

Zechariah 13:1-9
September 7, 2022

V. Oracle Concerning Israel (12:1-14:21)

A. Repentance of Judah (12:1-14)

B. Refinement of Judah (13:1-9)

Zechariah 13 picks up where the previous chapter left off. The Tribulation is over, Jesus has returned to earth, and He has just destroyed His enemies. The Israelites have now *looked on Him whom they pierced* (12:10) as Jesus takes His seat on David's throne in Jerusalem, ruling for one thousand years (cf. Rev 20:1-6).

As a part of this "transition," we read in 13:1 that *a fountain shall be opened... for sin and for uncleanness*. This is a continuation of the description of the full effects of the New Covenant, which we considered in our last study (12:6-14). This *fountain* isn't like the pieces found in the Temple, filled with stagnant water. Jesus' provision for sin is as a fountain that is over-flowing, ever-cleansing.

One result of the fulfillment of the New Covenant is the cutting off of idolatry and false prophets from the land (vv. 2-6). Idolatry was a persistent problem for the Israelites, starting no later than the golden calf as they exited Egypt, and it will pick right back up during the Tribulation period.

Further, there will be no more prophets during the Messianic Kingdom, which shouldn't surprise us, because the New Covenant had promised that *no more shall every man teach his neighbor... for they all shall know Me* (Jer 31:34). Any person claiming to be a prophet in that day will be a false prophet, and would be put to death (Zech 13:3; cf. Deut 13:6-9). Unclean spirits will likewise *depart from the land*, as Satan is bound for that period (Rev 20:1-3, 7).

All of Israel's shepherds who had come before would one day give way to the Good Shepherd (vv. 7-9), and He will continue to purge sin from Israel.

Verse 7 depicts Jesus at His First Coming, supported by the fact that Jesus quotes this verse in Matthew 26:31 and Mark 14:27 on the night that He was betrayed. When He, as the Good Shepherd, was handed over, His disciples (i.e., *the sheep*) *scattered*. Indeed, He was killed by the Roman *sword*, or the governmental power of capital punishment (cf. Rom 13:4).

Several commentators see a prophecy of the Messiah being the God-Man in v. 7 – *the Man who is My Companion*.

Before we turn to vv. 8-9, it's important to remember that the prophets didn't always present nice and neat outlines for us. Instead, we often receive a "dumping" of prophetic teaching. In other words, in one passage, a prophet can refer to a number of events and periods of time in one instance of foretelling.

While it seems vv. 1-6 deal with the Messianic Kingdom, and v. 7 Jesus First Coming, it also seems likely that vv. 8-9 of the Tribulation period, and the acts of purifying and refining that will occur at that time.

During those seven years, Zechariah writes that *two-thirds* will perish, whether at the hands of the Antichrist, or during the divine judgments. Nevertheless, *one-third* shall be saved *through the fire* (v. 9). This will be the remnant that will be the initial population of the Messianic Kingdom.