

Can we watch it again? Lynette is riveting. All right. If you want to get out your Bibles this morning, we're going to be in Zechariah chapter 8 as we continue through the book of Zechariah together. I have what I believe will be a shocking announcement to make to you. There's a baptism after service out by the.

Pond. Yeah.

Never gets old to me. All right. The eighth chapter of Zechariah. While you guys are making your way there, then let me remind you, historically in 536 BC, there's 42,000 Jews. A little remnant, of Jews, comparative to the million or so that were deported a generation earlier. This remnant returns from Babylon to Jerusalem, and they have one main goal, and that is to rebuild the temple. However, as we've mentioned week after week in our study, even though the work started the same year that they returned, it stopped that same year in opposition, arising to it, with opposition arising of the people were overwhelmed and they quit. And it probably would have been okay if it stopped for just a couple years. But it stopped for 16 full years. And in that time they started kind of living for themselves. And so they probably made excuses like, well, you know, we probably were just supposed that was the reason God used to get us here, right? We got here. Now that we're in the land, let's just live our lives. But God raised up. 16 years later, Haggai and Zechariah to encourage the people to complete the task of building the temple. And so he uses Haggai practically. Haggai is maybe even. You call him pragmatic. What he says is stop building your paneled houses and put the Lord first. Build his temple, and then he also has Zechariah, who is more encouraging. But as we've mentioned, quite a bit more mystical. And so he is going to use visions in the first six chapters, eight visions to kind of peel back the curtain into the spiritual, the supernatural, in order to help the people believe that they can accomplish this task that's bigger than them, by the power of God, that God's going to complete it, and it's not going to be by their might or by, you know, their power, but by God's Spirit. So those visions constitute the first section of the book. And if you are familiar with those visions, there's lots of horses in them. Zechariah loves horses. The visions are actually bookended first and last by horses. And it made me think about the horse that that fell over. Do you know what he said?

I've fallen and I can't giddy up. Anyway, horses.

Now, when we get to chapter seven, we have a new section in the book. And Zechariah is really two sections. It's the visions. And then it's a section that talks about primarily all God is going to do, not only when he fully brings them back into the land. In Zechariah's day and shortly thereafter. But at the second

coming of Christ. And so what? Chapters seven and eight do to begin this section is they actually answer a question that was brought to Jerusalem by a delegation from from Bethel. And there's a play on words in the sense that Bethel means house of God. And it's about 5 or 7 miles away from Jerusalem. And this delegation came to the temple, which is the house of God. So from the house of God came this delegation to the house of God to ask the leaders spiritually, should we continue to weep and to fast, as we have done for so many years while in captivity? And that's what happens in the seventh chapter, in the fourth verse. And and what they're saying is, while we were in captivity, we, we wept and fasted for the temple and its destruction. But now that we're back in the land and the temple is being rebuilt, then should we continue? And so God answers and he tells them, he says, well, I have a question for you. That's how he answers. When you fasted and you mourned during those 70 years, were you fasting for me? And the answer was no. That actually they were fasting for them. They probably meant in some form or fashion to be fasting for God. But if you really look deep down into the heart of the matter, it was about them. Their losses, their, you know, the stuff that had upended their lives. And God actually tells them that, you know, what I desire is something much different. In fact, what you find is that God never asked for them to fast to honor their past. They weren't even really supposed to. And instead of the fasting, verse 9 of Zechariah seven says, what I really would like is for you to have mercy. And so that sets the stage for then chapter 8. And remember, there were no chapter breaks in the original, so these two go together. And again, verse 1 of chapter 8 says, the word of the Lord of hosts came saying, thus says the Lord of hosts, I am zealous for Zion with great zeal and with great fervor. I am zealous for her. So we begin with the Lord talking about his zeal. When you see the phrase, thus says the Lord of hosts, the phrase Lord of hosts means Lord of heaven's armies. So when God uses that term, he's saying that I have the power of heaven's armies behind me to accomplish anything I say that I can accomplish. And so there's no opposition that can really stand against me. And heaven's armies. This phrase, depending on your translation, is used ten, 11 or even 12 times in this chapter. Thus says the Lord of hosts. So there's an emphasis here on God being able to accomplish what he says. Now this is what the Lord of hosts says. I am zealous for Zion, and the word zealous can also be translated jealous. And jealousy, I think, gets a bad rap in our culture. Maybe it's often connotated with unjust or even evil anger, but in the Bible, when you think about the love of God, the love of God does protect the love of God often lashes out in order to take care of those that he loves. And so God's zealousness or his jealousy is actually protective. And the word zealous in the Hebrew actually means to get intensely red, like your face flushes with anger or emotion in a moment of crisis. And so what's being conveyed here? To start this chapter is God is passionate about the

welfare of his children, and he's going to protect them. And what's true in Zechariah's day is true in our day. If you call yourself a child of the Lord. So thus says the Lord of hosts, who is zealous. He is zealous with great fervor. That word fervor can actually be translated fury. What? What's he going to say? Well, verse 3, thus says the Lord of hosts, I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth. The mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain. And 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 the streets. And thus says the Lord of hosts, if it if it is a marvelous thing in the eyes of this remnant, and the people of these days, will it also be a marvelous thing in my eyes, says the Lord of hosts. So let's stop there and cover this in two different slides. In verse 3, you see an emphasis on truth and holiness. God has this passion for Israel and Zion, the holy mountain. And what he says is that I'm going to return in dwelling in the midst of her. Then I shall create something truth and holiness. This return refers as much of Zechariah does from this point on to Christ's second coming. It's not just talking about the return in Zechariah's day, but it's talking about his millennial rule and reign in Jerusalem. And God will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. In fact, Zechariah is going to talk more about Christ's second coming and his dwelling in Zion than any other minor prophet. And he'll dwell in the midst, or he'll tabernacle in the midst. He'll live in the middle of his people, and they shall be called the City of Truth. And the Holy Mountain. And at this point in their history, when this was written, they were being called everything but that. In fact, the the nations were deriding them because of their collapse and how weak they were as they returned. So in this case, the city is going to be transformed because of God's presence dwelling within it. And it makes me think that, like the nation of Israel here, as prophesied of in the future, when Jesus comes back, when God's presence is unimpeded in my life or your life, then I become a person of truth and holiness because that's who God is. He produces what he is and those he dwells in. And that reminds me of Romans chapter 12. Many of you know this verse, chapter 2. It reads, and do not be conformed, or that is pressed into the mold of this world, but be transformed, which is the word in the Greek, that we get our word metamorphosis from. So it's metamorphosis like a, a, a larvae into a caterpillar. Is is the idea. And then from the caterpillar into the, the butterfly, the transformation that happens there, the, the metamorphosis. And so when I become God's and I am set apart, not conformed to this world, then Paul says, instead of being conformed, be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God. And so I love the fact that as I follow the Lord, and I, and I don't let the the world, you know, press me into its mold or its image, instead, I allow God to transform me. Then I'm in the

process, you know, and sanctification, which means to be set apart. It is a process. And I don't know about you, but for me, I've been a part of this process for over 30 years, and I, I know for sure I'm not a butterfly yet, you know, but I'm I'm definitely not a larvae anymore. So, you know, I'm in process and we all are. And God's transforming us. First Corinthians chapter 3 says that we are transformed. We are changed from glory to glory a little bit at a time. And so that's what he's going to do here. And when he does that in their lives spiritually, then the reason I read this whole section together is something else is going to happen physically. When Jesus comes back, and that is that old folks and children are going to play in the streets again. So this wouldn't seem like a big deal to most of us. Maybe. But due to the hardships of returning from Babylon, you know, the 900 or so miles across, some of the most, you know, uninhabitable desert regions of the Middle East, that that group that returned from Babylon to Jerusalem probably didn't include very many old people. There weren't very many to sit in the streets and in Zechariah's time, the the walls lay in in ruins and the streets weren't yet reconstructed. That would all happen later, when Nehemiah returns. And so while there were probably lots of children, the streets were not a safe place to play. And so he's saying that someday, even though you're in the middle of rebuilding this temple and you're rebuilding a temple in, in a in a pile of rubble, essentially the streets are tore up from the floor up, and the walls are all caved in. Someday it's going to thrive with joy and peace and unity. And I'd say this about Zechariah. Maybe of all the minor prophets. Many people, myself included, see much of what it prophesies as at least partially fulfilled in our days. And I would say this is true about this particular passage. As I was reading this, I was thinking about 2015. I was in Israel for their Independence Day, and they celebrate all week long. So everywhere we went there were celebrations up in the Galilee. I ended up being in the Old City of Jerusalem on the actual Independence Day itself. And so there was this massive celebration in the Old City where all the streets had been rebuilt and the walls rebuilt, and this building's rebuilt. And there was this throng of people celebrating in a way that only the Jewish people can do, dancing and singing and a bands, concerts. And what perplexed me more than anything that I experienced, really, it was shocking. Were all of these pre-teen kids, namely like bands of boys that were running free without supervision in this crowd. And I thought this, there's no way that this would ever happen in America. Like, can you imagine taking your kids up to the what used to be, you know, the VP fair or whatever in Saint Louis and just going run free kids, ten year olds go run there in in Israel, even to the right. Now with all that's going on over there, you know, geopolitically and the, the military stuff, kids can run free. There's no chance that somebody's going to them, take them down into a basement and do something awful to them, like over here. Like part of this has been fulfilled. They're running free. The other thing I, I

watched old people and they were sitting enjoying watching kids play. And one of the things that was humorous to me is during their festival, their celebration, I was a target for these young bands of boys because they have this in this celebration. They have this thing they do with these blow up hammers that have the Israeli flag on them, that they come by and they hit strangers with them. So they would do a drive by on me. You know, I was with my group of people, but they were targeting me. And then these hammers squeak and I, I found out later that it has something to do with the father of the Zionist movement, Theodor Herzl, and his painting that was made of him. But anyway, the old people sitting in the streets watching the kids play were getting quite a kick out of me, getting hammered. okay, so anyway, I thought, well, look, God is just doing this right in our midst. And yet this is just a little glimpse of what will happen in the Millennial Kingdom. And I say all that to say, in Zechariah's day, the things seemed too marvelous. God said, is this thing that's marvelous in your eyes? Is it also going to be marvelous in mine, or this thing that's impossible in your eyes is also impossible in mine? And the answer is no. Just because something's impossible in my eyes doesn't make it impossible in God's. And I was thinking about this this week because I really had a week where I was trying to. I would read through this multiple times, as I always do a few weeks ago. And then this week I was reading through it and I listened to guys teach on it, and I read commentaries on it, and I prayed over it, and I got to Friday, and I had absolutely zero, zero, zilch. And I'm like, what in the world am I going to say about this passage to these people? And then Friday night, I managed to have, like, I guess I'd say like a mini meltdown. I had one of the most prolific pity parties I've had for myself in quite a while, and as many of you husbands, I, I made sure my wife got to be a part of that against her will. And what I realized is my pity party was about a thing in our family that I, I haven't seen any movement or change in. And so I essentially spent, you know, quite a bit of time declaring how impossible this thing must be to see change in. And then, of course, I can look through the people that I get the keyhole and other people's lives and assume that everything's changing in their lives. So why is my life stuck? And you know, you've never been down that rabbit hole, but just, you know, act, act like you can empathize with me. But then I realized when I woke up the next morning at 6 a.m. and now I have to figure out something to say about this text, whether I want to or not, or whether I have anything or not. I. I spent the next 6 or 8 hours, and what I realized was, well, the unfortunate part about teaching the Bible is you have to actually live what you teach. And I usually live it by failure. So when I got up and looked at it through a new set of eyes spiritually, then I realized, well, man, just like here, there's things in my life I've decided are too marvelous for God to do. It shouldn't be that way, because God Jesus he said to. The disciples in in Matthew chapter 19, when he was talking about salvation to them, and they were

like, good grief, you know who can be saved? Jesus said in Matthew 19:26, with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. Well, you know, that's that should be ground zero for me as a believer. I mean, I have to know that if God can save me from hell, then he can do anything in life, because that's something that only can happen supernaturally. I mean, in fact, all the the healing Jesus did in the miracles, it was just to prove that if he could do this physically, he could do something much bigger that only God could do, and that's healed supernaturally, spiritually, and yet, boy, I'm prone to a pity party. And so I'd ask you the question I had to ask myself what things have I decided are too marvelous or impossible for God to do in my life? And then I have to ask myself, well, if I see it like that, is that how God sees it? The answer is no. Now God can do anything he chooses to do in my life. Well, he's going to do that here. And then that leads us to verse 6, or excuse me, seven 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. And I will bring them back, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness. And so proportionally, as we've talked about, very few people actually returned from Babylon to the Promised Land. And when the Jews returned to the land of second time, which is already happened, partially fulfilled in our days, it won't be just a trickle like it was in Zechariah's day, but it'll be a great multitude from the four corners of the earth, and Isaiah prophesied of this in Isaiah 11 verse 11, it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will set his hand again a second time. So this is after they were carried off into Babylon, and returned. They then were again. Historically, we know, carried off into captivity or dispersed after Jesus was crucified. And 70 A.D., the Romans dispersed them, and so gathered back a second time, which we have seen happen. They became a nation again in 1948, and when he does that a second time to recover the remnant of his people who are left, he'll do it from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam and Shinar, from Hamath and the islands of the sea. And he will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed from Judah and from the four corners of the earth. And so again that's happened in the last hundred years, started with the trickle. And then people started coming back. The Jews to their homeland after World War II. And then they were coming, namely from, you know, kind of half of the earth, until in our generation, the wall was torn down and communism fell in the Eastern Bloc and the USSR was opened up, where the majority of the Jews lived in the Western Hemisphere. And so they flooded back to Israel and Perplexingly. Every time it gets hot militarily over in Israel, more people are moved by God from the four corners of the earth to to move back to their homeland that are Jewish. And the numbers of Jews moving there is astronomical as we speak. So God's fulfilling this in our day. But having said all that, the

salvation mentioned here goes far beyond just geographical relocation or gathering. It encompasses a spiritual gathering as well, because when God starts to gather his people, the Jews from the four corners of the earth, then eventually when Jesus comes back, he's going to do something supernaturally spiritual, and that's going to include salvation for the nation. Paul writes about this in Romans chapter 11, verse 25. He says, for I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion. But blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles or the church age has come in. And so after the church age, all of Israel will be saved. As it is written, the deliverer shall come out of Zion, and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And for this God says, will happen, for this is my covenant with them. When I take away their sins. And so when God intervenes on Israel's behalf, there is going to be geographical relocation and gathering, but there's also going to be a spiritual assembly that's created. And what's true for them is true for you and I, that when God intervenes in our lives, it affects both our inward lives and our outward lives. There are some things that we leave. There's some new places we go. There's some some old haunts that we don't hang out in anymore. And then. But but our actions are all shaped by attitudes. And so our our actions imply a belief. And when we truly believe in God, things start to change. You know, he just reorients our way of living. He gives us a new worldview and it begins to reshape where we go and how we talk and and what we watch and who we interact with and how we live our lives. That's what God does. Through salvation. Israel will experience that. Well then verse 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, that's Haggai and Zechariah, who spoke in the day the foundation was laid for the house of the Lord of hosts, that the temple might be rebuilt. And so the year is now 518 BC. They're are two years into the building of the temple. It will be completed in 516 BC. And so they're right in the middle of the work. And he's saying, hey, I know it's hard, but but be strong. Those who listen to the words of Haggai and Zechariah for before these days, there were no wages for man, nor any higher for beast. There was no peace from the enemy. For whoever went out or came in. For I said, all men, every one against his neighbor. It's been hard, he says, but verse 11, 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, and 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. 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 notice to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear. These are the things that 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 things. I hate, says the Lord. And so he encourages them to be strong. He says, let your hands be strong. Two times in this section he says, do not fear. Two times in this section you know that when God tells people be strong, it's because they're weak. And when God tells people do not fear, it's because they're afraid. He knows right where we're at. He just addresses the issue head on, and I'm thankful that all of the great figures in the Bible are found afraid and weak. And that wasn't the end of their story. Even Jesus in his humanity was afraid and weak in the garden, as well as the apostle Paul, who maybe many would consider the greatest Christian ever lived. He was fearful. In Ephesus, he said, I fought with the beasts in Ephesus. He was fearful and Colossians, but he also wrote of just his struggle in life. In Second Corinthians chapter 12, with his ongoing physical issues, he said in verse 7 of Second Corinthians 12, and lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh, that is, a in the Greek a tent stake of an 18 inch tent stake was given to me. That's what he called his physical infirmity. A messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure so to keep him humble. God gave him a physical infirmity, and some people think he had bad eyes. Some people say his eyes oozed. Some people say he was hunchback. Other people believe he had malaria. We don't necessarily know. But he said, verse 8 concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And he said, that's what God said to him. My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, Paul said, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me, and therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then I am strong. And so when we find ourselves at our weakest, our most fearful, that's actually the place where God shows up the most prolifically and God has the ability then to do the most with us and for us when we are the weakest and we lack strength and courage because then we're out of his way. When I'm at my strongest and when I'm at my most courageous and I'm peacocking out in front of him. And I'm completely in his way. And then if he does anything through me, I'm prone to take all the glory. And so he says, well, at your weakest, then I'm still not just working, but I'm actually having my strength. The Lord's strength made perfect in your weakness. So he instructs his people, be strong. The words of Haggai and Zechariah are going to endure. They're going to rebuild the temple, and it's going to be completed. Israel will be prosperous one day and they'll be peaceful, and God is determined to do good for

them. Jeremiah wrote towards the end of his book in Jeremiah 29, or at least a little past the middle, as the nation of Judah, the southern Kingdom of Israel, was staring down the barrel of captivity, he wrote a verse that many of you probably call your life verse. Lots of Christians think this is their favorite verse. They hang it on their, you know, on their mirror in the bathroom. And when they do, I often wonder, do they know that this verse says things are going to get way worse before they get better? And that's Jeremiah 29:11 for I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not evil thoughts to give you a future and a hope. And that's as they're getting ready to be carried into captivity. That same Jeremiah wrote in Lamentations, the little poem that he wrote, he wrote it as Jerusalem was actually burning. And the people are being carried off into captivity. He sat in his grotto or his cave. The caves that would literally later form the face of a mount we now call Golgotha, or Calvary. He set there under the hill where Christ was crucified. Centuries before that would happen. And he penned these words as he watched people being killed and deported in the city, burning in Jerrod, in Lamentations 3:25 he said, the Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. And that makes me think about another verse that many would call their life verse from Romans chapter eight, verse 28, where Paul writes, and we know that all things work together for good to those who love God. Notice it doesn't say all things are good. It says, we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose. And so that's one of the great benefits of loving God and being called according to his purpose is that even though lots of things aren't good, he takes even bad things and works them for good in our lives. Which makes me ask myself this question. And I presented it to you because this study left me with a lot more questions than answers. Do I truly believe that God has determined to do good for me and their situation? They were looking around and all they could really see is bad. Maybe a few glimmers of hope, but the bad stacked up way more than the good. They had to ask themselves, hey, is God going to do good for us? Well, if you ask yourself that question, you may answer it like the man whose boy was demon possessed, Jesus was up on the Mount of Transfiguration. Mark chapter 9. The disciples are down in the valley. They run into this guy whose boy is demon possessed and his father is desperately looking for healing for his son, who is tormented both spiritually, spiritually, and physically. And if you're if you're a parent, you know there's no greater desperation than knowing your kid is hurting and you can't do anything for them. And he and he cries out to, to Jesus, can you help us? You know, we these guys can't do anything. Can you do anything? And Jesus said to him, if, if you can believe, then all things are possible. And this man, you probably know his his response to that. It's one of my favorite in the whole Bible. He says, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. And you know what? That was enough. Help my

unbelief, even though I believe was enough. Which which makes me think that man, God is so good. Do I believe that God is determined to do good for me? In the Bible, God is good. Everything that he has flows out of his goodness. Some of us are raised in faith traditions where God wasn't good. He was the big guy in the sky and he was looking to whack someone, right? And truly, God is just. He's both the just and the justifier. But God is good and he has determined good for me. And if I don't believe that about God, if I don't truly believe God is good and he is determining good for me, then it's going to distort the way that I live. Because what I believe about God is going to shape everything that I do in life, and how I experience and react to difficulties and victories, for that matter. Well, then Zechariah he goes on to say this. In verse 18, if I can get back there. I did it. 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, the fast, the 10th shall be joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah.

Therefore love, truth, and peace. And so each of the fasts that are mentioned here, as we told you last week, commemorated a tragic day that occurred around the fall of Jerusalem. And God promises that these mournful fasts would someday be turned into cheerful feasts. When you think about feasting, why did the the teddy bear say no to dessert after dinner? He was completely stuffed. You know, someday, someday, someday in the Millennial Kingdom, we can all we want, not get a potbelly. And so God says, I'm going to. I'm going to give you more than you ever dreamed of. The fast that they were, they were memorializing monthly. They they were never intended by God. And they were actually remembering fasts.

These events that were caused by their own sin. And so now God's grace, it's superseded their sin. And in the Kingdom age, feasting is an appropriate practice rather than fasting. In John chapter 16, verse 22, Jesus was trying to encourage his disciples. He was telling him, he's going to go away. If he goes away, he's going to send the Holy Spirit. If he sends the Holy Spirit, he's going to come back for them. Or they couldn't get their mind around it. And he's saying, look, your sorrow is going to be turned to joy. And then in verse 22 he says, therefore now you have sorrow, but I will see you again in your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. He's saying, look, I'm doing something that's that's something that nobody can. Why would you trade in for this temporal pleasure, something that can be taken for something that can't be taken. And the kingdom, the kingdom is now. Now the kingdom is spiritual. There's there's sorrow now, but in the midst of it, the kingdom of God is. It's not meat nor drink on this side of eternity, but it's righteousness. It's peace and joy to offset the sorrow. But when when Jesus comes back a second time, the kingdom will be material. It's physical, it's ultimate, and so there'll be ongoing celebration. But it makes me think I have the choice to cry over my failures and mourn my mistakes. Or I can. I can celebrate God's forgiveness

and and and lean into what he has done and what he is doing and what he will do. And they had that same choice. Well, God was going to do a bunch. Look at verse 20 thus says the Lord of hosts, people shall 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. And 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. And so Israel was originally meant to be a light to the Gentiles. God called them out of obscurity, to be a nation of kings and priests, and to guide the world to God. And instead they forfeited that right due to arrogance and exclusivity. And so God gave the church that right. We enjoy that privilege now. But in the millennial Kingdom, when Jesus comes back redeemed, Israel once again serve as God's evangelists or their messengers to the world. And here it's prophesied that in that day God will have done something so miraculously inside of them and in their land, that ten men of every language of all the nations will grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man. And the word grasp is to clutch, to hang on tight. The word is used when Moses picks up the snake in Exodus. Like you don't just pick that thing up. No, you gotta hold that sucker. I don't want that thing to bite me like I'm. I'm locking down on that thing. And so grasping the sleeve of a Jewish man and they're saying, let us go with you. We want to go to Jerusalem. Will you take us to your God? Because we've heard that he is with you. And in our day and age, the same is true for us, that the primary vehicle God uses to bring others to him is us. I don't know why he chose me. I won't speak for you. I feel like you know you. You Lord deserve a Rolls Royce and you got a Yugo. You know you got a Chevy Spark and you deserve a Mercedes Benz. But he chooses to do such. And it reminds me of a Colossians, chapter 1, verse 27, which says of the saints to them, God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of the mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. And so it never ceases to amaze me that God, as a Christian, he gives me Jesus Christ, my hope of glory. And then as I'm transformed into his image, then I actually have been called to make known to others to attract them to the same Jesus Christ, the hope of glory that I possess. It's amazing. Well, I'm going to leave you with questions that I ask myself through this study. Sometimes we just need to examine ourselves. Scriptures tell us if we examine ourselves, we wouldn't be judged. Maybe if you ponder this message or one of these questions, it'll lead to some growth. But here, basically the questions that I came up with in this study that originally I had way more questions about than answers. First question I had was, am I witnessing truth and holiness grow in my life? And if not, what could be hindering that progress? Second, is there anything

I've decided is beyond God's ability to fix or heal? And if so, am I going to allow him to speak into that, to deal with that, to give him the go ahead, to actually view his perspective on that? Thirdly, is my relationship with God shaping both my inner life and my outward actions? It's truly my faith. Have any feet? Faith without works is dead. Do I truly believe that God has determined? Good for me, because again, this will shape the way I live. Every facet of my life is determined on who I believe God to be and what he believes about me. Also, am I grieving over past failures or am I rejoicing in Christ's forgiveness? And finally, is my life leading others to Christ? If not, why? Heavenly father, we just want to thank you for Your word. And of course, I want to thank you for this group that shows up in a place in Scripture that's not attractive to many. Most people wouldn't say Zechariah as their favorite book of the Bible. Most people don't have a favorite verse from Zechariah. And yet, Lord, you challenge us. You encourage us, you convict us, and you stretch us through this amazing book. And so, Lord, would you please help us not be pressed into the mold of this world, but be transformed into the image of Christ in Jesus name we pray. Amen. Would you guys stand?