

Zechariah 7:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me, saying,

Analysis

Then came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me, saying. This transitional verse marks a shift from the delegation's question to God's authoritative answer. The formula "**came the word of the LORD of hosts unto me**" (vayehi debar-Yahweh Tzeva'ot elay lemor, וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֵלַי לֵאמֹר) introduces divine revelation with full prophetic authority. The title "**LORD of hosts**" (Yahweh Tzeva'ot, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת) emphasizes God's sovereign command over heavenly armies and earthly powers—the One who speaks has absolute authority.

The brevity of this verse heightens anticipation—after the delegation's question, God speaks. The phrase "**unto me**" (elay, אֵלַי) emphasizes Zechariah's role as mediator: God speaks to the prophet who then delivers the message to the people. This pattern of prophetic mediation anticipates Christ as the ultimate Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5) through whom God's final word comes (Hebrews 1:1-2).

The word "**saying**" (lemor, לֵאמֹר) introduces what follows, indicating that verses 5-14 contain God's direct speech. This formulaic introduction appears throughout prophetic literature, establishing divine origin for the message. It signals to readers: what follows isn't human opinion or prophetic speculation but God's own word requiring absolute obedience.

Historical Context

This transitional formula marks a common prophetic pattern: human question prompts divine response. The delegation came with a specific ritual question

(should we fast?), but God's answer addresses heart issues underlying the question. This pattern appears throughout Scripture—people ask one thing, God addresses deeper spiritual realities (compare John 3:1-8 where Nicodemus asks about signs and Jesus responds about new birth, or John 4:7-15 where the Samaritan woman asks about water and Jesus offers living water). The prophetic ministry functions as God's mouthpiece, redirecting surface questions to foundational spiritual truths. The title "LORD of hosts" in this context reminds hearers that the same God who commands heavenly armies and judged Jerusalem through Babylon now speaks about proper worship—His authority encompasses both cosmic power and personal piety.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. When you bring questions to God through Scripture, are you prepared for Him to address deeper issues than your surface concern?
2. How does the title "LORD of hosts" (sovereign over all powers) shape your understanding of His authority over your religious practices and personal life?
3. What does the pattern of prophetic mediation (God to prophet to people) teach about the necessity of authoritative revelation versus human religious innovation?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּהִי י'	דִּבֶּר	יְהוָה ה	צָבָא וְ	אֱלֹהֵי	לֵאמֹר:
H1961	Then came the word	of the LORD	of hosts	H413	unto me saying
	H1697	H3068	H6635		H559

