

## December 5

**Scriptures:** Read Zechariah 13&14

**Key Verse:** “And the Lord shall be King over all the earth...” (Zechariah 14:9)

### Overview

Chapter thirteen begins with words of hope that follow the thought in the preceding chapter. Although the Messiah was pierced, which caused those who believed in Him to mourn, His death opened up “a fountain” for the elect of the Lord to experience cleansing from sin—from that moment until the present time (Heb. 9:14); this is one of the provisions of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:34; Ezk. 36:25). The redemptive work of Jesus gave rise to a new and purified people of God, a spiritual Israel wherein there would be found no idolatry or false worship (the main problems God had with natural Israel). At this point, Zechariah seems to jump ahead and describe the absolute purity demanded of God’s people in the Messiah’s Millennial Kingdom (but admittedly, 13:2b-6 is difficult to understand). The general idea is that the people of God will be so zealous for the Lord and full of love for Him that even if they discover their own son to be involved in the sin of false divination, they will give him over to be cut off (cf. Deut. 13:6-10; 18:20; 21:18-21).

Regarding the next few verses of chapter 13 (vv. 7-9), however, the New Testament has given us an indication of their meaning. The Lord Jesus referred to Himself as fulfilling this prophecy. He was God’s Shepherd who was willing to lay down His life for His sheep (John 10: 11,15). At the appointed time, God’s sword became active against His Companion (John 10:30; Acts 2:23). Jesus was struck and crucified, and His disciples were the sheep who were scattered (13:7; Matt. 26:31-32, 56). The persecution of the early church led to the dispersion of many followers of Jesus, but this was in the plan of God, for in such a way the Gospel message spread to other places (Acts 8:1, 4). Even though Jesus would not be with His flock in body, He would be with those “little ones” in Spirit, and His kind shepherd’s hand would be “on” them (not to be translated “against”) to care for them (13:7b; Lk. 12:32).

Judgment and purging will follow the smiting of the Good Shepherd, but the words “and it shall come to pass” indicates that there will be a notable time lapse. Though the majority of inhabitants will die in unbelief, possibly during the time of the Great Tribulation in the latter days, the Lord will preserve a third who will be put to the test. From this one third, a smaller remnant who believe in Jesus will be purified, so that their faith may be genuine and “may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ” and receive salvation for their souls (1 Pet. 1:7-9). They will know the Name to call upon, and that Name will be Jesus. They will be the ones whom the Lord calls His people (13:8-9).

The final chapter of Zechariah is most likely describing the tribulation period of the last days. He tells of the terrible atrocities that will happen, but with Jesus the Messiah’s second coming, He will cut short those days. Zechariah prophesies that Christ will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and will split the Mount in two by an earthquake. The event may symbolize that Jesus has made a way of escape, for the Mount of Olives stands as a barrier to a quick escape from the city of Jerusalem. At this time, the believing inhabitants of Jerusalem (the remnant who

are addressed here) and all the other saints whom the Lord has gathered will be taken away from the evils around them (14:4-5). The evil in the world will not last for long, for while God saves His own people, He will strike the camps of the wicked enemies with a killing plague, which Zechariah graphically describes (14:12). Even some of the domestic animals that are with them will suffer because of the sins of mankind (14:15).

At the time of Jesus' second coming, Zechariah foretells that the skies will be supernaturally darkened. It is likely during this time that the plague will kill many, and many of the wicked will be killed by one another. The saints of the Lord will also be engaged in battle (14:13-14a), but suddenly, when it should naturally be dark, there will be light. This light will emanate from Jesus, the Light of the World and radiant coming King (cf. Matt. 24:29-31). In establishing His Kingdom, Jesus will miraculously change the topography of the land, including a life-giving river that will flow from His throne in Jerusalem (14:8, 10; cf. Joel 3:18; Ezek. 47:1-12; Rev. 22:1-2). All the wealth of the defeated foes will be gathered to enrich the people of God (14:14b) who will thereafter dwell safely and prosperously in the holy city of God (14:11). The whole earth will worship King Jesus, and everything and every person in His city will be wholly consecrated to Him.

Thus the book of Zechariah ends, telling of the victory in store for those who faithfully serve God. These promises of future glory for the remnant no doubt encouraged Zechariah's audience to not only build the Temple of God in obedience to Him, but also to live consecrated lives unto Him while waiting expectantly for the coming Messiah, King, and deliverer.

## **Prayer**

Keep us faithful, O Lord! Thank You for Your great and precious promises. We rejoice in the great hope set before us — Your return. We long to draw closer to You daily.