

TRADITIONS OF MEN OR TRUE WORSHIP – PART 2

--ZECHARIAH 7:1-14--

INTRODUCTION:

The book began with a call to repentance in chapter one, and chapter seven is also a call to repentance and a warning to all the people of the land and to the priests to not forsake true worship for the false worship of ritualism. The chapter began with a delegation from Bethel asking if they needed to continue fasting and mourning as they had done for so many years. They thought that by going through the motions they could earn favor with God, they did not understand what God desired, what God required, what true worship was. This had been a problem that the former prophets had addressed when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous and the cities and towns of all Israel were flourishing. As we finish up this chapter the LORD will again explain what true worship looks like in everyday life and then remind the people of their ancestor's response to the word of the Lord and the result because of their response. This was to warn the people not to go the same way as their ancestors.

- I. TRUE WORSHIP (Zechariah 7:8-10)
 - a. In verse 8, the _____ of the LORD, the word of Yahweh again came to Zechariah.
 - b. The word of Yahweh that came again to the _____ was a parallel message to what had just been revealed in verses 4-7.
 - c. In verse seven, the prophet used the ancestors, the former generation of Israel to illustrate the need for _____ worship.
 - d. The words spoken by the LORD of hosts revealed four characteristics of genuine _____, the kind that honors, glorifies, and pleases Him.
 - e. First, true obedience required Israel to “Dispense true _____.” (Zechariah 7:9b, NASB95) (Micah 6:8; James 2:1)
 - f. Second, genuine obedience which is an act of worship requires God's people to “practice _____ and compassion each to his brother.” (Zechariah 7:9c, NASB95)
 - g. Third, genuine obedience does not take _____ of others. (Deuteronomy 10:18-19; James 1:27)

- h. Fourth, genuine obedience refuses to ponder _____ in the heart. (Matthew 22:37-40)

- II. FORMER RESPONSE AND RESULT (Zechariah 7:11-14)
 - a. As I already stated, these _____, these characteristics of genuine obedience, did not originate with Zechariah.
 - b. Yahweh declared that this stubborn rebellion of the previous generation came from the _____.
 - c. Why did the past generation make their hearts so _____?
 - d. What was the _____ of this rejection and rebellion?
 - e. Instead of answering their cries for help and deliverance, God said, “...but I _____ them with a storm wind...” (Zechariah 7:14a, NASB95) (Jonah 1:11-13)
 - f. This judgment on Israel was _____.

CONCLUSION:

The essence of true worship begins in our heart and is seen in our attitude toward others. This is the evidence of a heart devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ and eager to produce the fruit of righteousness. If this is not the case and we are just going through the motions then we are no better than the former generation of Israelites, if this is true then we need to repent. Paul commending the Colossian believers for their steadfast faith in the Lord Jesus wrote in Colossians 1:9-12, “*For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.*” (Colossians 1:9–12, NASB95) Paul prays for them that their devotion to the Lord might be evident. True worship begins, not in the church on Sunday, but in showing kindness and compassion to those around us, dispensing true justice and visiting the widow and orphan in their distress, and keeping oneself unstained by the world.