

# Zechariah 7:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezer and Regem-melech, and their men, to pray before the LORD,

## Analysis

**When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezer and Regem-melech, and their men, to pray before the LORD.** This verse introduces the delegation that prompted God's extended response in chapters 7-8. The phrase "**sent unto the house of God**" (vayishlach bet-El, פָשַׁלְחַ בֵּית־אֱלֹהִים) can be translated either "sent to Bethel" (the city) or "sent to the house of God" (the temple in Jerusalem). Most scholars favor "Bethel sent" as the subject, with Sherezer and Regem-melech as the delegates' names.

**Sherezer** (שְׁרֵזֵר) appears to be a Babylonian name meaning "protect the prince," and **Regem-melech** (רֶגֶם מֶלֶךְ) possibly means "friend of the king." These Babylonian-influenced names suggest Jews who had spent their lives in exile, perhaps born in Babylon, now seeking proper worship after return. Their names reflect cultural assimilation yet their actions show spiritual hunger—they came "**to pray before the LORD**" (lechallot et-penei Yahweh, לְכַלּוֹת אֶת־פָנֵי יְהָוָה), literally "to entreat the face of Yahweh."

The phrase "and their men" indicates this wasn't a private inquiry but an official delegation representing a community. Their journey to Jerusalem and approach to the temple priests (verse 3) demonstrates proper recognition of established religious authority. However, God's response reveals that their focus on ritual compliance missed deeper spiritual issues—a pattern Jesus later confronted in Matthew 23.

## Historical Context

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Bethel, located about twelve miles north of Jerusalem, had dark history as a center of idolatrous worship established by Jeroboam I (1 Kings 12:28-33). After the exile, returning Jews repopulated the area. The delegation's journey to Jerusalem rather than establishing independent worship shows post-exilic reforms had taken root. The rebuilt temple (though still under construction in 518 BC) had become the recognized center of worship, fulfilling Deuteronomy 12's command for centralized worship. The mention of praying "before the LORD" indicates they approached the temple precincts where God's presence dwelt, following proper protocol. Their question about fasting (verse 3) would have been directed to the priests and prophets who served as authoritative interpreters of God's will. This historical moment captures the transition from exile's disruption to re-established covenant worship.

## Related Passages

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**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. What does the delegation's approach to established religious authority teach about proper submission to spiritual leadership while also discerning true teaching?
2. How do their Babylonian-influenced names yet spiritual seeking illustrate the tension between cultural context and faithful worship?
3. Why is it significant that they came to "entreat the face of the LORD" rather than merely seeking human opinion about religious practice?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיִּשְׁלַח	בֵּית	אֶל	שְׁרֵאָצָר	וְלֹא
When they had sent	unto the house	of God	Sherezer	
H7971	H1004	H410	H8272	H7276
				H4428
וְאַנְשֵׁי	פָּנָי	אֶת	לִפְלָל	וְתַּחֲזִקְנִי
and their men	to pray	H853	before	the LORD
H582	H2470	H6440		H3068

## Additional Cross-References

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**Zechariah 8:21** (Prayer): 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.

**Jeremiah 26:19** (References Lord): Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and besought the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls.

**1 Kings 13:6** (Prayer): And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.

**1 Samuel 13:12** (References Lord): Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering.