

Zechariah's Prophecy to the Remnant—Hypocritical Fasting (December 7, 518 BC)

Zechariah 7–8

Question About Fasting

7:1 And then, in the fourth year of King Darius, the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah on *the fourth day* of the ninth month, *which is Kislev*.

2 And *the people of Bethel* sent Sharezer and Regem-Melech, and their men, to entreat the favor of Yahweh,

3 saying to the priests of the house of Yahweh of hosts and to the prophets, “Should I mourn in the fifth month and keep myself separate as I have done for these many years?”

God's First Response—Examine Your True Motives

4 And the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying,

5 “Say to all the people of the land and to the priests: ‘When you fasted and lamented in the fifth and seventh months for these seventy years, did you really fast for me?’

6 And when you eat and drink, are you not eating and drinking *for yourselves*?

7 *Are not these* the words that Yahweh proclaimed through the former prophets, when Jerusalem and its surrounding towns were inhabited and at ease, and the Negev and the Shephelah were inhabited?’” [cf. [Isa 58:1–8](#)]

God's Second Response—A Call to Repentance

8 And the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah, saying,

9 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Judge *with* trustworthy justice, and show steadfast love and compassion to one another.

10 You must not oppress *the widow, the orphan, the foreigner, and the needy*. You must not devise evil in your heart against one another.’

11 But they refused to listen, and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from listening.

12 They made their hearts adamant in order not to hear the law and the words that Yahweh of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets; *therefore* great wrath came from Yahweh of hosts.

13 ‘Thus, just as I called and they would not hear, so they will call and I will not hear,’ says Yahweh of hosts.

14 ‘And I scattered them with a wind among all the nations that they had not known; the land was made desolate behind them—no one crossing through *it* or returning—and they made the desirable land a desolation.’”

Israel's Future Restoration

8:1 And the word of Yahweh of hosts came, saying,

2 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘I am exceedingly jealous for Zion; I am jealous for it *with* great wrath.’

3 Thus says Yahweh: ‘I have returned to Zion, and I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem will be called the faithful city, and the mountain of Yahweh of hosts *will be called* the holy mountain.’

4 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Old men and old women shall again sit in the public squares of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age.

5 And the public squares of the city will be filled *with* boys and girls playing in its public squares.’

6 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘*Even* if it seems impossible to the remnant of this people in those days, should it also seem impossible to me?’ declares Yahweh of hosts.

7 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Look! I *am* going to save my people from the land of the east, and from the land of the west,

8 and I will bring them and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They will be my people and I will be their God in faithfulness and in righteousness.’

9 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘Let your hands be strong, you who are hearing in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets *who were present on the day* the foundation was laid for the rebuilding of the temple, the house of Yahweh of hosts.

10 For before those days there was no wage for people or for animals, and there was no safety from the enemy for those who went out or those who came in, and I sent each person against one another.

11 But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ declares Yahweh of hosts.

12 ‘For *there will be* a sowing of peace; the vine will give its fruit, and the soil will give its produce, and the heavens will give their dew. And I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these *things*.

13 And then, just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you will be a blessing. You must not be afraid; let your hands be strong!’”

14 For thus says Yahweh of hosts: “Just as I planned to bring disaster on you when your ancestors provoked me to anger,” says Yahweh of hosts, “and I did not regret *it*,

15 so again I have planned in these days to do good to Jerusalem and the house of Judah. Do not be afraid!

16 These *are* the things that you must do: speak truth, each *of you*, with his neighbor; [[Eph 4:25](#)] practice trustworthy judgment and peace in your gates.

17 Do not devise evil in your hearts *against* your neighbor, and do not love a false oath, because all these *are* things I hate,” declares Yahweh.

18 And the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying

19 “Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘The fast of the fourth *month*, the fifth *month*, the seventh *month*, and the tenth *month* will be for the house of Judah jubilation and joy and merry festivals; therefore love truth and peace.’

20 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘*It will happen* again that nations and the inhabitants of many cities will come.

21 And the inhabitants of one city will go to another *city*, saying, “Let us go immediately to entreat the favor of Yahweh, to seek Yahweh of hosts—I also will go!”

22 And many peoples and powerful nations will come to seek Yahweh of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Yahweh.’

23 Thus says Yahweh of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from all the nations of every language will take hold of the hem of a Judean man, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard *that God is with you!*” ’”

Zechariah’s Prophecy to the Remnant—The Anointed King Rejected (c. 517–516 BC)

Zechariah 9–11

Judgment on the Nations Surrounding Israel (Historical and Eschatological)

9:1 An oracle.

The word of Yahweh *is* against the land of Hadrach,
and Damascus *is* its resting place.

For to Yahweh belongs the eye of humankind,
and all the tribes of Israel,

2 and also Hamath, *which* borders on it;
Tyre and Sidon—yes, they are very wise!

3 Tyre has built a fortification for itself,
and it heaped up silver like dust,
and gold like *the* mud of *the* streets.

4 Look! The Lord will drive it out
and will hurl its outer ramparts into the sea,
and it will be consumed by fire.

5 Ashkelon will see and will be afraid,
and Gaza will writhe exceedingly,
and Ekron *also*, because its hope is ruined.
And the king from Gaza will perish,
and Ashkelon will not be inhabited.

6 A mongrel people will dwell in Ashdod,
and I will cut down the pride of *the* Philistines.

7 I will remove its blood from its mouth,
and its abominations from between its teeth.
And it too will be a remnant for our God;
and it will be like a tribal chief in Judah,
and Ekron *will be* like *the* Jebusite.

8 But I will encamp at my temple *like a* guard,
against those crossing through and returning;
no oppressor will cross through them again,
for now I have seen with my *own* eyes.

The Coming of the Messiah, Israel’s True King (Historical and Eschatological)

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Look! Your king comes to you;
he *is* righteous and victorious,
humble and riding on a donkey,
and on a male donkey, the foal of a female donkey! [\[Matt 21:5; John 12:15\]](#)

10 And I will cut off *the* chariot from Ephraim,
and *the* horse from Jerusalem;
the battle bow will be cut down,
and he will announce peace to the nations.
His dominion *will be* from sea to sea,
and from *the* River to *the* ends of *the* earth.

The King Delivers Israel (Eschatological)

- 11 *As for* you also, because of the blood of your covenant,
I will release your prisoners from the waterless pit.
- 12 Return to *the* fortress,
O prisoners of hope;
today *I am* declaring *that* I will repay you double.
- 13 For I have bent Judah *as* my bow;
I have set Ephraim *as an arrow*.
I will set in motion your sons, O Zion,
against your sons, O Javan.
I will wield you like the sword of a warrior.
- 14 Then Yahweh will appear over them,
and his arrow will go forth like lightning;
and my Lord Yahweh will blow the trumpet,
and he shall go out in the storm winds of *the* south.
- 15 Yahweh of hosts will defend them,
and they will devour and subdue the sling-stones;
they will drink, they will make noise like wine,
and they will be full like the sacrificial basin,
drenched like the corners of an altar.
- 16 And Yahweh their God will save them on that day,
as the flock of his people;
for *they are like* the stones of a diadem,
glittering on his land.
- 17 For how *great is* his goodness, and how *great is* his beauty!
Grain will make the young men thrive,
and new wine *the* young women.

The King Rejects the Wicked Leaders (Eschatological)

- 10:1 Ask rain from Yahweh in the season of *the* spring rain—
Yahweh, who makes storm clouds,
and he gives showers of rain to them,
to everyone vegetation in the field.
- 2 Because the household gods speak deceit,
and those who practice divination see a lie,
and the dreamers of vanity speak in vain.
Therefore *the people* wander like sheep;
they are afflicted because there is no shepherd.
- 3a My anger burns against the shepherds,
and I will punish the leaders,

The King Selects the Righteous Leaders (Eschatological)

- 3b because Yahweh of hosts watches over his flock,
the house of Judah;
and he will make them like his majestic horse in war.
- 4 From them *the* cornerstone will go out,
from them *the* tent peg,
from them *the* battle bow,
from them every ruler,
all together.
- 5 And they will be like warriors,
trampling in the mud of *the* streets in the battle.
They will fight, because Yahweh *is* with them,
and they will put to shame *the* riders on horses.
- 6 And I will strengthen the house of Judah,
and the house of Joseph I will save.
And I will bring them back, because I have compassion on them,
and they will be as if I had not rejected them,

for I *am* Yahweh their God, and I will answer them.

- 7 And *the people of* Ephraim will be like *a* warrior,
and their heart will be glad as *with* wine.
And their children will see and rejoice;
their heart will shout in exultation in Yahweh.

The King Regathers His People—the Second Exodus (Eschatological)

- 8 I will whistle to them and gather them,
for I have redeemed them,
and they will become numerous as they have been numerous *before*.
- 9 Though I sow them among the nations,
in the distant places they will remember me,
and they will stay alive with their children, and they will return.
- 10 And I will bring them back from the land of Egypt,
and from Assyria I will gather them.
To the land of Gilead and Lebanon I will bring them,
until no *room* will be found for them *there*.
- 11 And he will pass through the sea of distress,
and he will strike the waves of the sea,
and all *the* depths of the Nile will dry up.
The pride of Assyria will be brought low,
and the scepter of Egypt will depart.
- 12 I will make them strong in Yahweh,
and in his name they will walk,
declares Yahweh.

A Lament for the Destruction of the Three Trees/Shepherds/Kings (Historical—Preexilic)

- 11:1 Open your doors, *O* Lebanon,
so that fire will devour your cedars!
- 2 Wail, *O* juniper, for *the* cedar has fallen,
for *the* magnificent *trees* are ruined!
Wail, oaks of Bashan,
for the impenetrable forest has come down!
- 3 *Listen to* the wailing of the shepherds,
for their splendor is ruined!
Listen to the roar of *the* young lions,
for the thickets of the Jordan are ruined!

The Rejection of the Messiah as Illustrated by Zechariah's Role-Playing (Historical—Preexilic and Exilic)

- 4 Thus says Yahweh my God: "Shepherd the flock *doomed* to slaughter.
- 5 The ones buying them kill them and go unpunished, and the ones selling them say, 'Blessed *be* Yahweh, for I have become rich.'
Their own shepherds have no compassion for them.
- 6 For I will no longer have compassion on the inhabitants of the land," declares Yahweh. "Look, I *am* going to cause humankind to fall, each into the hand of his neighbor, and into the hand of his king; and they will devastate the land, and I will not deliver *anyone* from their hand."
- 7 And I shepherded the flock *doomed* to slaughter, even the afflicted of the flock. I took two staffs, one I called Kindness, and the other I called Unity, and I shepherded the flock.
- 8 And I got rid of three shepherds in one month, for I grew impatient with them, and they also became tired of me.
- 9 So I said, "I will not shepherd you! The *one* dying will die, and the *one* to be destroyed will be destroyed. And the *ones* remaining, let them devour the flesh of each other."
- 10 And I took my staff Kindness and broke it, to break my covenant that I had made with all the peoples.
- 11 And it was broken on that day. Then the afflicted of the flock, the *ones who were* watching me, knew that it *was* the word of Yahweh.
- 12 And I said to them, "If it seems right to you, give *me* my wages, but if not, keep them." And they weighed out my wages, thirty silver *shekels*.
- 13 And Yahweh said to me, "Throw it to the potter," this noble price *at* which I was valued by them!" So I took the thirty silver *shekels* and I threw them to the potter *in* the house of Yahweh. [cf. [Matt 26:14–16; 27:3–10](#)]
- 14 Then I broke my second staff Unity to break the family ties between Judah and Israel.

The Evil Shepherd/King to Come (Eschatological)

15 And Yahweh said to me, “Take again the implements of a foolish shepherd.

16 For look, I *am* raising up a shepherd in the land who will not attend to the *ones that are* perishing; he will not seek the young man, he will not heal the *ones that are* crushed and he will not sustain the healthy *ones*; he will devour the flesh of the fattened ones and tear apart *even* their hoofs.

17 “Woe, my worthless shepherd who deserts the flock! *May* a sword *fall* on his arm and on his right eye! *May* his arm wither completely and his right eye be utterly blinded!”

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