**BCM Bible Study – February 1-2, 2023**

**Zechariah 6-8: Israel’s Coming Restoration**

These passages are a mixture of the (then present) continuing reestablishment of Jerusalem and the future blessings that will occur through Israel in Jesus’ coming. The ongoing theme of God’s returning to the people of Israel shines through here, even as He calls for their repentance and growth in different areas.

The vision found in 6:1-8 is a return to the vision found in Zech. 1:7-17. The addition of chariots to the horses indicates that this is a military mission associated with God’s plan for judgment and redemption of the nations. A core message of these verses is found in 6:5 where God is called “the Lord of the whole world,” and his true sovereignty is apparent. That message is great for us and is important for the coming chapters.

**Read Zechariah 6:9-15**

* Would you be willing to give your resources for a moment like this? (Does it depend on how valuable they are?)
* There are no references previously in the Old Testament about the High Priest needing or having a crown - and later it is given away (v.14). So what might the crown symbolize or represent? (Only Melchizedek and Jesus would be considered High Priests & Kings!)
* Last week Joshua and the Branch were also mentioned together (Zech. 3). What does this passage say that is true about both Joshua and this coming Branch?
  + What here is meant to apply only to the Branch?
* Verse 13 mentions “harmony between the two,” which likely refers to the high priest being king as well. Why is that important for us? (Look at Hebrews 7-8 for help.)
* What would have been noteworthy for the Israelites about Joshua (not the branch, which seems to be the primary focus)?
* God consistently seems to offer moments of encouragement like this where if ‘x’ happens, you will know it was Him. And consistently ‘x’ does in fact happen then. Have there been any moments like this in your life?

**Read Zechariah 7**

This is the last date mentioned in Zechariah, with it coming two years after the visions experienced (Zech. 1:7). It is also noteworthy that this occurs approximately halfway through the rebuilding process of the temple.

* For reference: the fasting in the fifth and seventh months was associated with the fall of Jerusalem and Gedaliah’s assassination respectively.
* What are signs in this passage of the Israelites change or lack of change?
  + If it was not for the Lord, who/what might the Israelites have been fasting for?
* What does this continued disobedience show about their time in Babylon?
* So is there value in fasting?
  + **Read Matthew 6:16-18**
  + What does this teach us about how to fast?
* Does the command in v. 8-10 still apply to us today?
  + If so, how should we judge how we’re doing at these tasks?
* What are some ways to tell if I’m doing something for God or with God?
  + Both can be good - if God calls you to do something for Him, that’s a good thing. Sometimes though, we may convince ourselves that we’re doing something for God or for His mission when it is just self-serving. That’s one of the reasons why with God shines through a bit better.
* How do we make sure that we are administering “true justice”?
  + “True justice demonstrates concern for the individual and mitigating circumstances, and goes beyond simply executing justice according to the letter of the law.” (Hill)

**Read Zechariah 8**

* Have you ever burned with jealousy? Given that was the phrase used, how strong must God’s care be for them?
* What is the significance of God’s return to Zion and Jerusalem?
  + Previously, God’s “divine presence was both represented and symbolized for Israel in the Mosaic tabernacle and later Solomon’s temple.” (Hill) The return of God’s presence clearly has an incredible effect on the people and the land as seen in verses 4-5. While at times it may be hard to see or feel this should be similar to God’s presence within our lives.
* How do you determine whether something is marvelous? What can we learn about God from His statement in v.6?
* **Read Exodus 3:7-10, Luke 19:8-10**
  + What does it suggest about God that he has always been so invested in saving His people (now all people)?
* Have you ever experienced God’s redemption and His turning a curse into a blessing (v.13)? What did God do in that moment?
* How difficult is the list of tasks found in v.16-17?
* Why are truth and peace the two things that God instructs the people to love?
  + “The prophet calls the people to love what God himself loves… Paul’s citation of Zechariah 8:16 indicates that God’s expectations have not changed (Eph. 4:25).” (Hill)
  + How then should we go about loving truth and peace?
* How do v. 20-22 predict a time that both brings glory to God’s name and invites others into knowing Him?
* What image does this paint of that one Jew?
  + “Ten is understood symbolically as a large or complete number.” (Hill)

How do these aspects of prophecy impact the hope associated with Jesus’ coming for you?