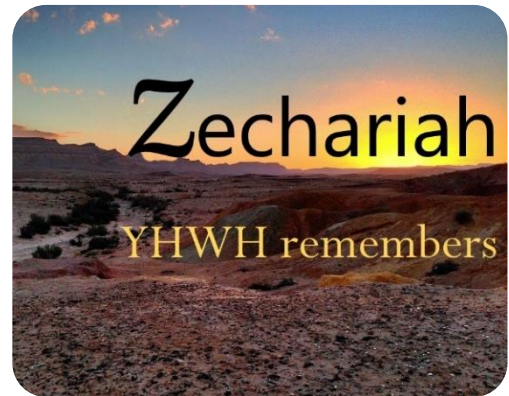


ZECHARIAH 7 vs 1

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Zechariah wrote around 500BC, when roughly 50,000 -- about 1/10th the population of the House of Judah in captivity... returned to Jerusalem, to rebuild the desolate region in advance of Messiah's first coming. Most of Judah had grown comfortable in their new home of Babylon... where they lived for the next several centuries, having rejected the Torah of Moses. But this chapter primarily speaks to the 10 northern tribes of Israel.



¹ It happened, in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of the LORD came to Zechariah in the fourth day of the ninth month, even in Chisleu / round 518BC... WOW, 2500 years ago; November – December, around the wintery time of Hanukkah, that's when the Lord spoke to Zechariah;

² when they / clearly... Bethel sent Sherezer and Regemmelech and their men / from Israel's capital, 2 civil representatives along with their symposium delegation -- other geniuses from the 10 northern tribes... they were sent from Israel, not Judah... sent to Jerusalem and had to multitask; their assignment:

[1] to pray before the LORD.

³ And [2] to speak to the priests and the prophets / these brilliant seminary grads... upstanding in their community... were in need of some clarification from the august religious hierarchy of the day...

who were in the house of the LORD of hosts,

saying / the 2 representative and their crew from Bethel asked,

Should I weep in the fifth month / in July - August,

separating myself, as I have done these so many years? / now days, they'd have their notepads and technology charged and ready; they sound exactly like the rich young ruler who came to Jesus with questions over the law... and answer the same: all these things I have done from my youth up -- Matthew 19:20

they wanted clarification on the newest rules and manufactured hocus pocus newly added by the religious apostates and self-righteous hypocrites. They wanted to know... do we really have to do all that stuff?

Well, the short answer is, **NO!**

Only on the Day of Atonement did the LORD require his OT people to fast. But in the NT, fasting is not prescribed, Jesus simply expected his followers to fast -- it's a good individual practice; it's okay to be hungry. In this chapter, we are reminded the LORD knows how to speak clearly; He is going to speak to prophet Zechariah... to have him say a little something to the inquisitive people.

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⁴ Then came the word of the LORD of hosts to me, saying,

⁵ Speak to all the people of the earth, and to the priests / speak to both the undiscerning populous and the religious self-righteous -- those faithless shepherds of the land; speak to them at the same time, saying,

When you fasted and mourned / and did all that religious sounding drama...

in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years / even when in Babylon, they wanted to dispute the small stuff; but the LORD threw all their tasteless, shallow hocus pocus into the one pot,

Did you really fast to Me, even to Me? The obvious answer to this rhetorical question is: **NO Sir!**

And because the LORD knows what is in our heart, and what we are thinking... and all the excuse-making that we start imagining instead of answering truthfully... He adds:

⁶ And when you ate, and when you drank,

didn't you eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves? The appropriate answer would be: **Yes Sir!**

The LORD knew their fasting was no different than their partying. It was all a show to be seen by others... as if they were pious and full of life; when inside, they were really dead.

⁷ Shouldn't you hear the words the LORD proclaimed by the former prophets,

when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities were all around her, when men inhabited the south and the plain?

And the appropriate answer would be: **Yes Sir!**

The people of God prospered when they did what the LORD asked; Moses said, as they were about to enter the land, they were to remember the Covenant God made with them – 10 commandments written in stone.

They didn't. So now, they should prepare for captivity; the leaders having invented endless traditions and burdens... and lost sight of the LORD; and were probably betting that He was a pushover, dupe or patsy.

⁸ And the word of the LORD came to Zechariah,

saying / aren't you glad the One who created the universe, speaks? Therein is the challenge of our genius 21st century; either we believe in the Creator of the universe... or we believe in a mute and meaningless universe; simple choice, isn't it?

⁹ Thus has the LORD of hosts said, saying,

ZECHARIAH 7 vs 1

Execute true judgment / dispense true justice,

and show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother: / things we can also do today.

¹⁰ **Do not oppress:**

[1] **the widow** / women in many cultures are still considered property of men; often, they still are without access to education; in many cultures, they are considered a burden to the family,

[2] **not the fatherless** / orphans whose fathers have died due to global policies disrupting communities, is one thing; but those children who are left abandoned because of irresponsible men is another problem altogether; children are prey of elitist pedophile rings and other human traffickers,

[3] **not the stranger** / the foreigner... or alien among us have rarely been welcomed by the majority,

[4] **not the poor** / Moses tells us: these are the very people the Lord loves *to defend and provide for* – [Deuteronomy 10](#) Jesus said, *the poor you will have with you always*; and whenever you want to do them good, He says, do it. Though it is not our responsibility to help those who are deliberately made and kept poor by govt; it is our opportunity to help. Being poor is big business for most govt agencies around the world; then they can tax the citizenry more to pay for all their programs. Those govts that misuse and embezzle the wealth of the citizenry has little to do with these verses. The LORD speaks to individuals;

and let none of you imagine evil in your heart against his brother. And did they listen? **No!**

¹¹ **But they** [1] **refused to listen**, and [2] **shrugged their stubborn shoulder**, and [3] **stopped their ears that they should not hear** / so they acted like healthy 2-year-olds; unfortunately, they weren't children, they were adults... heartless busybodies and hardheads not doing what is right.

¹² **They** [4] **made their hearts as flint**, so they [5] **could not hear the law**, and the words **the LORD of hosts sent by His Spirit through the former prophets:**

so, great wrath came from the LORD of hosts / and don't you wonder what He plans to do to those of our genius jackass generation who refuse to listen and shrug their shoulders? Here He already told us.

¹³ **Therefore** it happened that as **he** cried / who? [choose either: 1, 2, 3 or 4... from verse 10], as **he** cried... and **they did not hear**; so, when **they** cried, and **I would not hear**, says **the LORD of hosts:** / so two can play this game, right?

¹⁴ **But I scattered them** with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they did not know. **Thus the land was desolate behind them, and no one passed through nor returned: for they made the pleasant land desolate.** / The Lord is concerned about His creation; He's ready to defend and provide for: the widow, orphan, stranger and poor. He is expert with the stubborn. Someone who trusts the Lord, lives life much differently than those who trusts in thieves and robbers, who embezzle His gift of life using it for their own purposes. The one who trusts the Lord must be about their Father's business.