

The time of this prophecy was when the house of God was in progress Zech, 7:1 *And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah in the fourth day of the ninth month, even in Chisleu;* 518 B.C. I understand the first group returned under Zerubbabel 432B.C. the second under Nehemiah 538B.C.

Zec 7:1-2 *And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah in the fourth day of the ninth month, even in Chisleu; When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezer and Regemmelech, and their men, to pray before the LORD,*

But why did they feel the need of representatives to pray on their behalf? We have Jesus our High Priest at the right hand of God so we can with adequate preparation of the mind pray to GOD through Him as our mediator.

In those days they had the prophets, Zechariah, but he seems not to have acted as a priest although of that line (Iddo) and so they sent two persons some seven and half miles. They chose two whose names seem not to bear significance in Hebrew Zec 7:2 Sherezer and Regemmelech and their men, to pray before the LORD. This is the first occurrence of these names in the scriptures but it is evident that they were part of the exile

In chapter 1 we are told of a call to repentance and not to be as their fathers who failed to truly repent Zec 1:6 *But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.* An admission of the justice of God in casting them out of the Land

So we are looking at the situation but with the same people two years later, when they sent to El Bethel, the house of God, because the rebuilding of the temple was still in progress.

Bethel has many memories concerning Jacob of a place where the presence of God could be found Gen 28:17 *And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* And later whilst still with his father-in-law Gen 31:13 *I am the God-El =Almighty of Bethel where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.*

After an eventful part of the journey Jacob, a righteous man, called upon God Gen 35:7 *And he built there an altar, and called the place El-bethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother,* but it was not a permanent structure which the Temple of Solomon was always meant to become. Solomon built a temple for God but because of the disobedience of Israel it was destroyed by their enemies and now in the time we are considering Israel are attempting a rebuild of the Temple.

Ezr 6:14 *And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.*

Ezr 6:15 *And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the **sixth year** of the reign of Darius the king.* (two years later than in Zech 7)

And so the question was asked, Zechariah 7:2, should they weep as in previous years when they were in exile and now back in their land and the Temple in rebuilding? And the answer is returned by Yahweh Himself that they had not done so in sincerity in the past and not listened to the earlier prophets, God was not in their thoughts and all was a sham, a form of righteousness, But God is not mocked see Gal 6v7. And for this reason God neglected them and the land became desolate And Zechariah the prophet tells them from Yahweh what is wrong. They failed to show true compassion particularly toward their neighbours under the Law this was at that time, but with Jesus it is taken further.

Thus they were reminded that that was why the judgments came upon them as they were told through Moses in Deut. 28, the curses for disobedience. And they asked (as in v2) should they weep as in previous years and out of the benevolence of the Lord the answer came stating how they should change.

Zec 7:8 *And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:*

Yahweh God made it clear that there had been but a form of worship but it was not sincere. It was merely a ritual. It seems that they were aware of the Law but deliberately ignored it Zec 7:12 *Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone,*

lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of Hosts. And so they were scattered from the Land and it became desolate.

But their question now was should they have a different approach in prayer from when they were exiled and they were told they needed a sincere approach and not be as their predecessors. Before it was simply an act but God is not be mocked.

They provide a lesson for believers to consider.

And so what is fasting unto God but the divesting of everything that is natural to us that is contrary to the Spirit of God?

2Th 1:11-12 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we know that there is no respect of persons in Christ. So in verses 9-12 of Zech 7 nothing is left in doubt, as they would not listen so God shut His ears to their prayers and we know the result was calamitous and it was The Land that suffered as well as the people. This was the testimony to them and we know it remained so until they were scattered after they slew The Lord Jesus. Now they are being brought back, a necessary event, so that they will be in the Land to look on Him whom they pierced and mourn, after Armageddon.

Love to all Brother Ken