



**A Peak Behind the Curtain
The Future Kingdom
Zechariah 8:1-23**

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We ended last time in the middle of a Q&A session taking place at the Temple. The people of Bethel are following the Torah and have asked a question about a fast that was being followed by all but was not mandated in the Torah.

We have not arrived at the full answer yet, but we have had YAHWEH make two very specific observations about what took place in the past as it pertained to the people of Israel about following ritual.

When the heart is right, then the ritual is right because it flows from a heart of obedience and thanksgiving to God.

But, as we learned was the case pre-exile, when the heart is wrong, the ritual is wrong. Ritual does not do a thing if the heart is in the wrong place. Ritual never saves.



Case in point, there are some today who believe that baptism saves us, no it does not. Baptism is an outward sign of something that has already taken place internally as we follow Christ. It is the outward loyalty oath demonstrating to the fallen powers as well as to the world around us, that we are under new management and have full identified with the death burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and are now His followers.

If baptism was a primary requirement for salvation, then the thief on the cross has a serious problem. There was no time for him to get off the cross, be baptized, then get back up after Jesus said he was saved.

Luke 23:39–43

“One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”” (ESV)

Baptismal regeneration is the belief that a person must be baptized in order to be saved. It is our contention that baptism is an important step of obedience for a Christian, but we adamantly reject baptism as being required for salvation. We strongly believe that each and every Christian should be water baptized by immersion. Baptism illustrates a believer’s identification with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. (Got Questions Ministries 2002-2013)

In effect, baptism in New Testament theology is a loyalty oath, a public avowal of who is on the Lord’s side in the cosmic war between good and evil. But in addition to that, it is also a visceral reminder to the defeated fallen angels. Every baptism is a reiteration of their doom in the wake of the gospel and the kingdom of God. (Heiser 2015)

As New Testament believers, we also follow our Lord in obedience with communion. It too, at one level, is a means of expressing our love and loyalty to our King and also demonstrates to the enemy that we intend to be fully in with the Lord and are not neutral in the ongoing cosmic war. We are on the Lord’s side. We would be the ones running to Moses side.

Exodus 32:26

“So he stood at the gate of the camp and shouted, “Everyone who is on the LORD’s side come over here!” So all the Levites gathered round him,” (GNB)

In the culture today, as we remain faithful to Him, following Him in baptism and being obedient taking communion, we are showing to all who it is we follow. We are indeed “made new.”(2 Corinthians 5:17, Revelation 21:5)

These two “rituals” or rather ordinances which we readily follow here at Calvary, do not save. We are commanded to do them by the Lord and so we follow in obedience because we love Him and want to do what He commands. What saves is faith in the completed work of Christ.

Ephesians 2:8–10

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (ESV)



Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

If we add anything else as a “must do” to be saved, then we have moved to works and that is not how we are saved. But our fallen sin nature does like to gravitate towards that rule-based thinking because we struggle with the thought that the God of the universe desires to have us with Him for all eternity and He alone provides the means through Jesus Christ, for us to indeed be with Him eternally.

John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (ESV)

Now we come to Zechariah 8. This is still part of the answer to the question from the men of Bethel. We learn here that “God’s purpose concerning Jerusalem is unchanged by any ritual. Whether you go through a ritual or you don’t go through it, you are not going to change God’s plan and purpose.” (McGee 1997, 945)

We begin the chapter with YAHWEH drawing back the curtain and giving a clear view of conditions that will exist in Israel when Jesus Christ is on the throne.

Zechariah 8:1–3

“Then the word of the LORD of armies came, saying, “The LORD of armies says this: ‘I am exceedingly jealous for Zion, yes, with great wrath I am jealous for her.’ The LORD says this: ‘I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD of armies will be called the Holy Mountain.’” (NASB 2020)

There is a name for God that we will see here in chapter 8 used a lot. It will be used 18 times in this chapter. Three times in three verses already. The Lord of armies. יהוה יְבָרָאֹת YAHWEH Sabaoth.

Since we are moving to the end of the age, and based on what Ezekiel has already described as the backdrop for the restoration of Israel being through warfare, this term shows up. “God’s final transformation of human history is to be effected by means of warfare. Whether the language of apocalyptic battle is to be interpreted literally or figuratively, it is equally appropriate to the theme. The battle between good and evil has marked all human history; the final conquest of evil is thus set on a field of battle, in which God the warrior destroys the forces of evil.” (Craigie 1979-1988, 1020)

Zechariah will later directly address that coming event, Armageddon, in his description of the events surrounding the return of the Messiah at the end of the age in chapter 13 and 14.

All of this is the warmup. God is “exceedingly jealous for Zion, yes, with great wrath I am jealous for her.” The name being used has that as one of the elements in it.

There is an understanding by the remnant that what happened to them at the hands of Babylon and Assyria was due to the sin of the nation. God is now in the process of revealing the future He has in store for His people, so He will intentionally use a name that is intended to instill confidence in Him and His power to protect and deliver. And only through Him will this glorious future be possible.



We have just been told that ritual is not the key to appropriating this power, it is simply God's plan for His people and faithfulness is the key to be able to participate in what it is He is doing.

The word given to Zerubbabel still holds. "Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel, saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of armies." (Zechariah 4:6, NASB 2020) and notice the name for Himself that God used there.

This is one of His names and is one which those involved in the rebuilding of Jerusalem need to know as well as those of us living in these last days. Did you know that you and I have been specifically called of God to be His servants in this crazy culture? He wants to use you and me in everything we do as we allow Him to empower each and every day.

We can say that יהוה צבאות is YHWH the Almighty taken in its most intense meaning. This epithet refers to a God who is the Lord of all powers in heaven and on earth. The epithet יהוה צבאות does not merely include all powers. It also encompasses different characteristics and metaphors for God: God as King; God as warrior; God the almighty one; God as creator; God's holiness; God's glory; etc. (O'Kennedy 2007, 83)

In this name of God, YAHWEH Sabaoth, the Lord of Armies, we have, in this phrase the following:

- God as divine warrior
- God as King of the nations
- God the Almighty and omnipotent one
- God who seeks obedience and respect
- God who blesses
- God as judge of all
- God as creator
- God's grace, love and forgiveness

All of these thoughts are wrapped up in this term. This is indeed the only one who we need in these last days. He is the one who promises that the branch will rebuild the Temple. And we know Him and are His friends.

John 14:9

"Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (ESV)

John 15:15.

"No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (ESV)

"YHWH is seen by the prophets as Lord of the divine council and many of the prophets claimed themselves to have stood in YHWH's council. The fact that the epithet יהוה צבאות occurs so often in the prophets may reflect the prophet as a member of the divine council (Jer 23:18, 22) and the word of God thus becomes a divine instrument (Fretheim 1997:1298)." He is the God of ALL powers. (O'Kennedy 2007, 91-92)

Zechariah 8:1–2

"Then the word of the LORD of armies came, saying, "The LORD of armies says this: 'I am exceedingly jealous for Zion, yes, with great wrath I am jealous for her.'" (NASB 2020)

It is this all powerful one who is zealous, burning for Zion. Just as He previously stated in Zechariah 1:14. His jealous burning love for His people is why they are back in the land in the process of rebuilding the



Temple. It is also the reason why He is now revealing the future of the remnant to those who are asking and working hard to be faithful to Him.

It is as though God can no longer bear the estrangement from his people brought about by their obstinacy. Though they are not truly seeking him now, even in their fasts, his depth of feeling for them wells up into action on their behalf. As Ezekiel saw so clearly, restoration was totally due to God's initiative and grace (Ezek. 36:21, 22, 32). (Baldwin 1972, 159)

Zechariah 8:3

"The LORD says this: 'I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD of armies will be called the Holy Mountain.'" (NASB 2020)

And as promised earlier in Zechariah 1:16, He has promised that He will return to Jerusalem and dwell there. The Temple is halfway to being completed and God has already demonstrated with the visions that He is in their midst even in the present day. When God states He will return and dwell, He uses the perfect tense, as though it has already happened.

Jerusalem will indeed be the City of Truth and Zion the Holy Mountain. We are not talking about the immediate future here, but a future that is still being anticipated today. But as far as God is concerned, this is so sure to take place, He talks about it as if it has indeed already taken place.

Zechariah is talking about what life is going to be like in the Kingdom. He is peering behind the curtain and pulling it off to the side so we can all look. "If Israel can be made to see what Zechariah has seen in his visions, then they will respond with that obedient love appropriate to life under God's rule." (Achte-meier 1986, 136)

Is Jerusalem the City of Truth today? This will be the case once Messiah is on the throne and ruling in Jerusalem. "The millennial kingdom will be a holy Kingdom. Not only will the King be holy, but so will the land, the city, the Temple, and the King's subjects. Holiness will be integrated into every aspect of life during the reign of King Jesus." (Jeremiah 2014, 233-234)

The desire of the remnant will be to do His work by the power of the Holy Spirit.

As believers in these last days, that should be our desire as well. The only way we achieve anything of value on behalf of the Kingdom is through the power of the Holy Spirit. Holiness is also to be a key in the Kingdom, something we struggle with today.

True holiness does not mean having our heads in the clouds to the point we are no earthly good anymore. Not at all. It means being so surrendered to the will of God being done in our lives that our heads, hands, hearts; our every desire is to work in whatever He has called us to do, and to do so only through the power of the Holy Spirit. Imagine Jerusalem being that way.

Zechariah 8:4-5

"The LORD of armies says this: 'Old men and old women will again sit in the public squares of Jerusalem, each person with his staff in his hand because of age. And the public squares of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in its squares.'" (NASB 2020)

Here is the thing that has always been the case. When spiritual issues are aligned correctly, then physical issues are simply part of the blessings that God bestows on His people.



A time is coming, and it is so certain the Lord talks of it as already being a reality, that physical conditions will dramatically change.

Jerusalem being the City of Truth because of who is ruling from it, and because God Himself is dwelling with His people there as well, blessings that seem impossible are coming. Remember, most of those who are listening have come from Babylon or some other location where they have been in exile and in fear of their lives most of the time. But things are going to change.

Looking into that Millennial day, Zechariah sees Jerusalem repopulated and prosperous. He already talked about the walls being unnecessary due to the number of people. Now he touches on the quality of life.

With no fear from war, or famine, with perfect conditions and no disease, the city now has a significant population of older citizens as well as a significant population of children. Jerusalem is faithful now and is holy and has a new name as already implied in verse 3. "The circumference of the city will be 6 miles. The name of the city from that day forward will be: 'The LORD Is There.'" (Ezekiel 48:35, NET 2nd ed.)

There is also a new standard being talked about here, one very different from today and how we measure the success of a city.

Today, we determine how successful a city is based on the job market as well as profitability of the city. If the GDP of a society is healthy, so is the society. That is all going to be turned on its head in the future. The key indicators, as we see here, are how many elderly do you have who are enjoying life and how many children do you have.

The two groups overlooked today. Our current culture wants to kill children before they are born or make them wards of the state. Anyone over a certain age, per our culture, is no longer productive and should be put out to pasture as well. In fact, assisted suicide has become vogue in some places.

That will all change in the future. Measures of societal health will all change.

Those who are listening in on this, again, recently returned from Babylon, don't believe it. The walls have not yet been repaired. The city is still full of debris and quite noticeably lightly populated. There are not that many who are elderly and disease is still taking way too many children from them.

They were defeated in combat and the world's view of the time is, "that means your God is inferior to ours."

It is the other way around. Again, the people asking the question, in the manner in which they asked, reflected a knowledge that they were indeed being disciplined by the Lord. Part of the question implies a sub question asking when may they stop the mourning? When does restoration actually begin? They are hearing fantastic promises that would take a miracle of God to do.

Just because you have been defeated due to sin, and what used to be a glorious nation is now in ruins as a result of reaping what was sowed does not infer that your God is incapable of doing this.

Zechariah 8:6–8

"The LORD of armies says this: 'If it is too difficult in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be too difficult in My sight?' declares the LORD of armies. The LORD of armies says this: 'Behold, I am going to save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west; and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.'" (NASB 2020)



Don't be fooled by the rhetorical device that the Lord uses here. This is directed to the present remnant, the one which has been listening in.

But it is also pointed to the remnant at the end of the age. With the world in tatters, and most of Jerusalem as well, they too may be thinking the same. What is being promised seems impossible, but nothing is impossible with God. How can my work here in Bethel make any difference at all.

How often do we stop short when challenged, to do great exploits for the Lord, simply because we do not see how it is possible. Or we hit an obstacle. How can I make a difference, so we stop. We look at our circumstances and begin to wonder if God is even capable to change them.

Here is the thing, you and I may think what we are doing means nothing in the grand scheme of things. But none of us truly knows the grand scheme of things.

Let me tell you a story about a shoe salesman who was also a Sunday School teacher, his name is Edward Kimball.

Edward Kimball was a Sunday school teacher and one of the folks in his class was a rather wayward young man named Dwight Moody. Dwight left Chicago, with a 5th grade education, at 17 to make a living and wound up working for his uncle as a clerk in a shoe store. His uncle knew him, so a condition of employment was to go to church, and he wound up in Edward Kimball's class. Kimball visited Moody at work telling him about Jesus and shortly after Moody became a believer.

Moody became an evangelist founding Moody Bible Institute, Moody Church, and led 1 million or more to Christ.

What an impact, but we are not yet done with what faithfulness from Edward Kimball resulted in. Years later when Moody was preaching, a college student named J. Wilbur Chapman heard him and went forward to learn more meeting with Moody and assurance of salvation. He went out and began to share the gospel, and he employed a young professional baseball player named Billy Sunday.

Billy Sunday played professional baseball and was saved after an all-night bender by staff from the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago. He eventually left baseball and received training in ministry from J. Wilbur Chapman.

Billy Sunday became one of the greatest evangelists of his generation and helped found a lay organization in Charlotte. That organization invited to him preach in Charlotte NC but he couldn't make it recommending Mordecai Ham instead. One evening, Billy Graham heard Ham preach and gave his life to Christ.

All because, a shoe salesman and Sunday School teacher named Edward Kimball, went and visited one of his students at work.

None of us know the true impact of our lives this side of heaven. We are to simply be faithful. This is what the Lord is saying to the remnant. Your so-called small efforts rebuilding the Temple will result in the Messiah walking through it in just a few hundred years and declaring to all that He is the light of the world.

After making that clear, then the Lord goes further. He promises to bring back His people from the east and the west. This is an exile, yet in the future, that is more extensive than what took place with Assyria and Babylon. The population problem in the future, is to be resolved as the Lord brings in all who are Jews and have survived the Tribulation elsewhere in the world.



This is a restatement of promises previously made in Exodus 29:5.

Jeremiah 31:33

““But I will make a new covenant with the whole nation of Israel after I plant them back in the land,” says the LORD. “I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts and minds. I will be their God and they will be my people.”” (NET 2nd ed.)

He calls them His people. At the end of the Tribulation, an event which Zechariah will talk about, takes place where the remnant, the nation, repents and asks for their Messiah to come and save them, and He does. At that point, they are indeed claiming Him as their God and all of these things that they believe are fantastic, will become reality.

Back to the current day. Right now, there are those working on the Temple who have heard some of what Zechariah has said. It sounds amazing, but we have so much more to do and there is so much debris to still remove. And then there are the walls and the rest of Jerusalem.

God sees all they are doing, and He now turns to encourage them in their work.

Zechariah 8:9–13

“The LORD of armies says this: ‘Let your hands be strong, you who are listening in these days to these words from the mouth of the prophets, those who spoke in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of armies was laid, so that the temple might be built. For before those days there was no wage for man nor any wage for animal; and for him who went out or came in there was no peace because of his enemies, and I sent all the people against one another. But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ declares the LORD of armies. ‘For there will be the seed of peace: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce, and the heavens will provide their dew; and I will give to the remnant of this people all these things as an inheritance. And it will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.’” (NASB 2020)

This same Lord of Armies, the all-powerful omnipotent one who they are serving as they go about the business of rebuilding of the temple, encourages them “to let their hands be strong.” They are doing His work, and He is the one providing them the power and strength to do it.

It is a work, as previously told to Zerubbabel, that will be achieved through the power of the Holy Spirit. And here He is, encouraging those doing the work and providing the power and strength for them to work. When the work began and the foundation was laid, it was hard, dangerous work. There are no walls, there is no military out there to protect them and wild animals had the run of the city. But God protected and took care of them. God promises a different outcome for the people other than what they have just been through in Babylon.

This remnant that has returned in obedience to Him, they will be blessed, and they will be a blessing to the nations. The Temple they are working on, will have Messiah teach in it. They heard this from the prophets, Haggai and Zechariah. Because of the words from the prophets, they went back to work and rededicated the Temple.

But before that had taken place, no one was working. They had become discouraged by the enemy and had stopped the work. Just as we encounter obstacles along the as we bring Calvary Chapel Martin County to life.



Here is a truth we need to remember, when we encounter obstacles and folks actually coming against us, it means that someone else is nervous about what it is the Lord is doing. The enemy does not want a new church, the enemy does not want a new Temple.

He wants us to listen to the voices and cease doing the work. The very fact that the attacks occur and continue are enough to tell us, we are exactly in the middle of God's will on this matter.

This is true with anything the Lord has called you to do or be a part of.

Do not let the attacks of the enemy, in whatever form they come, distract you. Here in Jerusalem, because they had stopped doing the work, no one was being paid. Worse than that, social strife began to show up, because the nation was no longer being obedient to what it was the Lord had called them to do. Once they went back to the work, as encouraged by Haggai and Zechariah, all of that began to change.

Zechariah 8:11–12

"But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days,' declares the LORD of armies. 'For there will be the seed of peace: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce, and the heavens will provide their dew; and I will give to the remnant of this people all these things as an inheritance.'" (NASB 2020)

With obedience, comes blessings. God promises that and here tells them that social peace comes more than enough food and wine to not only take care of their needs but to also trade and provide an inheritance to their kids. God is the one doing this.

This is the same thing that Haggai told them would be the result of obedience in getting back to the work of rebuilding the Temple (Haggai 2:19). Due to their sin and disobedience in the past and being distracted by the enemy in the recent past, "the land has not been fertile. But it will, in the future, return to its ideal image of land "flowing with milk and honey.'" (Petersen 1984, 307)

When will this happen? It is happening right now. But the changes do not happen all at once.

Zechariah 8:13

"And it will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.'" (NASB 2020)

And indeed, those who are working on the Temple, are rebuilding the structure that must be standing in order for the Messiah to present Himself, just as Daniel as predicted He shall.

The way God had allowed the Temple to be destroyed and the people of Israel and Judah taken into exile had been used by other nations as an example of what it means to be under God's curse. (Clark and Hatton 2002, 211)

The nation will become a blessing to the world. Not just the Northern Kingdom or the Southern, but both. The separation is only a memory. For those listening in to Zechariah, that seems like a fantastic dream as most of the nation is still in exile.

Most of those who have returned are from Judah,

Both nations Has Israel become a blessing to the nations? Not yet, but the day is coming. "This promise is made to the remnant of Judah and Israel, and therefore of all the twelve tribes, who are to become



partakers of the future salvation in undivided unity (cf. Zech. 9:10, 13; 10:6; 11:14). Israel is therefore to look forward to the future without alarm.” (Keil and Delitzsch 1996, 565)

In the present day, the Temple will be rebuilt, and obedience will result in blessings. Many will return to the land, but not to the degree being talked about here. Yes, all the nations will indeed be blessed because of Jesus, but that time when Jerusalem will become a blessing to the world is still in the future and contingent upon God fulfilling His promise and dwelling with His people.

This is the future for the remnant, those who rebuilding are part of that future, so another word of encouragement to not fear, but be strong.

I like the way the Lord says that. For anyone who has stepped out in faith to follow the Lord, it is exciting and scary at the same time. The attacks of the enemy are very real. He not only uses others to attack, but he also works through others to create situations that seem insurmountable.

Romans 8:37

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” (NKJV)

The “these things” which Paul is referring to here are all of those people, things and powers which work to separate us from Christ and defeat us.

With Christ, we are more than conquerors. We are doing His work, so the Lord’s first word is “do not fear.” Fear is what takes place when we take our eyes off of Him and look at our situation. Fear leads us to start talking and agreeing with the situation. But faith tells us that the Lord has this.

As God is saying this, He is talking as if all the events being prophesied are done. In His mind, they are.

We need His mind as we go about following Him and doing what it is He has asked us to do.

Proverbs 3:5–6

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.” (NKJV)

It is after He says do not fear, that He says to let their hands be strong. When we are in fear, things begin to happen to us physically that prevent us from being strong.

I remember a new troop coming to us in Kuwait. We were in a combat situation and were indeed being shot at. In comes a young man who was scared out of his mind.

This individual had an impeccable record for over a decade in the Air Force, but now in a combat situation, he fell apart. In less than a week he lost 10 pounds, and his hair was coming out in clumps and ulcers were showing up on his skin. He was unable to sleep and was beginning to hallucinate due to the lack of sleep. I had him evaluated by the doctor who told me, it was all because of fear. I sent him home. I had never seen what fear could do in someone like that before. But fear has physical results. This is why the Lord first says, do not fear. Once we understand who has our back, and that He is the one we serve, then we can concentrate on being strong.

Zechariah 8:14–17

““For this is what the LORD of armies says: ‘Just as I determined to do harm to you when your fathers provoked Me to anger,’ says the LORD of armies, ‘and I have not relented, so I have again determined in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear! These are the things which you shall do: speak the truth to one another; judge with truth and judgment for peace at your gates. Also



let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all these things are what I hate,' declares the LORD.'" (NASB 2020)

God will indeed make sure that Jerusalem is rebuilt, and the Temple is completed. Not only in the time of Zechariah, but also at a future date when He is once again dwelling with His people. He fully intends to make Jerusalem the capital of the earth.

Just as He had disciplined His people because of their ancestors' sins, He is now blessing them for their faithfulness. They should not fear but continue on in faithfulness. He outlines some of the conditions that will exist in Jerusalem once He is dwelling with them, and the remnant had repented.

He is giving them a simple formula to follow, one which will be the standard in the millennium. "In short, the message is, "Do the things God loves (cf. 8:19) and avoid the things God hates.'" (Lindsey 1985, 1561)

Wow, ask a simple question and everything we have covered to this point, is the lead into the answer.

Zechariah 8:18–19

"Then the word of the LORD of armies came to me, saying, "The LORD of armies says this: 'The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth months will become joy, jubilation, and cheerful festivals for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.'" (NASB 2020)

Now, about those fasts. With Jesus on the throne, and God dwelling in the Temple, fasts will no longer be needed. Feasting though will indeed be required.

The bottom line, no, in fact blow all the fasts off.

Fasting will be over forever; the time of feasting will have come. The second is the way the pilgrimage of many peoples ... to entreat the LORD (20–21) here echoes the pilgrimage of the men of Bethel—also to 'entreat the LORD'—in 7:2. As they had come to Jerusalem to seek God, and so acknowledge his rule over them, so will people from all over the world. We can now see in retrospect that the pilgrimage from Bethel was a sign of something far greater to come. (Webb 2003, 125)

These faithful followers of YAHWEH, simply following the Torah and coming to Jerusalem to resolve an issue, have been there as a type, a picture of what it will look like during the Millennium as all the nations of the world come to Jerusalem to seek answers.

No, in that future day, fasting is no longer needed. But what about today for the folks from Bethel, the implication is also, no. For Yom Kippur, yes, but they are no other fasts required. You can fast today as you feel lead, but there is no requirement to do so.

What about us today? Should we fast? Are we required to fast?

Neither Jesus nor his apostles ever require fasting of Christians as a legal obligation. There is nothing wrong with fasting if it is done wisely and for proper motives. Indeed, the general tendency of Scripture is to encourage us to do it. It is an entirely appropriate way of humbling ourselves before God and presenting our deep concerns and needs to him. But as Christians we should be careful to avoid making rules, for ourselves or for others, where this is unwarranted. (Webb 2003, 126-127)

As a church, there will be times where we will fast. But even then, it will not be a requirement. You cannot make God love you more or less than He already does by fasting or not fasting.



These fasts were all self-imposed and had been observed for 70 years (Zech. 7:5) with sorrowful hearts and misdirected motives (cf. 7:5–7). These fasts are still observed by some Jews today. But at the Lord's Second Advent these fasts will be turned into feasts, symbolizing millennial joy. (Lindsey 1985, 1561)

Zechariah 8:20–23

““The LORD of armies says this: ‘It will yet turn out that peoples will come, that is, the inhabitants of many cities. The inhabitants of one city will go to another, saying, “Let’s go at once to plead for the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of armies; I also will go.” ‘So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of armies in Jerusalem, and to plead for the favor of the LORD.’ The LORD of armies says this: ‘In those days ten people from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.” ’ ” (NASB 2020)

These future blessings are not only for Israel, when Jerusalem is restored and becomes the capital of the world, then it becomes a primary piece in God's overall plan for blessing the nations.

Delegations will enter into Jerusalem and see a citizen of the city and then begin to follow them because God is with them. The nation will finally fulfill what it is that was their calling in Exodus 19.

Exodus 19:6

“ ‘And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.” (NKJV)

His people are looking forward to that day when He establishes a new covenant for all of Israel. But here is the thing, we can have that right now today. For the believer, God is with us has been fulfilled as God is with us in the person of the Holy Spirit. That which Joel said was a future thing really did begin to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost per Peter and his sermon in Acts 2.

Being members of the new covenant brings ‘spiritual blessings’. God has adopted us into his family, made us his children, and poured out his love on us. More than that, God has poured his own Spirit into our hearts—the Spirit of his son Jesus. The fact that God's Spirit is in us means that we are now the place where God dwells by his Spirit; so much so that Paul can say in 1 Corinthians 14:25 that the outsider should come to our gatherings and exclaim ‘God is really among you!’ God is with us in the person of his Son, and continues to be with us in and through his Spirit. (Stead 2015, 134)

That means you can have this today if you do not know Jesus.

It is not hard to do, we have already talked a little bit about earlier.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)



ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

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