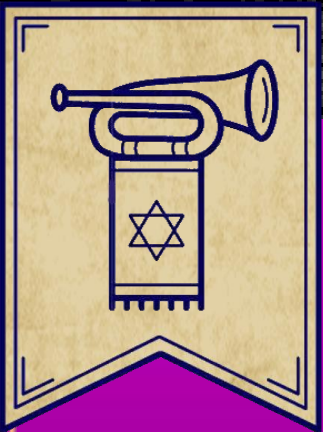




Messengers: Zechariah

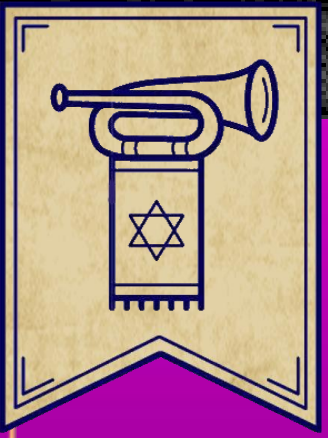




Matthew 23:27-28

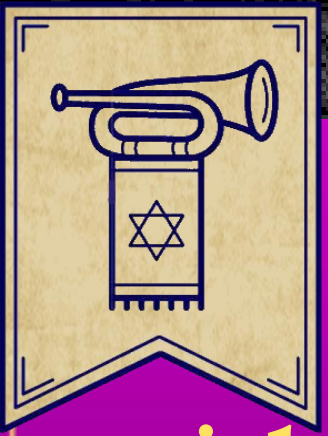
The problem Jesus came to fix
was a heart level sin issue and all of us
even the most religious
miss God's perfect standard





Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ
can transform the heart at the core
(Jesus does what none of us ever could)





In Zechariah 7 the people come with a question about fasting and God's answer pushed past performance and it prompts the heart to ponder the person behind the practice of fasting

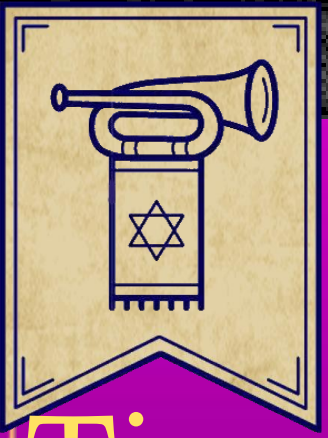
Zechariah 7:5-6





Zechariah: Empty Rituals Vs True Religion



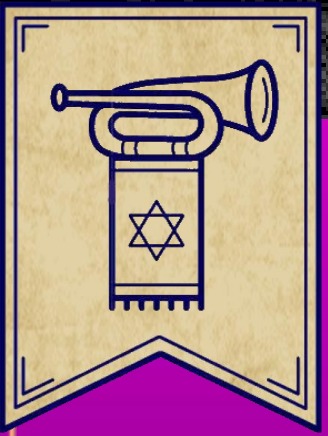


Zechariah 7:1-3

Time advances between Zechariah 6 and 7
(about 2 years pass)

In that span of time the Temple
is now about halfway done
(God's promise is becoming reality)





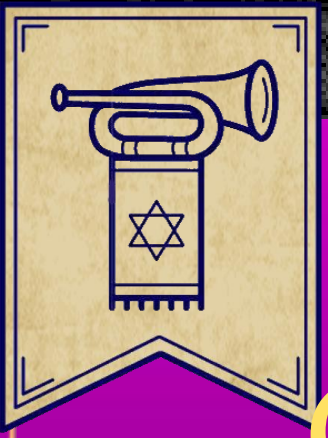
For the entire exile (70 years)
ever since Babylon invaded and
conquered Jerusalem they had
been fasting 4 times a year





With the Temple being close to completion and the fast related to the Temple being burned down approaching, men from Bethel want to know – should they continue the practice of fasting?

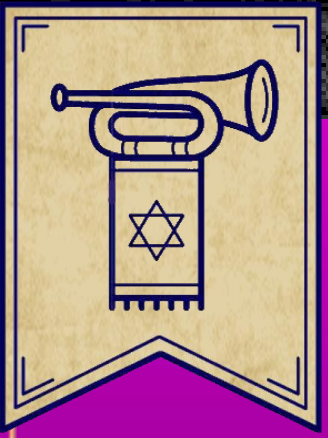




God was going to elevate their eyes
(God was going to help them see past
their empty rituals to Himself)

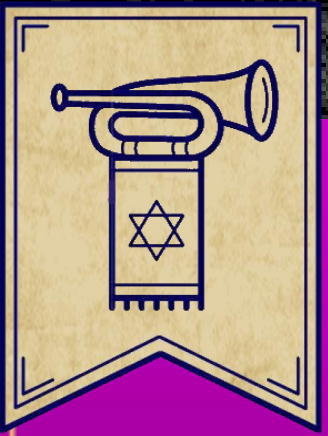
Zechariah 7:4-7





Outwardly they were faithful to observe these fasts but inwardly they had missed the entire purpose of fasting

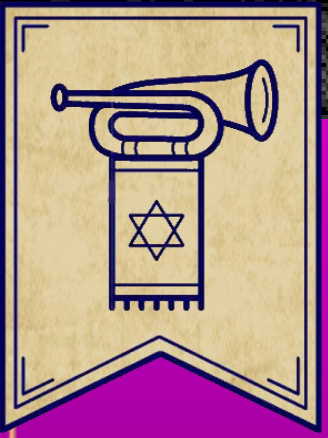




God's question brings us
beyond the ritual and it forces us
to examine the motivation
behind our behavior and practices

Zechariah 7:8-10

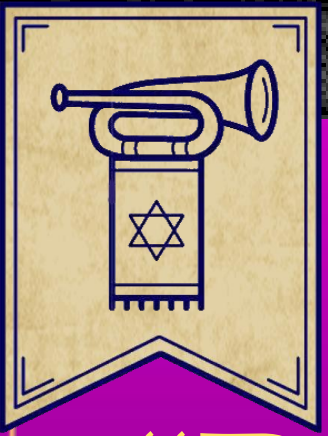




“Dispense true justice” = execute
justice faithfully

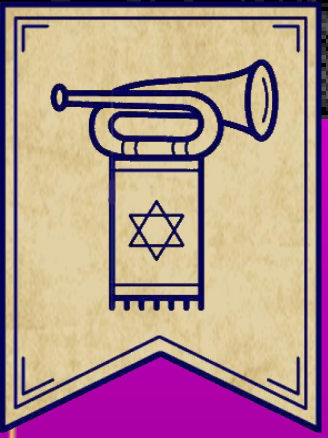
“Practice kindness and compassion” =
This speaks to faithful agape
(God-type) love, the same steadfast love
God shows His people





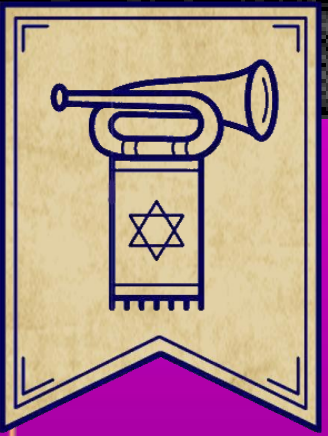
“Do not oppress the widow, orphans,
foreigner, or poor” = these were the
most vulnerable people and easiest to
exploit in society





“Do not devise evil in your hearts
against one another” = plotting and
desiring to do evil against your brother

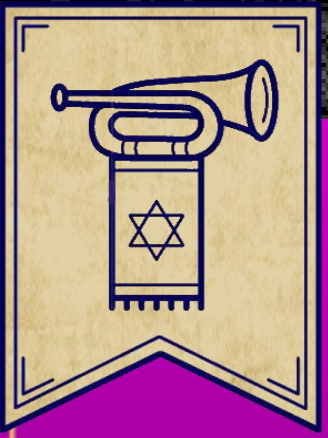




Remember Christ didn't die
to make us religious, He died to make
us righteous and to restore us to
a right relationship with God

Zechariah 7:11-14





God is urging this new generation
to learn from the past

