

Zechariah 7

Zechariah 7.1-7

V1 – **Date for this segment?** Fourth year of King Darius (about 518 B.C.)

-**What was the date for the beginning of Zechariah?** Second year of Darius (1.7) or 520 B.C.

V2 – **What town had sent a delegation to Jerusalem?** The town of Bethel

-**What was the purpose of the delegation?** To seek God's favor

V3 – “The priests” are Haggai and Zechariah

-**What was another purpose of the delegation?** To ask a technical question of the priests

-**What was the question?** “Shall we continue to keep the feast of the fifth month?”

-**Read 2 Kings 25.8-9** - Jerusalem was destroyed in the fifth month; therefore, the exiles had fasted and prayed all that time to commemorate the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

-**Question:** Since we are rebuilding the temple and the city, should we continue to fast? (A very good question - like celebrating a defeat)

V4 – **To whom did God give an answer?** Zechariah

V5 – Seventh month: Assassination of Gedediah (*2 Kings 25.25, Jeremiah 41.1-10*)

-**Had God commanded these fasts?** No

V6 – When they had a party, they did it for themselves

V7 – “**Didn't the former prophets give you the same message?**” Example: fasts mean nothing unless God commanded them

-So the answer: "You don't have to keep these fasts"

Zechariah 7.8-14

V8 – Again God spoke to Zechariah

V9 – **Instead of fasting, what did God tell the people to do?** “Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother.” **Read Amos 5.24, Hosea 6.6, Micah 3.1**

-In other words, the former prophets had said the same thing

V10 – **What else did God say for them to do?** Don't mistreat widows, orphans, strangers, or the poor; don't plan evil in your heart against each other

V11 – **What had the people done back in the days of Amos, Hosea, and Micah?** Ignored the prophets, turned a stubborn shoulder to them, stopped their ears from hearing

V12 – **How did they make their hearts?** Like flint

-Flint is a hard stone

-Many times we can see flint for the bed of railroad tracks – it is very hard and sharp

-**What happened because they made their hearts like flint?** The wrath of God was upon them

V_13 – Very interesting: “Turn about is fair play.”
-They ignored God, so He ignored them

V_14 – **What had God done?** Scattered them with a strong wind

Lessons from Chapter 7

- Some gospel lessons in *Chapter 7* about the danger of ignoring God
- Also, the danger of substituting ceremonies for righteous living
- Therefore, what was God’s answer about the feasts?** Drop them and live righteous lives instead

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