

The Four Fasts of Zechariah

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By Joseph F. Dumond

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Researching Traditions

by Beau Beamesderfer

With the day of Tisha b'Av (ninth day of the fifth month) coming up next week, I thought it might be interesting to look at the traditions from a Scriptural perspective.

Zec 8:18 And the word of the LORD of hosts came unto me, saying,

Zec 8:19 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace.

Zec 8:20 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities:

Zec 8:21 And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also.

Zec 8:22 Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD.

Zec 8:23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.

The traditions that stem from verse 19 include 4 periods of fasting, which Yah appears to support as periods of remembrance as He will turn them into times of joy.

According to traditions, the four fasts are as follows:

1. Seventeenth day of the Fourth month – aka Tammuz 17
2. Ninth day of the Fifth month – aka Tisha b'Ab
3. Third day of the Seventh month – aka Tishrei 3
4. Tenth day of Tenth month – aka Tevet 10

For these traditions to be accurate, the events had to occur prior to the time of Zechariah. This is to look at the Scriptures to understand what events these four fasts might be referring to, so to understand these practices, we must look at the times that precede Zechariah.

Zec 1:1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

Zec 1:2 The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers.

The time of Zechariah was just after the Babylonian exile, so no events that occur after this time are valid to establish the practice – they can only confirm the support of the times.

The Fast of the Fourth Month

Two significant events are recorded in Scripture that occurred in the 4th month. The first is the time Moses destroys the original tablets of stone, and the second event is the fall of Jerusalem.

Moses Destroys Tables of Stone

Based upon times established in Exodus 16, we have generated the following Biblical calendar:?

1ST MONTH

1ST 2ND 3RD 4TH 5TH 6TH SAB

1 2 3

4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11 12 13 14 Pesach 15 1st of Unleavened 16 17

18 19 20 21 22 23 24 Omer 1

25 26 27 28 29 30

2ND MONTH

1ST 2ND 3RD 4TH 5TH 6TH SAB

1 Omer 2

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Omer 3

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 Omer 4

16 Manna 17 Manna 18 Manna 19 Manna 20 Manna 21 Manna 22 Omer 5

23 24 25 26 27 28 29 Omer 6

3RD MONTH

1ST 2ND 3RD 4TH 5TH 6TH SAB

30 1 2 3 4 5 6 Omer 7

7 Shavuot 8 Moses Ascends 9 2 10 3 11 4 12 5 13 6

14 7 15 8 16 9 17 10 18 11 19 12 20 13

21 14 22 15 23 16 24 17 25 18 26 19 27 20

28 21 29 22 30 23

4TH MONTH

1ST 2ND 3RD 4TH 5TH 6TH SAB

1 24 2 25 3 26 4 27

5 28 6 29 7 30 8 31 9 32 10 33 11 34

12 35 13 36 14 37 15 38 16 17 Moses Descends Mount 18

19 20 21 22 23 24 25

26 27 28 29 30

Exo 16:1 And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt.

Exo 16:2 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:

Exo 16:3 And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

Exo 16:4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

Exo 16:5 And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

Exo 16:12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God.

Exo 16:26 Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.

Exo 16:29 See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.

Exo 16:30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

From these passages, we understand that Manna fell on the morning of the first day of the week. This is understood because the instructions were to collect Manna for six days, collecting a double portion on the sixth day so they would have enough for Sabbath.

We can then take the average number of days in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd months and generate a calendar (above). From this calendar, we can then determine when Shavuot fell and from this point we can count 40 days to get to the date that Moses was instructed to come down from Mt Sinai.

We just did a lot of figuring and averaging to get to the 17th of the 4th month. Tradition records that this is the day that Moses broke the tablets, and we see that it could work out to be just that, but on a sighted calendar, averages don't typically work in figuring out specific dates – but that's just my opinion.

Fall of Jerusalem (not the Temple)

Another significant event that happened in the 4th month is found in Jeremiah.

Jer 39:2 And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up.

Jer 39:3 And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, even Nergalsharezer, Samgarnebo, Sarsechim, Rabsaris, Nergalsharezer, Rabmag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon.

Jer 39:4 And it came to pass, that when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war, then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went out the way of the plain.

Jer 39:5 But the Chaldeans' army pursued after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he gave judgment upon him.

Jer 39:6 Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah.

Jer 39:7 Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.

Jer 39:8 And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.

Jer 52:6 And in the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.

Jer 52:7 Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans were by the city round about:) and they went by the way of the plain.

Jer 52:8 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him.

Jer 52:9 Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; where he gave judgment upon him.

Jer 52:10 And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah.

Jer 52:11 Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah in regards to both Jerusalem and Judah.

Isa 3:1 For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water,

Isa 3:2 The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient,

Isa 3:3 The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.

Isa 3:4 And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.

Isa 3:5 And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

Zec 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;

Zec 7:2 When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezzer and Regemmelech, and their men, to pray before the LORD,

Zec 7:3 And to speak unto the priests which were in the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?

From these verses, the ninth day of the fourth month is the day of fasting as defined by events in Scripture, and is much easier to come to than the events of the seventeenth. The ninth day is associated with the fall of Jerusalem according to Scripture and this would have been one of the final events before the Babylonian captivity – more than 70 years prior to Zechariah.

The Fast of the Fifth Month

As we begin to look at the fast of the fifth month, we begin again with the passage in Zechariah 7 as Yah's response is important to understand the relationship between the fourth, fifth and seventh month.

Zec 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;

Zec 7:2 When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezzer and Regemmelech, and their men, to pray before the LORD,

Zec 7:3 And to speak unto the priests which were in the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these so many years?

Zec 7:4 Then came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me, saying,

Zec 7:5 Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?

Zec 7:6 And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?

Zec 7:7 Should ye not hear the words which the LORD hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the south and the plain?

Zec 7:8 And the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah, saying,

Zec 7:9 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:

Zec 7:10 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

Zec 7:11 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

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.

Zec 7:13 Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried,

and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:

Zec 7:14 But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not.

Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.

From these verses, we see that they were seeking Yah on the ninth day of the fourth month about conducting a fast in the fifth month. Yah's response then relates the fasts of the fifth and seventh months. The fact that they were seeking Yah on the ninth day of the fourth month about the fasts of the fifth and seventh months indicates, to me, that these fasts are all related.

What events happened in the fifth month that would constitute a period of fasting or remembrance?

Jer 52:12 Now in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, which served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem,

Jer 52:13 And burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great men, burned he with fire:

Jer 52:14 And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.

Jer 52:15 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive certain of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude.

2 Kings records this period slightly differently.

2Ki 25:8 And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

2Ki 25:9 And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire.

2Ki 25:10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

2Ki 25:11 Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away.

2Ki 25:12 But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.

2Ki 25:13 And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea that was in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon.

2Ki 25:14 And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.

2Ki 25:15 And the firepans, and the bowls, and such things as were of gold, in gold, and of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away.

2Ki 25:16 The two pillars, one sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of

the LORD; the brass of all these vessels was without weight.

2Ki 25:17 The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the chapter upon it was brass: and the height of the chapter three cubits; and the wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work.

2Ki 25:18 And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door:

2Ki 25:19 And out of the city he took an officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of them that were in the king's presence, which were found in the city, and the principal scribe of the host, which mustered the people of the land, and threescore men of the people of the land that were found in the city:

2Ki 25:20 And Nebuzaradan captain of the guard took these, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah:

2Ki 25:21 And the king of Babylon smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away out of their land.

2nd Kings records the removing of all the items of the Temple for their transport to Babylon beginning on the seventh day of the fifth month, when Nebuzaradan entered Jerusalem. Jeremiah records the actual destruction of the Temple which was done on the tenth day. The Temple would not have been destroyed until all items had been removed – thus, the removal of all items would have occurred on the seventh through the ninth.

Several other well known events have occurred on the ninth day of the fifth month such as the destruction of the second Temple by the Romans and the final results of the Spanish Inquisition resulting in the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492.

All of these events are tracked back using the Rabbinic calendar that is in use today which follows the conjunction of the moon. For those that follow the sighting of the moon, we know that the sighting of the moon is 1 or 2 days later than that of the conjunction.

This means that if a date is calculated to be the ninth on a conjunction calendar, then it would be the seventh or possibly the eighth on the sighted calendar.

What we are left with though is a dilemma of whether to observe the seventh or the tenth of the fifth month. Do we look at the time that the looting of the Temple began or do we look at its ultimate destruction?

There is another passage that points to the tenth day of the month found in Ezekiel. I've only included a small piece of the passage, but I believe that there is enough to see the correlation of the events.

Eze 20:1 And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD, and sat before me.

Eze 20:2 Then came the word of the LORD unto me, saying,

Eze 20:3 Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye come to enquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by

you.

Eze 20:4 Wilt thou judge them, son of man, wilt thou judge them? cause them to know the abominations of their fathers:

Eze 20:5 And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am the LORD your God;

Eze 20:6 In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands:

Eze 20:7 Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

Eze 20:8 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

Eze 20:9 But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt.

Eze 20:10 Wherefore I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness.

Eze 20:11 And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them.

Eze 20:23 I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries;

Eze 20:24 Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols.

On the tenth day of the fifth month, men during Ezekiel's time (after Jeremiah, but before Zechariah) came seeking Yah. Yah responds to Ezekiel telling Ezekiel that Israel had not been faithful to Yah. This is the same reason that Judah was expelled from the land into Babylon.

Jer 25:1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon;

Jer 25:2 The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

Jer 25:3 From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that is the three and twentieth year, the word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened.

Jer 25:4 And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear.

Jer 25:5 They said, Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever:

Jer 25:6 And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt.

Jer 25:7 Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the LORD; that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

Jer 25:8 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words,

Jer 25:9 Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.

Jer 25:10 Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

Jer 25:11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

Jer 25:12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

Jer 25:13 And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.

Jer 25:14 For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.

Is it possible then that both Israel and Judah were expelled from the land on the same day, years apart? Whether it is or not, it is a good indicator that it is the tenth day of the fifth month as this is the day recorded in multiple locations.

The Fast of the Seventh Month

Previously, I had always assumed that the fast of the seventh month as recorded in Zechariah 7-8 was the fast of Yom haKippurim as instructed by Yah. However, when I looked into it further, I found a fast that remembers the death of 80+ men that caused the remnant of Judah to flee the land in fear. The date of this fast is found in tradition, but Scripture does record the people and event to be remembered.

2Ki 25:22 And as for the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler.

2Ki 25:23 And when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.

2Ki 25:24 And Gedaliah sware to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon; and it shall be well with you.

2Ki 25:25 But it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah.

2Ki 25:26 And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.

Jer 41:1 Now it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah.

Jer 41:2 Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land.

Jer 41:3 Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him, even with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, and the men of war.

Jer 41:4 And it came to pass the second day after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew it,

Jer 41:5 That there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, even fourscore men, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring them to the house of the LORD.

Jer 41:6 And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, weeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam.

Jer 41:7 And it was so, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, and cast them into the midst of the pit, he, and the men that were with him.

Jer 41:8 But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not: for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbore, and slew them not among their brethren.

Jer 41:9 Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men, whom he had slain because of Gedaliah, was it which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with them that were slain.

Jer 41:10 Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the Ammonites.

Jer 41:11 But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done,

Jer 41:12 Then they took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great waters that are in Gibeon.

Jer 41:13 Now it came to pass, that when all the people which were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, then they

were glad.

Jer 41:14 So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah.

Jer 41:15 But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites.

Jer 41:16 Then took Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after that he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, even mighty men of war, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon:

Jer 41:17 And they departed, and dwelt in the habitation of Chimham, which is by Bethlehem, to go to enter into Egypt,

Jer 41:18 Because of the Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor in the land.

Jeremiah does not give a specific day in the seventh month, but records a period of feasting where men gathered together, and the traditional dates suggest that this is the feast of Yom Teruah. Two days later a group of 80 men were also killed. Jeremiah 42-43 give a deeper look at the impact of the people's decision.

The fast of the seventh month is a further remembrance of the captivity of Babylon and is a sad time as the remnant of Judah flees because of the death of the appointed governor Gedaliah.

The Fast of the Tenth Month

2Ki 25:1 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about.

2Ki 25:2 And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

Jer 52:1 Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

Jer 52:2 And he did that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

Jer 52:3 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Jer 52:4 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about.

Jer 52:5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

Eze 24:1 Again in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Eze 24:2 Son of man, write thee the name of the day, even of this same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day.

Eze 24:3 And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Set on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it:

Eze 24:4 Gather the pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill it with the choice bones.

Eze 24:5 Take the choice of the flock, and burn also the bones under it, and make it boil well, and let them seethe the bones of it therein.

Eze 24:6 Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the bloody city, to the pot whose scum is therein, and whose scum is not gone out of it! bring it out piece by piece; let no lot fall upon it.

Eze 24:7 For her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock; she poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust;

Eze 24:8 That it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance; I have set her blood upon the top of a rock, that it should not be covered.

When Yah tells Ezekiel to write down the date of the tenth day of the tenth month, it is an indication that it is a day to be remembered. This is the day that Babylon began the siege against Jerusalem. Of any of the four fasts, Yah specifically mentions this day to Ezekiel – this should show us the significance of this fast day as well as the others that are associated with it.

Personal Conclusion

For me, looking into these fasts has given me more of an insight into them and has cleared up the difference between the traditions that are held now and what Scripture says. These events are all related to the dispersion of Judah which ended with these four events (listed chronologically):

1. The Tenth day of the Tenth month – Babylon began its siege against Jerusalem
2. The Ninth day of the Fourth month – The walls of Jerusalem are broken down
3. The Tenth day of the Fifth month – The final destruction of the Temple is accomplished after it began on the seventh day of the fifth month
4. The Third day of the Seventh month – Due to the murder of Gedaliah, the remnant of Judah flees the land

The traditions have obviously evolved over time, but it appears to me that when Yah addresses Zechariah, these are the events that spawned the traditions that He is referring to. While it is difficult for me to fully comprehend the impact of these events, the passage in Ezekiel 20 really struck me as the summary of what we are to learn:

Yah, by His grace, has revealed Himself to us and has drawn us out of Egypt – the world – into the wilderness where He fully reveals Himself to us. (Hosea 2:14) Here is where we choose to keep our eyes on Him and leave all of Egypt behind, or where we offend our Creator and bring

along Egypt with us.