

Zechariah 7:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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:

Analysis

Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear—divine reciprocity operates: Israel ignored God's prophetic calls, so **so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts**. This is measure-for-measure justice (middah keneged middah), the principle that divine judgment mirrors human sin. God doesn't capriciously abandon His people; they abandoned Him first.

When Judah faced Babylonian conquest, their desperate prayers went unanswered—not because God is cruel, but because they had systematically rejected His gracious warnings. Jesus echoed this principle: **"With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again"** (Matthew 7:2). Grace has seasons; after persistent hardening comes judicial hardening (cf. Romans 1:24, 26, 28: "God gave them up").

Historical Context

This verse explains why God didn't intervene during the Babylonian siege (588-586 BC). For generations, prophets had warned of coming judgment if Israel persisted in idolatry and social injustice. When catastrophe came, the people's prayers were too late—the time for repentance had passed.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Can you identify times when you ignored God's repeated warnings, then wondered why He seemed distant when crisis came?
2. How does this verse challenge the assumption that God must always answer prayer on our terms and timing?
3. What does it mean practically to cry out to God while He is 'near' (Isaiah 55:6) rather than waiting for emergency?

Interlinear Text

יְהוָה יִכְרְאוּ	וְלֹא אֵל		
H1961	H834	H3808	
Therefore it is come to pass that as he cried			
H7121			
אֲשֶׁמָּע	כִּי יִכְרְאוּ	וְלֹא אֵל	
H8085	H3651	H7121	H3808
and I would not hear	Therefore it is come to pass that as he cried		
אֲשֶׁמָּע	אָמַר	יְהוָה	צְבָאוֹת:
H8085	H559	H3068	H6635
and I would not hear	saith	the LORD	of hosts

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 1:15 (Parallel theme): And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Jeremiah 14:12 (Parallel theme): When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

Jeremiah 11:11 (References Lord): Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.

Micah 3:4 (References Lord): Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings.

Proverbs 28:9 (Parallel theme): He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

James 4:3 (Parallel theme): Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.