sees four horses. A man, God’s messenger, is riding on the red horse.

D) And he’s standing among the myrtle trees.

The myrtle tree represented Israel. It’s a small evergreen - more a shrub than a tree.

A) It never grows more than eight feet tall.

B) It has dark green leaves and when its pedals are crushed they give off a fragrance.

1) Israel is like an evergreen – it too, never dies.

C) It’s small in comparison with other nations.

1) And the crushing of the pedals reminds us of Israel’s tendency to grow sweeter through suffering and persecution.

D) Paul – the fragrance of Christ – 2 Corinthians 2:15

God is zealous for Jerusalem.

A) He’s angry with the nations that persecute Israel. God comforts Israel, but judges the Gentiles.

B) Zechariah 1:16 predicts Jerusalem’s glorious future, “Thus says the LORD: “I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house shall be built in it...”

C) What an encouragement this would be to Zerubbabel and his Temple crew...

D) In verse 17 he predicts, “My cities shall again spread out through prosperity; the LORD will again comfort Zion, and will again choose Jerusalem.”

E) The returnees were laying groundwork for expansion.

❖ **Lesson: God is able to do great things – through small people. His fragrance is revealed in our times of pressure.**

At the end of chapter 1, Zechariah sees Dream 2.

18 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were four horns. 19 And I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these?”

So he answered me, “These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.”

20 Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen.

21 And I said, “What are these coming to do?”

So he said, “These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head; but the craftsmen are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.”

Four horns appear.

A) These are nations that scattered Israel - probably the *Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans.*

B) He then sees four craftsmen - or demolition experts - who dismantle these nations.

C)The point is simple, pick on God's kids and God will pick on you.- 4 great nations all brought to ruin.

Chapter 2:1-8 – records Dream 3.

A)A man with a tape measure goes out to measure the dimensions of Jerusalem.

B)If you've ever sold a house, appraisal – measure the Square footage – and the lot size.

C)Well The city has changed ownership. It now belongs to the Jews.

It would be another 75 years (or so) before Nehemiah would return to rebuild Jerusalem's walls.

A)Yet in the meantime, God promises in verse 5 to be a fire around the city.

B)He'll protect Jerusalem and be its glory.

C)Zechariah sees a city that has grown in it's prominence – far exceeds the present dimensions

In fact Zechariah sees the day when there is no longer a need for walls any more at all.

A)And the encouragement again in this for the people who were discouraged and wondering why are we doing what we are doing –

B)The Lord was revealing that Jerusalem would again become a prominent city –

1)What they were doing would eventually bear much fruit

C)I don't know about you but sometimes as I am ministering, sometimes as I am parenting,
1)sometimes as I am dealing with people I think, is any of this sinking in, will any of this do any good?

D)and what an encouragement if God would give you a little insight –

1)Yes things are going to work out, in fact things are going to work out better than you think

2)This city is going to expand even far beyond its walls

E)God says in verse 8 he who harms Israel "touches the apple of my eye."

1)And this is how He feels about you if you're one of His kids.

Don't Grow weary in doing good, for in due season you will reap if you do not loose heart!

– Galatians 6:9

The city was going to flourish again, in fact...

A)Now something of note is the time of Israel existing without walls didn't happen in Zechariah's day,

B)It didn't happen in Romans days

1)It didn't happen until June of 1967 when Israel gained control of Jerusalem again,

C)and they spread far beyond the dilapidated walls that once held people in them

D)And why this is important is Ezekiel says in chapter 38 that that invasion from Gog and Magog,

1)the nations to the north would happen when Israel began to dwell without walls

E)The stage is set for that invasion: God protects His people and wipes out those invaders

1)Russia, Iran – those other Arab nations

The subject of Dream 4 is the High Priest Joshua.

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. ²And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?"

³Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.

⁴Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes."

⁵And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head."

So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the LORD stood by.

A)As the dream begins: Zechariah sees Joshua standing before the Lord and Satan at his right hand ready to accuse Joshua.

B)Joshua isn't exactly dressed for success. Verse 3 says he's wearing "filthy garments."

1)The Hebrew term translated “*filthy*” actually means “*excrement stained,*” or “*dung splattered.*”

C)Imagine a bad case of diarrhea. That’s his robe.

The Angel of the Lord is on one side of Joshua. Satan is on the other side.

A)And the devil is up to his old tricks.

B)He is called the accuser of the brethren and is trying to heap guilt on a child of God who’s helping to build the Temple.

C)This is what he’s up to today. Satan doesn’t want to see a strong church in our community, 1)so he tries to condemn and discourage builders like you and me.

2)*How can you be serving God - look at the sins you’ve racked up?*

D)Notice what happens:

Satan comes to accuse Joshua and the Lord steps up to defend him, verse 2, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan!... Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?”

A)What a fitting description for all of us? None of us deserve God’s mercy and grace.

B)We’re all brands snatched out of hell.

1)No one is good enough for God.

C)Take the witness stand and try to prove you’re worthy of God’s favor

1)and Satan will tear you up on cross-examination.

D)Attempt to defend yourself and he’ll drag up every nasty thought and dirty deed.

1)*Thankfully, Joshua doesn’t defend himself.*

Verse 5 is the key to his defense. “The Angel of the LORD stood by.”

A)The Lord was Joshua’s attorney.

B) Often in the OT the Angel of the Lord is a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus.

1)Here, Joshua recruits *the divine Perry Mason*. Like ole Perry, Jesus never took a case he didn’t win.

C)Jesus rebukes the devil – then strips off Joshua’s filthy threads - clothes him in rich robes and a clean turban.

D)Jesus does the same for us! -

Lesson: We have a Divine defense attorney: 1 John 2:1 sounds like Zechariah 3. We’re told, “If anyone sins, we have an advocate (or an attorney) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

A)Case is presented: ALL TRUE - On the cross Jesus canceled out our sin.

B)He forgives us, accepts us, clothes us in His righteousness

1)God looks at you and sees you clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

C)It reminds me of Martin Luther’s vision. **Martin was at his desk when Satan appeared to remind him of all the evil he’d done.**

Finally *Luther* had enough of *ole Lucifer*. He shouted, “It’s all true, Satan, and many more sins I have committed which are known to God only; but write at the bottom of your list, *‘the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanses us from all sin!’*”

Luther grabbed the inkwell sitting on his desk, and threw it at Satan.

It was a turning point in Luther’s life – from that moment on he was free from the devil’s debilitating condemnation...

Of course, the inkwell missed the devil, and hit the wall. Today, 500 years later, you can visit the Wartburg Castle in Germany, and still see the famous ink spot.

And just as Luther did, I hope you’ll Take a stand on the blood of Jesus and stop allowing the devil to bury your good intentions under a mountain of guilt.

In Dream 5 Ch.4:1-14 Two Sundays ago – Major Point of the Minor Prophets – Zechariah

A)In this dream Zechariah sees an automated Menorah.

B)A Jewish Menorah is a seven branch lamp stand that burns with olive oil.

1)A long process - lots of work - went into lighting the Temple Menorah.

C)Olives had to be grown and harvested. They had to be crushed and the oil extracted.

1)The menorah was then filled and tended by the priest.

But none of this applies to the menorah Zechariah sees.

A)There's piping that runs from the olive trees into a bowl and onto the lamps.

B)This menorah is supernaturally supplied

C)Lesson is revealed for us in v.6 "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts."

D)As God fueled the menorah without human help, the Temple will be constructed thru the power of the Spirit.

The Lord says to Zerrubabbel – you laid the foundation and w/ my help you are going to finish it

A)In Scripture oil is a type of the Holy Spirit.

B)*Oil lubricates, soothes, heals, lights, warms, refreshes, invigorates, fuels, polishes, and shines –*

1) all of which the Spirit does in our lives.

C)**The Holy Spirit stokes our service.**

1)He lubricates the work so it's easier and smoother. He refreshes along the way, and creates in us a shine.

D)God is able to do great things in our lives and through our lives

1)As we learn to co-operate with and depend upon the power of His Spirit

E)More on that – Study By His Spirit – Major Point of the Minor Prophets – Zechariah

Dream 6 Zechariah sees a flying scroll. Ch.5:1-4

Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll. 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits." 3 Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: 'Every thief shall be expelled,' according to this side of the scroll; and, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled,' according to that side of it."

4 "I will send out the curse," says the Lord of hosts; "It shall enter the house of the thief And the house of the one who swears falsely by My name.

It shall remain in the midst of his house And consume it, with its timber and stones."

In this vision Zechariah sees a flying scroll – It's quite large - 30 feet by 15 feet.

A)Think of the airplanes that fly down the beach pulling advertising banners behind them.

B)Zechariah sees a banner announcing judgment.

It reads, "**The curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth.**"

C)God has been encouraging and encouraging, and now it is time for a little warning

1)You know sometimes we don't like that –

D)But God warns us because he loves us!

1)You as a parent – HOT don't touch

E)WARNING LABELS ARE NECESSARY

1)Stupid: Don't drink this and some still do!

Lesson: Sin always has negative consequences

Dream 7 Chapter 5:5-11 is Zechariah's version of the old TV show "I Dream of Jeannie."

A)But rather than a Jeannie in a bottle, he sees a woman in a bushel basket.

B)But the girl isn't a pretty Jeannie in a skimpy costume.

1)Her name is "**Wickedness.**" You might say, "*She's a real basket case.*"

C)The angel takes this wicked witch, stuffs her in a basket, then seals it with a lid made of lead.

1) She's transported back to Shinar, or Babylon.

D)Wickedness is seen here pictured as a woman

1)And the reason this fits so well is because the Hebrew word for wickedness is a feminine word

But this is an encouragement – is a picture of God carrying their sin away

A)Apparently, the Jews who returned to Jerusalem brought with them a few evils they'd picked up in Babylon.

B)Their evil gets *returned to sender.*

C)And here's a lesson for us.

1) You can't begin a new life in Christ if you're holding on to *dirty thoughts*, and *corrupt attitudes*, and *sinful habits*.

D) So Stuff your past in a basket, plop on a lid, and ship it far, far away.

Dream 8 Chapter 6:1-14

Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze. 2 With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses, 3 with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses—strong steeds.

4 Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?"

5 And the angel answered and said to me, "These are four spirits of heaven, who go out from their station before the Lord of all the earth. 6 The one with the black horses is going to the north country, the white are going after them, and the dappled are going toward the south country." 7 Then the strong steeds went out, eager to go, that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth. And He said, "Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth." So they walked to and fro throughout the earth. 8 And He called to me, and spoke to me, saying, "See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country."

Zechariah sees two bronze mountains, and four chariots riding between the mountains.

A) The chariots, presumably war-chariots, are pulled by horses – red horses, black horses, white horses, and dappled (*or pale*) horses.

B) It's interesting, 600 years later on the isle of Patmos, John sees these same horses –

1) The four horsemen of the Apocalypse - and writes about them in Revelation 6.

C) In fact, the book of Zechariah gets quoted or referenced 31 times in the book of Revelation.

D) This has led many scholars to believe that Zechariah is seeing a vision of the end of days –

1) when God will pour out His tribulation on the whole world

The reason this is an encouragement is because the Tribulation ends with the Messiah on the throne

A) Ruling and Reigning in His 1,000 year Reign of Perfect peace

B) The picture is made clear by what happens next

v.9-11 Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "Receive *the gift* from the captives; from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have come from Babylon; and go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. Take the silver and gold, make an elaborate crown, and set *it* on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest."

As the refugees continued to return from exile they brought with them gifts from wealthy Babylon.

A) Three men in particular who bring gifts are referenced Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah

B) The meaning of their names is interesting: (Heldai means *robust*, Tobijah means *God's goodness*, and Jedaiah means *God knows*),

C) McGee sees the intention that **God knows that through His goodness, He will put His king on the throne, and He will do it in a robust manner.**

V.11 Make an elaborate crown, and set it on the head of Joshua:

A) It was absolutely unusual to crown a high priest, because priests were never crowned as kings and kings were never priests.

B) Elaborate crown: This is definitely a *royal crown* and is not the customary headdress of the high priest.

C) There already was a strong, godly civil leader in Jerusalem named Zerubbabel.

1) It seems like it would have made a lot more sense to crown Zerubbabel instead of **Joshua . . . the high priest.**

But this was meant to be a Picture: Joshua was crowned because the next descendant of David to rule would be Jesus,

A) Joshua the High Priest being crowned prefigured

Jesus our Joshua – Kingly High Priest

V.12-13 "Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, saying: "Behold, the Man whose name is the **BRANCH!** From His place He shall

branch out, and He shall build the temple of the Lord; Yes, He shall build the temple of the Lord. He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule on His throne; so He shall be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”⁶

B) This is a familiar title for the Messiah (Isaiah 4:2 and 11:1, Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15).

C) The Branch is associated with fruitfulness and life.

1) This speaks of the fruitfulness and outreaching life of the Messiah.

Lesson: Jesus returns He will rule in this temple as a Kingly High Priest and Israel shall be fruitful again.

D) Reminder for us: John 15 – Our Key to bearing fruit for the Lord is to abide in Jesus the Branch

1) His nutrients pour into our lives

Now section 1 Closes out with Chapters 7-8 which take place 2 years later – 4th year of King Darius

A) Chapter 7 looks back at the sin that led the nation into Captivity

B) Chapter 8 looks forward to what will happen when the Messiah comes to reign.

C) Ch. V.1-7 Pinpoints the problem with the nation: They were given over to rituals but not relationship.

D) Even instituting a different fast that the Lord did not require.

1) Really show how spiritual we are – Willing to do more than required.

V.8-10 Reveals The conduct God desires – What God wants: people who will listen and obey.

Then the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, saying, “Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother.’ “

(11-12) The rebellious reaction of God’s people.

“But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. Fingers in ears – talk to the hand Yes, they made their hearts like flint, Hardened

refusing to hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the Lord of hosts.”

V.13-14 The Result was judgment – Exile in Babylon

Therefore it happened, *that* just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so they called out and I would not listen,” says the LORD of hosts. ¹⁴ “But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them, so that no one passed through or returned; for they made the pleasant land desolate.”

ZECHARIAH 8 – JERUSALEM RESTORED

A) The Lord makes 10 statements regarding future blessing upon his people in this chapter.

B) Each one begins with the Phrase: The Lord says

V.1-2 The Lord says: My passionate love for Israel has not diminished.

Again the word of the Lord of hosts came, saying, “Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her.’

I am zealous for Zion with great zeal:

A) The word for zealous in the ancient Hebrew comes from the idea “to become intensely red.”

B) It has the thought of a face becoming flushed with deep emotion.

1) This shows that God is passionately concerned for His people.

V.3 The Lord says: I will return to Zion

“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.’ “

V.4-5 The Lord says: Jerusalem will be a thriving, safe place.

“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. The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.’

When we visit the Jewish Quarter in the Old City

A) A great verse to read by one of the playgrounds.

B) It's a prophecy that's being fulfilled today!

C) These prophecies, and others like them, are why no Bible-believing Jew will ever give Jerusalem back to the Muslims.

1) God is zealous for Zion...

D) And let me add, He's zealous for our community.

1) He doesn't just live in Jerusalem. He's on our streets, in our schools, in your workplace.

V.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."

The Lord says: V.6 Even if it is too amazing for you, is it too hard for Me?

A) What I am saying might be blowing your minds

B) You look at the devastation and the ruin – hard to imagine Jerusalem being great again –

1) But I see it and it will come to pass

C) God looks at you and me – He sees the finished product.

1) Making us like Jesus

D) Sometimes all we see is how far we are from that

1) How unlike Jesus we are – We have people in our lives that love to remind us of that.

E) Not too marvelous for the Lord – He who has begun a good work will be faithful to complete it!

(7-8) The Lord says: Israel will be gathered, far more than the few who have returned thus far.

"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; 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.'"

God promises a gathering from exile to come that will far surpass the present gathering.

A) This gathering has already begun – Jewish people have been returning to their Homeland by the 1,000's in recent years

B) V.8 They shall be My people and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness:

C) The gathering God promises will not just be a geographic gathering, but a spiritual gathering.

1) It won't just be that their address changes, but their heart also.

V.9-13 The Lord says: Take courage; finish the work, for I will bless you.

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

Listen, the response to the Promise of God's Presence and power and Provision is always

A) Be strong and courageous – Joshua – with Moses so I will be with you.

B) Keep our eyes not on the greatness of the task – the Enemy – or the Obstacle

1) But on the greatness of our God!

C) Let your hands be strong: The foundation was set more than fifteen years before.

1) Though they faced lack (**no wages for man**) and opposition (**no peace from the enemy**),

D) God wanted them to find strength for the work (let your hands be strong) in His promise.

(14-17) The Lord says: I am determined to bless My people.

"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, so again in these days I am determined to do good to Jerusalem and to the house

of Judah. Do not fear. 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; 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."

Just as I determined to punish you when your fathers provoked Me . . . in these days I am determined to do good:

God promises blessing to Israel instead of cursing, and He promises it on the principle of the Mosaic Covenant.

A)Luke: **It is the fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdom**

B)God is like us – He doesn't enjoy punishing his kids – Loves to Bless them!

C)**Jews Prayed hands raised - Expectation**

(18-19) The Lord says: in light of your glorious future, feasting is more appropriate than fasting.

Then the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, "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.'"

The fast of the fourth month . . . shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts:

A)Each one of these fast days remembered a tragic day around the fall of Jerusalem.

B)God here promises blessing so wonderful that these mournful fasts will be transformed into cheerful feasts of celebration.

C)Beauty for ashes and He turns our mourning into Dancing

(20-22) The Lord says: the nations will stream into Jerusalem, to seek the Lord.

"Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Peoples shall yet come, inhabitants of many cities; 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." Yes, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord.'

In Zechariah's day not many people wanted to come

to a downtrodden city like Jerusalem.

A) God promises a redemption so great that one day the peoples shall yet come to the glorified city.

V.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.*"'

(23) The Lord says: God will give Israel such favor that the nations will see God is with them.

A)Others will want to be there.

B)God had always wanted His relationship with Israel to have a contagious effect on the other nations

1)That will finally happen during the Reign of Jesus

C)Even so today: Jesus wants our relationship to have a contagious affect upon others

D)We would be so FREE – SO FULL OF JOY

1)You have something I don't and I want it

As we close tonight – Consider what the Lord said in the beginning of Chapter 8

A)God was and is zealous toward Israel. He has plans for her future.

B)And God is zealous for you. He also has dreams He wants you to fulfill.

Woodrow Wilson put it, "We grow great by dreams... Some of us let these great dreams die, but others nurse them through bad days until they bring us into sunshine."

C)Hold on to the dreams God gives you.

1)Dreams for ministry... or relationships... or business... or family...

D)Some people work, and never dream. Others dream, but never work.

1) Be like Zechariah. Let your dreams cause you to serve God faithfully.