

Festivals of Joy

Zechariah 7 – 8

by Don Falkos

copyright 2018 Donald Falkos Storytelling LLC

Since the downfall of Jerusalem, the people of God, especially those living near the devastated city, had been fasting on the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple. Now that the Temple was being rebuilt, they wondered if they should continue this tradition. The Lord replied:

All these years you've been fasting for yourselves, not for me. And whenever you have feasted, you have done so for yourselves, not for me. I don't care about your fasting and feasting. My prophets have always made my concerns clear. "Seek justice; show mercy and compassion; see to the needs of the widow, the orphan, the immigrant, the poor. Treat each other with respect." But you have never listened. That's why you ended up in exile and this pleasant land was left desolate.

I will return to Zion, the Holy Mountain. I will live in Jerusalem, the City of Truth. I will bring such prosperity, children and the elderly will no longer need to work. I will bring back those who were scattered abroad, and people of every language and every nation will come with them.

Those who laid the foundations of my Temple experienced many difficulties and eventually gave up. But I will see you have everything you need so you might complete the task. Don't be afraid. Work hard, and build my Temple.

Turn your days of fasting and mourning into festivals of joy, and as you build my Temple, build your community around justice and truth. Remain faithful to me. Otherwise, not one of the promises I have made will be fulfilled.