

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Zechariah*

*Message 18 God is With The Nation Israel*

*September 1, 2013*



The Vision of Ezekiel by Francisco Collantes Cir 1630

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

# Pentwater Bible Church

## The Book of Zechariah

### Message Eighteen

### God is With Israel

September 1, 2013

Daniel E. Woodhead



Painting by Sharlene Lindskog-Osorio

GOD WILL PROSPER ISRAEL

Zechariah 8:18-23

*<sup>18</sup>And the word of Jehovah of hosts came unto me, saying, <sup>19</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love truth and peace. <sup>20</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities; <sup>21</sup>and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts: I will go also. <sup>22</sup>Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Jehovah. <sup>23</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass,*

*that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you (ASV 1901).*

## JEHOVAH GOD ANSWERS THE QUESTION OF FASTS

### Zechariah 8:18-19

*<sup>18</sup>And the word of Jehovah of hosts came unto me, saying, <sup>19</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love truth and peace (ASV 1901).*

God's Word again comes directly to the spirit of Zechariah bypassing his eyes and ears. God reminds him of the question posed by the men from Bethel with their spokesmen Sharezer and Regem-melech. These two men and their entourage accompanying them asked to *entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to speak unto the priests of the house of Jehovah of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?* At that time God did not directly give them an answer. Instead He admonished them for their self-serving fasting, which was not in repentance for what they had done. It was simply an attempt at penance, which is not a biblical truth. True repentance means you have turned away from your sin. Penance is man's attempt to provide some self-atonement for his sin. God wanted the Jews in Zechariah's day to *connect with Him* and establish a relationship with Him. He did not want them going through the motions of a ceremony to commemorate an event that they caused themselves. For those who have entered the Church since the sacrifice of Jesus there is no additional atonement. Jesus already took our sins and wiped them clean at the cross.

The men from Bethel who came to Jerusalem to entreat God and His prophet asked specifically about a fast that they had been conducting in the fifth month of the year (Av). When Jehovah God answered their question He reminded them that they had also fasted in the seventh month (Tishri) as well. The Lord God knowing that there were more fasts, in which they were engaged, provides two more in this text. The fast of the fourth month (Tammuz) commemorated the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. This followed a Babylonian induced famine of Israel, which is a typical wartime strategy. Once the enemy has been starved out, their resistance is feeble. This one happened in the eleventh year of king Zedekiah's reign (Jeremiah 39:2, 3; 52:6-7). The fast listed in the tenth month (Tevet) marked the initiation of the siege of Nebuchadnezzar in Zedekiah's ninth year (II Kings 25:1; Jeremiah 39:1; 52:4). What God is saying to the Jews through Zechariah is comforting to them. He says that all these fasts *shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love truth and peace.* What God is speaking to in these verses is the state of worship in the Millennial Kingdom as well as the Jew's status with God. God mentions this in Isaiah.

### Isaiah 61:2-3

*<sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of Jehovah's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; <sup>3</sup>to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to*

*give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, that he may be glorified (ASV 1901).*

Isaiah 65:19

*<sup>19</sup>And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and there shall be heard in her no more the voice of weeping and the voice of crying (ASV 1901).*

The Lord closes this section of Scripture with a command to love truth and peace, *ohev, emet* and *shalom*. The Hebrew word order is this; truth, and peace love. This is a warning against apostasy and backsliding into sin. This will not be the case for the Jews in the Millennial Kingdom but those who went back after the exile would be susceptible to these issues.

THOSE WHO WILL COME SEEKING THE JEWS

Zechariah 8:20-22

*<sup>20</sup>Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities; <sup>21</sup>and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts: I will go also. <sup>22</sup>Yea, many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Jehovah (ASV 1901).*

During the Millennial Kingdom Jerusalem will be continually visited by all nations. They will come to Jerusalem to seek the Lord God who will have His throne there running the theocratic government of the world. They will collect others in different cities and head to Jerusalem in large groups. This will indeed be a universal worldwide pilgrimage of all Gentile nations to pay homage to King Jesus in Jerusalem who will be sitting on David's Throne. The level of enthusiasm for worshipping the God of the Universe who will have taken up His place on this earth will be unprecedented. These verses describe the pilgrimage as happening *speedily (nēlēkā hālōk)*. Others who don't hear of the invitation in the first declaration will say that they want to go too when they say, "I will go also." This also demonstrates a contagious enthusiasm for worshipping God in the world headquarters, Jerusalem. Zechariah describes the pilgrims as "many peoples" and "strong nations." This will be a worldwide movement of all peoples, not one limited to a few nearby people groups that come out of fear or weakness and inability to remain independent. The mightiest of all nations will be there, knowing full well that Jehovah God is sovereign over the entire earth. Psalm 122 vividly depicts this.

Psalms 122:1-9

*<sup>1</sup>I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of Jehovah. <sup>2</sup>Our feet are standing Within thy gates, O Jerusalem, <sup>3</sup>Jerusalem, that art builded As a city that is compact together; <sup>4</sup>Whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of Jehovah, For an ordinance for Israel, To give thanks unto the name of*

*Jehovah. <sup>5</sup>For there are set thrones for judgment, The thrones of the house of David. <sup>6</sup>Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: They shall prosper that love thee. <sup>7</sup>Peace be within thy walls, And prosperity within thy palaces. <sup>8</sup>For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. <sup>9</sup>For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God I will seek thy good (ASV 1901).*

Isaiah also confirms the sovereignty of God during this time.

Isaiah 45:23

*<sup>23</sup>By myself have I sworn, the word is gone forth from my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear (ASV 1901).*

This good news spreading like wildfire is reminiscent of the early Church Age. The birth of the Church saw three thousand souls converted the first day on the Jewish festival of Pentecost (Acts 2:41). The early Church consisted primarily of Jewish apostles and messengers who were exceptionally enthusiastic for Jesus. Over time the Church became populated with a preponderance of Gentile believers. However instead of converting the world, the Gentile Church became more and more merged *into the world*. The Gentile Church grew as a whole apathetic to the evangelistic zeal that these verses describe for people coming to Jerusalem during the Millennial Kingdom. In fact Christ in His letter to the Church at Ephesus said that they had lost their first love, Him (Revelation 2:4). God's Word will never fail, as it will go out to all its intended audience exactly as God has planned. However, the Church Age will not end in a worldwide conversion of all peoples, groups and tongues. There will not be universal peace and righteousness but it will end in apostasy.

THE BIBLE SAYS THERE WILL BE A FALLING AWAY (APOSTASY) IN THE LAST DAYS.

Three NT passages *clearly* describe the character of the apostasy.

I Timothy 4:1-3

*But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth (KJV).*

The source of the apostasy is demons, for apostates have essentially given in to seducing spirits and are preaching a system of doctrine, which is a doctrine of demons. Furthermore, they speak lies through hypocrisy, and their consciences have stopped working.

## II Timothy 3:1-5

<sup>1</sup> *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.* <sup>2</sup> *For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,* <sup>3</sup> *Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,* <sup>4</sup> *Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these (KJV).*

In verses 1-4 there is a description of the general character of the world in the last days, and it is obvious to the casual observer that these characteristics are true today. Verse five centers on the religious front, where the last days will be characterized by men having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Apostate ministers, having churches which function as businesses, have a form of godliness. Others wear clerical garb but do all for show. But because they deny the power thereof, they have denied the true *power* of godliness. They claim to trust in God but are actually trusting in worldly methodologies such as building programs, marketing strategies, and staff enhancements. These are all coupled with appeals for funds to fuel their growth.

II Peter 2:1-22 discusses the apostates at length. Reading through the passage, Peter displays no love or tolerance toward the apostates. The Bible and particularly the Lord Jesus do not display any toleration toward apostasy and both castigate it very severely, as these verses clearly show. The apostasy and failure, will end in the greatest war that mankind, will have ever known, The Great Tribulation (Revelation 6:1-19:21). During this worldwide war the Lord will again use Jewish evangelists (144,000) to spread His Word on a worldwide basis most effectively with incredible missionary zeal (Revelation 7:3-9).

## THE FLOURISHING OF THE JEWS IN THE MILLENNIUM

### Zechariah 8:23

<sup>23</sup> *Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you (ASV 1901).*

The Lord God now continues to describe the extent of Jewish leadership and favor in the world during the Millennial reign of Jesus. He says that *that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nation*. Ten is a common number used in Scripture to denote an indefinite but large number (Genesis 31:7; Exodus 34:28; Leviticus 26:26; Numbers 24:22; I Samuel 1:8; Job 19:3; Daniel 1:12; Amos 6:9). Here it means a great multitude of Gentile people who shall gather to see God's Glory in Jerusalem. The Gentiles will vastly outnumber the Jews in that day as they do now as well. Further this is not a regional gathering. It will be from the entire world as *all languages and nations* are described. What they are described as doing is *taking hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew*. The Hebrew verb translated as taking hold is the verb *hāzaq* often denotes

almost a violent grabbing of something with the intention of not letting go. The *khenaph*, is the corner of the long flowing garment worn by the ancient Jews. Then to each of the four *khenaphayim* of the typically white outer garment were attached *tsitsith*, “fringes,” or tassels of blue. This is probably what is being referred to, since it was the distinctly visible sign of “a man, a Jew” as the Hebrew text reads. It is spoken of as being caught hold of, first with a view to detain the Jew, so as to request his permission to accompany him. But it also has the sense of keeping *firm* hold, depicting the earnest *determination* of the Gentile pilgrims to accompany the Jew who is on the way to the future world capital Jerusalem to pay homage to the Jewish Messiah King Jesus.

The Lord God and Creator of the entire universe will be the center of attraction for the entire thousand-year Theocratic Kingdom. This is perhaps the strongest and most concise statement of the future blessing of the Jews as they are given a commanding role in the world’s government. These Gentiles will say to the Israelites, “*We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*”

Deuteronomy 28:13

*And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do [them] (KJV).*

Israel’s final restoration will bring the nation Israel to the world’s attention. As we have seen the Gentiles will lay hold on the Jews to be with them realizing that they are the ministers of God. They will no longer be persecuted but will lead the way to the Messiah Jesus.

Zephaniah 3:20

*<sup>20</sup>At that time will I bring you in, and at that time will I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I bring back your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah (ASV 1901).*

Pesikta Rabbathai, in Yaklut Shimoni.

*Thus in this ancient Jewish Midrash we read: “All nations shall come, falling on their faces before the Messiah, and the Israelites saying, Grant that we may be Thy servants, and of Israel. For, as relates to the doctrine and the knowledge of the law, the Gentiles shall be their servants, according as it is written: ‘In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all the languages of the nations, shall even take hold of the skirts of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’”*

NEXT WEEK: ALEXANDER’S SWIFT RISE AND CONQUERING

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**  
[Info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com](mailto:Info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com) Toll Free 877-706-2479