Zechariah 7:8-14

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

Wyn Laidig

January 2016

***Zechariah 7:8–14***And the word of YHWH came to Zechariah, saying, “Thus says YHWH **tseva’ot**, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another, do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart.” But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears that they might not hear. They made their hearts diamond-hard lest they should hear the Torah and the words that YHWH **tseva’ot** had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great anger came from YHWH **tseva’ot**. “As I called, and they would not hear, so they called, and I would not hear,” says YHWH **tseva’ot**, “and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and the pleasant land was made desolate.”

1. This second half of chapter 7 builds upon the first. Summarize the main point of the first half of Zech 7.
2. YHWH now goes on to give the people further instructions on what true worship looks like. List all the things mentioned in Zech 7:9-10. See if you can find out the key Hebrew word for each item, and do a little word study on each to learn more about the meaning of the word, and the kind of worship our Father truly seeks.
3. These instructions for worship were not really new instructions from YHWH, just now given to the people through Zechariah. Although not direct quotes from Scripture, they were really reminders of prior instructions. What other Scriptures can you find where each of the items on the above list had already been taught to the people in the past.
4. From Zech 7:11-12, list the four ways that YHWH characterizes the people’s prior response to His instructions. Notice how Hebrew tends to use pictures? What picture (either from this list, or like of another picture) best represents how you sometimes respond to God’s instructions?
5. Twice in Zech 7:11-12 the ESV has the phrase “that they might not hear” or “lest they should hear”. In Hebrew this both of these phrases are simply **min-shema**. The preposition **min** can have several meanings but here is probably best translated “without”. What does **shema** mean? What is the consequence of their stubbornness?
6. The phrase “stubborn shoulder” is also found in Neh 9:28-31. How is the message of this passage similar to that of our Zechariah passage?
7. How did YHWH send his previous instructions to the people (Zech 7:12)?
8. What was YHWH’s response to the people’s continual stubbornness (Zech 7:12b-14)?
9. Does Zech 7:13-14 describe events that took place **prior** to Zechariah’s time or does it describe these that would take place **after** Zechariah’s time? What makes you think so?
10. At first this seems a strange way to end the message. It is like there really is no conclusion. But the message has a point, even though it is unspoken. The point is that the story of the past is very relevant to the present situation of the people. What is the real unspoken conclusion to the message that Zechariah is being given?
11. In what ways do you tend to respond to God’s instructions like the people of Israel did? Have you ever experienced His discipline?
12. Notice that God eventually punished the entire nation. Even the few that were righteous were punished with the bad. How should that help us look at the bad things that sometimes happen to us?
13. How does this passage speak to our hearts today?