

SERMON FOR OCTOBER 25, 2020

TEXT: ZECHARIAH 14: 8-11

THEME: ALL THINGS NEW

8 On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter. **9** And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day the Lord will be one and his name one. **10** The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses. **11** And it shall be inhabited, for there shall never again be a decree of utter destruction. Jerusalem shall dwell in security.

In the name of Jesus:

Cities spend big bucks today to advertise. They want to market themselves in order to have others think good of them, and in doing so, the theory goes, businesses will flock to the city. Several years ago the city of Philadelphia spent \$20 million on a campaign called: "The City That Loves You Back." Sometimes the marketing works, sometimes it doesn't. But there are big bucks to be spent in the marketing of cities.

How is this for a marketing campaign for a city: "Free! Beautiful mansions located in a perfect golden city with 100 % clean water, no utility bills, flawless roads, perfect climate, no sickness, beautiful music, free transportation, no taxes or extra expenses, and no fine print whatsoever.

Where is this city? And who can make an offer like that? To a city like that, to a future like that? Jesus. Jesus can and Jesus does.

Yes, Jesus was betrayed, arrested, crucified, died, and was buried. It was ugly and barbaric. But it wasn't the end. It isn't the end. God's death on the cross was not the end. For on Easter God's Son arose from the grave, Christ is alive and death has no dominion over Him! The Good News of Easter reverberates and rings true today: He is not in the grave, Christ has risen!

For the past two months we have been looking at the Old Testament prophet Zechariah. Today we come to the last chapter of his book, chapter 14, where the prophet rolls out his promotional campaign for the New Jerusalem, God's forever home in heaven for all believers.

God has a promise for you, and that promise is new life in Christ. Hope for heaven tomorrow changes how I live on earth today. Hope keeps us from going into despair and giving up. Hope helps us get out of bed and go to work. Hope gives meaning to daily life now. Hope changes us from living selfishly to living for others. Zechariah promotes the New Jerusalem by speaking about hope. In his marketing campaign, Zechariah makes several points.

First, there is a hunger for the New Jerusalem. “I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem for battle and the city will be captured and houses plundered and the women ravished, and half the city will go forth into exile.” (v12). Zechariah envisions a time when Jerusalem will be overrun by armies, capturing and killing half of the citizens. What kind of marketing strategy is this? It is what every good campaign does. Zechariah paints a picture of the old so that we hunger for the New. The New is so much more better than the old, the future is so much more better than the past. Our past isn’t pretty. It is full of frustrations and failures, full of pain and deep disappointment. Zechariah paints a picture here of the way things really are today. We are sick with sin. And it isn’t pretty.

We are all sick here with sin. We are sick of Covid, sick of being isolated, sick of the tension in relationships, sick of the anxiety we all feel. That is the point Zechariah is making, that there is a better place than here. It is there, with God, the New Jerusalem.

Something this spectacular is worth fighting for, which is why Zechariah writes: “The Lord will go forth and fight.” The Lord fights for you, He fights every enemy that stands in the way of you spending eternity in the New Jerusalem. That is why on Easter, Jesus defeated the last enemy, death, in

His rising to life again. Death dies and Life wins! The Lord will go forth and fight for you! He is on your side! What is against you? Sickness? Anxiety? No matter what you are facing, God goes forth to fight to get you to the New Jerusalem. God fights for you stuck in hopeless despair. For you who has a nervous twitch, to you who can't sleep at night. The Fighter, Jesus, fights for you! Because He loves you.

He is the Ruler of the New Jerusalem. Zechariah says that "the Lord will be king." What will the Lord do as Ruler over the new Jerusalem? There will be no cold or frost, no darkness, only light. Living water will flow out from Jerusalem. It will continue non stop, summer and winter. There will be no drought and scarcity will give way water and life. Jerusalem will rise above all the cities and its light will shine as a light on a hill.

And the Lord will be King over it all, in fact, the word all appears twelve times in Zechariah 14. That is no accident. There were twelve tribes of Israel. Twelve apostles. The number twelve signifies and means completeness in the Bible. Twelve announces that all things, **ALL THINGS** will be new. Perfect bodies, perfect relationships, perfect health, perfect joy, perfect bliss, and perfect life. Because the Lord is Ruler over all. And because He is Ruler over all, we are secure. We are secure because in Jesus He has gone to prepare the

perfect place for us. No matter who you are, God gives residency to all who believe in Jesus.

A recent survey asked Americans” What words give you the most hope?” Number one was I love you. Number two, I forgive you. Number three, supper’s ready. Supper’s ready? Yes, these three phrases summarizes our hope, for God says, I love you, I forgive you, and Supper is ready, that is, the marriage feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom awaits all who believe in Jesus.

You and I have hope in Jesus. This is hope for today, hope for heaven and hope for tomorrow. And this hope doesn’t disappoint. For in Jesus He makes all things new.

Amen