



Zechariah 13:1, 6-7

The Precious Fountain Opened

In God's marvelous grace He will open up a fountain for the cleansing away of sin. God in His mercy provides a means of dealing with man's greatest problem. The wages of sin is death, but God paid the penalty so He could freely acquit the sinner. God opened up the fountain that cleanses away sin and unrighteousness. This is totally impossible for depraved man to do. Only God can forgive sin. This is not speaking of baptism as taking away sin because the earthly fountain of water is a symbol of the spiritual water that cleanses away sin, i.e. the blood of Jesus Christ. The vicarious, sacrificial death of Christ, through His shed blood cleanses away sin. 1 John 1:7 tells us the blood of Jesus cleanses us from every sin. The apostle John writes, "... the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. God's detergent is the only one that can deal with our guilt before God.

God's Fountain

On that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity (13:1).

That day refers to a future day of the LORD (14:1). We find the phrase on that day sixteen times in the last three chapters of Zechariah (12:3-4, 6, 8-9, 11; 13:1-2, 4; 14:4, 6, 8-9, 13, 20-21). It should be obvious that this day is clearly in his mind. On the day of Christ's crucifixion and death the fountain was opened potentially for Israel and all mankind. This is the day when Gentiles and Jews are turning by faith and trusting in the death of Jesus to wash them of their sins. There is also a day coming when the Jewish people will turn to Christ (Romans 11:25-29).

That fountain not only deals with our past sin and guilt, but it also provides for our sanctification. He continually cleanses us from our sins. The LORD our Righteousness prepared the fountain. It is never a cistern or stagnant pond of water, but a wellspring of water that is always fresh, abundant, easily accessible and flowing spiritual water. The vicarious, substitutionary fountain filled with the blood of the Lamb of God has been opened and now there is cleansing for all who will come to Him (Heb. 9:7-15). He invites everyone who is a sinner to come freely to the fountain for cleansing of all sin.

The Fountain Opened

The fountain was broken open at the cross. Blood of the Suffering Servant of God flowed through every pore as He prayed in the Garden of

of God flowed through every pore as He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (Lk. 22:44). The cruel scourges tore open His back (Jn. 19:1), and the crown of thorns woven by the soldiers pierced his temples (Mk. 15:17, 19). His hands were nailed to the cross (Jn. 20:20, 25, 27). The blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin (1 Jn. 1:7; cf. Rev. 7:14).

The fountain was first opened to the house of David in the great preaching of the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36). Zechariah continues in 13:6-7, And one will say to him, What are these wounds between your arms? Then he will say, *Those* with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. ’

Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd,
And against the man, My Associate, ”
Declares the Lord of hosts.
Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered;
And I will turn My hand against the little ones.

The Shepherd Smitten

The smiting of the Shepherd is according to the will of God. The smitten one is the Shepherd of Yahweh. The shepherd of Jehovah, whom Jehovah describes as a man who is His next one (neighbor), cannot of course be a bad shepherd, who is displeasing to Jehovah, and destroys the flock, or the foolish shepherd. . . . The idea of nearest one (or fellow) involves not only similarity in vocation, but community of physical or spiritual descent, according to which He whom God calls His neighbor cannot be a mere man, but can only be one who participates in the divine nature, or is essentially divine. The shepherd of Jehovah, whom the sword is to smite, is therefore no other than the Messiah, who is also identified with Jehovah in 12:10; or the good shepherd, who says of Himself, I and My Father are one (John 10:30). ”

Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of Israel, appointed by God Himself (John 10:11). He alone can be called Yahweh's fellow for he was God as well as man (Jn. 1:1), even the true God (5:20), although One with the Father Himself (5:30) He assumed our nature with the purpose that He might suffer for our sins.

Yahweh calls His True Prophet as opposed to the false prophets (13:2-6), the Messiah, My Shepherd (vv. 7-9). Not only does the prophet give us a picture of the smitten Shepherd, but also the scattering of the sheep and the saved remnant.

Yahweh is the one who directs the death of His Shepherd who is in deed the True Shepherd, the Good Shepherd (John 10:11, 14), the Great Shepherd (Heb. 13:20) and the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4).

The deity of God's Shepherd is strongly affirmed in 13:7. The Lord claims unity of essence with His shepherd. Therefore, the deity of the Messiah is emphasized.

The effect of the killing the Shepherd

The death of the shepherd is according to the counsel of God (Isa. 53:10). The Shepherd was smitten (Isa. 53:4, 7, 10) at the crucifixion of Christ and His own sheep abandoned Him like scattered sheep (Matt. 26:31, 56).

The flock will be dispersed in consequence to the slaying of the Shepherd. The nation has brought judgment upon itself. But even then, a remnant will be saved (vv. 8-9).

The historical fulfillment of this prophecy is found in the words of Jesus to His disciples the night before His death in Matthew 26:31-32. He said, "You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered. But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee" (cf. Mark 14:27). The soldiers came and arrested Jesus and the disciples fled in all directions. After His death they barricaded themselves behind locked doors in fear of the Jewish religious leaders. However, the Lord soon brought His hand back over the disciples fulfilling His own words, "But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee."

This does not exhaust the meaning of Zechariah's words. There will be a remnant of those who believe on Jesus the Messiah (Rom. 11:22-36). Keil and Delitzsch suggest the "cutting off of the two-thirds of Israel commenced in the Jewish war under Vespasian and Titus, and in the war for the suppression of the rebellion led by the pseudo-Messiah *Bar Cochba*. . . it was continued in the persecutions of the Jews with fire and sword in the following centuries."

The false shepherds of Israel consumed the sheep. However, "The Old Testament prophecy reached to John the Baptist, and attained its completion and its end in Christ (Matt. 11:13; Luke 16:16; cf. Matt. 5:17)" (Keil).

Many Bible scholars conclude that there are two fulfillments in this passage from Zechariah. The initial fulfillment in the persecutions against the believers in Acts and the Diaspora when the Jews are scattered across the empire after Rome destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70. But there is also the ultimate fulfillment in the time of the Tribulation at the end of this age. The apostle John informs us that the majority of the Jewish nation will be destroyed. The surviving one-third or remnant will be purified through the persecutions during the Tribulation and God's chastising hand. It is at that time that they will call upon the name of the Lord and trust Him for deliverance (Zechariah 12:10-13:1; cf. Matthew 24-25). There will come a time when they will hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and turn to Him as the only name under heaven given among men whereby they may be saved (Acts 4:12). Romans 11:25-36 reminds us God is not finished with His chosen people. The "partial hardening has happened to Israel at the present time until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and thus all Israel will be saved . . ." (vv. 25-26). They will one day respond to the marvelous sovereign saving grace of God and be saved. Pray for Jerusalem. Pray for the hastening of that great day when Jesus comes.

Zechariah closes with the gathering of all nations together by the LORD against Jerusalem. They will take the city and plunder it and lead away half of its inhabitants into captivity (14:1-2). However, the Lord will then take charge of His people, appearing on the Mount of Olives, and splitting this mountain prepare a safe way for the rescue of the remnant and come with His saints (vv. 3-5) to complete His kingdom. From Mount Zion salvation will stream forth over the whole world (vv. 6-11). God will miraculously smite the enemies who came to destroy Jerusalem (vv. 12-15). The enemies are destroyed by the immediate interposition of the Lord. There will be a remnant of Gentile nations who will turn to the Lord and worship Him (vv. 16-19), and Jerusalem will become holy because the LORD dwells in her midst (vv. 20-21). In chapter fourteen we have predicted in Old Testament from the completion of the kingdom of God, which the Apostle John saw and

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predicted in Old Testament from the completion of the kingdom of God, which the Apostle John saw and described in Rev. 20-22 in New Testament mode under the figure of the heavenly Jerusalem (Keil and Delitzsch). Cf. Matt. 24-25.

The message of the old and the new covenant is clear. There is cleansing, washing, forgiveness for every missing of the mark and for the removal of every guilty stain left by sin and depravity (Isa. 1:18; 1 Cor. 6:9ff; Eph. 2:5ff; 1 John 1:7; 2:2). Come to the fountain for cleansing today. The LORD God reigns!

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