



Lesson 11 May 9th, 2020

Peace and Justice Reign

Study Scripture – Zechariah 8:1-8, 11-17

Background Scripture – Zechariah 8:1-8, 11-17

Key Verse:

“So again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the Judah: fear ye not.”

Zechariah 8:15

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever gone away on a trip that you did not really want to go on? Maybe it was a school trip, or a trip to visit relatives, or a trip to go to some faraway place. But for you, you did not want to go. To you mentally and otherwise you were dragged away.

You long for the day that you would go back to your own house, to your own neighbourhood, to your own familiar surroundings, even if your experiences in those surroundings might not have always been the most pleasant.

Even though we share certain of those feelings of being away from where we want to be, we know that the people of Judah and Israel had more than triple bad experiences to what we might ever have.

They had been taken away from their country by a powerful military nation that had captured them, destroyed their very beautiful Temple built by Solomon, and burned down their houses. This was a dreadful situation. Much pain and suffering was involved.

The prophet Zechariah was a young man when God called him to prophesy to the people of Israel when they were very discouraged at what had happened to them.

This book is therefore very important for us to read carefully for it deals with our own experiences when we have struggled with discouragement. This young man did not shy away from reminding the people of his own nation that their behaviour had brought upon them their share of judgments and distress. But his book of prophecy overthrows bad feelings and says in a strong series of prophecies that God in the future would reign over His people of Judah and Israel.

What this **young man did was** very important for it is easy to get caught up in the many things that happen to us in day-to-day life that will cause us to be unhappy, depressed and feel sad. When this happens to us, both young and older people lose their perspective or their vision of the good life that God wants them to live and they begin to live as people without hope.

That is not a good state of mind to be in. So Zachariah wrote his book to correct that tendency that we have to lose hope. He wanted all of us young and old to have a hope that is sure. This kind of hope would make us refreshed no matter what circumstances we are in.

Zechariah was too young to have served in the beautiful Temple built by Solomon before it was destroyed for he lived in Babylon partly during the reign of Queen Esther who we studied about last week. So he knew about the difficulties that the people of his nation had gone through and the dangers among which they lived.

But Zechariah, whose name means “Yahweh remembers” brought an important message that God remembered His promise. The people of Judah and Israel still belonged to Him even though they had spent a lot of time outside of their land.

He stressed that God would cleanse and restore them and restore their nation. He will bring great blessings to them in the years ahead of them. As well, in the distant future Jesus will come to the Earth and would live among them and life will be immensely better.

Then they would not be afraid but would enjoy a beautiful life. The streets of Jerusalem would be filled with the songs of happy children playing with each other. There would be many older people who would be living long and peaceful lives and would enjoy seeing the miracle that God had performed for them.

This lesson of Zechariah is important to us for God has promised us that even though we might have made mistakes and had not been faithful to Him, He would never forget us but will always be faithful to us.

He will come one day to live with us. He will bring and peace and happiness with Him. He, the perfect, wise, righteous, and capable ruler will reign over us and life will be a lot better and we will have all of the good things of life which includes food and a pleasant place to live.

So even though you are young if you're ever struggling with discouragement at what is happening do not get depressed. Do not lose your vision of the life that God wants you to live. Live as young people should and not let the cares of life cover you. Remember bad times do not last forever. Think carefully and keep your mind clear.

It is only with a clear mind and a good memory that you will remember what God has in store for you. You remember that God will keep you. So do not be discouraged at all, or at least not for more than 10 minutes. Zechariah was never discouraged but instead after warning his people to do what was right he was encouraging his people

Try to plan as best you can. Get help from others that have more experience than you. Keep praying to God for He certainly will help you and save you from discouragement.



But remember that God loves peace and justice. He loves when you do not fight among yourselves, but instead are always willing to help other in less fortunate circumstances than you.

He likes when you are fair and not give less to others than is due to them. If you are doing anything to the church remember that the Bible says God loves a cheerful giver. This means that whatever you offer to God must be offered cheerfully, and not grudgingly.

One song says, Give of your best to the Master, Give of the strength of your youth. God loves that. Zechariah was a young man and he gave the best he had to God. God blessed him. He will bless you too.

