

Studies in Zechariah 12 Zechariah 13:

by John W. Bramhall

The sermon explores the significance of Zechariah 13, highlighting the fountain of cleansing, purging of the land, and the true shepherd, Jesus Christ, who was smitten by God for the sins of humanity.

Duration: 43:13

Scripture: Genesis 3:24, Zechariah 13:7, Matthew 6:33, John 10:11, Hebrews 13:20

Topics: "Jesus Christ", "Atonement Theology"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the profound impact of seeing Jesus on the cross for the first time as a young sinner. The sermon then delves into the significance of verse seven in the book of Zechariah, which reveals the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ. The speaker emphasizes that Jesus, as the good shepherd, willingly faced the judgment of God on behalf of humanity. The sermon also discusses the scattering of the sheep of Israel and the future gathering of all believers by Jesus.

Transcript

It would be a wonderful day if the Lord came for his own, and thank God for that blessed and sure hope. And may every one of us who know the Lord live in the joy of that blessed promise when the Saviour said, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. It will be much better to be there than even here.

May God grant the hope will be real to our hearts and encourage us. We turn to chapter thirteen today in the book of Zechariah, reading the contents of this chapter, nine verses, where the Spirit of God writes, In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered, and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

And it shall come to pass that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live, for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord. And his father and his mother that begat him shall trust him true when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day that the prophet shall be ashamed every one of his vision when he hath prophesied.

Neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive, but he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman, for man taught me to keep cattle for my youth. One shall say unto him, What are these

wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow or my equal.

Set the Lord of hosts, smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass that in all the land set the Lord.

Two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them.

I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God. May God bless the reading and the hearing of his word, and by his Holy Spirit may he direct our hearts and our minds to the coming event when our blessed Lord Jesus will return in power and great glory. We've had the joy of going thus far through the prophecy the past week, and we have seen the divisions of that book which I would name briefly again.

Chapter 1 verses 1 through 6. The call of God for national repentance. A message through Zechariah to call the nation to repent, forsake their sins, and seek the Lord. We found the second division in chapter 1 verse 7 going to the end of chapter 6. A series of 8 visions given to the prophet in one night.

With consolatory as well as comforting words concerning the future of Jerusalem. For contrary, or in contrast I should say, to the prophecy of Haggai, the ministry of Zechariah relates particularly to the city of Jerusalem. Haggai's ministry pertained in particular to the house of the Lord, or the rebuilding of the temple.

But Zechariah goes further to bring before us the coming restoration and the prosperity of Jerusalem in the day that the Lord returns to the earth. The consummation of that second division was so blessedly typifying to us in the coronation of Joshua the high priest, the coming coronation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, when he shall sit as a king and a priest upon his earthly throne. The third division of the chapters we found in chapters 7 and 8. A question that was brought to the prophet, and was answered by the Spirit of God, to tell that they would not have fasting, but in the ultimate end, when God's purposes would be fulfilled, there would be nothing but joy, gladness, and a time of feasting.

Our last section that we've already commenced in, from chapter 12 to the end of this wonderful book, or chapter 9 rather, to the end of this book, consists of two great burdens. Whenever you read the word burden in relation to prophecy, it usually signifies a prophecy of a threatening character. We've already seen the first burden, bringing the children of Israel in the last conflict against the nations into ultimate victory, and also bringing them, as we saw in our preceding message, to the day of their reconciliation, to the great national day of atonement.

Look with me in chapter 13, where we commence today, where we have the continuation of chapter 12, which brings before us in its confirmation the cleansing and the great day of atonement for the house of Israel. In that day there shall be a fountain open to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. We rejoice in the knowledge that fountain will be the fountain of cleansing blood, which they will acknowledge was shed upon the cross of Calvary, when the Messiah of Israel, rejected by his own, was crucified, and upon that cross, nevertheless, in the language of Isaiah 53, and may I still repeat, Isaiah 53 will be the national confession of repentance and conviction and acknowledgement that he was wounded for our transgressions, that he was bruised for our iniquities, that

the chastisement of our peace was upon him that we by his stripes may be healed, and they will acknowledge all we like sheep have gone astray.

We have turned everyone to his own way, yet Jehovah has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Beloved of the present day, it's the most difficult task to bring one of the earthly people of God to the acknowledging that Jesus the Son of God, dying on Calvary, was their own Messiah. But we thank God for those who do and have acknowledged him as such.

But in that day, they will see the fountain, open for cleansing, that streamed from the pierced side of the Son of God. And in that day, to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the fountain of his precious blood will be for their sin and for their uncleanness. If you would desire, and I commend it to be done, read the twenty-third chapter of the book of Leviticus, and you may recall one of the great feasts, the annual feast of Jehovah, was the great day of atonement.

When in repentance annually they were to come together for the forgiveness of the nation's sins. And beloved, how greater will be that national day when they see him whom they have pierced, and acknowledge he was wounded for their transgressions. And what a cleansing it will be for the nation.

But may I insert a plea for any precious soul who may be with us today, not knowing that cleansing power of Christ and his precious blood. We would just say in the words of the good old hymn, have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? And God grant that if you have never been washed in that precious blood, plunge in by faith today, and your soul will be cleansed. Hallelujah for such a Savior.

But now as we go to verse two, there is not only a moral and spiritual cleansing from sin and defilement, but as we read in verse two, going down through verse six in particular, there will also be a purging of the land. There is not only iniquity and the sins of the people taken away, in that day of the godly remnant that will come through the fires of the great tribulation. There is to be a cleansing of the whole land.

For as you note in the context of this section, the land must be and will be cleansed from all idolatry, as well as the ministry of false prophets. We have noted again and again in our study, that there has been the ministry of false prophets. We noted particularly in a recent study, that one of the greatest times of idolatry in Israel, as well as the greatest of all false prophets, will be when the wicked, false Messiah, the Antichrist, presents himself with his credentials.

That are accepted. For the Savior said, I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not, but another will come in his own name, him ye will receive. And beloved, may I state again, the greatest time of idolatry, the greatest time of apostasy, in the history of Israel, is not in the past, it is in the future.

And take the solemnity of that truth to your heart, and realize not only for Christendom, not only for the failing days, of the Christian testimony, but for Israel, Judaism, as well as Christianity, the greatest day of apostasy lies before the world. And for Israel in particular, when they receive the one who is the false Messiah, the wicked shepherd, or the foolish shepherd. But in the day of cleansing, the land will be cleansed too, from every idolatrous practice, and from every false prophet.

Note the words as we read them quickly. The new testimony will be kept clean, for says the Lord, it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, I will cut up the names of the idols out of the land. They shall no more be remembered.

Hallelujah for such a day. When the memory of the false shepherds, the memory of the false prophets, the memory of the idolatrous practices, will never again be brought to mind. You know, when the Lord cleanses, he does a good job, does he not? And then reads further, also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land.

Do you remember the Lord Jesus saying about a man who had an evil spirit, and then when he was cleansed, the evil spirit was taken out? And when those wicked spirits, taken out, found no place to go, they came back again. And went into that cleansed land, and they were worse than they had ever been before. It was the parable that signified by the Lord Jesus, that Israel has been cleansed from idolatrous practice as a nation, since the days of the Babylonian captivity.

But when the wicked spirits return to the land in the days of the great tribulation, the latter state of Israel in apostasy and idolatry will be the greatest of all. But says the Lord Jesus, the unclean spirits I will cause to pass out. Follow through.

We have an hypothetical case presented to us in verse 3 as we go on. For God declares how we will keep the testimony clean. It shall come to pass that when or if any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that began him shall say unto him, thou shalt not live, for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord.

And his father and his mother that began him shall trust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day that the prophet shall be ashamed. Every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied, neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive.

Let me say a word about that third verse in particular, first of all. For as you look at these words, one can recognize this hypothetical case reminds us of the solemn words of Deuteronomy chapter 13, which you may read from verses 6 through 10. And may I say, now listen to this divine principle.

In Deuteronomy chapter 13 and verses 6 through 10, God declared that his people were responsible to be obedient to the revelation of his divine truth. And that even if one of their own children prophesied against the word of the Lord, they were to be put to death. Now may I point out that in our book of Zechariah, in this verse, the truth of God will be supreme to the hearts of his people in that day, above their family relationship.

Now that's a searching fact. How many of us even today are willing to keep the truth of God, no matter the compromise that may come from the dearest upon the earth to us. But in that day, in Israel's glory, God's truth will be more important to be obeyed than compromising with even their own children.

And as Deuteronomy commands by the word of the Lord, such a false one should be put to death. Now this is an isopodical case if it ever appears in the millennial kingdom. It shall come to pass that prophet will be exposed.

And as verse 4 declares, he may have the hypocritical garment of a prophet, outwardly wearing the rough garment to deceive, indicating that he professes to be a prophet of God. But then when challenged, he shall say, I'm not a prophet, I'm a husband man. Man taught me to keep cattle from my youth up.

In other words, one will be so ashamed, he will seek immediately to evade the accusation and deny his outward profession. Now when you come to verse 6, I'd like to give you two particular lines of thought. For there is a division, there is a difference of opinion and conviction in the minds of not only rabbinical, but

even Christian teachers regarding the setting of these words.

In the grammatical context, they belong in relation to the false prophet. And they'll challenge him, saying, what are these wounds in thine hands? And he shall answer, those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Now let me give you a realistic case in the Old Testament of false prophets.

You'll all remember the time when Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal. And you'll recall as they were to prove who was the living God, by fire coming down from above upon the sacrifice beneath and devouring it, the prophets of Baal prayed. They not only prayed, but as time went on and there was no answer, then in their frenzy they cut themselves with knives, to indicate the fervency of their petition in relation to their God.

And it was often the custom of false prophets to thus manifest themselves in their fervor, and to thus cut themselves in their body. And if there is such a one in that coming day, he'll be challenged, what are those wounds? And he will answer, these which I received in the house of my friends. Perhaps he may have been chastised by his own parents in his youth as a result of his false ministry.

Or he may have inflicted those wounds himself. Now that's one interpretation that is held by many good men. David Barron, one of the greatest Hebrew Christian Jews, as well as our brother Charles Feinberg, who teaches the book of Zechariah in a most blessed way too.

And there have been others. But all acknowledge, whether they follow that teaching or not, they acknowledge it is a very abrupt change, transition, if you're going to separate it from the context that precedes it. But then on the other hand, the other teaching is worthy of emphasizing too.

For I'm sure that all of us have heard again and again, and perhaps ourselves may have quoted, that the words would remind us of the good shepherd, our Lord Jesus. And we do find, though there is a break in the context at the end of verse 6, we do find that great shepherd comes before us, as we shall see in verse 7 particularly. And surely we can and do and would acknowledge the true shepherd was the smitten shepherd.

He also was wounded. Yea, he was even smitten unto death in the house of his friend. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

And thus we do acknowledge that if the words apply to him, they are true of him who was wounded in the house of his own friend. But the next verse brings before us, in contrast to the false shepherd, the true shepherd. Now beloved, may I point out something.

And this is a precious corroboration of the great teaching of God's truth. We saw in chapter 12, that there will be a vision of that one whom they have pierced when they see him face to face, that will convince them that they pierced him. As we read in chapter 12, remember the words, they shall look upon me whom they have pierced.

May I pause for a moment of reflection with you. My beloved friend, you and I who belong to the Lord, and you who may not belong to the Lord, your sins and mine pierced that blessed one upon the cross of Calvary. As you and I can and do acknowledge, my sins were laid on him.

Jesus bore them on the tree, and our sins pierced the blessed Son of God. And beloved, it's a wonderful sign, wonderful truth, when the heart finds and the soul has revealed to it that on that cross he was, let me

quote Isaiah 53 verse 5 and 6, verse 5 particularly, in this respect, he was wounded for my transgression. He was bruised for my iniquities.

The chastisement of my feet was upon him, and with his stripes I am healed. And there is a poor, guilty, undeserving sinner. The believing sinner can acknowledge, my sins were borne in his own body there.

And my beloved, that's one of the most wonderful looks that the soul ever receives in its history. When the soul looks to see the Lord Jesus, and says he loved me, and he gave himself for me. And acknowledges, my sins were laid upon him.

Jesus bore them on the tree. God who knew them laid them on him, and believing, I'm free. May I pose again and ask to the conscience, have you looked upon him whom your sins have pierced? For as the poet wrote, there is life in a look at the crucified one.

There is life at this moment for thee. Then look sinner, look unto him who was nailed to the tree. What a look! My mind goes back to the boyhood days, when as a poor sinner, if I could take you to the spot where I knelt, and for the first time I saw him on that tree for my own sins.

Blessed moment, blessed moment. But oh may I point out to you in our thirteenth chapter, the great truth of verse seven. For in this great truth of the seventh verse, we have something even of a different character presented to us.

And that is not that my sins were laid upon him, but that even his God, and our God, smote him, the one who was the true shepherd. Note the words. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow or equal.

Set the Lord apostle, smite the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. O beloved, may I say, O may I say, and this is a truth beyond our comprehension. May I say, though you and I are guilty, and though Israel as a nation was guilty of slaying their Messiah, it was overruled as an act of God who smote the true shepherd himself.

Some of the deepest words to my soul, incomprehensible to my mind, they're found in that fifty-third chapter of Isaiah in verse ten. Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him. My beloved, I cannot fathom the depth of meaning in those words.

That the very heart of the Father, the very heart of the Eternal God, found pleasure in bruising his own son. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow. And we would turn away from all the claims of false shepherds, and would see the acknowledgement of the God of glory, that the true shepherd was the one who was his equal.

May I point out that you have the humanity, and you have the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ declared in those two expressions. My shepherd, my equal, wonder of wonders, God in his sovereign act of love divine, and in the purpose of his determined heart, gave the one who was the darling of his bosom, and he was smitten. My beloved, may I say as you contemplate with me for a moment, that sword of justice with its flaming, that flaming sword in the garden of Eden, that bought the way to the tree of life, and drove man out of that garden of blessing.

There was no one who ever braved the judgment of that sword, until that blessed Eternal Son of God came down from the glory, and in that body of humanity said, I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd

giveth his life for his sheep. And as the good shepherd, he faced the sword of judgment from the God of glory above, for you and for me. Smite the shepherd.

And as you read Matthew 26, how verily the Lord tells of it taking place, as they came and took him away from the garden, and would have taken his sheep. And he pleaded for them to be kept and to be saved, and he went forth to meet the sword of divine justice on the behalf of the sheep. O beloved, that smitten shepherd, O thank God for the precious truth, when blood from a victim must flow, this shepherd in pity was led to stand between us and the foe, and he willingly died in my stead.

And what love to your heart and mine, that that shepherd went himself to bear the stroke of justice, which was aimed at you and me. Hallelujah, what a Saviour. I cannot fathom how God could and did smite the man that was his equal.

Now, may I say this as I quote the words of another? There is that about the life and about the death of the Son of God, that only God the Father is able to comprehend. And all that we can do is to take our shoes from our feet in adoring wonder and worship, making no attempt to penetrate what is impenetrable, to define what is indefinable, or to comprehend what is incomprehensible to human creature mind. Beloved, worship alone can flow from the heart that recognizes who the person was that died on that cross to save you and me.

God's shepherd, God's equal, I and my Father are one, and it was He who was. And beloved, know, know what followed, and smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand upon the little one. There's two applications we give.

There is no question in relation to the context pertaining to Israel. When the shepherd was smitten, the sheep of Israel became scattered. But there was a handful.

I will turn mine hands upon the little one, and now for the nucleus of that little company of disciples, the blessed Lord sent the message of redeeming grace and the gospel of His salvation to gather and bring into the flock those that were not even of Israel, to bring them to itself. But the day is coming, as the context declares and as our study has indicated, when He will gather the sheep again. May I point out this precious truth? If you will trace the resurrection day, the first resurrection day, and its ministry, the ministry of the Lord Jesus in that day, the sheep had been scattered, the handful of disciples had been scattered and fled.

But the ministry of our Lord Jesus that first resurrection day was to bring them back together. And He sought Peter, He found Mary, He found the two walking away from Jerusalem to Emmaus. And through that day He ministered until at the end of the day, in Luke 24, in John 20, He had them gathered in the upper rooms, and He came into their midst and He showed them His hands and His side.

Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Our risen Lord has been gathering His sheep, praise be to His name, and over the world He has gathered His own and brought them to Himself by His redeeming grace. In relation to Israel, thank God the burden of the prophecy is that He will bring back the scattered sheep.

But notice we read the last two verses. Not all of Israel individually will be saved, but note the words. It shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein.

And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them, I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God. Now may I repeat what we have stated before? There will be a spared remnant.

There will be a spared remnant that in that day of His return will be brought back into the land through the refining of the great judgment time of the tribulation, and brought to be gathered together in that blessed day of our Lord's return. They go through the fiery furnace of testing, but that remnant will be brought through the fire. May I say there are three purposes for the great tribulation? First of all, in relation to Israel, there is the purpose of refining and purifying that nation that the Lord will have a godly remnant as the nucleus of the nation.

Second, the Lord will also, according to Matthew 25, 31 through 46, and according to Revelation 7, He will have a spared company of Gentiles, blessed be His name, even in that particular day of trouble, that they too may enter into the millennial kingdom as the blessed of the nation. The third reason for the great tribulation, and this is the most solemn, it will be the time when the ungodly will be punished, and the godlessness of the earth, the iniquity of the world, and the godlessness of the nations will be judged, and all the ungodly will perish. May I add, my beloved, the solemn fact, when the great tribulation is finished, there will not be left alive on the earth one ungodly person.

Now, if you read your scriptures, covering it, whether in Matthew, whether in the Revelation, another contemporary, even New Testament scriptures, you'll come to that conclusion. But the Lord's desire and intention is a remnant for Israel, a saved remnant out of the nation, and the judgment of destruction for the rest. May I say humbly, I gratefully acknowledge that my salvation will take me out of this world before that awful day comes, by the way of the rapture.

But note, I want to denote in closing, what the divine fruit is going to be in that remnant to come. Verse nine, I will bring the third part through the five. Now, I cannot literally dogmatize on a third coming through, for if you will read Isaiah six, you will find Isaiah speaking of only a tenth.

But one thing is sure, a small remnant, a fraction of them will be the nucleus in that blessed day. But now I want you to see the fruit that will be produced in that remnant. At the end of verse nine, the last part, first, they shall call upon my name.

Did you ever read Psalm 50, verse 15, wonderful promise? When the Lord said through the psalmist, call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will answer thee, and thou shalt glorify me. And in that day there will be a number that will call upon his name. And then second, he says, I will hear them, I will answer them.

And third, I will say, it is my people. God will acknowledge them. And fourth, they shall say, Jehovah is my God.

O my beloved one, the day that will be when the godly remnant will not acknowledge their Jehovah, and he will acknowledge his people. May I close by asking, beloved friend, do you belong to him? The joy of being able to say, my Lord, my God, I am his, I am his forever, through the wounds of the one who died on Calvary for my soul. Shall we pray? Blessed Father, we thank thee for that one who out of the fullness of that glorious presence of God came down to the earth, and in the darkness of this scene, born of a woman, glorified thee in every thought, in every word, in every deed of his life.

Sinless, holy, and pure, he glorified thee below, but he glorified thee in a greater way, and magnified thy love in all of its fullness, when he permitted himself to be smitten upon that tree of Calvary. And the sword of justice against sin pierced his own soul. Surely we acknowledge as thou hast written, yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him, when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.

He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hands. We that know him would say this moment, thank you, Lord, for saving my soul. Thank you, Lord, for making me whole.

Thank you, Lord, for giving to me thy great salvation, so rich, so free. Our prayer as we close, Father, it is that someone who has never seen that Savior, pierced for their sins, will at this moment look to him and acknowledge he loved me, and he gave himself for me. We ask it in our Savior's name, for his glory.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/9/SID9723.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-w-bramhall/studies-in-zechariah-12-zechariah-13/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net