Hope has a Name: Zechariah 8

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Preacher: Jayson Turner

[0:00] Good morning, church. That's pretty good. We're just going to go with that. So, I mean, I heard how you sang the God of Wow. The foyer, Hidden in the Light.

Man, Christian biographies are, I think, part of our spiritual disciplines. Just to see faith lived out in another's life, maybe a different circumstance, just to find encouragement and to challenge us.
So, if you need a good book, I would encourage that. And the best book, if you've not figured out what you're going to do as far as abiding and reading in the Word this summer, want to continue to encourage us to be in the Proverbs.
We're doing that as a family, and it's kind of fun in the evening when we gather for dinner. We'll often, maybe one or two of us, will share, like, a proverb that we had read that day, and we'll kind of talk about it a little bit.
So, kind of a neat way to encourage one another. If you have a copy of the Scriptures, turn open to Zechariah chapter 8. We're going to be looking at verses 1 through 23. There's a bunch, but I figured out a way to go fast.
[1:25] We'll just see. And you notice Scott and Wendy are not here. They're on vacation. So, think of them. Pray for them, that God would refresh them. We are blessed to have just a stalwart, faithful, amazing lead pastor in Scott.

And, yeah, I just pray the Lord would just really refresh them. I think they're away for another few days. He'll be back with us next Sunday, but just coasting into town at that point.
So, let me pray, and then we'll dive into the text. Lord, we think of the words of the psalmist where he cries out, Open my eyes that I might behold wondrous things out of your law.
Lord, I pray that we would see wondrous things out of your book this morning. Lord, that we would find some hidden treasure that perhaps we didn't even know was there.
And, Lord, that you would use it in our lives, not just to have interesting things to think about, But, Lord, it would be transformative. We know that your word is sharper than any two-edged sword.
[2:42] And it's there to train us in righteousness and godliness. And so, Lord, we come this morning as an act of worship to bow our hearts to you, To open our ears to your word.

And we pray that you would be in the midst of the proclamation of your word, Through the power of your word and spirit this morning. And, Lord, we would leave having had a sense we've heard from you.
And, Lord, that you would be continuing to do a work in us, even today. We love you, Jesus. And all God's people said, Amen. Amen.
Well, as we arrive now, kind of in the middle section, Second, third of this book of Zechariah, We arrive at chapter 7 and 8, Where we pick up the narrative, Israel is about halfway into the temple rebuilding project.
We know that because in Zechariah 7 and 1, It says it's now the fourth year of King Darius. They began the temple rebuilding project in his second year.
[3:54] Additionally, we know that it has been nearly two years Since Zechariah experienced this sleepless night, Receiving eight visions from the Lord To encourage God's ancient people about their future, To remind them, really, that God had not forsaken them.

Even though life for them at that time, It was very hard. They returned to a city that was decimated. There was no wall. The city was decimated. There was no temple.
And so it has been a difficult season of life for them. And really, the essence of chapters 7 and 8 in Zechariah Are really this message that God remembers you, Israel.
God is working amongst you. And it's great because Zechariah's name, as we recall, It means what? God remembers. And so these two chapters are really about, Hey, God is still with you.

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His blessing is there. And it's not just present on you today, in your day, But it's just going to continue to get better and better. And there's a lot of future promise in the passage that we are looking at actually today.
[5:07] And in fact, Dr. David Jeremiah calls this future blessing, He calls it the coming golden age.

Okay? And he's really talking about the millennial reign, The thousand year reign of King Jesus prior to the eternal state. So if you need another good book to read this summer, This is actually on my reading list for this summer.
And this was put out about a year ago, The Coming Golden Age. And this is all about, if you're like, Jay, Scott, you guys keep mentioning the millennium. You're so confusing. Here's your book. All right?
And the reason I like David Jeremiah is because I can understand him. So this will be a very, I think, encouraging book. If you're interested, you know where you shop, And you can figure that out.
All right. So this passage is really, it's really very future oriented. And so we are going to talk a bit this morning about the future.
[6:12] And just to give you just a little bit of a road map for the future, So that you know where the millennium fits in. Okay? I've got a slide for you related to six future events on God's calendar.

All right? And these happen in succession. We will first have the rapture of the church. 1 Thessalonians 4, 16 and 17 is the key text on the rapture of the church.
The Lord will return for his bride. That will then kick off what's called the tribulation period. You can read Revelation chapter 6 through 19. Or, excuse me, yeah, 6 through 19 describing those events.
At the end of the tribulation we have the final battle. It's known as Armageddon. We're actually going to look at that when we get to Zechariah 14. We will then, that will culminate on Christ's return with his saints.
That would be you and me if we're, yeah, we will be with them. And then that will then kick off this thousand year reign, the millennium. Which will then complete and usher in eternity.
[7:18] So these are six events. I wish that my theology only had Jesus returns and it's over and we're in heaven. But as I read God's word, I see these six events as does your other pastor Scott.

And so we're kind of stuck with this a little bit complicated future that lies ahead of us. And here's the great thing. You can disagree with us and we can still fellowship.
But as I read scripture, this is how I best understand it. And especially as we look at this chapter today, there is again footprints, evidences that we're really dealing with this thing called the millennium in the future.
And if you want the key text describing the millennial reign of Christ, you can just go to Revelation 20. All right. Revelation 20. And you're saying, well, that age, what are we going to do?
We're going to reign with Christ. We're going to rule with Christ. I think that thousand year period is a time of conditioning and preparing us for our eternal home. I think in a way we will, although with glorified bodies now, we're not going to be dealing with sin.
[8:21] But I think the Lord is going to continue to be discipling us. Right. Not correcting sin, but growing us in knowledge, appreciation, enjoyment of God during that time. And I think maybe you've maybe you've had this thought before.

Like when I die, all of a sudden it's like I'm going to be like exactly where I need to be. I think you're going to have a thousand years where the Lord is going to continue to progressively prepare us for the eternal state.
Now, we can disagree about Revelation 20 and we can worship together. I have friends actually that read that chapter of Revelation. They they allegorize it. And maybe you're saying, well, Jay, why don't you?
I can't because as I read Revelation chapter 20 verses one through seven, we have this phrase a thousand years that is repeated six times.
We're told there is a thousand year reign of Christ that is yet to come. So it's repeated over and over. It's sort of like if I told my son he's mowing the lawn and I'm like, stop mowing.
[9:27] And he just keeps my like, stop. And I say it's stop, stop, stop, stop. And he doesn't stop. And then he goes over the garden hose. And I'm like, what did you think I meant? Well, I thought maybe you were sort of allegorizing, Dad.

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No, no, I'm speaking plain. And so as I come to Revelation 20, I think God is just speaking plain to us that there is this thousand year reign kingdom that lies ahead.
The more that I actually read my Bible, the millennial reign of Jesus, where the church ruled with him and he fulfills all his promises to Israel. I see it hidden everywhere, including this chapter that we're in this morning, Zechariah chapter eight.
And so my objective is to give us another lens as we study this book so that we don't just allegorize all of these promises made to Israel and conflate them with the church.
Right. I think we have two separate entities here. God has a plan for both. Is there application for us as the church? Of course. Of course there is.
[10:35] So bringing us up to speed last week in chapter seven, God reminds Israel not to behave like the former generation. OK, it was a generation, as Scott shared with us in chapter seven, verse 12, that made their heart diamond hard.

Let's they should hear from the Lord. And perhaps we've all done that at different seasons in our life. But for Israel, it resulted then in God's judgment, his correction.
We see in Zechariah 714, it says that God scattered them with a whirlwind among the nations that they had not known. And we know from history and because it's recorded in scripture that they were actually taken into exile for 70 years into Babylon.
The city, Jerusalem destroyed the temple, destroyed. And we see their consequences for disobedience. Today, we continue this theme of God's now returned blessing to his ancient people and a future golden age promised.
Now, because of the length of this chapter, I am going to make six observations as we read together. Some of them tie together.
[11:53] Some of them are just for free. Hopefully there is at least one that will encourage you this morning. Amen. Let's get after it. Beginning here in verse one. Word of the Lord.

And the word of the Lord of hosts came, saying, Thus says the Lord of hosts, I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy. I am jealous for her with great wrath.
Thus says the Lord. I have returned to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain.
So 70 years of discipline. God has still not forsaken his ancient people. In fact, he says here, I have returned to Zion.
Zion is the hill where the temple sits. I will dwell in the midst of you. Even though you have not been faithful. Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city.
[12:58] Is Jerusalem a faithful city unto the Lord today, friends? Say no. No.

No. No. It's not. And that's why as I read the text, I see there is a future promise here.
I see it focusing on a future golden age, i.e. the millennium. But I love the hopefulness in this first section.
I love the kindness of God in this first section. Hey, I have returned. I will rule in this city. I will dwell in the midst of you.
And so my first observation is this. God's character, it never changes. Observation number one. God's character never changes.
[13:54] And you're like, well, how did you get that observation, Jay? Because this passage oozes with grace. And I think there's a lot of folks that read their Bibles and they're like, God seems schizophrenic to me.

He seems erratic, capricious, a little unstable because I read the Old Testament and I'm like, whoa. And then I read the New Testament and I'm like, oh, I like Jesus.
Right? And sometimes people will observe the text and they'll say, man, I think God has changed. And so my observation number one is no. God's never changed. His character never changes.
And I think this passage gives evidence that it just oozes with grace. In fact, Malachi 3.6 says, I, the Lord, I do not change. Hebrews 13.8, Jesus says, I'm the same yesterday, today, forever.
I don't change. And I want us to notice how long-suffering God is. He's not moody. He's not fickle.
[15:01] And I would suggest as you read the Old Testament, if you haven't for a while, just observe the evidences of God being gracious throughout the Old Testament. I think you will be shocked.

Before the flood, God came and warned humanity for a day? For a year? For a year? How long did he endure with the vileness present on planet Earth?

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120 years as Noah built the ark. God sent prophets to Israel and Judah for generations before exile came.
Think about the golden calf incident in Exodus 32. Israel turned to idolatry almost immediately after receiving the covenant, and yet God did not wipe them out.
This is a gracious God in the Old Testament. God was even patient towards a pagan nation. You remember Nineveh? And Jonah's like, I don't want to go there.
[16:05] I want to flee. Because I know who you are, God. And what does he say of God? You're gracious. You're merciful. The God of the Old Testament and the New Testament are the same.

God is far more gracious, far more long-suffering than we give him credit for, friends. So that's observation number one. His character never changes. Let me address a phrase here that I think can be a summing block for some.
Because he says here in this first section, he says, hey, I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her. What does it mean that God is jealous?
And recall, Zechariah in Zechariah 1.14 said God is actually exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion. And it's interesting to me that critics love to camp on this as evidence that God is somehow not God, that God is just very human, very petty.
You ever heard Oprah Winfrey talk about this in multiple interviews? She said this, I was taught that God is loving and God is all-powerful and God is everywhere.
[17:20] So I was introduced to this idea of a jealous God, and I thought, I don't want to worship a jealous God. Observation number two.

See how fast we're moving, friends? It's this. We shouldn't worship a God who's not jealous. We shouldn't worship a God who's not.
Because if God is God, friends, He deserves everything. A God who wants half our life, is that God? Not at all. Not if we're talking about God. If God is, He deserves everything. And God's jealousy, or we could use the word devotion, has nothing in common with man's sinful jealousy.
See, when we envy, when we're jealous, it's because we don't have something that typically belongs to another. Oh, you have that thing. Right?
[18:25] If you're a guy and your neighbor has like a zero-turn mower, you're like, I want that. I'm just pushing. I've been pushing my whole life. I'm going to just keep pushing, right?

I want that thing. I want that ability. I want the looks. I want the income. I want the life experiences. Friends, God is jealous when we give to another something that actually rightfully belongs to Him. think of it this way.
If you're married, man, and there's another man that comes and starts flirting with your wife, it would be right for you as her husband to take issue with this.
And you would let this individual know, back off. what is it that rightly belongs to God our worship our worship Exodus 34 14 says you shall worship no other God for the Lord whose name is jealous worship praise honor adoration belong to God alone only he is worthy of it do you realize we have a planet that just enjoys the benefits of their creator every day just by the very nature that they take their next breath that's a gift they enjoy some good food that's a gift they have ability to do things create things experience things those are all gifts we have a planet that will use God's stuff all summer long the lakes the mountains the sand the sun and they will never ever say thank you
[20:30] God's a jealous God I was kind of burdened by this this week and our young adult we before we spend some time in the word we just took time as a group let's thank God let's thank God for all his goodness in all of life because I don't want to be one that's not worshiping not thanking the one that gave us everything amen God's a jealous God rightfully so now don't miss the promise here that we see in verses one through three there is a day coming where God will again verse three dwell in the midst of Jerusalem it says he will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem has he done this no he hasn't Jesus has not physically ruled from the city that will be described here as the faithful city so what is the city going to look like well this future golden age let's let's see keep going verses four to eight it's described a bit thus says the Lord of hosts old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem each with staff in hand because of great age and the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets thus says the Lord of hosts if it is marvelous in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days should it also be marvelous in my sight declares the Lord of hosts thus says the Lord of hosts behold I will save my people from the east country and from the west country and I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem and they shall be my people and I will be their God in faithfulness and in righteousness friends this is a just a an image a

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wonderful image of blessing returned okay and I think there was an element of it in

Zachariah's day but I believe this is massively future oriented in fact it's going to be better than we can imagine verse six it's so good that not only is it going to be marvelous to the remnant to think about it's actually marvelous to God like how good does something have to be to impress God it has to be good it's like in Genesis 131 when God created the head he created everything he's like very good it's marvelous to God his creation without being marred by sin so I'm going to say this observation number three this future golden age this millennial kingdom to come is going to blow our minds I'm kind of proud of that one blow our minds you guys are writing blow my mind yeah it's and here's the thing friends on God's timetable of these six events millennial millennial reign of Christ precedes actually eternity so it's going to be marvelous and it's going to be then even better in the eternal state where as it says in 2nd Peter 313 we await for a new heavens a new earth earth 2.0 it's going to be so beautiful so amazing it's like Eden everywhere do you realize how much time I waste in life putting up deer fencing at my house I will never have to do that again and putting down weed cover on our gardens and then burning holes to keep the weeds out and let the plant I will I will never do that again in eternity it will be remarkable it will there's no curse it will just keep getting better and I think we're getting a little we're getting just a little peak of this this future millennial kingdom I actually put together a slide to kind of like get our imaginations going okay now I don't know but this is what chat chibi tea spit out for me all right so we're going to go with it you got the temple Christ is dwelling he's he's reigning but I'm just giving you this just to like we never think about the future we never think about I think the enemy wants us to think about the millennial kingdom heaven as like some ethereal weird strange place it's like whoa that looks pretty cool I might want to walk that boulevard and that seems pretty cool just to just to kind of get our imaginations going

I think we are drawn into to fantasy stories mythologies science fiction stories because they stir our longing they stir our longing for wonder of I believe our future reality C.S. Lewis Tolkien they believe that in fact they said myth and story were splintered fragments of the true light and the Christian gospel is the true myth that fulfills them see in Jesus' day Jerusalem was roughly one square mile it's about 50 square miles today in the millennium we're given measurements it's 70 square miles Ezekiel 41 or 45 1 and Ezekiel 48 20 both describe the dimensions of future Jerusalem 25,000 cubits which is roughly 8.5 miles squared and you've got about 70 square miles and because scripture isn't super clear that may just simply be the interior of the future millennial city and people it says here

Zechariah says they'll be gathered from the east country and the west country east west what happens in the east sun rises what happens in the west sun sets God is going to be gathering a people and he's gathering his ancient people and even today we are observing right God's ancient people moving back to the land that God gave them as an inheritance we're living in a very unique time in history friends May 14th 1948 Israel was declared a nation I think all of these I'm not saying every decision that's happened in our history is righteous and that we should stand behind but it seems that God the God of history is orchestrating things in such a way to then usher in his millennial kingdom Israel's never fully possessed the land that was promised to them you read your Bible they never they never

[27:28] Joshua 1 14 says they will possess the land from the Euphrates to the great sea to the Mediterranean they never have it's yet future and that means that it will include parts of Lebanon Jordan Syria Iraq you want to see the division of the land described in the millennium just jot this down Ezekiel 47 verses 13 to 20 you know what I think is just wonderful about this sermon you guys are like why is he talking about the millennium again and there's going to be a day when we're in the millennium you're like you're going to be coming back you're like Jay thank you're talking about the millennium this place this is great see I know this is a a partial hardening has come upon

Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in so God right now is like man I'm building my church but there's going to be a day when I take my church away and all of a sudden the Jews that are left they may wake up and go whoa we missed our Messiah and I think God still has a plan yet for his ancient people and I think that revival of God's ancient people is going to happen primarily during the tribulation period those seven years that will then usher in the millennial kingdom I think all this points to the millennium where saved Israel will finally experience the fullness of the land promises the kingdom promises and the peace promises found in the Old Testament and so maybe you're a little confused you're like Jay help me for a little bit here who enters the millennium well

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we're reigning with Christ we have glorified bodies we've been raptured we return and we're helping administrate that government that kingdom in those days there will also be those
Jews who trust in Jesus during the tribulation who actually make it to the!! I think Gentile believers who come to faith in Christ during the tribulation who will live to the end those are the ones that will enter into this earthly millennial kingdom tribulation of sheep and goats I believe it's describing the events at the end of the tribulation period there those that will go into the millennial kingdom those who will go to eternal fire awaiting final judgment at the end of it those who trust in Christ in the tribulation and they die they will just be counted as part of those that reign with Christ and Revelation 20 verse 4 talks about tribulation martyrs that they will come to life and reign with Christ so I believe they will just be part of what we are doing as the church during that time now Zachariah is describing something in this section similar to what Isaiah records about this future golden age it's a place of what safety it's a city where there's security for children and for the elderly in a way that mankind has never experienced I mean we live in a world that exploits children aborts children marginalizes the elderly and it says here here's another you know comparison passage related to that in Isaiah 65 Isaiah writes verse 20 no more shall there be an infant who lives but a few days or an old man who does not fill out his days for the young man shall die a hundred years old wow and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed they shall build houses and inhabit them they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit well like we've never experienced this friends old men typically living to a hundred and yet there's a day coming when those that die at a hundred they will be considered what old no they'll be considered what young you died at a hundred that's young
George you find this funny I love that you're the closest thing to a hundred we got here this morning so this is good yeah they'll be considered young friends this is not the eternal state described in in Isaiah 65 or as we're reading in Zechariah 8 okay it's not the eternal state because nobody dies in eternity and here if you die at a hundred you're considered young in Isaiah 65 life is extended right things are renewed in such a way during the millennial period but death is still present when you go to the eternal state in revelation 21 guess what death shall be no more in eternity there's no death at all and this blessing friends it just continues now Zechariah give him a sneak peek this was ahead but now he's going to bring it back to their present for just a few verses look at verses 9 to 15 he says this thus says the Lord of hosts let your hands be strong you who are in these days have been hearing these words from the mouth of the prophets who were present on that day that the foundation of the house of the
[33:23] Lord of hosts was laid that the temple might be built for behold or before those his neighbor but now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days declares the Lord of hosts for there shall be sowing of peace the vine shall give its fruit and the ground shall give its produce and heavens shall give their due and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things and as you have been a byword of cursing among the nations O house of Judah and house of Israel so will I save you and you shall be a blessing fear not but let your hands be strong for thus says the Lord of hosts as I purpose to bring disaster to you when your fathers provoked me to wrath and I did not relent says the Lord of hosts so again I have purpose in these days to bring good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah fear not for all the talk about the future

God is telling his people hey I'm actually with you even today I'm going to be with you in the future but I'm with you today and he says here fear not fear not even in the heart because I'm the God that's in your past I'm the God that's in your present I'm the God that's in your future right it's like the promise in Isaiah 41 10 hey fear not because I'm with you and I think initially it was hard as they returned in fact it says there's no wage for man or any wage for beast never no there's no safety like what they paid the beast there's a wage for the beast no there's there should be a wage for the worker that has equipment right he has an ox or in our day it's like he's a worker with an excavator you should get paid more it doesn't matter even if you have good equipment you're not getting paid in this day there's no resources and yet
God saying stay encouraged keep pressing on let your hands be strong finish the task that I gave! finish! Friends there's great application for us as the church say at the task we know how the story ends 1 Corinthians 15 58 therefore my beloved brothers be steadfast and movable always abounding in the work of the Lord knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain God is growing a people he's growing a family he's going to return he's going to make all things new I know there's like six things in the future events and you're like man I'm still confused it's just going to keep getting

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better there's seven years not so great but then it's going to be better it's going to be wonderful observation number four are we on number four did I skip one we're on number four okay there's a lot going on here here we go it's good to think about the end of the story observation number four it's good to think about the end of the story in fact
God says it's good to think about the end of the story because he says the only book in the Bible in Revelation chapter 1 verse 3 it says if you read the words of this book of this prophecy there's a blessing maybe you didn't know that blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy blessed is the one who hears who keeps what's written in him for the time is near friends knowing how the story ends changes our perspective on suffering on trial friends I think about God's future promises quite a bit and I don't think it has made me less engaged on planet earth I don't think it's been escapism I'm trying to be as engaged as I can be I think it's hopeful I know what the future holds some of you have broken bodies you have things that are just man you carry with you I've had a colostomy bag for 45 years since I was 12 11 12 years old
I will love I'm looking forward to a glorified body like George like there's no wheelchairs I'm saying in heaven like that's our hope like we we can't like it's gonna like thank you Lord I can endure these things knowing what lies ahead it's good to think about the end of the story it's encouragement to press on and to be reminded God's at work which one is he telling him here strengthen your hands keep at it Warren Wiersbe says this he says we don't live by God's explanations we live by his promises it's life because we know that our sin has been dealt with at the cross and our future is secure we live Jesus I'm preparing a place I'm coming back like that should fill our hearts we know how the story ends we live by his promises we actually know the end of the story that Jesus wins this is gonna be a rare sermon because I
[39:03] I may never do this again because I don't talk about my ink but I'm gonna tell you about this one okay you never have to come up and ask me about this one okay this right here this is the the Christus victor symbol okay and you have here the the iota excuse me and the sigma Jesus the first and last letter in Greek of Jesus Jesus okay and here you have the chi and you have the sigma christos first and last letters in Greek of Christ Jesus Christ nika nika is not a girl's name uh it is because I had a gal at a coffee shop say hey you got my name on your arm and I was like oh you're nika oh this actually is Greek for victory conquers so this is Jesus Christ conquers Jesus Christ is victorious Jesus Christ wins that's a reminder to me I know how the story ends guys we're on the winning side we live by God's promises Jesus wins and because we know how the story ends we can engage well today and for

Israel in the day of Zechariah he's telling him hey you know how the story ends you know that in the millennium you're going to possess all things in the millennium you're actually not going to be a byword of cursing anymore friends I don't know when the Lord is going to return but it doesn't surprise me that we're amping up the anti-Semitism in this day and you're starting to see as you read God's word whoa that makes sense why the nations are raging against God's ancient people anti-Semitism today is terrible and what's what's what's really shocking and disgusting is it's it's amping up in the church not our church but there's a day coming when Zacharias says to them hey you shall be a blessing to the nations and we actually see it at the end of this section so we're going to take things out of order just to make things so convoluted but let's go there verses 20 to the end thus says the Lord of hosts people shall come even the inhabitants of many cities the inhabitants of one city shall go to another saying let us go at once to entreat the favor of the
Lord and to seek the Lord of hosts I myself am going many peoples and strong nations shall come and seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the Lord thus says the Lord of hosts in those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew and say let us go with you for we have heard that God is with you now certainly I think there is definitely fulfillment on the day of Pentecost here but I also see a future fulfillment in the millennial kingdom where the nations come to Jerusalem to worship King Jesus and we really see sort of this full arc circle the culmination of the Abrahamic covenant from Genesis 12 1-3 the salvation the Messiah that came from the Jews all of a sudden we see them at the end then receiving that blessing back observation number five we're crushing it the story's end should motivate righteous humble zealous living for
Jesus today church the story's end should motivate righteous humble zealous living for Jesus today see how I snuck two observations that are kind of the same back to back it's good to think about the end of the story and then the story's end should motivate see that I know I know what I'm doing you

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don't have to email repetition is the key to learning okay for the church we're the bride we know that Christ is returning for us in those six you know things we know guess what that number one the rapture that's our time right first Thessalonians four and we know that our lives then will be at that point tested with fire not for salvation salvation is all of the Lord by grace through faith but we know as first Corinthians three describes this judgment seat or this beam of seat judgment for the church where our lives will be tested by fire how did we serve the
Lord in this life okay and we're being tested not for salvation but for reward and how we will rule with Christ in the future golden age man I want to have I want to have a job in the millennial kingdom that's more than just taking care of I don't know a public bathroom in one of the Spokane parks now that could happen but I'm hoping I get maybe even the whole park I don't know maybe a square block we'll just have to see whatever the Lord said I'll be delighted to do now it should motivate this righteous living in us today let's drill down well what is righteous living today how should God's people of every age behave this is super practical friends go to verse 16 to 17 skipping back Zachariah writes these are the things that you shall do speak the truth to one another render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace do not devise evil in your hearts against one another and love no false oath for all these things
[44:26] I hate declares the Lord super practically how should we live today we should speak truthfully we should speak truthfully we should not be people that deceive others we should live honestly we should live peaceably with each other and chiefly we should just love what our king loves and what does he love he loves truth and he loves peace he loves truth Proverbs 12 22 lion lips are an abomination to the Lord but he delights in truth fullness peace the Lord loves peace he loves when his people walk in unity you know in Christ it says in Ephesians 2 that we're there's one new man neither Jew nor Greek in this life as we come to faith in Christ we're all part of the church okay we're all part of the church then in

Ephesians 4 he says hey be eager to maintain the unity in the bond of peace the Lord loves peace he loves when we seek unity so that's how we're to live Zachariah finishes up this with a question and he's actually going to kind of shift back to chapter 7 about fasting okay and I'm going to finish here because we already looked at the end of the kind of future blessing passage in 20 to 23 but let's look at verses 18 and 19 here at the very end it says here and the word of the Lord of hosts came to me saying thus says the Lord 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 seasons of joy and gladness peace therefore comes back to it love truth and peace remember there was this delegation sent from
Bethel this town ten miles north of Jerusalem came down asking hey should we continue the fast we've been doing it for 70 years and they had all these different fast fast of the fifth remembering the burning of the ground temple by Nebuchadnezzar fast of the seventh commemorating their governor Gedaliah who was murdered and then two more fast are added here they had a bunch there was one in the fourth month remembering the capture of Jerusalem fast in the tenth month the siege of Jerusalem these were self-imposed recall they did them for 70 years they were never told to do this there was only one fast in the Old Testament that was obligatory that you had to do that was the fast on the day of atonement read about that in Leviticus 16 so they just said we're going to do this and it's interesting because God asks a question in chapter 7 verse 5 hey are you doing these for me are you fasting for me tells us God's not looking for ritual he wants our hearts he wants the hearts of his people to belong to him we live for him but it should emanate from the fact that we belong to him that we're in communion with him but I want us to see the promise because the promise is fasting we get to chapter 8 you're not going to be fasting there's going to be a day coming when you're doing what you're feasting exactly feast days ahead food some of you guys are just the only thing you heard was feasting in the millennial kingdom that's all you heard this morning you're like
I'm going to eat praise the Lord you guys I know I know who we are don't worry yeah feast days people together this just beautiful image of wonderful food and man it's so good this chapter friends chapter 8 is pregnant with expectation future blessing in the heart there's good ahead and finally my last observation is this observation number six this chapter affirms that the story is just going to get better the story is just going to get better for God's ancient people as they come to faith in him and for God's bride the church as we rule with him in those thousand years and then we just enjoy him forever in the new heavens and the new earth the story just keeps getting better in that this the

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story actually it never comes to an end it never comes to an end and
I just think this is so hopeful friends because if your earthly life if you're in the midst of difficult it's not always going to be so and it's hard to see past when there's darkness maybe at the end of your life there's still longing there's disappointment but friends that's just the beginning that's what this chapter tells us it's just the beginning I believe in my heart of hearts those six events they're going to occur now if it happens to be that there's only five I'm good still I'm okay or four we're still good because we know how the story ends man it's so good my dad died and I'll end with this he died when he was 53 years old he died three months after Julie and myself were married and it's like he never met his grandkids and it's it's very strange for me and I and I will sometimes feel this ache you know even this morning I'm trying to worship in
[50:25] Waverly my my only grandchild is like giving me the raspberries trying to keep me from worshiping Jesus but I think about sometimes my dad because he never got to experience that and he dealt with a lot of health issues multiple he had a couple heart surgeries dealt with cancer knee replacement infection Guillain Buret just crazy stuff he just Lord gave him a lot of suffering in his life and man he ended life there was a lot of disappointment he never could succeed really to the place he wanted to in business didn't leave you know inheritance or there was debt because he was always sick he could never work and it's strange it's actually strange to be to serve you as your shepherd and you guys you'll never meet my parents it's a weird thing for me because I served in a place where everybody knew my parents and just how life works but a week before he passed

I actually sat at his bedside in the family room because his bed had to get moved downstairs he had another surgery he had infection in his knee so he couldn't be upstairs he couldn't walk stairs and he just he suffered a lot and I shared these words and I don't even think I fully understood I just read this and I'm like oh man this is a promise from God I'm gonna give this to my dad and so this is what I shared with him Romans 8 18 I said dad I consider the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing to the glory that is to be revealed to us amen father we thank you for time together and lord it's a little bit of a detour from where we typically are in the new testament but lord I believe there is a golden age coming because you have written about it and lord regardless of how the future events unfold and if we've all missed it and it's a little bit different we know that you will return king jesus you will rule and you will reign forever and ever and we want to live today in anticipation of that and we want to make the most of you while there is time so lord stir in us to be your people in this time in this unique place that you put us and we will we will delight as you use us to minister and to see people come to know how gracious and good you are how good and gracious you have actually always been we pray this in jesus name amen
Thank you.

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