

“A Godly Jealousy”

Zechariah 8:1-13

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Teaching Aim: To recognize the unique relationship that the LORD of hosts (Yahweh) has with His Bride Israel. To understand not all jealousy is wrong, especially when it is God’s jealousy for His Bride who wandered into idolatrous affairs with other gods. To see God’s zeal for His people to repent and return into a right relationship with Him. To recognize the LORD is a covenant keeping God who always keeps His promises, even when His people don’t.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

Part I: The LORD will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem on the Holy Mountain (Zechariah 8:1-3)

1. Ten times in **Zechariah chapter 8**, the words, *“Thus says the LORD of hosts”* are used to introduce an address to the Jewish remnant. The LORD had a message for His wandering Bride, He wanted her to be restored back to a right relationship with Him (**vv. 1-2**). What can we learn about the LORD’s feelings for His wandering Bride from the word *“jealous?”* *“Zealous”* in the New King James Version is translated *“jealous”* in the KJV, NASB, NIV & ESV. Today we tend to think of jealousy as being a bad thing, but is it always? How about when it comes to God’s jealousy for His wandering Bride - Israel? How would you define the word, *“jealous?”* (See Dictionary)
2. What did the LORD of hosts promise in **verse 3**? What makes this promise so remarkable considering the adultery Israel had committed with the gods of the nations? Jerusalem in the future will be known as *“the City of Truth.”* According to **verse 3**, what are two other names the city will be known by? What are some of the other names used in the Bible as synonyms for Jerusalem? (Hint: Search online)

Part II: The people will be restored to Jerusalem and the city will dwell in safety during the millennium (Zechariah 8:4-8)

1. Who are the most vulnerable people in any society (**vv. 4-5**)? What do we learn about the future of Jerusalem from these verses? How does the peace and harmony described in the future Jerusalem contrast the turmoil of the Babylonian captivity and the days preceding it? What can we learn about the city from the fact that the old men and old women were described as sitting in the streets and the children freely playing in the streets? How does this peaceful climate contrast the Jerusalem of today?

2. The peace in Jerusalem that is ultimately referred to in **verses 4 & 5** is the peace that will occur during the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ when Jesus reigns on earth from the city. What surprising detail can we learn about this age from **Isa. 65:20-21**? How will life in the millennium be similar to life in the pre-flood days?

3. The returning exiles had become discouraged by all the opposition they were facing in their attempt to rebuild God's temple, but is anything too difficult for God? What kind of challenges are you facing in your life? Do they seem overwhelming to you right now? What can we learn from the words of Jesus in **Matt. 19:26**?

4. During the Babylonian captivity, the Jewish captives were taken to the east, but not to the west. At the time, going west would only lead them into the Mediterranean Sea. During the diaspora following the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Romans, the Jewish people were spread throughout the entire world for the next 2,000 years. This made a return to the Promised Land seem unlikely, if not utterly impossible. What bold promise did God make to His people in **verses 7 & 8**?

5. In **verse 8b**, we find one of the many "*I wills*" in Scripture. Under the Old Covenant Law, God commanded His people, "*Thou shalt,*" or "*Thou shalt not,*" with the responsibility being on the people to 100% obey Him. The people failed miserably. Under the New Covenant, Jesus did for us what we could never do for ourselves. What will the Lord do for us according to **Jer. 31:31-34b** and **Ezek. 36:24-27**? How does Jesus relate to this promise?

6. The Hebrew word "*berit*" or "*covenant*" literally means "*to cut a covenant.*" Covenants were ratified by the shedding of blood. Jesus Christ is the ultimate example of "*cutting a covenant*" when He ratified the New Covenant by dying on the cross for our sins. Even though Jesus is "*Emmanuel*" (God with us), this was difficult for Him. Why did Jesus react the way he did in **Matt. 26:36-46**; **Psa. 22:1** and **Matt. 27:46**? Name some ways that you see the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in **Psalms 22:14-18**? What major historical event does **Psa. 22:21b-22** describe? Note: David wrote **Psalms 22** under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit some 1,000 years before Christ. How do we know that the blood of Jesus did in fact ratify the New Covenant? (See **1 Cor. 11:25**)

Part III: The temple will be rebuilt, and the people will be blessed when Messiah returns and reigns on earth (Zechariah 8:9-13)

1. What word of encouragement was given by the LORD of hosts in **verse 9**? Why was it important for the Jewish remnant to let their hands be strong? What mission had the LORD assigned them to? (See **Zech.1:16**) How have God's promises of future blessing encouraged you to press on during difficult times?
2. In **verse 10** the LORD of hosts reminded the Jewish remnant of how bad things had been before their return to Jerusalem during the Babylonian captivity. With obedience comes blessing, with disobedience comes curse. This was true during Zechariah's day, and it is still true today. What can we learn from **Deut. 28:38-46** about the curse Israel faced? Does God still curse nations today because of their disobedience? Is it possible that the United States will have to walk through difficult times if we don't repent and turn back to the Lord?
3. What encouraging word does the LORD of hosts give to the Jewish remnant in **verse 11**? The day of the curse had passed, now if the Jewish remnant would be faithful to God, the day of blessing would come. What are some areas in your life that you are struggling with and need to get right with God? What are some practical steps that you can take to do so?
4. During the millennial reign of Jesus Christ, everything will change for the house of Judah and the house of Israel (**vs. 13**). What major change is described in **verse 13**? How should God's people react to the blessing of the Lord? What did the Jewish remnant fear at the time and why was it important for their hands to be strong? What had the LORD of hosts commanded the returnees to do through the prophets Haggai and Zechariah? (See **Zech. 1:16**)
5. Few people realize what a special time we live in today historically. Read **Zechariah 8:8** and notice the covenantal language found within the verse. After almost 2,000 years of the diaspora following the Roman conquest in A.D. 70, God has kept His word and bought the Jews back into the Promised Land. How can we see the nation of Israel's 1948 restoration to the Promised Land in **Ezek. 37:1-8**?

6. God really does keep His promises. How should this truth affect our Christian walk today? (See **1 Cor. 15:58**; **Zech. 8:13b**) Have you received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? If not, why not do so right now in prayer?

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- The LORD is zealous for His wandering Bride, it is His desire to have her back and in a right relationship with Him.
- The LORD of hosts promised to return to Zion and dwell at Jerusalem with His people.
- Jerusalem will be called by the names: *"the City of Truth," "The Mountain of the LORD of hosts,"* and *"The Holy Mountain."*
- The city will be restored to a place of safety, prosperity, and true worship; this will ultimately take place during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.
- Jewish people from all over the world will be brought home to the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem; the process has already started.
- A change in political climate will occur to allow the rebuilding of the temple.
- God will cause the remnant to be prosperous in all they do if they simply obey Him.
- Israel will no longer be considered a curse but rather a blessing to the nations of the world.