

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



"The Fountain, The Shepherd and the Fire"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Zech. 13:1-9; Zech. 12:10-12; Deut. 13:7-12; Is. 53:4-5; Ezek. 34:5, 11-12; Matt. 26:30-31; Is. 1:25-26

Prophecy can be like standing on one mountaintop and looking toward another. You can see the peaks and know there is distance between them, but you cannot always see or measure the valleys in between. A prophetic word may have an immediate or partial fulfillment while also pointing toward something greater still to come. That is especially important in these final chapters of Zechariah. Some things have already broken into history, particularly in Yeshua, while there is still an *"in that day"* that awaits its fullness.

Zechariah 13 flows directly out of the mourning and repentance of chapter 12. ADONAI pours out *"a spirit of grace and supplication,"* and the people *"look toward Me whom they pierced"* (Zech. 12:10). Then a fountain breaks open for cleansing. Idolatry and falsehood are removed. The Shepherd is struck, the flock is scattered, and a remnant is brought through the fire. This chapter is not simply about God rescuing His people. It is about God cleansing, purifying, and forming His people into who He always intended them to be.

1. THE FOUNTAIN OPENS TO CLEANSE WHAT HAS DEFILED US

Zechariah begins, *"In that day, a fountain will be opened to the house of David and to those dwelling in Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity"* (Zech. 13:1). The word *maqor* speaks of a fountain or spring, and here it is opened, loosened, broken forth. The people have looked upon the One whom they pierced and mourned; now the Lord Himself provides cleansing. The fountain addresses the issues of sin and impurity. There is almost an echo of the Flood here—waters of cleansing, defilement being dealt with, and a remnant preserved. Yet here it is deeply personal: the God against whom the people sinned is the One who opens the fountain by which they are cleansed.

That cleansing does not leave idolatry and falsehood untouched. ADONAI says, *"I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will not be remembered any longer. And also, the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness I will remove from the land"* (Zech. 13:2). The word of idols, *atzavim* (עֲצָבִים) is plural of the very word the Lord used in Genesis 3 to describe the consequences of our disobedience: *atzav* (עֲצָב), meaning pain, distress, and toil. The things we look to instead of God eventually become *atzavim* – sources of pain and distress. Alongside idolatry stands false prophecy—speaking falsely in God's name and misrepresenting His character. Jeremiah confronted prophets who cried "peace" when there was no peace, giving people comfort without repentance. Zechariah points toward a day when that deception will be removed. God cleanses not only what we say about Him, but also the ways our lives may falsely represent Him.

2. THE SHEPHERD IS STRUCK AND THE SHEEP ARE SCATTERED

The movement into verse 7 is striking. In vv 3–6, the false prophet deserved judgment and is trying to hide his identity. His wounds reveal that something has happened, yet he appears to have escaped the full consequence that was due him. Then ADONAI declares, *“Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, against the man who is My companion! ... Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered!”* (Zech. 13:7). In chapter 11, it was the worthless shepherd who deserved to be struck. Now the sword is raised against **My Shepherd**, the man whom ADONAI calls His companion. The false prophet deserved piercing, yet the prophetic picture suddenly turns toward the Shepherd who is struck.

Isaiah had already declared, *“Yet we esteemed Him stricken, struck by God, and afflicted. But He was pierced because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities”* (Is. 53:4–5). On the night before He gave His life, Yeshua quoted Zechariah directly: *“This night you will all fall away because of Me; for it is written, ‘I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered’”* (Matt. 26:31). The Shepherd is struck and the sheep scatter, but scattering is not the end. ADONAI had already promised, *“I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out”* (Ezek. 34:11). The Shepherd who is struck is also the One through whom the scattered are sought, gathered, and restored.

3. THE REMNANT IS BROUGHT THROUGH THE FIRE

After the Shepherd is struck and the flock scattered, Zechariah sees a remnant. *“Then it will happen—it is a declaration of ADONAI—that in the entire land two-thirds will be cut off and die, but a third will be left in it”* (Zech. 13:8). Even within this severe passage, the remaining third reveals God's mercy. Yet we might expect the next words to say that those who remain are now finished with hardship. Instead, ADONAI says, *“This third I will bring through the fire. I will refine them as silver is refined, and will test them as gold is tested”* (Zech. 13:9). That raises the natural question: If I am among those who remain, if I have been brought close to the Good Shepherd, why am I still going through the fire?

The answer is that God is doing more than rescuing us—He is refining us. Silver is smelted so that what does not belong is removed. Gold is tested so that its purity is revealed. In the same way, the remnant is brought **through** the fire so that God can form His people into who He always intended them to be. The goal appears at the end of the chapter: *“They will call on My Name and I will answer them. I will say, ‘They are My people,’ and they will answer, ‘ADONAI is my God’”* (Zech. 13:9). The fire is not the destination. The destination is a purified people, restored in relationship with Him.

CONCLUSION

We are called not merely to avoid speaking falsely in His name, but also to refuse to **live falsely in His name**. If there is something we have depended upon instead of Him, something that has become an idol or a source of false security, the fountain is open for cleansing. If we are in a season of refining, our prayer cannot only be, “Lord, get me out,” but also, “Lord, form me into what You intended me to be.” Do not mistake the fire for abandonment. The same God who preserves the remnant is the One who refines it. Let

Him remove what cannot remain, and let the confession of Zechariah 13 become ours again: *“ADONAI is my God.”*

Perhaps today you’re asking, “Lord, if I belong to You, why am I still in the fire?” Do not mistake the fire for abandonment. The God who preserves the remnant is the same God who refines the remnant. Ask Him to remove what cannot remain and to form in you what reflects Him. Call upon His Name. Let the deepest confession of your heart become the confession at the end of this chapter: *“ADONAI is my God”* (Zech. 13:9). And hear the heart of the Lord answering His people in return: *“They are My people.”* The goal is not merely that we survive the fire, but that we come through it having been formed and shaped more and more into His likeness.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the picture of prophecy as seeing from one mountaintop to another help us understand passages that have both partial and future fulfillment?
2. Why do you think the opening of the fountain for cleansing in Zech. 13:1 is immediately followed by the removal of idols, false prophets, and the spirit of uncleanness?
3. How does Zech. 13:7, together with Is. 53:4–5 and Matt. 26:31, deepen our understanding of Yeshua as the Shepherd who is struck?
4. **Personal Reflection:** Are there things in your life that function like the *atzavim* (idos) of Zechariah—things you depend upon to carry, protect, or secure you instead of trusting ADONAI?
5. **Personal Reflection:** In a difficult or refining season, is your first prayer usually, “Lord, get me out,” or, “Lord, make me what You intend me to be”? What might He be refining in you now?

CLOSING PRAYER

ADONAI, thank You that You do not simply expose sin and impurity; You open the fountain that cleanses us. Pour out Your grace upon us and give us hearts that genuinely seek Your favor. Remove every idol we have trusted, every false picture of who You are, and every place where our lives have carried Your name without reflecting Your character. Teach us to look toward Yeshua, the Shepherd who was struck, and to understand more deeply the mercy You have shown us through Him.

And when You bring us through the fire, give us grace to trust what You are doing. Refine us as silver is refined and test us as gold is tested. Remove what does not belong and form within us what reflects You. May we call upon Your Name with whole hearts, and may our lives confess with increasing faithfulness, *“ADONAI is my God.”* Make us a people who belong unmistakably to You, who walk in Your truth, and who display Your grace, love, righteousness, and faithfulness to the world around us.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.