

THE MINISTRY OF ZECHARIAH:
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE FASTS
(Zechariah 7:1 – 8:23)

- I. One QUESTION Concerning Fasting (Zech. 7:1-3)
- A. ASKED (and ANSWERED) *on* the 4th day of the 9th month during the 4th year of the reign of Darius of Persia
 - B. Asked *by* a delegation from BETHEL
 - C. Asked *of* the PRIESTS and the PROPHETS
 - D. Asked if they MUST continue to WEEP and FAST in the 5th month
- II. Four ANSWERS from the Lord (Zech. 7:4 – 8:23)
- A. Consider their PAST ostentation (7:4-7)
 - 1. Their FASTS and their FEASTS had always focused on THEMSELVES (cf. Isa. 58:3-8)
 - 2. OBEDIENCE would make the fasts irrelevant
 - B. Consider their PRESENT obligation (Zech. 7:8-14)
 - 1. They had NEGLECTED four MORAL obligations
 - 2. They had demonstrated four REBELLIOUS ATTITUDES
 - 3. Persistent HARDENING will bring future SCATTERING

- C. Consider their FUTURE expectation (8:1-17)
 - 1. God will DWELL in the city
 - 2. Young and old will PROSPER and be SECURE
 - 3. They must do the WORK of BUILDING the temple
 - 4. They must practice the MORAL obligations they had NEGLECTED (cf. 7:9-10)

- D. Consider their ULTIMATE celebration (8:18-23)
 - 1. The FASTS will be turned into FEASTS
 - 2. All Israel and Judah will be CONVERTED
 - 3. All surviving HUMANITY will have been CONVERTED

III. Lessons

- A. FORMAL RITUALS mean nothing if our attitudes and actions are SELF-ABSORBED
- B. The BIBLE as written by the PROPHETS is the very word of God communicated through His SPIRIT
- C. We don't need MORE information; we need to LIVE BY the information we have
- D. Faith in God's promises should encourage OBEDIENCE, not LETHARGY
- E. Worldwide conversion will not come through the agency of the CHURCH but through the witness of ISRAEL