



# LOCKINGCASTLECHURCH

Life Group Notes – 7<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Coming back to the heart: Prayer for all. Zechariah 8

*Please visit the LCC website to listen to the talk or read the transcript if available.*

## **Zechariah 8: Many will come to seek the Lord**

<sup>9</sup> This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Now hear these words, "Let your hands be strong so that the temple may be built." This is also what the prophets said who were present when the foundation was laid for the house of the LORD Almighty. <sup>10</sup> Before that time there were no wages for people or hire for animals. No one could go about their business safely because of their enemies, since I had turned everyone against their neighbour. <sup>11</sup> But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as I did in the past,' declares the LORD Almighty. <sup>12</sup> 'The seed will grow well, the vine will yield its fruit, the ground will produce its crops, and the heavens will drop their dew. I will give all these things as an inheritance to the remnant of this people. <sup>13</sup> Just as you, Judah and Israel, have been a curse among the nations, so I will save you, and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong.'

<sup>14</sup> This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Just as I had determined to bring disaster on you and showed no pity when your ancestors angered me,' says the LORD Almighty, <sup>15</sup> 'so now I have determined to do good again to Jerusalem and Judah. Do not be afraid. <sup>16</sup> These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; <sup>17</sup> do not plot evil against each other, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this,' declares the LORD.

<sup>18</sup> The word of the LORD Almighty came to me. <sup>19</sup> This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'The fasts of the fourth, fifth, seventh and tenth months will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.' <sup>20</sup> This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will yet come, <sup>21</sup> and the inhabitants of one city will go to another and say, "Let us go at once to entreat the LORD and seek the LORD Almighty. I myself am going." <sup>22</sup> And many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the LORD Almighty and to entreat him.'

<sup>23</sup> This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'In those days ten people from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, "Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you."'

*Note this is the NIV2011 version of the text. It would be helpful to compare it with other translations.*

### **Comment:**

Although it had seemed impossible to clear the rubble in Jerusalem, it was during the ministry of Zechariah that the Jews finally got the Temple rebuilt years after returning from exile. Somehow he managed to inspire and envision the people to crack on and get the job done. Zechariah presented a bigger vision for the Kingdom of God that meant their work would have a much wider impact on the world. We all need a bigger vision.

'Without vision', says Proverbs 29v18, 'the people perish', or 'they cast off restraint'. In other words, without vision, we tend to lose focus. Over the past few weeks we have seen Zechariah's global vision unfold as the Kingdom of God is described as an offer of security, forgiveness, and justice for *all nations*, not just a selected few. This is what Jesus inaugurated when he said 'The Kingdom of God has arrived! Repent and believe the good news!' The global vision of God's kingdom is still being rolled out today and will continue to grow until Christ returns and all is fulfilled. The promise of God from this passage is that ultimately many nations and powerful peoples will grab hold of believers and ask them to go with them to seek the Lord. Remember that Jesus quoted Isaiah 56 when he said 'My house will be a house of prayer for all nations'. The church is the body of Christ, the new temple of the Holy Spirit and he offers everyone everywhere the opportunity to come, worship and pray and seek the Lord together. The church can be that place of spiritual refreshment, life and abundance in Christ, if we keep soft hearts that welcome the Holy Spirit.

### **Questions:**

- 1) How does a compelling vision inspire us to 'have strong hands'? Can you describe a time you were inspired spiritually or practically?
- 2) Why is it important to realise that our actions can have greater or even eternal significance?
- 3) What sort of things can cause us to become hard hearted towards the Lord? How can we keep soft hearts?
- 4) In light of this passage what sort of church is the Lord wanting us to become over the next year?