

“The Zeal of the LORD of Hosts” (To bless us!)
Zechariah 8

Zechariah 8:1–23 (NKJV)

8 Again the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying, ² “Thus says the LORD of hosts:

‘I am zealous for Zion with great zeal;
With great fervor I am zealous for her.’

³ “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.’

⁴ “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.

⁵ The streets of the city
Shall be full of boys and girls
Playing in its streets.’

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.

⁷ “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;

⁸ 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.’

⁹ “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.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ But now I *will* not *treat* the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ says
the LORD of hosts.

¹² ‘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.

¹³ 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.’

¹⁴ “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,

¹⁵ So again in these days

I am determined to do good
To Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.
Do not fear.

- ¹⁶ 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;
- ¹⁷ 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.”

¹⁸ Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, ¹⁹ “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.’

²⁰ “Thus says the LORD of hosts:

- ‘Peoples shall yet come,
Inhabitants of many cities;
- ²¹ 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.”
- ²² Yes, many peoples and strong nations
Shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem,
And to pray before the LORD.’

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.*” ’ ’ ”

I. Know the LORD of hosts! –

"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (John 17:3 NKJV)

1. It is IMPORTANT to know our God as the LORD of hosts! Why do I say this? Look how OFTEN the Lord uses this title in the BIBLE, and in this chapter –

A. In the Bible God calls Himself LORD of hosts – 940 times!

B. In **Zechariah 8:1** He uses it twice!

C. In this chapter He uses it 17 times in 23 verses- :1 (2) :3 (1) :4 (1) :6(2) :7(1) :9(2) :11(1) :14(2) :18(1) :20(1) :21(1) :22(1) :23 When the Bible repeats something, it is IMPORTANT!

2. It is important to know what “LORD of Hosts” means!

A. The phrase means “LORD of hosts” means LORD of armies.

B. Yet, just as blessed means more than happy, so does “hosts” means much more than what we typically think when we think ARMIES. If you understand the term Biblically, it means God is the commander of EVERYTHING!

* His armies include locusts – **Exodus 10:4, 12, 13, 14, 19** and spiritual locusts – **Revelation 9:3 & 7**

* His armies (His hosts) include the all the plagues of Egypt not only the locusts but the frogs (**Exodus 7:14-25**) Gnats (**Exodus 8:12-15**) Lice (**Exodus 8:16-19**) Flies (**Exodus 8:20- 32**) and not only these but blood in place of Egypt’s water (**Exodus 7:14**) Disease on livestock (**Exodus 9:1-7**) the boils (**Exodus 9:8-12**) the hail (**Exodus 9:13-35**) Darkness (**Exodus 10:21-29** ...

* His rule is over the waters of the Red Sea – **Exodus 14:21- 31**

* Israel’s army would be included, including their trumpets that blew down the walls of Jericho, including David and his sling and stone which took down Goliath!

* The bow that was drawn at a venture which killed wicked King Ahab would be included ...

* Nebuchadnezzar ruler of Babylon who took and his armies which burned Jerusalem and stole away her children these are part of God’s Host too!

* The fish / whale that swallows Jonah, the worm that killed Jonah's precious plant ... your headache, someone's cancer, a king's insomnia, record books, all these are part of God's Army!

He is called "Lord of Hosts" because He controls EVERYTHING! - **The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD. (Proverbs 16:33 NKJV)**

Even the men who killed Jesus Christ were under God's control – **"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know-- 23 "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; (Acts 2:22-23 NKJ) "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 "to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. (Acts 4:27-28 NKJ)**

II. Feel God's Zeal –

Again the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying, 2 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; With great fervor I am zealous for her.' (Zechariah 8:1-2 NKJ)

How does God (according to Zechariah 8) bless His people?

1. By returning to them, giving them Himself – **Zechariah 8:3 & 8**
3 **"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.'** Zechariah 8:3 (NKJV)

A. *This is really a prophecy of Christ's coming –*
23 **"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,"** which is translated, "God with us." Matthew 1:23 (NKJV)

B. Jesus is the Truth –

⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. John 14:6 (NKJV)

14 ... ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, ... Revelation 3:14 (NKJV)

C. This was God’s covenant promise –

³³ But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Jeremiah 31:33 (NKJV)

2. Of course, eventually God will dwell with His people FOREVER - ... They shall be My people And I will be their God, In truth and righteousness.’ Zechariah 8:8 B (NKJV)

² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” Revelation 21:2–5 (NKJV)

3. Having God, and His zeal for us, is everything -

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? Romans 8:31 (NKJV)

¹¹ For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good *thing* will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

¹² O LORD of hosts, Blessed *is* the man who trusts in You! Psalm 84:11–12 (NKJV)

4. By bringing peace and safety to them (even in marvelous ways) –
Zechariah 8:4-6

⁴ “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. ⁵ The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls Playing in its streets.’ 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. Zechariah 8:4–6 (NKJV)

A. They had endured war. Women had seen husbands killed. Women had eaten their babies –

⁹ Those slain by the sword are better off Than those who die of hunger; For these pine away, Stricken for lack of the fruits of the field. ¹⁰ The hands of the compassionate women Have cooked their own children; They became food for them In the destruction of the daughter of my people. ¹¹ The LORD has fulfilled His fury, He has poured out His fierce anger. He kindled a fire in Zion, And it has devoured its foundations. Lamentations 4:9–11 (NKJV)

B. Old men and women mean they were blessed to live so long, children playing in the streets means the streets must be SAFE!

5. By bringing them out of captivity – **Zechariah 8:7-8 A**

⁷ “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; ⁸ I will bring them back, And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. ... ’ Zechariah 8:7–8 A (NKJV)

Even captivity to sin – **Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ "And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. ³⁶ "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. (John 8:34-36 NKJ)**

6. By giving them strength and prosperity, even in regard to building the Temple, even the Temple that is us – **Zechariah 8:9- 13** (see also **Ephesians 2:19-22 and 3:14-21, 6:10**)

⁹ **“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. ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ But now I *will not treat* the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ says the LORD of hosts. ¹² ‘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. ¹³ 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.’ Zechariah 8:9–13 (NKJV)**

We are the temple, pray we would be filled with God’s Spirit, be strong in the Lord, in His might!

7. He is zealous to “do good” to them by grace even as He may punish for our doing evil – **Zechariah 8:14-17**

¹⁴ **“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, ¹⁵ So again in these days I am determined to do good To Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear. ¹⁶ 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; ¹⁷ 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.” Zechariah 8:14–17 (NKJV)**

- A. *Just as He killed them and let them starve, so He blesses!*
- B. *Speak the TRUTH!*
- C. *Live in peace with your neighbor ...*

8. By replacing their mourning and fasting with rejoicing and feasting –
Zechariah 8:18-19

¹⁸ Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, ¹⁹ “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.’ Zechariah 8:18–19 (NKJV)

9. By spreading these blessings world-wide – **Zechariah 8:20-23**

²⁰ “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Peoples shall yet come, Inhabitants of many cities; ²¹ 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.” ²² Yes, many peoples and strong nations Shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, And to pray before the LORD.’

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.*” ’ ” Zechariah 8:20–23 (NKJV)

A. *Remember this is the remnant –*

B. *This prophecy is fulfilled by men like Peter, John & Paul –*

⁴ And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “*which,*” He said, “*you have heard from Me;* ⁵ *for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.*” ⁶ Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ And He said to them, “*It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.* ⁸ *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*” Acts 1:4–8 (NKJV)

III. Rejoice in what God has done and will still do -

²⁰ And Mordecai wrote these things and sent letters to all the Jews, near and far, who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, ²¹ to establish among them that they should celebrate yearly the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar, ²² as the days on which the Jews had rest from their enemies, as the month which was turned from sorrow to joy for them, and from mourning to a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and joy, of sending presents to one another and gifts to the poor. Esther 9:20–22 (NKJV)

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