

The Cross and Truth and Trials

Zechariah

Sermon 15

Zechariah 13:1 – 9

Nutshell: The **Cross** is God's ultimate truth. It speaks the **truth** about us and the truth about Him. Therefore, the Cross must ultimately purge out all lies, lying, and liars. But those whom the Cross cradles must find its truth through at a **cost**, joining God in the cost He paid for it.

Review: God told them to turn, 1:3. They turned, 1:6b. That was enough for God to lay out the coming New Covenant to be established by the Christ.

Jesus (the "Man") **reconnoitered** the world, 1:8-11, asking the Father for pity on Jerusalem, 1:12.

God laid out His dual *jealousy* for His people and *anger* towards those who hurt them, 1:14-15. *This dual theme is continually repeated.*

God's **Undo 1**: the four builders (ch 1)

God's **Redo 1**: Jesus measuring for an expanded Jerusalem (ch 2)

God's **Prerequisite Redo**: cleansing the presently unclean priesthood (ch 3). Tied to it was the **Prerequisite Redo** of the Spirit's empowerment, 4:6.

God's **Undo 2**: ridding His land of liars (ch 5)

The **reconnoitering** was completed, 6:1-8. The real answer would be Jesus Himself, 6:12-13.

Redo How-to: Avoiding what led their fathers into Babylon (ch 7-8)

God's **Undo 3**: Lands on Israel's borders judged. Christ's offered peace terms are prophesied (ch 9)

God's **Redo 2**. Judah and Israel are to be reunited and victorious against oppressors (ch 10)

God's **Undo 4**. Like **Undo 2**, exposing His people's betrayal (ch 11). The queries in ch 7-8 answered.

God's **Redo 3**. Judah and Jerusalem will be united in repentance by the pouring of the Spirit (ch 12)

God's **Redo 4**. All God's people washed, 13:1.

God's **Undo 4**. Idols and false prophets therefore evicted, 13:2-6.

God's **Undo 5** and **Redo 5**. The Cross offends 2/3. 1/3 enter the trials of the Cross.

Vision Outline: Chaps. 1 – 6. 8 Visions.

A chiastic outline: Initial points (Vis. 1-3) leading to a Focal point (Vis. 4 & 5), then mirroring the initial points in the latter half (Vis. 6-8) of the outline. Link Vision 1&8, 2&7, 3&6, 4&5.

Vision 1, 1:7-17. Vis 2, 1:18-21. Vis 3, 2:1-13. Vis 4, 3:1-10. Vis 5, 4:1-14. Vis 6, 5:1-4. Vis 7, 5:5-11. Vis 8, 6:1-8.

Vis 2 & 3, God to judge the pagans; Vis 6 & 7, now His people. Vis 8 brings real rest from wrong rest (Vis 1).

Vision 1: The Son's HORSEMEN: the pagans **rest** smugly. God: I'll be with Israel and judge/convert the pagans.

Vision 2: God sends 4 builders to **BRING DOWN** the 4 **PAGAN** horns that scatter God's people.

Vision 3: The Son **goes out** to **measure** Jerusalem for her coming expansion. Pagans to be judged.

Vision 4: Priest Joshua clothed: justification. Satan rebuked. Zechariah appointed; Messiah promised.

Vision 5: Olive-fed Menorah: sanctification. Spirit-filled Zerubbabel to overcome pagan 'mountains'.

Vision 6: A flying scroll **goes out** as a '**measure**' of the ungodly in Israel.

Vision 7: ~~COUNTERFEIT BRIDE~~ measured (ephah), **THROWN DOWN**, sealed over, bridesmaid-flown to native Shinar.

Vision 8: The Son's HORSEMEN go forth to give God's Spirit **rest** (judge or convert (2:11) the pagans).

Note God's equal judging activity between the pagans and His people: Vis 2 & 7, Vis 3 & 6. 1 Peter 1:17.

Kid-speak: We're trying to listen to God's voice from *which* book of the Bible today? Zechariah.

Review (cont.):

Chap 6:9-15, Make crowns for the High Priest, since Messiah (Shoot) will be the original Priest-King.

Chap 7, Q & A: "Has your fasting been for Me? Or, as your fathers, *have you ignored justice & mercy?*"

Chap 8, "The Big Shift- I'll dwell with you → pleasantness. Many will join. *But are you neighborly?*"

Chap 9, "I'll send Alexander as a type of Messiah, who will come humbly, His victory in the Cross."

Chap 9 is a large version of the "Then you'll know" prophecies of 2:9, 4:9, and 6:15.

Chap 10, As surely as Alexander will come, God will reunite Judah and Ephraim vs. their foes.

Chap 11, Zechariah plays a good shepherd, but the people only value him at a slave's death price, 30 silver shekels. Zechariah breaks his staves representing their unity. Zechariah then plays a bad shepherd, because that's all they deserve. Therefore (11:1-4), judgment comes.

Chap 12, God will send the nations against Jerusalem in order to destroy those nations. Judah, Jerusalem, and the house of David will finally be united in heart. They'll finally see the Messiah they crucified. They'll mourn broadly and individually.

- I. "Strike the Shepherd," Zech 13:7. Quoted by Jesus, Matt 26:31; Mk14:27.
 - A. Fulfilled in His disciples abandoning Him to the cross.
 - B. The principle of the scattering effect of the Cross is seen in its *general* offense, 1 Cor 1:23.
 1. Jesus had to bear the Cross alone
 2. Because it is *our* reproach that had to become *His* reproach, Ps 69:9.
 - C. But it is ultimately the Cross that gathers God's wandering sheep back to Him, Jn 10:11.

Kid-speak: Zechariah says "Hit the Shepherd." Who was the Shepherd who got hit? Jesus! Where did He get hit that way? The Cross!

II. The Cross in Zechariah

- A. Zech 3:9, 'I will engrave the engraving on the omniscient Stone, removing the land's sin in one day.'
 1. Its effect: peace and fellowship, Zech 3:10.
 2. The further effect of its 7 eyes (omniscience): God searching out the earth through Christian worship, 4:10. (In the Lord's Table we "strongly declare" Christ's death until He comes.)
- B. Messiah must enter the Temple as the Priest and Sacrifice to obtain the crown waiting there, 6:11-12.
- C. 9:11, The blood of their Covenant.
- D. 11:13, The Shepherd valued at 30 silver shekels.
- E. 12:10, Me whom they pierced.
- F. 13:7, Strike the Shepherd.
- G. Observation: the clearest portrayals of the Cross are the last two.
 1. God's activity clearly seen in this last one: *Him* calling for the Cross.

2. The further the ‘story’ of Zechariah goes, the more involved the details; yet the Cross becomes clearer.

Kid-speak: Is chapter 13 the first time we see the Cross in Zechariah? No! Several times before that.

III. Structure of the Chapter (One of the easier chapters)

A. Two main parts

1. 13:1-6 shows us the **cleansing** (from the “piercing” of 12:10) and its effect.
2. 13:7-9 displays the **Cross** and both those whom it offends *and* embraces.

B. Two theme statements and their effects

1. Theme: 13:1, the fountain of cleansing opened;
Effect: 13:2-6, how the cleansing roots out falsehood (idolatry and false teaching).
2. Theme: 13:6, the Cross and its general effect: scattering and regathering.
Effect: 2/3 removed. 1/3 received and refined.

C. Jesus knew this, the character of the Cross to which He went.

1. He knew the nature of man (falsehood, rejection of Grace).
2. He knew the nature of Grace (overcoming falsehood and rejection).
3. The nature of the Cross: to divide mankind into two groups.

Kid-speak: What does Zechariah say both gets rid of lying and brings God’s people to Him? The Cross!

IV. The Chapter

A. God continues to speak of a coming time in history, “in that day,” 13:1-6

1. Chapter 12 and 14 are the co-most with this phrase.
2. A fountain will be opened “in that day,” 13:1
 - a. (None of the four keys words (fountain, open, sin, seclusion) occur together elsewhere
 - b. Except “sin” and “seclusion” in Num 19:9)
3. The fountain from the “piercing” of 12:10
 - a. For the same groups in chap 12- Jerusalem and the house of David
 - b. We assume it extends outside Jerusalem to the whole region of Judah, whom God will save first, 12:7.
4. Cleansing from:
 - a. Sin- actual separation from God.
 - b. Seclusion- a word used mainly for the ceremonial separation women practiced from bodily emissions, including those of childbirth, Lev 12, 15.
 - i. But also of the ash-water mixture of the red heifer of Num 19
 - ii. Spoken of more broadly in Ezra 9:11

- c. By putting sin and seclusion together, God shows the teaching character of the ceremonial law. The seclusion was a *picture* of *real* seclusion from God. A definition of sin.

Kid-speak: In the Cross, God opened up a big bath where we can get washed from what? Sin.

B. The effect of the cleansing would be **removal** of two connected things, 13:2-6

1. **Idols**, 13:2

- a. Even the names given to the idols would fade from memory.
- b. But *we* still have to deal with them *every day*.
- c. Even the idols that claimed us before and would claim us again *every day*, 1 Jn 5:21

2. **False prophets** and the spirit/ spirits who motivated them, 13:3-6

- a. Indicating that false teaching is more likely spirit-led than mere lack of proper teaching, 13:3
- b. A removal such that parents would finally obey the law about false prophet children, Deut 13:6-11
- c. The choice is between putting ‘the dead’ to death or letting the death spread to others.
- d. A removal such that false prophets would take *themselves* out of circulation, 13:4-6
 - i. Keeping their revelations to themselves
 - ii. Putting away the trappings of prophets
 - iii. Claiming other lines of work and ancestry, 13:5
 - iv. Claiming that self-inflicted religious scars were from brothels, 13:6
- e. *This* is not such a day, eh? More like a false prophet heyday!

Kid-speak: What’s one thing the Cross will get rid of one day? People who lie and say, “God told me to tell you this,” when God really didn’t.

C. God calls for the Cross, 13:7

1. Against the Shepherd He Himself had chosen to lead His people
 - a. A blow, a striking.
 - b. Punishment *from* the Just (*upon* the Just, *for* the unjust, 1 Pet 3:18).
2. Against the “Champion,”
3. who is His “Fellow,” His “Familiar.”
 - a. Understatement of understatements!
 - b. “My Father and I are one.”
4. Christ must face this utterly alone. “The sheep must be scattered.”
 - a. For none of the Apostles had aid to give in His redemptive work.
 - b. Their sins were being paid for as well.
 - c. But the immediate effect: REgathering the diminished ones, starting with the Apostles.

Kid-speak: Who would God the Father punish on the Cross? His Son.

D. The exact proportions of that day, 13:8-9

1. 2/3 cut off. Their preference of personal righteousness makes the Cross odious.
2. 1/3 would adopt a preference for Christ's righteousness.
3. The 1/3 would be refined in fiery trials, 1 Pet 1:6-7; 4:12.
4. The spirit of pride will fill the Father, "You for whom My Son was stricken!"
5. The spirit of adoption will fill them: "Daddy!" Rom 8.

Kid-speak: What does the Cross do to the whole world? Divides it up into two groups: the ones who don't think they need the Cross and those who do.

V. What's God Telling Us Here?

- A. The Cross is at the center of God's workings for all time.
- B. The Cross's cleansing means getting rid of lies and liars.
 1. When falsehood is rampant, the Cross is therefore minimalized.
 2. When we magnify the Cross, we bump up against false spirits. They tell us we're rude and presumptuous.
- C. Jesus alone is THE hero of history. He takes the hit.
- D. Most people won't like the Cross.
- E. Finding God in the Cross signs us up for afflictions.
 1. Otherwise, how would we ourselves know what the Cross means to us?
 2. If we give up nothing, it's worth nothing.
 3. But the giving up is total.
- F. Fellowship with God is the final end.
 1. Is that, after all, what we want?
 2. Sometimes, it's hard to love God- just because *we* run dry.
 3. Here (and passages like it) is a good place to camel back up.

Kid-speak: The Cross makes it where we can know God and spend time with Him. But do we even want to spend time and talk to God?

VI. What Does God Want Us to Do About It?

- A. Stay at the center. Stay at the Cross.
 1. Connect the Col 2:20 "If..." (describing 2:11-15) to the Col 3:1-2 "If..."
 - a. The second "If" because of the *reality* described in 3:3-4
 - b. Prompting the *necessity* (ought) of 3:5-10
 2. Praise God for the Cross.
 - a. In prayer.
 - b. In song.
 - c. In corporate worship.
 - d. By living as described in VI. A. 1. above.

- B. Stay with Christ.
 - 1. Think on Him.
 - 2. Thank Him.
 - 3. Talk to Him.
 - 4. Emulate Him. Love like He does.
- C. “Don’t be surprised at the fiery trials.”
 - 1. C’mon, get used to it. (Not the daily renewed pain, but the knowledge that it’s here to stay.)
 - 2. Have a response. “Falling apart, but each part still belongs to Christ.”
 - 3. Remember why we need trials.
 - a. Fellowship with Christ.
 - b. Exposing sinfulness and sins.

Wrap-up: The Cross, the Truth, and the Trials.

The Cross frees our mouths and hearts from **lying**. The message of the Cross, therefore, rubs people (undelivered liars) wrong at a core (pretty invisible) level.

Oh, for the day when lying ceases! (What an unseen weight lies impose/inflict!)

But **lying** can cease from our midst- meaning continuing to discover and oust liars. Good worship does most of that.

The Cross takes our misery and pain but replaces them with the kind of aggravation Jesus felt in fighting temptation AND confronting **lies**.

How grieved and quenched might the Spirit be at our loathing to divide from professing believers where *He* makes the division?