

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

Zechariah 7–8

Question About Fasting

7:1 In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth *day* of the ninth month, *which is* Chislev.
 2 Now *the town of* Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech and their men to seek the favor of the LORD,
 3 speaking to the priests who belong to the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, “Shall I weep in the fifth month and abstain, as I have done these many years?”

God's First Response—Examine Your True Motives

4 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,
 5 “Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months these seventy years, was it actually for Me that you fasted?
 6 When you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and do you not drink for yourselves?
 7 Are not *these* the words which the LORD proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous along with its cities around it, and the Negev and the foothills were inhabited?’” [cf. [Isa 58:1–8](#)]

God's Second Response—A Call to Repentance

8 Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah saying,
 9 “Thus has the LORD of hosts said, ‘Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother;
 10 and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.’
 11 But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing.
 12 They made their hearts *like* flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts.
 13 And just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen,” says the LORD of hosts;
 14 “but I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate.”

Israel's Future Restoration

8:1 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying,
 2 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘I am exceedingly jealous for Zion, yes, with great wrath I am jealous for her.’
 3 Thus says the LORD, ‘I will return to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts *will be called* the Holy Mountain.’
 4 Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Old men and old women will again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each man with his staff in his hand because of age.
 5 And the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in its streets.’
 6 Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘If it is too difficult in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, will it also be too difficult in My sight?’ declares the LORD of hosts.
 7 Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Behold, 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 *back* and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.’
 9 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Let your hands be strong, you who are listening in these days to these words from the mouth of the prophets, *those who spoke* in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid, to the end that the temple might be built.
 10 For before those days there was no wage for man or any wage for animal; and for him who went out or came in there was no peace because of his enemies, and I set all men one against another.
 11 But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days,’ declares the LORD of hosts.
 12 For *there will be* peace for the seed: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these *things*.
 13 It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.’
 14 “For thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Just as I purposed to do harm to you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and I have not relented,
 15 so I have again purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear!
 16 These are the things which you should do: speak the truth to one another; [[Eph 4:25](#)] judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates.
 17 Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all these are what I hate,’ declares the LORD.”
 18 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,
 19 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth *months*

will become joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.’

20 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘*It will yet be* that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities.

21 The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, “Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go.”

22 So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.’

23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, 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 The burden of the word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach, with Damascus as its resting place (for the eyes of men, especially of all the tribes of Israel, are toward the LORD),

- 2 And Hamath also, which borders on it;
Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.
- 3 For Tyre built herself a fortress
And piled up silver like dust,
And gold like the mire of the streets.
- 4 Behold, the Lord will dispossess her
And cast her wealth into the sea;
And she will be consumed with fire.
- 5 Ashkelon will see *it* and be afraid.
Gaza too will writhe in great pain;
Also Ekron, for her expectation has been confounded.
Moreover, the king will perish from Gaza,
And Ashkelon will not be inhabited.
- 6 And a mongrel race will dwell in Ashdod,
And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.
- 7 And I will remove their blood from their mouth
And their detestable things from between their teeth.
Then they also will be a remnant for our God,
And be like a clan in Judah,
And Ekron like a Jebusite.
- 8 But I will camp around My house because of an army,
Because of him who passes by and returns;
And no oppressor will pass over them anymore,
For now I have seen with My eyes.

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

- 9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout *in triumph*, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you;
He is just and endowed with salvation,
Humble, and mounted on a donkey,
Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. [[Matt 21:5](#); [John 12:15](#)]
- 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
And the horse from Jerusalem;
And the bow of war will be cut off.
And He will speak peace to the nations;
And 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 My covenant with you,
I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
- 12 Return to the stronghold, O prisoners who have the hope;
This very day I am declaring that I will restore double to you.
- 13 For I will bend Judah as My bow,

- I will fill the bow with Ephraim.
 And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece;
 And I will make you like a warrior's sword.
- 14 Then the LORD will appear over them,
 And His arrow will go forth like lightning;
 And the Lord God will blow the trumpet,
 And will march in the storm winds of the south.
- 15 The LORD of hosts will defend them.
 And they will devour and trample on the sling stones;
 And they will drink *and* be boisterous as with wine;
 And they will be filled like a *sacrificial* basin,
Drenched like the corners of the altar.
- 16 And the LORD their God will save them in that day
 As the flock of His people;
 For *they are as* the stones of a crown,
 Sparkling in His land.
- 17 For what comeliness and beauty *will be* theirs!
 Grain will make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins.

The King Rejects the Wicked Leaders (Eschatological)

10:1 Ask rain from the LORD at the time of the spring rain—

- The LORD who makes the storm clouds;
 And He will give them showers of rain, vegetation in the field to *each* man.
- 2 For the teraphim speak iniquity,
 And the diviners see lying visions
 And tell false dreams;
 They comfort in vain.
 Therefore *the people* wander like sheep,
 They are afflicted, because there is no shepherd.
- 3a "My anger is kindled against the shepherds,
 And I will punish the male goats;

The King Selects the Righteous Leaders (Eschatological)

- 3b For the LORD of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah,
 And will make them like His majestic horse in battle.
- 4 "From them will come the cornerstone,
 From them the tent peg,
 From them the bow of battle,
 From them every ruler, *all* of them together.
- 5 "They will be as mighty men,
 Treading down *the enemy* in the mire of the streets in battle;
 And they will fight, for the LORD *will be* with them;
 And the riders on horses will be put to shame.
- 6 "I will strengthen the house of Judah,
 And I will save the house of Joseph,
 And I will bring them back,
 Because I have had compassion on them;
 And they will be as though I had not rejected them,
 For I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.
- 7 "Ephraim will be like a mighty man,
 And their heart will be glad as if *from* wine;
 Indeed, their children will see *it* and be glad,
 Their heart will rejoice in the LORD.

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

- 8 "I will whistle for them to gather them together,
 For I have redeemed them;
 And they will be as numerous as they were before.
- 9 "When I scatter them among the peoples,

- They will remember Me in far countries,
And they with their children will live and come back.
- 10 “I will bring them back from the land of Egypt
And gather them from Assyria;
And I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon
Until no *room* can be found for them.
- 11 “And they will pass through the sea *of* distress
And He will strike the waves in the sea,
So that all the depths of the Nile will dry up;
And the pride of Assyria will be brought down
And the scepter of Egypt will depart.
- 12 “And I will strengthen them in the LORD,
And in His name they will walk,” declares the LORD.

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

11:1 Open your doors, O Lebanon,

- That a fire may feed on your cedars.
- 2 Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen,
Because the glorious *trees* have been destroyed;
Wail, O oaks of Bashan,
For the impenetrable forest has come down.
- 3 There is a sound of the shepherds’ wail,
For their glory is ruined;
There is a sound of the young lions’ roar,
For the pride of the Jordan is ruined.

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

- 4 Thus says the LORD my God, “Pasture the flock *doomed* to slaughter.
5 Those who buy them slay them and go unpunished, and *each of* those who sell them says, ‘Blessed be the LORD, for I have become rich!’ And their own shepherds have no pity on them.
6 For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land,” declares the LORD; “but behold, I will cause the men to fall, each into another’s power and into the power of his king; and they will strike the land, and I will not deliver *them* from their power.”
7 So I pastured the flock *doomed* to slaughter, hence the afflicted of the flock. And I took for myself two staves: the one I called Favor and the other I called Union; so I pastured the flock.
8 Then I annihilated the three shepherds in one month, for my soul was impatient with them, and their soul also was weary of me.
9 Then I said, “I will not pasture you. What is to die, let it die, and what is to be annihilated, let it be annihilated; and let those who are left eat one another’s flesh.”
10 I took my staff Favor and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples.
11 So it was broken on that day, and thus the afflicted of the flock who were watching me realized that it was the word of the LORD.
12 I said to them, “If it is good in your sight, give *me* my wages; but if not, never mind!” So they weighed out thirty *shekels* of silver as my wages.
13 Then the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter, *that* magnificent price at which I was valued by them.” So I took the thirty *shekels* of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD. [cf. [Matt 26:14–16; 27:3–10](#)]
14 Then I cut in pieces my second staff Union, to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

The Evil Shepherd/King to Come (Eschatological)

- 15 The LORD said to me, “Take again for yourself the equipment of a foolish shepherd.
16 For behold, I am going to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered, heal the broken, or sustain the one standing, but will devour the flesh of the fat *sheep* and tear off their hoofs.
- 17 “Woe to the worthless shepherd
Who leaves the flock!
A sword will be on his arm
And on his right eye!
His arm will be totally withered
And his right eye will be blind.”