

Zechariah 13:1-9

## The Cleansing Power of the Open Fountain

God is progressively revealing more and more of His plan for the last days as we move through the writings of the prophet Zechariah.

***Zechariah 13:1, “In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.”***

The opening line of verse one connects us back to Zechariah chapter 12, which describes events that will take place at the end of the seven years of Tribulation.

***Zechariah 12:2-3, “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.”***

Now follow the train of thought that leads us to chapter 13:

***Zechariah 12:6, “In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile...”***

***Zechariah 12:8, “In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem...”***

***Zechariah 12:9, “It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.***

***Zechariah 12:10 “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. <sup>11</sup> In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem...”***

Then ***Zechariah 13:1*** follows, referring to the same occasion, ***“In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.”***

This is a prophecy referring to the blood that would flow like a fountain from Christ whom they pierced at the cross. This prophecy was given 500 years before Christ.

“A fountain would be opened”—literally, it means a hollow would be dug out (*Baron, p. 459*) from which would flow a fountain which would be for the cleansing of sin and moral uncleanness.

This happened when the Roman soldier pierced Jesus' side with a spear and blood and water flowed forth from the open wound.

The crucifixion of Jesus took place when the Jewish nation of Israel rejected their Messiah.

Because of their rebellion and rejection of their King, the Jewish nation did not experience the sin-cleansing benefit of the blood of Jesus.

*Matthew 27:24-26*, "When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it."<sup>25</sup> And all the people answered and said, "His blood [meaning, the guilt and responsibility for shedding His blood] be on us and on our children."<sup>26</sup> Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified."

That rebellious declaration, "His blood be on us and on our children," has cursed the Jewish people for the past 2,000 years as they have suffered the consequences of rejecting their King.

But Zechariah is prophesying of a time, near the end of the Tribulation, when, in chapter 12:10, there will be a supernatural outpouring of the Spirit of grace and supplication upon the Jews in Israel, and their eyes will be opened to recognize that Jesus, whom they crucified, was their Messiah.

On that day, near the end of the Tribulation, the blood of Jesus Christ whom they pierced will no longer be a curse against them, but will be poured out upon their hearts by the Holy Spirit, to cleanse them of all their sin and rebellion, and to cause them to call out to the Lord—supplication.

This is true for all of us who have put our faith in Christ. His blood was shed for us on the cross 2,000 years ago, but it did not benefit us, in fact we were condemned and guilty for our part in His death, until the day the Holy Spirit opened the eyes of our faith and enabled us to recognize and believe and cry out to Jesus.

The day our eyes were opened and we put our faith in Christ, and called upon Him, we were no longer guilty for the death of Christ, but we were cleansed of our sin and guilt, and we were made righteous—we were saved by the blood that we had caused to be shed.

Ezekiel prophesied about the same end-time sin-cleansing event. *Ezekiel 36:25-27*,

*"Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.<sup>26</sup> I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.<sup>27</sup> I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them."*

So, Zechariah chapter one is prophesying that there is coming a day, near the end of the Tribulation, when the guilt for shedding the blood of Jesus Christ which has for 2,000 years been against the Jewish people, will be removed, and the blood of Jesus will totally cleanse all of Israel from their sin.

***Zechariah 13:2, “It shall be in that day,” says the LORD of hosts, “that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land.”***

The climax of Israel’s idolatry and their greatest and most deceptive false prophecies will take place during the Tribulation, when as a nation they embrace the Antichrist instead of Jesus Christ, and many in Israel worship the beast and his image. (*Baron, p. 464*)

But at the end of the Tribulation, when Israel’s idolatry and deceptive prophecies have reached their worst level, in that day, when God suddenly pours out His Spirit of grace and supplication, and their eyes are opened to recognize the Messiah, and their hearts are cleansed by the fountain of Christ’s blood...

Then verse two says that the Lord will also, in that day, completely purge and cleanse the land of Israel of all the pollution of their idolatry, and all false prophets will be removed from the land of Israel, and all the evil spirits who were inspiring the false prophecies will be cast out of the land.

At the end of the Tribulation, the Lord is going to purge and cleanse the land of Israel, making it ready to be the center of God’s Kingdom on earth.

Verse 3, now describes what is thought to be a hypothetical scenario that illustrates how radically the hearts of the Jewish people will become loyal to their Messiah in that day when they have been cleansed by the fountain of Christ’s blood.

***Zechariah 13:3, “It shall come to pass that if anyone still prophesies [a false prophesy, after the great spiritual awakening of Israel], then his father and mother who begot him [because of their new-found passionate zeal for Christ] will say to him, ‘You shall not live, because you have spoken lies in the name of the LORD.’ And his father and mother who begot him shall thrust him through when he prophesies.”***

This is a characteristic of people who have lived to see the unspeakable horrors of what happens to a nation when someone under the influence of lying deceitful spirits tries influencing the people against the truth.

Those who have lived through the fall-out strongly react against the deceitful, lying words.

Today, there are many who have lived through communist dictatorships, and who have seen the destructive effect of deception and lies being propagated as truth.

And those people are leading the outcry against the wave of lies and deception being unleashed on our nation. They know that this will destroy our country.

Another hypothetical situation is presented in verses 4 to 6 to illustrate the radical spiritual transformation that will take place among the Jewish people at the end of the Tribulation.

Under the antichrist, false prophets will have celebrity status. They will be privileged, possibly well-paid, respected and protected by authorities.

But when the surviving remnant of the nation of Israel is saved there is a radical change in attitude.

**Ezekiel 36:31** helps us interpret these three verses. Speaking of the same time of spiritual awakening Ezekiel says, *“Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations.”*

**Zechariah 13:4-6**, *“And it shall be in that day that every [former false] prophet [whose eyes have been opened, and whose soul has been washed clean by the fountain] will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies; they will not wear a robe of coarse hair to deceive [He’s given up the dress of a prophet—no longer trying to deceive].<sup>5</sup> But he will say, ‘I am no prophet [formerly a celebrity but now loathing his former status], I am a farmer [lowest social class]; for a man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.’<sup>6</sup> And one will say to him, ‘What are these wounds between your arms?’ [The false prophets used to cut themselves as part of their ritual to entice the demons to give them messages. And he bears the scars on his body, but is now ashamed of them. i.e., 1Kings 18:28; Deut. 14:1] Then he will answer, ‘Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.’”*

This reply is hard to make sense of, but it seems to be a transition into the next verse, which is a prophecy of the crucifixion of Christ.

Christ came to His own people, the house of Israel, but His own people rejected Him and He bears the scars of His own people on His body.

**Zechariah 13:7**, *“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion,” says the LORD of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; then I will turn My hand against the little ones.”*

Let’s look at the first part of this verse, which prophesies the crucifixion of Jesus.

*“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd...”*

The sword is a symbol of violent death.

This is the Lord speaking. He is giving the command for His Shepherd to be put to death violently.

God's Shepherd is the Good Shepherd—this is a reference to Jesus.

Israel sinned, they had wanted, all through Jesus' ministry to put Him to death, but not until God gave the word, could they carry out their desire.

It was God's plan to send His Son Jesus to the Cross to die in our place—to pay the penalty for our sins. (Acts 4:27-28)

Initially, when Israel killed the Lamb of God, the results were, God's judgment came against the nation, but the final result, that God intended all along, was that the nation would be saved by the blood of their sacrificial Lamb whom they slew.

Under the sacrificial system, who receives the benefit of the animal sacrifice?

It is the one who was responsible for causing the death of the lamb, who receives the benefit of the innocent animal's death.

Israel killed their Shepherd, who was serving as their Lamb, out of rebellion. But God had them kill their Shepherd so that His blood could one day save this rebellious nation from their sin, and make them righteous.

***“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion,” says the LORD of hosts...***

The Shepherd who God commands to be slain, is described as the Man (a human being), and this Man is further described as, “*My Companion,*” a translation of a Hebrew word which means, the one nearest to me, or my closest relative, or my brother.

It is a term which implies, one who stands by me as my equal. And this is how the LORD of hosts describes the Man Jesus. (*David Baron, p. 476-77*)

This is an amazing prophecy which describes the Good Shepherd who is slain for the sin of rebellious men, as the Man who is God's equal—the God-Man.

Being fully Man, Jesus is one of us (except without sin), He understands us and can relate to us.

And Being fully God, Jesus can save us, and protect us, and meet all of our needs.

It is believed that Jesus Himself was referring to this very passage from Zechariah when He made the comments that are recorded in John 10.

***John 10:27-30, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. [He's describing Himself as the Shepherd] <sup>28</sup> And I give them eternal life [He's describing Himself as***

their Savior who lays down His life so the sheep can live], *and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.* <sup>29</sup> *My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.*

[Here Jesus describes His ability to protect His people as being the same as the Father's ability to protect His people—nobody can snatch them out of either hand. Now look at what He, the Man Jesus says in verse 30.]

<sup>30</sup> *I and My Father are one.*”

He described Himself as the Man who is God's equal.

Did the Jewish people pick up on that?

**John 10:31-33**, *“Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. <sup>32</sup> Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?”*

<sup>33</sup> *“The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.”*

Now look at the last half of **Zechariah 13:7**, *“... Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; then I will turn My hand against the little ones.”*

The result of Israel crucifying their Shepherd, was that the people of Israel (described as, sheep) were scattered and left without a Shepherd.

This prophecy was fulfilled shortly after the crucifixion of Jesus, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, killing 1.5 million Jews in Israel. The survivors were scattered all over the world, many were sold as slaves.

For 2,000 years now, the sheep of Israel have been scattered all over they world where they have been persecuted and oppressed like no other people ever, as the Lord turned His hand against them.

Since 1948, when Israel was re-formed as a nation, the Lord has been gathering them back to the land of Israel. Why is God bringing the Jews back to Israel?

Zechariah teaches that when they are back in the land, God will bring to a climax and conclusion His purging judgment against the nation during the Tribulation, which is described in the next verse.

Notice that verse 7 describes the crucifixion of Jesus and the scattering of the people of Israel.

The very next event in Zechariah's prophecy is the time of the Tribulation.

There is no hint of the church anywhere in Zechariah's prophecy. The prophecy is about God's dealing with Israel, not God's dealing with the church.

We saw the same thing in chapter 11. Verses 12 to 14 foresaw the time of the cross. And then then next verse, 15, jumps straight to a prophecy of the Antichrist—during the Tribulation.

There is no church in the Old Testament prophecies about the Tribulation.

The Old Testament prophets have much to say about history up to the cross. And they have tons to say about history during the Tribulation. But though they talk so much about the Tribulation, they have nothing to say about the church.

This is one of the reasons we believe that the church will not be present during the Tribulation—the Tribulation is not part of church history, it is the conclusion of Israel's history.

This does not mean that the church is spared from suffering. No, there have been 2,000 years of church history, and through most of it, the true church has been persecuted.

*John 15:20, "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you..."*

And I believe that we may soon get our turn to experience strong opposition and hardship for our faith, before the Tribulation comes.

***Zechariah 13:8, "And it shall come to pass in all the land," says the LORD, [this reveals that the people of Israel are back in the land of Israel—their return began in 1948.] "That two-thirds [of the Jews] in it [in the land of Israel] shall be cut off and die, [this is describing the brutal devastation of the Tribulation upon the Jews living in Israel] But one-third [of the Jews] shall be left in it:***

The Tribulation is a time of incredible suffering for everyone who is living on the planet at that time. But it is also a time of mercy, as God is going to preserve a small remnant of people alive from every nation, till the end of the tribulation, including Israel.

***Zechariah 13:9, "I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. [This is much of God's purpose for the Tribulation, for the purging and refining of the remnant 1/3 of Israel who will survive and become the citizens of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom.]***

***They will call on My name, [this is the result of the Spirit of supplication being poured out on the nation in 12:10] and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; and each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'***

For 2,000 years the guilt for shedding the blood of Jesus Christ has condemned the Jewish people, but there is very soon coming a day when the Spirit of grace will cause the people of

Israel to cry out to Jesus, and on that day, the blood of Jesus Christ that has been on their heads will begin to flow over them and will cleanse the heart of every Jew who is still alive.

Is the guilt of Jesus death on your head today?

Cry out to Him to save you, and the blood that you are guilty of, will become the blood that cleanses and forgives you of all your sin.

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