

ZECHARIAH 8: 1 The word of the LORD of Armies came to me.

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In this chapter God promises the continuance of his favor to those who are returned from the captivity; so that upon the removal of his judgments, the fasts they had observed during the captivity may now be converted to so many occasions of rejoicing. He likewise promises in due time a general restoration of his people, and the enlargement of the Church by the accession of the Gentiles, vv. 1-20. The conclusion of the chapter intimates farther that the Jews, after their restoration, will be instrumental in converting many other nations, Zac 8:21-23. Compare Rom 11:15, Rom 11:16.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 2 Thus says the LORD of Armies: "I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath."

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Verse 2

I was jealous - Some refer this to the Jews themselves. They were as the spouse of Jehovah: but they were unfaithful, and God punished them as an injured husband might be expected to punish an unfaithful wife. Others apply it to the enemies of the Jews. Though I gave them a commission to afflict you, yet they exceeded their commission: I will therefore deal with them in fury - in vindictive justice.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 3 Thus says the LORD: "I have returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called 'The City of Truth;' and the mountain of the LORD of Armies, 'The Holy Mountain.'"

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Verse 3

I am returned unto Zion - I have restored her from her captivity. I will dwell among them. The temple shall be rebuilt, and so shall Jerusalem; and instead of being false, unholy, and profligate, it shall be the city of truth. and my holy mountain. Truth shall dwell in it.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 4 Thus says the LORD of Armies: "Old men and old women will again dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand for very age."

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Verse 4

There shall yet old men and old women - In those happy times the followers of God shall live out all their days, and the hoary head be always found in the way of righteousness.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 5 The streets of the city will be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.”

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Verse 5

The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls - The progeny shall be numerous, healthy, and happy. Their innocent gambols and useful exercises shall be a means of health, and a proof of happiness. To be healthy, children must have exercise. But they cannot take exercise, except in the way of play and diversion: ergo, such playfulness cannot be sinful. Let them be kept from evil words, lying, swearing, and scurrility; and all the rest may be innocent.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 6 Thus says the LORD of Armies: “If it is marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvellous in my eyes?” says the LORD of Armies.

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Verse 6

If it be marvellous - You may think that this is impossible, considering your present low condition: but suppose it be impossible in your eyes, should it be so in mine! saith the Lord of hosts.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 7 Thus says the LORD of Armies: “Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country;

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Verse 7

I will save my people from the east country, and from the west - From every land in which any of them may be found. But these promises principally regard the Christian Church, or the bringing in the Jews with the fullness of the Gentiles.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 8 and I will bring them, and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they will be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.”

ZECHARIAH 8: 9 Thus says the LORD of Armies: “Let your hands be strong, you who hear in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets who were in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of Armies was laid, even the temple, that it might be built.

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Verse 9

By the mouth of the prophets - The day or time of the foundation was about two years before, as this discourse of the prophet was in the fourth year of Darius. After this God raised up prophets among them.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 10 For before those days there was no wages for man, nor any wages for an animal; neither was there any peace to him who went out or came in, because of the adversary. For I set all men everyone against his neighbour.

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Verse 10

For before these days there was no hire for man - Previously to this, ye had no prosperity; ye had nothing but civil divisions and domestic broils. I abandoned you to your own spirits, and to your own ways.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 11 But now I will not be to the remnant of this people as in the former days," says the LORD of Armies.

ZECHARIAH 8: 12 "For the seed of peace and the vine will yield its fruit, and the ground will give its increase, and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things.

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Verse 12

For the seed shall be prosperous - Ye shall be a holy and peaceable people; and God will pour down his blessing on yourselves, your fields, and your vineyards.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 13 It shall come to pass that, as you were a curse among the nations, house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing. Don't be afraid. Let your hands be strong."

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Verse 13

As ye were a curse - Instead of being execrated among the people, ye shall be blessed; instead of being reproached, ye shall be commended. Ye shall be a blessing to all the nations round about. All these promises we may expect to be completely fulfilled when the Jews acknowledge their Messiah.

O house of Judah, and house of Israel - The restoration shall be complete, when both Israel and Judah are brought back.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 14 For thus says the LORD of Armies: "As I thought to do evil to you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath," says the LORD of Armies, "and I didn't repent;

ZECHARIAH 8: 15 so again have I thought in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Don't be afraid.

ZECHARIAH 8: 16 These are the things that you shall do: speak every man the truth with his neighbour. Execute the judgement of truth and peace in your gates,

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Verse 16

Speak ye every man the truth - See Zac 7:9, Zac 7:10.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 17 and let none of you devise evil in your hearts against his neighbour, and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate," says the LORD.

ZECHARIAH 8: 18 The word of the LORD of Armies came to me.

ZECHARIAH 8: 19 Thus says the LORD of Armies: "The fasts of the fourth fifth, seventh, and tenth months shall be for the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts. Therefore love truth and peace."

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Verse 19

The fast of the fourth month - To commemorate the taking of Jerusalem; 2Kgs 25:3; Jer 39:2; Jer 52:6, Jer 52:7.

The fast of the fifth - In memory of the ruin of the temple, 2Kgs 25:8; Jer 52:12, Jer 52:13.

The fast of the seventh - For the murder of Gedaliah, Jeremiah 41:1-17.

The fast of the tenth - In commemoration of the siege of Jerusalem, which began on the tenth day of the tenth month; 2Kgs 25:1; Jer 52:4; Eze 24:1, Eze 24:2; and see on Zac 7:3 (note), Zac 7:5 (note).

Cheerful feasts - Ye shall find all your evils so completely redressed, that these mournful fasts shall be turned into joyful feasts.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 20 Thus says the LORD of Armies: "Many peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities will yet come;

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Verse 20

There shall come people - Similar promises to those in Isa 2:3 and in Mic 4:1, Mic 4:2. Many Gentiles, as well as Jews, will then be found devoting themselves to the Lord.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 21 and the inhabitants of one shall go to another, saying, 'Let us go speedily to entreat the favour of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of Armies. I will go also.'

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Verse 21

I will go also - This is the answer of the person invited. It is a good work. We must have God for our friend. We cannot expect this unless we seek him: and as we know not what an hour may bring forth, let us go speedily.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 22 Yes, many peoples and strong nations will come to seek the LORD of Armies in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favour of the LORD.”

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Verse 22

And strong nations - This may refer to the conversion of the Mohammedan tribes; especially to those in the vicinity of Palestine. Perhaps even the Egyptians, inhabitants of Arabia Petraea, of Syria, etc.

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ZECHARIAH 8: 23 Thus says the LORD of Armies: “In those days, ten men will take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they will take hold of the skirt of him who is a Jew, saying, ‘We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’”

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Verse 23

Ten men - shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew - The converts from among the Gentiles shall be to the Jews as ten to one. But ten may here signify a great number, without comparison. And from this scripture it appears as if the Jews, converted to God, should be the instruments of converting many Gentiles. See on Isa 3:6 (note). Catching hold of the skirt is a gesture naturally used to entreat assistance and protection. This and the three foregoing verses, says Abp. Newcome, refer to the great accession of converts which the Jewish Church received between the captivity and the coming of Christ; to the number of Christian disciples which the Jewish preachers made, and to the future conversions of which the restoration of the Jews will be an eminent cause.