



Fountain

We are now in the final unit of the book of Zechariah (chapters 9-14). Just as chapter 9 through 11 form a single unit (a "burden of the word of the Lord"), chapters 12 through 14 also form a single unit presenting another burden. Chapter 12 flows seamlessly into chapter 13. As we saw last week, chapter 12 ends with a prophecy about a future revival for Israel as they contemplate their role in the crucifixion of Messiah and mourn over their sin. I suggested this prophecy is about the future fulfillment of the Day of Atonement (or Yom Kippur) for Israel when their sins will be removed. Chapter 13 continues the theme of this future revival and removal of sin. Zechariah says a fountain will be opened to wash away sins. One may object that the fountain was open in the first century at Calvary and that is true. But at that time the Jewish nation characteristically rejected Jesus as the Christ. That will change in the future. Thus we can say that the fountain was opened "potentially" in the first century but will be opened "experientially" during the Day of the Lord as revival comes.

1. **The Fountain Opened (13:1):** Note the time-marker "in that day," a phrase we saw in 12:3, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 11. This is shorthand for "the day of the Lord" and refers to a future time when Messiah returns, bringing judgment to Israel's enemies and blessings to Israel (see, e.g., Daniel 9:24-27, 12:1-7; Joel 3:1-3, 9-21; Zephaniah 3:6-17; Haggai 2:20-23). The phrase "in that day" occurs 20 times in Zechariah. This verse continues the prophecy of a future national revival introduced in Zechariah 12:10-14.

- On the idea cleansing by water see Ezekiel 36:25
- The fountain opened in the first century but will be experienced (by faith) by Israel at this future time
- This future event is associated with the fulfillment of the New Covenant with Israel (Jer. 31:33-34; Rom. 11:25-27)

2. **The Cleansing of the Land (13:2-3):** In connect with the opening of the fountain, God will remove idolatry, false prophets, and demonic influences from the land. Again, this is a time of New Covenant fulfillment when God's people will be righteous (Jer. 31:33). These verses refer to what Zechariah saw symbolically in his visions in chapter 5.

- What is a false prophet/teacher? (See Ezek. 13)
- Because of the radical change in God's people that turn to Christ, they will call out the false prophets even if it is their own children (see Deuteronomy 13:1-5)

3. **False Prophets on the Run (13:4-6):** The false prophets will attempt to evade execution for their deeds.

4. **Strike the Good Shepherd (13:7):** The prophet returns to the shepherd motif seen in 9:16, 10:2-3 and 11:4-17. Recall in chapter 11 the Good Shepherd was valued at 30 pieces of silver. Here, God will permit the shepherd to die a violent death, the flock (Israel) to be scattered, and God will refine the "little ones" (this is the faithful remnant, the "poor of the flock" of 11:11). Jesus noted the fulfillment of this passage (Matt. 26:31, Mark 14:27)

- Just as the false shepherds will be slain by their fathers for turning people away from God, the true shepherd will be slain by His Father to turn people to God

5. **Refining a Remnant (13:8-9):** The text reverts back to the future day of the Lord. At that time 2/3 of Israel will perish but 1/3 will live and be refined. (Compare Ezek. 5:1-12) This future remnant will call out to God in faith in their New Covenant relationship. They will be delivered. (Romans 10:13)