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Zechariah 13:1-9 **Cleansing of Israel**

Zechariah 13:1-9, *"In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. 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. ³ It shall come to pass that if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who begot him 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. ⁴ "And it shall be in that day that every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies; they will not wear a robe of coarse hair to deceive. ⁵ But he will say, 'I am no prophet, I am a farmer; for a man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.' ⁶ And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'*

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. ⁸ And it shall come to pass in all the land,"*

Says the Lord, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: ⁹I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.' "

Zechariah predicts a day when Israel is going to be cleansed of sin and uncleanness. This is God's plan for His people Israel.

God is a God of forgiveness.

God's forgiveness is promised in the Zechariah 13 the chapter, that cleansing is promised to Israel.

In chapter 12 in the future time in a period called "that day," which is the day of the Lord, the time of the great tribulation, that during the great Tribulation, the nation Israel is going to repent and turn to Christ.

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.*

They see Christ, repenting of their sin, weeping in sorrow, and that's the foundation upon which the cleansing of chapter 13 occurs.

V 11, a great mourning.

V 12, a great mourning.

V 13, mourning.

V 14, mourning.

All this weeping, mourning, and repentance when they see Jesus Christ and it is this that is the foundation for the cleansing that comes in 13.

There is no forgiveness until there is repentance.

There is no salvation until there is sorrow for sin.

There is no cleansing until there is an awareness that cleansing is needed.

As they mourn, see Christ, they are doing what is required by God for cleansing.

Zechariah 12:1-9 the tremendous holocaust of Armageddon. Born out of that slaughter of Armageddon is going to be the vision of the returning Christ as He comes in His glory.

The remnant that is left at the end of the slaughter is going to see Jesus Christ. They are going to mourn, weep and repent.

V 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.*

Because cleansing always follows true repentance, true sorrow for sin.

What happens in chapter 14?

They get to the kingdom, because the repentant and cleansed people are ready to occupy the millennial kingdom.

So that's the connection between these chapters.

There is coming then a future cleansing for Israel.

Zechariah is not the only prophet to speak of this. Ezekiel does in chapter 36.

Ezekiel 36:25-29, *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. ²⁶ 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. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. ²⁸ Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. ²⁹ I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you.*

On the day of repentance, the remnant turns to Christ.

Ezekiel is saying the very same thing. There is coming a tremendous cleansing when God purges His people in response to their repentance.

Zechariah by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit outlines for us the elements of this cleansing.

Israel is going to be cleansed, and there are six elements to this cleansing.

1. Israel will be cleansed from the defilement of sin.

V 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.*

In that day means the day of the Lord, and it also means the day when Israel repents.

The house of David speaks of royalty

The inhabitants of Jerusalem speak of the common people.

Common people and royal people alike will enter into this cleansing. This fountain will be opened to them for sin and for uncleanness. This cleansing will be a cleansing from the defilement of sin.

This is the supreme need of the Jew and the Gentile, to be cleansed from defilement.

The Bible says that every man is a sinner.

Romans 3:10, *As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;*

That all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. That no one escapes.

Romans 3:23, *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

We are sinners, cleansing and regeneration is needed.

Particularly in relation to Israel, Zechariah is speaking here. Israel has been defiled for many reasons.

- Because of historic disobedience to the law of God.
- Because of an outright wholesale rejection of Jesus Christ as the Messiah.

These things have brought about the defilement of the people of Israel. They are guilty and they are kept from salvation by these rejections and by continual hardness of heart and continual unbelief.

Romans 10:3, *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.*

- They are self-righteous.
- They are trying to establish their own righteousness and have not submitted to the righteousness of God.
- They have authored a system of works rather than the system of faith and grace that God authored.

In this state of rejection, unbelief, hardness of heart, Israel is guilty before God of sin.

Of course, the greatest sin of all is to reject Christ, and they have done that.

As we see the nation of Israel today, they are divided into three categories.

We have the orthodox who are very few in numbers, who still adhere in any sense to the Old Testament text but violently are opposed to Jesus Christ. They stand in a place of unbelief and sin.

We have the conservative. They are the moderately liberal Jews who don't accept the literalness of the Old Testament but believe it has some spiritualized significance. They, too, reject Jesus Christ. They reject the commands of God, spiritualizing them away.

We have the most liberal of all called the “reformed” who don’t really believe that the Bible is anything more than sort of a human document in any sense. They are basically a social club.

All these categories of Israelites stand in the place of sin because the sin is rejecting Jesus Christ and the law and the principles of God’s truth.

But what happens on that day is wonderful.

In that day a fountain, ***Maqor*** in Hebrew, comes from a root verb which means to dig out.

It could be a well or a spring or a fountain.

Jeremiah 2:13 and Jeremiah 17:13 use the very same Hebrew word and they talk about the fountain of living waters gushing out.

Psalm 36:9, *For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.*

Something just gushing out of a source.

Now here it is not used as the source of life or the source of refreshment as in those other texts, but as a means of cleansing and purification.

Zechariah 3:4, *Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes."*

A picture of the priestly nation Israel's high priest Joshua was kind of like a symbol of the priestly nation Israel. Zechariah saw in this vision that night when he had all those eight visions, he saw rather Joshua with filthy garments and the angel came and said, "Take away those filthy garments because I am going to cleanse you."

It was a picture of Israel. Same thing we have here. God is going to cleanse Israel of all its filthiness.

The word opened in the Hebrew has with it the idea of continuous permanent opening. This thing, once it's opened, will be perennial. It will be available as a source of perennial purification.

Whenever God opens the fountain of cleansing, it's perennial.

The fountain of cleansing was opened at Calvary. On the cross of Calvary, the fountain was opened. It has been purifying souls ever since. Yet Israel has never been able to enter the purification because of their unbelief and hardness of heart.

But the fountain has been open for a long time to the whole world. But it won't be opened to Israel with a perennial cleansing until Israel comes in repentance.

Once the fountain was opened at Calvary.

1 John 1:7, *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

John says that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, keeps on cleansing us. It's perennial.

Someday that perennial fountain will be opened for Israel, for the house of David, and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. When they come in repentance and that fountain opens on a national basis to them it will be for sin and uncleanness.

The word sin is significant. It means in the Hebrew to miss the mark, to go in the wrong way. It was used in reference to sin against men and sin against God, a very common Old Testament word.

But its root idea is you went wrong down the wrong path, the path of disobedience, indifference, and rebellion. It must do then with what a person does, going away from God, behaving in a manner inconsistent with God's pattern.

The second word, uncleanness, means something that is to be shunned or something you are to flee from.

The word is used with any kind of ceremonial impurity in the book of Leviticus. It has to do with those things that would ceremonially defile somebody like a dead body. So, it has to do with defilement, something to be shunned, something that would bring defilement.

Israel will be cleansed of its own moral defilement and of its tendency to behave and go in the wrong direction.

This is twofold.

Israel's cleansing will have to do with what it is and what it does. Because that is how sin manifests itself. It is a matter of what we are and consequently it is a matter of what we do. This will come as a cleansing from the defilement of sin.

This is the thing that everybody needs. I thank God that there are some who have already entered into the fountain that was opened at Calvary, some Jews.

But all of us need this cleansing because all of us are defiled. We all have that moral defilement in our nature, and we all walk in a way that is wrong, away from God.

Solomon said when he dedicated the temple, he stood up and spoke these words.

1 Kings 8:46, *“When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy, far or near;*

Every person needs cleansing.

Psalm 14:2-3, *The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. ³They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.*

Paul reiterated that text in Romans 3.

The cleansing is needed by everyone, and it is available for anyone who comes with repentance.

How do you get into the cleansing?

By faith.

Zechariah 12:10, *then they will look on Me whom they pierced.*

By looking at the one who was pierced.

By looking at one who was pierced for you on the cross and one who came out the other side of the grave and did it for you, bore your sin and believing in Him and receiving Him as Saviour.

His cleansing is applied to you.

In that future day, Israel is going to experience that as a nation. They are going to come back into the place of covenant relationship with God. Only the blood of Christ can cleanse in that way. It's the only fountain that can do it.

Hebrews 9:13-14, *For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

The blood of Christ can purge. The cleansing of Israel will be from the defilement of sin.

2. From the deception of false prophets. v 2-6,

The two besetting sins of Israel have always been idolatry and false prophecy.

Wherever idolatry existed, it existed as a result of false prophets propagating it.

The false prophecy was really behind the scenes causing idolatry. Phony prophets with speaking lie. Israel was populated by the boat load with false prophets.

King Ahab was the husband of Jezebel. In the apostate age of King Ahab and the time of Jehoshaphat, there were at least **400 false prophets** and only one true prophet. It's kind of like we have in the world today, about 400 to 1 might be a little.

On Mount Carmel, one old prophet, Elijah; 450 prophets of Baal one to 450. The false prophets in the history of Israel have been the thing that dragged Israel down. They slew the true prophets, and they listened to the false.

Why did they do that?

Because the true prophets called for the right behaviour, and they didn't want to do that.

They loved the orgies of the false prophets.

They wanted a religion like the false prophets had told them they could do anything they wanted. It was built on the sensual. They could go up to the temple and have a sex orgy with the priestesses.

That kind of religion was big thing.

The false prophets drew the people into idolatry and God has always remembered this and God knows, too, that in the end time Israel is going to fall again to false prophets, the number one false prophet is Antichrist.

The number two is his coworker, the false prophet, that we read about in Revelation 13. They are going to fall in the end time.

But when Christ returns and He cleanses Israel from the defilement of sin, He is also going to cleanse them from the deception of all these sham prophets.

V 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.*

Whenever God wants to talk about conquering, He calls Himself the Lord of armies.

What is behind a false prophecy?

Some spirit.

What kind?

An unclean spirit.

All the gods of the nations are demons, says the Old Testament. Behind every false prophet is an unclean spirit, either mediately or immediately. The spirit of uncleanness causes the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness.

When salvation comes, God brings the Spirit of grace and salvation.

But when false prophets come, it is the spirit of uncleanness. The spirit of uncleanness is a reference to the agency of demons and Satan himself who are behind it.

1 Corinthians 10:20, *Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.*

When you go to a pagan religion you are fellowshiping with demons because they are behind it. Any other religion but the true one is an act of worshiping a demon.

All false teachers and all false prophets and all false systems everywhere are all the handiwork of demon spirits, the agency of uncleanness that is spawned by Satan himself.

1 Timothy 4:1, *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,*

Demons are the ones who invent false religions.

God says in that day I will cut off the idols. I will cause the prophets, the sham prophets, and the unclean, or the spirit of uncleanness behind them, to pass out of the land.

In other words, God is going to clean up the whole place. All the false prophets are going to get it. There won't be any of them

in the kingdom or in eternity. The unclean spirits are going to be cast aside.

In **Revelation 20** we find that the most unclean spirit, Satan himself, is going to be bound with chains for the period of time of the duration of the kingdom and then cast into the lake of fire.

When Christ returns and redeems Israel and sets up His kingdom, they will be no demons in action in the kingdom.

Will there be any sin?

Sure, because all sin isn't spawned by demons, some of it will come from human nature of people still alive when the kingdom begins even though they are godly people.

They will commit sin because they are still in the human bodies, and they will have children. Some of whom will not believe and will constitute even a rebellion at the end of the **1000-year** kingdom.

The spirit of uncleanness then is a collective name for the wicked spirits that energize false prophets. They are unclean because they drive their victims into sexual and other impurities. They are unclean because they defile with false religious systems.

I thought Israel was cleansed of demons.

I thought after the captivity they didn't get into false religion.
I thought they didn't have any more idolatry.

In a sense it is true. Ever since the Babylonian captivity, Israel has never gone into idolatry as they knew it in the past, worshiping false images. But they have their own kind of idolatry.

In the end time they are going to have more of that stuff than they ever had in the past.

Matthew 12:43-45, *“When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. ⁴⁴Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. ⁴⁵Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.”*

There was a time in the Babylonian captivity when God came along and God chased that demon out of you and God cleaned up that demon of idolatry, that spirit of uncleanness.

But the day is going to come, because of your rebellion and because of your antichrist attitude, when he comes back with seven of his friends and it's going to be worse than it was in the beginning.

Israel has not yet seen the terror of judgment that they are going to see in the tribulation. They have never seen anything like it yet. Worse than anything in Germany, or anything they have ever endured at the hands of the Arabs, the battle of Armageddon. When the demons come back seven times worse than they were there the first time.

They are going to hook up with false systems.
They are going to buy the line of Antichrist.

Demon infestation is going to come. But then it says in Zechariah that the Lord is going to come, and He is going to clean that all out. They won't even remember it. All the demons are going to be exterminated.

V 3, *It shall come to pass that if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who begot him 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.

After this cleansing is done, anybody who tries to prophesy as a false prophet then his father and his mother who begot him the closest relationship.

Naturally speaking, people couldn't be anymore close than a father and a mother and a child. But when somebody

prophesies, his father and mother who begot him will say to him that you will not live.

We are going to kill you, son.

“For you speak lies in the name of the LORD.”

You say that you are a prophet of God, and you are a liar.

They will stab him to death. You shall not live.

They will stab him till he dies.

A mother and a father will do that to their child, because they will have such a hatred of false prophecy. Because of the hatred of false prophecy will overrule normal human feelings.

They will be the first to condemn the apostate to death. This is what was done in the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 13:6-11, *“If your brother, the son of your mother, your son or your daughter, the wife of your bosom, or your friend who is as your own soul, secretly entices you, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods,’ which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers,⁷ of the gods of the people which are all around you, near to you or far off from you, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth,⁸ you shall not consent to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him;⁹ but you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and*

afterward the hand of all the people. ¹⁰ And you shall stone him with stones until he dies, because he sought to entice you away from the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. ¹¹ So all Israel shall hear and fear, and not again do such wickedness as this among you.

A false prophet was to be killed.

When Israel comes to repentance and salvation, Israel will be obedient.

By chance if a false prophet does arise, they will take the life of that false prophet, even though it be their own child.

V 4, *“And it shall be in that day that every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies; they will not wear a robe of coarse hair to deceive.*

When this all happens, and God begins to destroy this whole thing. Anybody who is a prophet is going to become so ashamed that he doesn't want to be known as a prophet.

He will no longer wear a rough garment.

The rough garment was the sign of a prophet.

That basically came from the days of Elijah. Elijah wore a rough garment, a mantle. The literal Hebrew says a hairy garment. This could mean that it was a goatskin kind of a leather thing

with the hair on it. It probably means that it was woven out of camel's hair, which was what they did.

We still have camel's hair clothes today. That would be woven from camel's hair. This mantle became the clerical garb of the prophet in that day. If you wore that, you were signifying that you were a prophet.

He is saying here that prophets themselves won't even want to be identified as such because they will be so fearful, because they will see what's going to happen. They will deny that they are even prophets. They will disclaim any association whatsoever with prophecy because they see what's happening.

Micah 3:7, *So the seers shall be ashamed, And the diviners abashed; Indeed they shall all cover their lips; For there is no answer from God."*

They don't want to say anything.

They don't want anybody to know they claimed to be prophets. They don't want anything to do with that, because they see the consequence when God begins to cleanse Israel from the deception of sham prophets.

They do not wear rough garments to deceive.

Why do they wear that prophetic garment?

To make people think they are real prophets.

There are people today who wear clerical garb to make people think they are really from God. But they are not.

They deceive with it. They are not from God.

We have them today. People with all kinds of religious regalia all over them, but they are not from God.

They use the garb of the prophet to deceive but they are going to junk that garb in that day when God starts raining on the false prophets.

V 5, *But he will say, 'I am no prophet, I am a farmer; for a man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.'*

They will say that I am not a prophet but a farmer. I worked on a farm all my life. For man taught me to keep cattle from my youth, you must have another person in mind. I have been a farmer all my time and all I ever know is the cattle. Just an old farmer.

They are going to denounce it. You must have me confused with somebody else. I am just a farmer. I have never been anything else since I was just a kid.

V 6, *And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'*

One will ask them, what are the wounds in your hand?

Then he shall answer to them that those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

Deuteronomy 14:1-2, *“You are the children of the Lord your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave the front of your head for the dead. ²For you are a holy people to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.*

Is it a sin to get your paring knife caught on your finger?

No!

Do you know one thing the pagans did?

They cut themselves.

Remember the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel?

What did they do?

They cut themselves.

1 Kings 18:28, *So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them.*

It was their manner to do that because that was a part of pagan worship.

This was part of pagan ecstasy.

nor shave the front of your head for the dead.

They had a ritual where somehow in praying for the dead they shaved themselves bald. Don't do that.

Jeremiah 16:6, *Both the great and the small shall die in this land. They shall not be buried; neither shall men lament for them, cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them.*

The custom of the pagans was to cut themselves and then this crazy custom where they made themselves bald over the dead.

Zechariah saying that it was a custom among the pagans to cut themselves.

Why are you all cut up then?

What are these wounds between your hands?

Most people have determined that what that means is between the hands is here and so it's in the torso.

Some have stated anywhere on the arms or across the torso would be where these pagans would cut, or it could mean in the hand. But pagans cut themselves in their religion.

If you are not a false prophet, why are you all cut up?

These are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my lovers, **Aheb** in Hebrew, lovers literally.

What are lovers?

The lovers are the idols that he loved.

These are the wounds of my idolatry.

He can't escape it. He must admit it. I was wounded in the house of my lovers. I was wounded in idolatry. There is no alibi.

There is no way out when God begins to deal with the sham prophets in the day of Israel's cleansing. So, Israel will be cleansed from the defilement of sin and the deception of sham prophets.

3. Israel will be cleansed through the death of the Shepherd.

Israel will be saved not from something but through something.

V 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.

From the false shepherds wounded in the idol houses, the Spirit of God turns to the true Shepherd. He is just as much a part of Israel's cleansing as anything. He is the sine qua non. He is the absolute necessity.

They can't be cleansed from the defilement of sin.

They can't be cleansed from the deception of sham prophets, unless they are cleansed through the death of the Shepherd.

The Lord Jehovah is the speaker, and Jesus Christ is the one spoken of.

God says, "*Awake, O sword.*"

- ✓ God is going to move in judgment.
- ✓ God is unsheathing His sword.
- ✓ God is going to smite the Shepherd.

The death of Jesus Christ was the plan of God.

Did you see that there?

Who calls the sword?

God does.

V 7, "*Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion,*"

God called for the death of Jesus Christ.

God did.

Jewish people have for years wanted to make sure nobody blamed them for the death of Christ. I don't know why.

God even takes the responsibility Himself right here.

The envy, the hatred of Satan, the blind fury of the chief priests, the contempt of Herod, the guilty cowardice of Pilate, all these things put together only accomplished what God had designed to do from the very beginning before the foundation of the world. He was the lamb slain.

God did it.

The word “O sword.” The sword is in action. This is a figure of the death of Christ. The word awake shows as if the sword has been sleeping. It’s as if it’s been set aside.

Isaiah 53:10, *Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.*

It was God who took out the sword.

It was God who struck it at Calvary. The cry comes from God, *“Strike the Shepherd.”*

Once weeping Jeremiah called to the sword of the Lord. He called the sword of the Lord. The sword is kind of like a vivid symbol.

Jeremiah 47:6, *“O you sword of the Lord, How long until you are quiet? Put yourself up into your scabbard, Rest and be still!”*

Jeremiah had seen enough of the sword. But in this case, God pulls the sword out to be used against His own beloved Son.

“Against My Shepherd”

My Shepherd.

We are not talking about false prophets anymore.

False prophets aren't His shepherds. His Shepherd was Jesus Christ. Take the sword against My Shepherd. He is speaking of His possession.

“Against the man, My fellow.”

The word man here is an uncommon word for man in the Hebrew. It doesn't just mean man, it means a strong man or a mighty man.

Not talking about an ordinary man.

He says, “Take the sword against the strong man/the mighty man. Then the phrase My fellow is literally of My union. Take the sword against the strong, mighty man of My union.

What does it mean by my union?

The Hebrew could be translated this way, the mighty man who is coequal with Me.

The man, the mighty man who is My equal.

The man, the mighty man associated with Me in equal status.

That is what the Hebrew really means.

What a fantastic statement about the deity of Jesus Christ.

Take the sword against My Shepherd, the mighty man, My equal. My equal.

This is a prophecy of the wonderful statement that Jesus fulfilled when He said, *"I and the Father are one."*

The mighty man, My equal. Listen, Jesus is God. He is God.

How else can you have Him be Micah's baby born in Bethlehem and Isaiah's the Father of eternity?

Unless He is God.

Jeremiah calls Him Jehovah Tsidkenu,

Jeremiah 23:6, *In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

He is the man who is equal to God. He is Jehovah Tsidkenu. He is God. Israel, to be cleansed, must have a sacrifice for sin. The Shepherd must be smitten.

Zechariah shows Israel's cleansing from the defilement of sin, from the deception of false prophets, and through the death of the Shepherd.

4. Israel will be from the scattering of the sheep.

Israel has been scattered all over, but they are going to be saved even from that.

V 7, And the sheep will be scattered; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.

Israel's going to have to be brought back because they were scattered.

On the night in which Jesus was betrayed He spoke these words.

Matthew 26:31, *Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'*

Jesus quoted **Zechariah 13:7**.

When Jesus died the first that were scattered was His disciples.

But it was far beyond that that He spoke because a few years later in **70 A.D.** when Titus came in and conquered Israel, the whole nation of Israel was scattered.

They were leaderless.

They were confounded.

They were confused.
They had spurned the Messiah.
They had no direction.
They were scattered all over the world.

When God cleanses Israel, it's going to be a cleansing from the dispersion of the sheep. They are going to be all brought back.

We live in a time when we can begin to see this happen. It is an exciting, fantastic thing to realize. We see them coming back even now. The verb to scatter here means to break in pieces, literally disintegrate them all over the world.

It happened in 70 A.D., and they have just come back and reconstituted their nation. They are beginning to come to their land in preparation for the final regathering. They will be cleansed from dispersion.

V 7, *Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.*

Who are the little ones?

The little ones are the believing remnants of this age and of the church age.

There were some Jews that turned to Christ. Some of them were apostles and some of them were in that early church in Jerusalem.

By the time we come to Acts chapter 5 we have at least 20,000 of them. They are still Jews today who are saved.

From the very beginning there were some little ones. They are the same as the poor of the flock in chapter 11:7. They are the believing remnants.

While the whole thing is scattered and they are all scattered it says God is going to put His hand, turn His hand on the little ones.

That phrase turns His hand upon is uniformly, without exception, used in the Old Testament to refer to chastening and judgment.

What happened to the early church?

What was the first thing that happened to them once they got grounded?

Acts 8:1, Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

What was the characteristic of the early church?

Persecution.

God says even the little ones are going to be persecuted.

The idea of placing His hand on them is uniformly used.
In **Amos 1:8; Psalm 81:15; Isaiah 1:25 and Ezekiel 38:12.**

All those above passages uniformly are used to speak of chastening. God then is going to scatter the whole flock of Israel and even the little ones.

Even the poor of the flock, the believing remnant, they are going to hit the persecution.

John 15 Just after Jesus had made such wonderful promises to His flock and told them that He would do so many wonderful things for them.

He would cause them to bear fruit.

He would give them His Spirit.

He would give them His peace and all this.

John 15:18-20, *“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 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. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.*

John 16:2, *They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.*

The little ones were persecuted.

The message is simple. The Shepherd's going to die. When the Shepherd dies for the sins of His people, they will be scattered because of their rejection.

Even the little ones, the Lord will allow them to go through suffering and persecution that the church at its birth might be pure. Then in the day of cleansing, God's going to gather all that scattered group right back. We see that they will be cleansed from the defilement, from the deception, from the dispersion all through the death of the Saviour.

5. Cleansed from the devastation of slaughter.

V 8-9, *And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the Lord, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: ⁹I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.'* "

In the battle of Armageddon, we studied in chapter 12, there is going to be a terrible slaughter. Zechariah says that that

slaughter is going to take the lives of two out of every three in Israel.

Some do not take that literally.

Most of those people in the Armageddon battle are going to die. A third are going to remain. This is the indestructible third, the holy seed.

Can't destroy Israel.

They have a holy seed. The Old Testament says that. They are indestructible. There is an attempt by the Antichrist and the armies of the world to wipe the whole nation out.

But they are only able to wipe out some of them. Two thirds will die and one third is left and they will be purified and refined like silver and like gold.

Who are these thirds?

Identical with those in **Zechariah 12:10** who look on Christ at His return.

Two thirds of the people are killed. They are not even there when Christ comes back. Christ returns, the one third or however many it is, those remaining, that remnant remaining are going to see Christ.

- They are going to repent.
- They are going to mourn.

- They are going to weep.
- They are going to look on Him who was pierced.
- They are going to be saved.

They make up for that third.

Some of them might be 144,000.

- They are survivors.
- They are pure.
- The people whose hearts were prepared.
- They are the third who enter the kingdom in their physical bodies to populate the earthly kingdom. They will be refined.
- They are going to go through a refining process you can't believe.

When it says they are going to be tested by fire.

There is going to be such trial in the time of the tribulation, there is nothing in history that can even come close to it.

Matthew 24:21-22, *For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.*

Such incredible fire and persecution and slaughter.

They are going to be refined, leaving only the precious silver, only the precious gold, all the other rebels purging out.

Little final third is going to be the remnant of Israel that inherits the kingdom.

The whole population of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So, cleansing from defilement, cleansing from deception, cleansing from dispersion, cleansing from devastation, all through the death of the Shepherd.

6. Cleansed through the decision of the souls.

V 9, *They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.'*

This will never happen as a sovereign act of God until there is a decision of the souls of the hearts of Israel. It will never happen until they shall call on My name.

God does not sovereignly redeem apart from faith.

The people that were ***Lo-ammi*** in **Hosea**, not My people, become ***ammi***, My people.

From the midst of the fire, they see Jesus Christ and they call upon Him and He looks and says, *"I will hear them and I will say, 'He is My people,' and they will say, 'He is my Lord.'"*

The decision of the soul consummates it.

Isaiah 35:10, *And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, And come to Zion with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

- ✓ God is a God of forgiveness.
- ✓ God will forgive His people Israel even though they were a part of those that killed His Son.
- ✓ God will forgive you because that's His nature.

Who is a pardoning God like that?

Do you know any other God on the face of this earth who pardons and forgives those who kill Him?

No other God, so pardoning.

Because we are the sinners, we cannot tolerate a God less than that because only He can take away our sin. The fountain is open for you. No need to wait.

Some people of Israel may wait too long.

They may be in the slaughter of Armageddon and never get to the fountain that's opened at the end.

Please don't wait any longer.