Zechariah 8:18-23

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

Wyn Laidig

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***Zechariah 8:18–23***And the word of YHWH **tseva’ot** came to me, saying, “Thus says YHWH **tseva’ot**: 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 and cheerful feasts. Therefore love truth and peace. “Thus says YHWH **tseva’ot**: Peoples shall yet 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 YHWH and to seek YHWH **tseva’ot**; I myself am going.’ Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek YHWH **tseva’ot** in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of YHWH. Thus says the YHWH **tseva’ot**: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’ ”

1. For review, summarize the message of prior three sections of the chapter, Zech 8:1-8, Zech 8:9-13, and Zech 8:14-7.

Zech 8:1-8. YHWH will totally and fully restore Jerusalem and His people. He will return to them, and a live in their midst in Jerusalem. There will be peace and prosperity in the land like never before. And it will be marvelous for both God and man. That is what lies ahead! That is the “light at the end of the tunnel.”

Zech 8:9-13. People, get back to work on the temple! Great things are going to happen if you are obedient. The Seed of Peace, the Prince of Peace, is going to initiate the Covenant of Peace. And there will be peace and prosperity in our land for that remnant that chooses to obey. God will bring salvation to that remnant and you will be a blessing to all the nations, as was promised to your father Abraham.

Zech 8:14-17. YHWH is placing qualifications on what is expected of those who are to be a part of his blessing. His promises are sure, but they are not for everyone. The peace and prosperity promised are for the faithful remnant. Those will be the ones who live lives in heart-felt obedience to YHWH, loving others in an honest and selfless manner.

1. Chapters 7 and 8 are all part of the same message given to Zechariah by YHWH. How is this final passage (Zech 8:18-23) linked back to the events described in the first part of Chapter 7? In other words, what is the common thread in both the beginning and ending passages?

Fasting. Ch 7 begins with people from Bethel coming to ask whether or not they still needed to fast in the fifth month in remembrance of the destruction of the temple. These two chapters containing the words of YHWH to Zechariah have all been His answer. At the end YHWH again comes back to the question of fasting.

1. Four fasts are mentioned here. Two of them in Zech 7:5, but now we have two more. When did the periods of fasting occur, and why MIGHT these dates have been designated as days of fasting?

Fourth month – Probably this remembers the breach of the Jerusalem city walls by the Babylonians in the 11th year of King Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. This marked the end of the Davidic kings. Zedekiah secretly fled the city (Jer 39:2-8).

Fifth month –As discussed in Zech 7, Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of the temple took place in the fifth month (2 Kings 25:8).

Seventh month – As discussed in Zech 7, most Christian commentators suggest that the occasion for the seventh month fast is the assassination of Gedaliah (Jer 41:1-3), however I think it is more likely that this refers to the fast of Yom Kippurim, also called the Day of Atonement (Lev 23:26-32).

Tenth month – This probably remembers the beginning of the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:1 and Jer 52:4).

1. What will these days of fasting be like? How is this different from normal times of fasting?

They will be JOY שָׂשׂוֹן “sason” and JUBILATION שִׂמְחָה “simchah”.

This is the opposite of normal fasting, which are usually times of sorrow or mourning.

1. When will this happen? What are the times that Zechariah is talking about?

The latter days. The end times after Messiah comes. Much of these two chapters have pointed toward what will happen in the latter days, when Messiah returns and initiates the new covenant. The Seed of Peace will come, and remnant of His people will “possess all these things”. Peace, prosperity, security, old age, YHWH living among his people, etc. There will no fasting, sorrow or mourning during this time after Messiah returns.

1. Recall that Jer 31 is the passage that speaks specifically of the new covenant and the latter days. Compare Zech 8:19 to Jer 31:10-14.

***Jeremiah 31:10–14***“Hear the word of YHWH, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.’ For YHWH has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be **radiant over the goodness of YHWH, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall be like a watered garden, and they shall languish no more.** Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. **I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow**. I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, declares YHWH.”

Jeremiah: He will turn **mourning into joy** and exchange **gladness for sorrow**.   
Zechariah: Their **fasting will become joy and jubilation**.

1. Yeshua also taught about fasting, and when it is appropriate or not appropriate to fast. See Mark 2:18-20. How does this relate to what YHWH says about fasting in Zechariah 8?

***Mark 2:18–20***Now John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people came and said to him, “Why do John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?” And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? **As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.** The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.

When the Messiah returns, we cannot fast any longer. It will be the time of the wedding banquet. It will be a time of celebration rather than a time of fasting.

1. At the end of Zech 8:19, YHWH says “Therefore love truth and peace.” **emet** אֱמֶת “truth” and **shalom** שָׁלוֹם “peace” Look up the other times these two words are used in Zech 7-8. **Emet** is used 5 other times (Zech 7:9, 8:3, 8, 16) and **shalom** is used 3 other times (Zech 8:10, 12, 16, 19). Why are these words so significant? What is YHWH’s telling us?

7:9 – render **emet** judgments  
8:3 – the city of **emet**  
8:8 – God is **emet** and righteous  
8:16 – speak **emet** to one another  
8:10 – there was no **shalom** from the enemy  
8:12 – For [there will be] the Seed of **Shalom** (Zera HaShalom)  
8:16 – give judgments that are **emet** and make for **shalom**

This is how YHWH wants us to live – in truth and peace. This is his heart. These are his qualities. God is **emet**. His Son is the Prince of **Shalom**.

1. In looking at Zech 8:20-22 (and also the whole message of this entire vision), compare the following: Zech 2:11, Is 2:2-5, Rev 21:10-11, Rev 21:22-27). What connections do you see in these passages?

***Zechariah 8:20–22***“Thus says YHWH **tseva’ot**: **Peoples** shall yet 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 YHWH and to seek YHWH **tseva’ot**; I myself am going.’ **Many peoples and strong nations shall come** to seek YHWH **tseva’ot** in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of YHWH. .

***Zechariah 2:11***And **many nations shall join themselves to YHWH** in that day, and shall be my people. And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that YHWH of hosts has sent me to you.

***Isaiah 2:2–5***It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of YHWH shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and **all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come,** and say: “Come, **let us go up to the mountain** of YHWH, to the house of the God of Jacob, **that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.”** For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of YHWH from Jerusalem. He shall **judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples**; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall **not lift up sword against nation**, neither shall they learn war anymore. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of YHWH.

***Revelation 21:10–11***And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, **high mountain, and showed me the holy city** Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

***Revelation 21:22–27***And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. **By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it**, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. **They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.** But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

We see YHWH dwelling in Jerusalem, bringing peace to all nations. All nations will come and seek him (entreat him). He will “judge between them”. He will teach them. they will walk in his light, in His torah.

1. Look at Zech 8:23. What is the general literal meaning of this verse?

Lots of gentiles will seek to walk alongside of Jews, because they know that they walk with God.

1. Note that the Text says that ten men grab the robe of one Jew (lit. “a Jewish man”). Prophetically speaking, what could this be referring to?

All the nations will seek to walk with Yeshua the Messiah, since it will be clear that God is with Him.

1. What do you think the significance is of the number ten? Why ten men grabbing onto the robe of one Jew? See for example Gen. 31:7; Lev. 26:26; 1 Sam. 1:8; Job 19:3; Dan. 1:12, 20; Amos 6:9).

Some suggest this demonstrates that in the latter days there will be a 10:1 ratio of Gentile to Jewish believers in Messiah.

Others argue that the 10 has no literal significance, but just means “a large number”, or is symbolic of “comprehensiveness” or “completion”. In other words it symbolically means that the regathering that will take place is from all the nations, from the ends of the earth. This seems to make most sense.

***Genesis 31:7***yet your father has cheated me and **changed my wages ten times**. But God did not permit him to harm me.

***Leviticus 26:26***When I break your supply of bread, **ten women shall bake your bread in a single oven** and shall dole out your bread again by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied.

***1 Samuel 1:8***And Elkanah, her husband, said to her, “Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? **Am I not more to you than ten sons**?”

***Job 19:3***These **ten times** you have cast reproach upon me; are you not ashamed to wrong me?

***Daniel 1:12***“Test your servants for **ten days**; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink.

***Daniel 1:20***And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them **ten times better** than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom.

***Amos 6:9***And if **ten men** remain in one house, they shall die.

1. Is it interesting that the Text says that Gentiles will take hold of the ROBE of a Jewish man. The word translated as robe is the Hebrew **kanaf**  כָּנָף “corner, wing”. The word **kanaf** can mean wing (as of a bird, for example) or corner (as the corner of something). Often it refers to the corner of the robe or outer garment that the people of Israel used to wear. This is special because of the command of YHWH in Number 15:38. What was to be on the **kanaf**, and what did it signify?

***Numbers 15:37–41***YHWH said to Moses, “Speak to the people of Israel, and tell them to make **tassels on the corners** of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a cord of blue on the **tassel of each corner.** And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and **remember all the commandments** of YHWH, **to do them,** not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to whore after. So you shall remember and do all my commandments, **and be holy** to your God. I am YHWH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am YHWH your God.”

tassels = Hebrew **tsitsit** צִיצִת “tassel, fringe” or Greek **kraspedon** κράσπεδον

1. According to Jewish tradition, the Messiah would have special power in his **kanaf** (corner of his garment). Why do you think that was? Look at Mal 4:1-2 which is a prophetic passage about the Messiah coming in the latter days. Also consider what the **kanaf** with the tassels symbolized.

***Malachi 4:1–2***“For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says YHWH **tseva’ot**, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with **healing in its wings.** You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

The Messiah would have healing in his **kanaf.** This makes sense since the **tsitsit** are reminders to live in obedience to the Torah, and the Messiah would indeed live in perfect obedience to all commands of His Father.

1. Look at Matt 9:20-22 and Matt 14:36. The word fringe is the Greek **kraspedon** κράσπεδον, and is a translation of the Hebrew **tsitsit** צִיצִת “tassel, fringe”. Why did touching the tassel result in healing?

***Matthew 9:20–22***And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and **touched the fringe of his garment**, for she said to herself, “If I only touch his garment, I will be made well.” Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And instantly the woman was made well.

***Matthew 14:34–36***And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent around to all that region and brought to him all who were sick and implored him that they might only **touch the fringe of his garment**. And as many as touched it were made well.

Touching the tassel proclaimed their faith that Yeshua was the Messiah. They knew Zech 8:23 and Mal 4:2 and the traditional understanding of how these passages apply to the Messiah. They expected and believed the Messiah would have special healing powers in his **kanaf** to which the **tsitsit** were attached. So in touching Yeshua’s **kanaf** they were proclaiming their faith in Him as the Messiah. And he responds to the woman, saying your faith has made you whole.

1. What is the main point of this passage? How would you summarize the message here?

In the latter days, when the Messiah returns, there will be no need for ANY fasting. Our mourning and sorrow will be replace by joy and jubilation. In preparation for his return, we should live in truth and peace. When he does return, Gentiles from all nations will be gathered to Him, and will seek to worship Him in Jerusalem.

1. What do you personally take away from your study of this passage? What does living in “truth and peace” look like practically to YOU?