

# OpenTheo

## Zechariah 12 - 13



### Zechariah - Steve Gregg

Zechariah 12-13, often studied piecemeal, are co-extensive prophecies that talk about the protection of Israel during the time when nations of the world would attack them. The prophecy refers to a time after the Romans conquered and scattered the Jews, a point where they were no longer able to remove Jerusalem. The prophecy ends in chapter 13 with the purification trials of the people, purging of the priesthood, and the statement that "This people" will say "The Lord God". These prophecies are relevant to understand several aspects of the New Testament, especially with regard to purifying the sons of Levi and creating a new priesthood.

### Transcript

Alright, today we are looking at Zechariah chapter 12 and we come to the final stretch of the book. Although we will not finish the book in this session, we will need at least two sessions to cover these three chapters. Chapters 12-14 are a single prophecy just as chapters 9-11 were.

And just as chapters 9-11 began with the words, the burden of the word of the Lord, so does this three chapters begin with the expression, the burden of the word of the Lord. However, whereas in chapter 9 it said the burden of the word of the Lord against Hadrach, which was a Syrian region that came under Alexander's power when it was conquered. And so it was the burden of the word of the Lord against someone is about the judgment of them.

So this one, this prophecy ends up being about the burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. And I'm going to suggest that this prophecy by the time it ends is talking about the end of Israel. It begins, however, very positively toward Israel.

God again defending Israel. Now the assumption of many as they study this section of Zechariah is that we're talking about the end of the world. It's a very popular thing to apply many of the parts of this section to the second coming of Christ or to the events just before and just after.

For example, chapter 14 is thought to be about the second coming of Christ,

Armageddon and the millennium. And so also many of the aspects of chapters 12 and 13 are thought to be. But this is only due to the fact that people when they study Zechariah often take it piecemeal.

They find a verse here or a verse there, a description or an image here that strikes them as being apocalyptic, eschatological, end of the world-ish. And so they figure this is a section that must be talking about such things as that. Where, in fact, the prophecy is a running prophecy discussing events that follow one another in a sequence.

And right in the middle of them, we have this verse, chapter 13, verse 7, which is almost exactly in the middle of the of this particular prophecy, which has a Waco 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. Now, Jesus, when he was speaking to his disciples in the upper room, he said, all of you will be offended of me this night that it might be fulfilled.

Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. Well, this is obviously referring to Jesus being arrested and his disciples scattering and running from him. That's what he said it was.

And he quoted this verse. This verse was fulfilled that night. Therefore, it strongly discourages us from looking at this section as being about the second coming of Christ.

The time frame would seem to be the first coming of Christ. And this is not the only indicator. There will be others that we discover here.

And therefore, we're not looking at the end of the world. But once again, at the time when God came and fulfilled prophecy through the Messiah, which was 2000 years ago now, although events subsequent to that are also, I think, involved, especially in chapter 14. That is to say, what the Messiah accomplished in his death and resurrection wasn't just for a moment in time.

It's for all time. And therefore, the effects of it continue to this day. And some of the things we'll read about here refer to those effects.

But as far as the events referred to, I am persuaded that none of the events in chapters 12 through 14 are related to the second coming of Christ. And in that, I take an unusual position, not a unique one. There are others who agree, but it is not the majority view.

The majority view is dispensationalism, and this section of Zechariah in dispensationalism is regarded as belonging to the end times. I'm going to suggest that Zechariah 12 begins overlapping material in the previous three-chapter prophecy, which is chapters 9 through 11, and it runs up to the same point and maybe a little beyond. These two prophecies are sort of coextensive, not exactly to the date, but for the most part, the same time period is in chapters 9 through 11, as is covered in chapters 12

through 14.

The difference being that in 12 through 14, the emphasis, as verse 1 of chapter 12 suggests, is going to be on the judgment on Israel. Now, before God judges Israel, He's going to give them a chance to repent. He's going to send the Messiah.

He's going to pour out His Spirit on them. But because they, for the most part, do not respond as they should to this opportunity, there will be a disaster which brings an end to Israel. And that's what I believe we're talking about here.

Now, as we saw in chapter 9, after Alexander's conquests were discussed, and Jesus' salvation also, which was glimpsed, it talked about the Maccabean War. And I believe that in chapter 12, verses 1 through 9, we're going to be reading about that same general period. A period where Israel's enemies are trying to remove Israel, trying to remove Jerusalem, trying to unseat them, trying to destroy their distinctiveness, defiling the Temple.

Antiochus Epiphanes actually forbade the Jews from possessing copies of the Torah, from circumcising their sons, from observing Sabbath or Passover. In other words, he was trying to absolutely wipe out Israel as a people of the covenant of God. However, these verses talk about how God will protect Israel during this time.

And, of course, chapter 9 said the same thing. Yet, at the end of chapter 11, we saw that God was, because they rejected Jesus as their shepherd, God would give them over to a cruel shepherd who would tear them to pieces. And that was, of course, Rome.

So, even the previous section, though early on talked about God's deliverance of the Jews and their Temple from Alexander and from Antiochus, and referred frequently to the Messiah coming and bringing salvation. Chapter 11 ended with that acted parable about the shepherd and the stabs and so forth. And because the people rejected the shepherd, which was Zechariah playing the role of the Messiah, he broke the first staff, which was grace, and ended the covenant between himself and those rebels.

And then later he broke the second staff, which was union, which represented the unity of the nation of Israel, and they dissolved and were not united. And they were scattered. And this is what happened to them.

After Jesus came and was rejected, the Romans came and conquered and killed and scattered the Jews. And their kingdom ended at that time. Now, we're going to start sort of in the same mode in chapter 12 that we were in chapter 9. Namely, in the time prior to Christ, but not very much prior to Christ, a few centuries, that Israel is threatened by other nations, but the other nations do not succeed because God makes Israel too heavy a stone to remove.

It's as if Israel's planted there in the Middle East as a large boulder, which the nations

find inconvenient. And so they decide they're going to remove that rock, but they only hurt themselves doing so. The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel.

Thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy, very heavy stone for all peoples.

All who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of all the earth are gathered against it. Now, one of the reasons that people assign these things to the end times is because of expressions like all nations. There certainly has not been a time in history when all the nations of the world attacked any one place, Israel included.

And therefore, if this is referring to a time when all the nations of the world will attack Israel, that hasn't happened yet. So that must be the end times. There must be a new Israel in the end times, regathered and reattacked by all the nations.

And this is exactly the scenario that many end times teachers believe is predicted here. However, don't be deceived by the hyperbole. The reference to all nations is very common in scripture.

In other places, it says that God had driven Israel into all the nations when he took them into Babylon. If you'd look, for example, at chapter 7, Zechariah 7, 4. Reminding them of his having sent them into the Babylonian exile, he says, But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them.

So he's reminding them of the exile. He said he had scattered them to all the nations. Well, there certainly were nations into which they were not scattered, though they were widely scattered into numerous nations.

The point here is that all the nations should not be taken as a literal statement here any more than in the other place in Zechariah, which mentions it, they were not scattered to every nation on the planet. And if you look at Acts chapter 2, in setting the scene for the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, Acts chapter 2 and verse 5 says, Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. Now that's a very expansive expression, every nation under heaven.

And yet it is not to be thought that this literally meant every nation really under heaven. This is simply meaning from all over the world. Jews of the diaspora from all over the world came to Jerusalem for Passover and for Pentecost in order to fulfill their pilgrimage duties at the festival.

So there were people from far and wide, from many nations. In fact, later on, we have a list of some of those nations in Acts 2 verses 9 and 10 and 11. It actually lists 15

different nations.

But that's not all the nations. The Navajo nation was not represented there. None of the tribal nations from Australia or southern Africa were there.

Obviously, there were nations of the earth, even India and China were known to exist in those days, but they weren't there. When it says all the nations under heaven, this is what we call a hyperbole. And interestingly enough, Acts is not even written in poetry, but it uses this hyperbole.

Zechariah is written in poetry to a large extent. The prophets used poetry a great deal, and they used hyperbole. So when it says it will be difficult, if not impossible, for all nations to heave away the stone, Jerusalem will be like a heavy stone that will surely cut in pieces those who try to heave it away, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.

It is not necessarily saying that all nations of the earth literally will be. Israel has been attacked by many different nations, in fact, prior to this. The Babylonians had attacked them, of course.

The Assyrians had attacked them previous to this. They weren't removed. Even the Samaritan peoples around them were trying to remove them.

In the days of Zerubbabel and later Ezra and Nehemiah, the Syrians under Antiochus Epiphanes did. Many nations have tried to remove Jerusalem and have always found it impossible when God was on their side. Now the Babylonians didn't remove them because God wasn't on their side.

But this is talking about after the exile. All nations that come and try to remove Jerusalem up to, of course, the point of the Messiah's time and after, will not be able to remove it. It's going to be preserved.

And in a hypothetical way, though all nations should try to remove it, even if all of them did, it's not going to be removed. In any case, this is saying that at the period of time Zechariah is describing, which is, I believe, in the intertestamental period, that God will not allow Jerusalem to fall despite opposition from many nations. And even if all nations should try to remove them, they would not succeed.

Verse 4, In that day, says the Lord, I will strike every horse with confusion. This would mean the horses of enemies, not Israel's horses, but those of the nations that come against them. He's going to protect them by striking their horses with confusion and its rider with madness.

Now, actually, there were times, and this is no doubt symbolic, but there were times literally where God did that. When Gideon and his 300 men broke their jars and exposed

their torches in the night and said the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, the Midianites, whom they were overwhelmed in numbers by, they were thrown into confusion and began to kill each other so that Gideon's men didn't have to do all the killing. The Midianites killed each other.

This was because God threw them into confusion. This is one of God's strategies he used again later on in the days of Jehoshaphat. In 2 Chronicles, chapter 20, Jehoshaphat was surrounded by a huge multitude, a confederacy of three different nations coming against him, way too many to defeat.

And he prayed and asked God to deliver them. A prophet of God said, just send the musicians out to sing and to praise God. And so they did.

And what happened was God sent confusion among the enemies and they began killing each other off. So to send confusion to enemies is one of God's strategies. And I don't know to what degree this may have literally happened in any of the battles of the Maccabees or anything like that, but it's not necessary for this to be literal.

It's just saying that God will, in fact, supernaturally see to it that no enemy armies will be able to succeed against them. I'll strike every horse with confusion and its rider with madness. I will open my eyes on the house of Judah, which means I'll look favorably upon it, which implies there'll be protection, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

Again, not literally, this is all very apocalyptic. And the governors of Judah shall say in their hearts, the inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength, and the Lord of hosts their God. In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile and like a fiery torch in the sheaves.

They shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, Jerusalem. I suspect that this is largely fulfilled in the Maccabean revolt, where the people of Judah were like a fire burning up their enemies, the Syrians all around them. Notice he says, I'll make the governors of Judah, or the rulers or the leaders of Judah, which in those days were the Maccabean family, the priestly family of Mattathias, became the leaders, he'll make them like a firepan in a woodpile and like a fiery torch.

Now these are two images, one of a firepan in a woodpile, a burning woodpile. If you stick a firepan in it, what's going to happen to the firepan? Not much, it'll just get hot. It's fireproof.

It's similar to what he said about Joshua back in chapter 3 in the vision of the filthy garments and so forth, of Joshua and Satan was accusing him. In Zechariah chapter 3 and verse 2, he said, The Lord said to Satan, The Lord rebuke you, Satan. The Lord who

has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you.

Is this not a brand plucked from the fire? Now a brand, as I said, is a metal object you put in the fire, it gets red hot and you brand cattle with it. But the brand itself is not hurt by the fire. It takes on the heat of the fire, it's element, it's not burned up.

It's going to be preserved in a situation that would burn up lesser objects. So also a firepan in a pile of wood when it's burning, it's going to endure. It won't burn up.

And so the trials and the invasions of Judah will not allow them to be burned up. They will be, the governors will survive this or endure it. Not all as individuals.

Many of them actually were killed in those battles. But as a group, the governors of Judah continued to exist until the battle was won. And so they are like a firepan in that they endure the trial that they're going through.

But they're also like a fiery torch in that they burn up, not themselves, but their enemies. A torch among the wheat, among the grass, the sheaves, it's going to burn those things up. So the people who are coming against them will be defeated by them.

It's basically the way this poetic imagery is being used. And Jerusalem will be inhabited in its own place again. This may sound like, you know, a return from some other place to Jerusalem.

But you see what happened in the Maccabean period was that the temple in Jerusalem was abandoned because of the abomination of desolation that Antiochus Epiphanes sacrificed there. So essentially the worship of God in Jerusalem was abandoned. And of course the Maccabeans themselves had to flee from Jerusalem and live in the woods.

And they conducted guerrilla raids. They had to live in the wilderness. But once they won, they got to come back to Jerusalem.

They reestablished the temple worship and so forth so that Jerusalem was inhabited again by these people in its own place. It says, The Lord will save the tents of Judah first so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

And one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David. And the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them. It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Now, all the nations here could be cumulative of all nations that come during the entire period of time or just the multiple nations that are in league with and represented in the armies of Syria. In any case, we find that this is referring to that general period of time

just as chapter 9 was referring to it. And we'll see why in a moment.

Because this period of time ends with the coming of Jesus. And therefore it precedes his coming. Now, when it says He'll save the tents of Judah first and the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not become greater than Judah.

Judah, of course, would refer to the villages, not the capital city. Jerusalem is the capital city of Judah. But the villages, the tents, the outliers who aren't living in the city, the ones who are not the powerful ones who rule the city and the rule of the country, the deliverance will come from lesser sources than the house of David in Jerusalem.

And why? Because it did. When Jerusalem was threatened, when the temple was defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes, the revolt came not from Jerusalem, not people in Jerusalem, people in an outlying town. Modian is the little village where the priest Mattathias and his sons actually killed a Syrian official as he was... Do you know the story? What happened, the way the revolt began is when Antiochus outlawed observing Jewish religion in Israel.

He sent officers down to each of the villages to try to get the Jews to sacrifice to pagan deities. And when the officer came to Modian, this village, he commanded the priest there, Mattathias, to sacrifice to a false god. Mattathias refused to do it, but another Jew stepped forward and offered to do so, to comply.

And Mattathias the priest killed that Jew and then killed the Syrian officer. And so he knew that that was an act of war against Syria. And so he and his sons fled to the mountains where they organized their guerrilla band, the Maccabees, who were joined by sympathetic Jews from all over the country.

And the revolt and the salvation of the people came from not Jerusalem, but from one of the outlying villages, from a lesser status than Jerusalem. Jerusalem, you might think, Jerusalem and the house of David there and the deliverance came from the tents of Judah so that the people of Jerusalem couldn't boast against them. It was a lesser, less significant town from which the help arose.

But he will save the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Of course, the whole country, including the capital city, were saved. And it says, those who are weak, the feeble among them in that day shall be like David.

Now, like David means mighty. He was a king who conquered everyone he set out against. In fact, even before he was a king.

When he wanted to have Michael, the king's daughter, as his wife, Saul thought he could get David killed by requiring a thousand foreskins of Philistines. Bring me a thousand foreskins of Philistines so you can have my daughter. David went out and killed 2,000 and brought the foreskins to him.



I mean, David was a force to be reckoned with when he went to battle. He actually, even as a young man, as a young boy, had killed bears and lions with his bare hands. Probably had a knife or a club or something too, but he had actually protected his sheep from those kinds of predators.

Just as a young boy or man. He was quite a fighter. And it says, in those days, the most feeble people will be like David, suggesting that others will be even more mighty than David.

This is, again, hyperbole. There's no such thing as a time when David was more powerful than David. The point is, though, that all the people of Israel in this time will fight valiantly.

And those who are mighty men will fight like the angel of God, the angel of the Lord. Well, how does the angel of the Lord fight? Well, you might remember in the days of Hezekiah when the Assyrian armies camped around Jerusalem and Hezekiah prayed, God sent an angel of the Lord out to strike 185,000 Assyrian troops and he said, the angel of the Lord is also a force to be reckoned with. And the most feeble people in Jerusalem will be like David.

And the house of David, that would be the more impressive people, generally speaking, not the feeble ones, shall be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them. In other words, everyone is going to be an imposing opponent to the enemies because God is going to strengthen them and throw rocks and have slingshots and things like that and they fought off the Assyrian armies. This is just talking about how people will be, the Jews will be valiant beyond, you know, the natural capacity they had and this is suggested because God is with them because God says, it shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

It's not because of the Jews but it's because God is destroying their enemies. God has determined that they will win. Unfortunately, however, the time would come when God would not help them win against the Romans.

And we transition from that period to the time of the Messiah, I believe. Now the passage at the end of chapter 12 we're about to read is almost always applied by dispensational writers that God is going to pour out his spirit on the Jewish people and that they will be converted. This is in conjunction with their understanding of all Israel will be saved after the rapture sometime from their understanding of Romans 11-26.

They believe God will at the end of the tribulation or in the middle of the tribulation sometime, maybe even, I mean, not all of them would perhaps give the same timing but they believe God will and this is the scripture they use. It says, And I will pour out 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 have pierced. They will mourn for him as one

mourns for his only son and grieve for him concerning his death.

And there will be a mourning that is similar to the mourning at that place on the occasion of Josiah's death, and the land shall mourn every family by itself the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves and their wives by themselves. All the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves. Now it's very clear that this is stated in a very tedious way, naming several different families and their wives in each case.

Why don't you say everybody including their wives? You know it's obviously stretching this out in order to make a particular impression. Namely the mourning will extend to families high and low. He mentions priestly and royal families.

The family of David, the royal family. The family of Nathan. Nathan was one of the lesser Judean families.

It was one of the sons of David that didn't actually become king when Solomon did. Nathan. And then there's mention of the family of the house of Levi, which is the priestly family.

And then also Shimei, which is a lesser Levitical family. So he kind of takes examples of you know the royal Judean families and the Levitical families. He picks a high family and a low family in that category and says they will all be involved in this and their wives too.

So this is not just a thing happening with the men. The women and the men. High and low in rank.

Well each by themselves. Which means this will be an individual thing not just a group psychology thing where everyone's just kind of participating because everyone else is. All by themselves they're going to be mourning because the Spirit poured out on them.

Now this does look like it's talking about a general repentance. A general turning to God of the Jews of all ranks and even both genders. And who is it that happens to? To the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

The Spirit of grace and supplication is poured out on them and they'll look on me whom they've pierced. This certainly speaks to us of Jesus and it should. Because that particular line they shall look upon him whom they've pierced or me is quoted in John chapter 19 and John chapter 19 34 and 37.

It talks about when Jesus was pierced on the cross and water and blood flowed out of his side. And John said that it might be fulfilled they shall look upon him whom they've pierced. So the piercing in this verse is obviously the piercing of Jesus on the cross.

Now this does not necessarily mean that they look upon him while he's on the cross because whom they have pierced might refer to it earlier piercing than the time they're looking. But nonetheless it is Jesus that is referred to as the one pierced. And they will look upon him and they'll mourn.

Now if this is in the future it certainly is something that has not yet happened. But was there not a time when the Spirit was poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem on a wide range of Jewish families gathered from all over the Roman Empire in fact and on men and women, husbands and wives. There was as I recall on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2 that was the outpouring of the Spirit on the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

And when Peter explained it he said this is what was spoken of by the Prophet Joel. He says in the last days says Lord I will pour out my spirit on all flesh and your sons and daughters shall prophesy your old men and your young men you know the old men are going to see have dreams the young men see visions and upon my servants and my handmaids I'm going to pour out my spirit. These the men and the women people of all ranks your old men your young men your servants.

In other words Joel is also talking about God pouring out his spirit. God poured out his spirit on all the ranks of people men and women high-ranking low-ranking people on all flesh. Joel said that God would do that and that's what Zechariah says God will do.

The difference is that the New Testament quotes Joel's words and says they were fulfilled at Pentecost. It's unlikely that Zechariah has a different event in mind because the prophets many of them spoke of the age of the Messiah as the age of the Holy Spirit. They didn't use the term age of the Messiah or age of the Holy Spirit but they did speak about God pouring out his spirit upon his people.

Remember Ezekiel had seen the valley of the dry bones and these were just scattered bones human bones and they were restored in two stages. The first stage is the bones began to rattle and assemble themselves into skeletons upon which flesh and skin and hair appeared and Ezekiel said they were all standing there just like an army but there was no breath in them. They were not alive and then he prophesied to the wind or to the spirit that is and then breath came in and they came alive.

That vision is in Ezekiel chapter 37 and he explains it. He says this is what God's going to do. He's going to reassemble Israel.

They are in Babylon at that time and they are hopeless. They say our bones are dry. We have no hope but he says I'm going to gather you back to your land.

I'm going to reassemble and he did in the time of Zerubbabel he did regather them to the land. He did reassemble the nation but there was yet another stage. He had to prod his spirit upon them.

The nation was reassembled in the days of Zerubbabel but the outpouring of the spirit, the second stage that would bring them to life had not happened and it did happen at Pentecost. You see the prophets saw the return of the exiles from Babylon and the coming of the Messiah and the age of the spirit as of one piece or two stages of one thing. So Israel was regathered in the days of Zechariah but the spirit was not poured out until Pentecost and Joel spoke about it, Zechariah spoke about it, other prophets, Isaiah spoke about him pouring out his spirit and he says until the desert becomes a blossoming rose, a fruitful field and so forth.

That is the spiritual wilderness becomes spiritually fruitful because of the fruit of the spirit. These are images the prophets used to speak of the messianic age which is the age when the spirit is dispensed to the people of God and that is I believe what is prophesied right here. On the day of Pentecost the spirit was poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

First 120 in the upper room and then as Peter preached conviction of the spirit came upon the multitude and they saw in their mind's eye, they saw in their conscience him that they had pierced, they saw that he was the Messiah, they saw that they had pierced him, they were pricked at their heart and said what must we do and Peter called them to repentance and this was I believe what Zechariah is predicting, the pouring out of the spirit, them realizing that they've pierced the Messiah, weeping over it, repenting over it. It talks about mourning and so forth, repentance and mourning are often linked together and I think this is suggesting repentance and that's what these people did. In fact when they said men what must we do? Peter said repent every one of you and be baptized and so I believe this is a reference to Pentecost not some future thing.

Then in chapter 13 it continues in verse 1, in that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness. Okay, a fountain that cleanses sin and uncleanness, what sort of fountain might that be? It's not a fountain of water certainly because you can't cleanse sin and uncleanness that way. Of course it's Christ's blood that cleanses all sin.

Although it is not impossible to imagine that those who are cleansed by Christ's blood also were washed in the baptismal fountain, that a fountain was opened as Peter said repent and be baptized every one of you that they entered the body of Christ, they entered the church through baptism but I'm not sure if this is a reference to baptism. It's a reference certainly either to the blood of Jesus, that fountain that flowed from him, his hands and his feet and his side that was for cleansing of sin or it could be a reference to that salvation that comes as a result of it which was entered through baptism on the day of Pentecost after the Spirit was poured out on him. In any case this cleansing, this outpouring of the Spirit this morning, we need look no further than the day of Pentecost for the fulfillment of this and if someone wants to say no this is not a repeat of this in the end times.

There certainly are people who say there's going to be another Pentecost. We're looking for another Pentecost in the end times. This is a very common thing that people often expect.

I'm thinking ok on the basis of what? On this verse? Why when there is this prediction would you look for another Pentecost in the end times when after this prediction there was a first Pentecost? When this verse was already fulfilled at Pentecost why look for a second Pentecost to be the fulfillment of it? It doesn't make any sense. It's not predicting here two different occasions like this and if what people are expecting in the last days on the basis of this verse is another Pentecost well then Pentecost must be what it's describing right? A Pentecost. You only need one.

There's no mention of two Pentecosts but one Pentecost in scripture and this is the one I believe and the people that remnant of Israel were cleansed of their sins by coming to Christ on that occasion. They were pricked in their conscience convicted by the Spirit. They repented.

They were baptized. They came into Christ. They received the cleansing of that fountain that God opened up for sin and for uncleanness.

Now verses 2 through 6 are really kind of interesting and kind of funny in a way. I mean there's almost a bit of humor in them and they are describing the effects of this repentance and cleansing. What the nation of Israel had always been affected by in Old Testament times especially before the Babylonian exile was idolatry and the false gods had their false prophets and so associated with idolatry was always the prophets of those idols.

When Jezebel brought the worship of Baal into Samaria into the northern kingdom there came 4,000 prophets of Baal. Wherever there's a religion, where there's a God, there's a religion. Where there's a religion, there's a priesthood and prophets and they are false prophets.

Now this passage talks about prophets very negatively. It does not use the term false prophets. But that shouldn't set us back.

The Old Testament never uses the term false prophets. The expression false prophets is absent from the Old Testament. We do read that there were false prophets in the Old Testament times but we read it in the New.

In 2 Peter 2.1 it's talking about Old Testament times and Peter says there were false prophets among the people and there should be false teachers among you, he said. Jesus said beware of false prophets who appear as sheep but inwardly they're ravening wolves. 1 John 4 verses 1-4 warn about how many false prophets have gone out into the world.

The New Testament frequently refers to false prophets. The Old Testament does too but it doesn't call them false prophets. It just calls them prophets.

True and false prophets in the Old Testament are distinguished by what God they represent but they're all called prophets. There were prophets of Baal. The Bible doesn't say false prophets of Baal but we know they were false because they're serving a false God.

Here we have a reference to prophets and it certainly means false prophets. In fact we can see that although it just calls them prophets and that may be confusing because after all Zechariah himself was a prophet. What's wrong with prophets? But prophets here are spoken to be something intolerable to godly people.

They won't tolerate prophets anymore but the prophets they have in mind are the prophets that promote idolatrous gods and you can tell that those are the prophets he has in mind because verse 4 at the end of verse 4 where it's talking about these prophets says they will not wear a robe of coarse hair to deceive anymore. So he's talking about prophets who deceived people. So that we need to know going in because as we start reading 2 and following it speaks so disparagingly about prophets.

They won't tolerate prophets anymore. We have to understand from the context he means the prophets that are leading Israel astray like the prophets who led them astray before the exile. What's being suggested here is that the new order when they've been cleansed of their sin and uncleanness by this fountain they will not worship other gods and they will not tolerate the suggestion of worship of the gods.

They will not fall to the false prophets. Jesus told his disciples to beware of false prophets and later he said that he was the good shepherd and the sheep know his voice and they won't follow false shepherds. They don't know the voice of a false shepherd.

They are thieves and robbers. Now in the New Testament time therefore the true Christian knows the voice of the master and does not tolerate or follow the false prophets. This fact is dramatized for us here by depicting a man who once was a false prophet but he doesn't want anyone to know it now because a new age of intolerance for false prophecy has come upon the people of God and while he was making his bread and his reputation as a false prophet at an earlier era he will not be tolerated now.

A person who prophesies now is going to be killed which is of course what Deuteronomy says should happen to a false prophet. In Deuteronomy 18 it says the prophet who is not a prophet from God says that person shall not live and this passage describes the parents of a prophet killing him if he prophesies and speaks of a certain person when he said when someone says you're a prophet he says no I'm not a prophet never was a prophet that a man who used to be a prophet he denies it because it is so intolerant the society is so intolerant he doesn't want his past to be known. Now this is the milieu here

and I think pretty much all commentators will agree with it but you have to understand this is a little story about a false prophet who doesn't want to be known to have been a false prophet because the society won't tolerate him anymore and it's just illustrating that in the messianic age the people of God will be loyal to God to the point where false prophets are you know they'd better hide.

They'd better not let anyone know that's what they are because the people will not follow them as they did as the Jews did in former times. And so it goes like this. 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. 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've spoken lies in the name of the Lord. And his father and his mother who begot him shall thrust him through when he prophesies.

And it shall be in that day that every prophet will be ashamed of his vision meaning his former prophetic career. When he prophesies they will not wear a robe of coarse hair to deceive. But he will say I am no prophet.

I'm a farmer for a man taught me to keep cattle for my youth. I've never never had a career as a prophet. I've just been farming since I was a little kid.

And someone will say to him but what are these wounds in your hands? Then he will answer those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Now this verse 6 has tempted Christians everywhere to see this as a messianic reference to Christ's wounds in his hands. It probably is not and I'll tell you why.

For one thing translators have not all agreed that this is even referring to wounds in hands. I've looked up several translations of this because they all differ in the New American Standard Bible. It says what are these wounds between your arms? And in the Hebrew English Interlinear it says what are these wounds between your hands? Not in your hands but between your hands.

The RSV and the ESV say what are these wounds on your back? And the new RSV says what are these wounds on your chest? And the NIV says what are these wounds on your body? You see between your hands, between your arms, on your back, on your chest, these are some of the suggestions of what is being spoken of here. It's not necessarily talking about the nail holes in the hands as the wording of the New King James and the King James make it sound. Furthermore, the New Testament which quotes heavily from Zechariah and from this section, even this prophecy of chapters 12-14, there are numerous quotes from this section in the New Testament.

They never quoted Zechariah 13.6 applying it to Jesus which is very strange if they

thought that was about him because they were quite fond of combing through the New Testament. And combing through the Old Testament and finding all those salient prophecies that spoke clearly about Jesus. In the way it's rendered in our Bibles, it sounds like it's talking about somebody who's crucified.

And if I were one of the apostles reading this, I think I'll use that one too because they nailed him to a cross even as it's written. They said where are these wounds in your hands? And yet they didn't. They didn't quote this which makes us wonder.

Could this be? Not about Jesus. And in the context, notice it's not talking about the Messiah, it's talking about false prophet. It's the false prophet that is asked what are these wounds between your hands, between your arms, on your back, on your chest, on your body, whatever the correct translation is.

This is the man who no longer is wearing a coarse garment to deceive and he no longer flails himself with whips and injures himself like the false prophets did. Remember when Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel? They were cutting themselves and so forth. I mean, that's what these false gods required the prophets to do, to mutilate themselves and whip themselves and so forth.

And this man in this story seems to still have marks on his body somehow. On his forearms or on his back or his chest, somewhere on his body, there are marks which I think we're supposed to understand these are the scars remaining on him from his former career as a false prophet. And when they say, well, if you weren't a prophet, how come you have these wounds on you like this? And he gives a what many commentators think is an evasive answer.

I got these, you know, you know, in the house of my friends. Well, how's that happen? It may sound strange to you. It may almost sound funny.

But most commentators believe that he's saying, you know, I was at a party at my friend's house and things got a little wild. And, you know, there was a brawl and I got injured and so forth. And that's what these are from.

In other words, it's not a realistic answer, but it's a desperate answer. He doesn't want to own up to the fact that he has been a false prophet because he's likely to get himself killed or thrown, run out of town. And so he comes up with a nonsensical answer out of desperation.

Now, someone might say, well, that doesn't seem like a very reasonable way to understand this. Well, what is a reasonable way to understand it? That's the problem. This passage is kind of funny because it talks about anyone who prophesies during the era that we're talking about here.

No one's going to be sympathetic for him as they were prior to the Babylonian exile.



They're going to be actually extremely unsympathetic. The idea that the father and mother of the prophet will thrust him through and say, you can't live because you're prophesying lies actually comes from Deuteronomy 13, verses 6 and following, which is where God commands that even family members, even close family members must be so zealous for God that if a close family member tries to lead them away from God, they should kill him.

It says in Deuteronomy 13, 6, 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 of the gods of the people which are all around you, near you or far off from you, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth, you shall not consent to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him, but you shall surely kill him. Your hand shall be the first against him to put him to death and afterward the hand of all the people. In other words, one of those crimes in Israel that is a capital crime, deserving execution is idolatry.

That was the most dangerous sin for Israel to commit and anyone who even secretly said, let's go see, let's go worship some idols, that person is bringing the whole nation into jeopardy. They shall not be allowed to live, even if it's someone you love, even if it's a close relative. You've got to be more loyal to God than to your relatives.

Remember, Jesus said, he that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. He that loves wife or children more than me is not worthy of me. This is the idea.

God said the same thing. You can't love your family members and your best friends like your own soul more than you love me. If they're starting to drag you away from me to worship other gods, that's intolerable.

Now, in the Old Testament, people were killed for stuff like that. Of course, the New Testament does not authorize killing people for sins. The Old Testament Israel was a theocracy, an actual earthly government with laws and courts and penalties and so forth where they had to keep God's laws or face criminal penalties.

In the church, we don't have criminal penalties. We do excommunicate, hopefully. We do exercise church discipline when people are doing things wrong.

But the idea here is using language from the Old Testament about what it looks like for a community of believers to be intolerant of idolatry and of false prophets. The idea that they should put them to death. He points out, well, finally, God's people will have that zeal and loyalty to God that they should have had, the very zeal that Deuteronomy predicted.

A son or a daughter who leads you astray, your parents, the parents, shall be the first to

thrust him through and kill him. Now, I don't know if this ever really happened or ever was intended to happen or whether this is just God's way of being emphatic. You know, it would seem like in most cases, if that was really going to be practiced, there wouldn't be very many people trying to lead you into idolatry.

And the Jews never were obedient enough to do it. But if they did, it would probably, the behavior probably would have stopped. Probably only have to happen one time.

And someone said, oh, I suggest it. And boy, I got killed. Okay, so I guess I won't do that again.

And nor will anyone else who saw this happen. But here, it's not describing the actual case. It's describing an actual attitude of the people of God being as zealous as they should always have been.

To be intolerant of breaking the covenant. Intolerant of going after other gods. Intolerant of betraying God.

So intolerant that it's considered to be worthy of death. To even breathe the suggestion to be a false prophet of another god and try to lure people. So, this is simply giving a very vivid description of the attitude of the new community of the Messiah, the new covenant people.

They will not be so wishy-washy as the Jews were, in tolerating idolatry. And rather, they will be entirely intolerant of it, even if their own child is to lead them astray or is a false prophet. They'll do the right thing against that child, and they won't let family sentiments get in the way.

And again, I think Jesus is insane. If you love father and mother more than me, or wife and children more than me, you're not worthy of me. This is his way of perhaps stating the principle for his disciples that is here spoken in somewhat more graphic, somewhat exaggerated terms.

But it's not only that they'll kill false prophets, but former false prophets who aren't doing it anymore will want to conceal that. And if someone says, well, were you a false prophet? No, I never was one of those. Never did that.

I've been a farmer for my youth. Interesting, the statement that they will say, I am no prophet. I'm a farmer.

For a man taught me to keep cattle for my youth is precisely what a true prophet said on one occasion. You might remember Amos 7.14. Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet, but I was a herdsman and a tender of sycamore fruit. I tended livestock and was a farmer.

I'm not a prophet. Now, of course, here he's not denying that he is a prophet now, but he's saying I wasn't one. And he's not saying it because it'd be a shame to be one.

He's saying it because it's really true. He wasn't. He didn't choose to be a prophet.

He was an ordinary agricultural worker, and then God called him to be a prophet. That's what he goes on to say. He says, then the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said to me, go prophesy to my people Israel.

So Amos actually said, I wasn't a prophet. I was just a farmer, but I'm a prophet now because God called me and told me to go prophesy. But apparently, former false prophets will borrow his line.

I wasn't a prophet. I was just a farmer, just a herdsman. And it's a direct echo of Amos' words, although the difference is that Amos was telling the truth, and he wasn't ashamed of being a prophet.

He wasn't saying it as a diversion to pretend that he wasn't what he was. He really was just a farmer. But these guys, the impression is that it really was a false prophet, but now they're trying to pretend like they weren't.

Then in verse 7, we have this verse that clearly talks about Jesus. It says, 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. Now, the little ones would be the people of Israel. After they strike Jesus, God's going to judge Israel.

And it should come to pass in all the land, says the Lord, that two-thirds in it will be cut off and die, but one-third should be left in it. And I 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 of them will say, the Lord is my God. Now, the shepherd will be killed. That's Jesus.

Since Jesus quotes this in Matthew 26, 31, and says this is going to be fulfilled tonight, it's a rather unmistakable time marker for the fulfillment of this particular prophecy. And after they've killed the Messiah, the next thing we read about is that God is going to turn his hand against the flock, against Israel, because of their rejection of their king. And this is really pretty much where chapter 11 left off.

They rejected their shepherd, and so God's going to bring a cruel shepherd to tear their hooves apart and devour them. That means that because they didn't choose the good shepherd, he's going to bring a bad shepherd, and that bad leader is going to be the bad

ruler, is going to be Rome, who's going to treat them very badly and destroy them. And that's where the prophecy ended in the previous group, chapter 11.

We've now reached that very point, but it goes further and gives more detail. This part of Zechariah 13 at the end, and going into chapter 14, is, in my opinion, about AD 70 and the following era, which is, of course, the era we live in. I believe that we find, as we get to chapter 14, which we won't tonight, we will find that AD 70, the destruction of Jerusalem, is told along with the prophecy about the new Jerusalem, the church, the spiritual Jerusalem, continuing and worshiping God purely.

After the old Jerusalem is destroyed, the new Jerusalem, the Christian church, worships God in spirit and truth, and we will see, and I will demonstrate from especially citations from the New Testament, that this is what chapter 14 is about. Once again, most commentators want to make chapter 14 to be about Armageddon and the story line well enough. Now, because they do that, in chapter 13, verse 8 and 9, where it talks about two-thirds shall be cut down and die, cut off and die, but one-third shall be left, the remnant will survive.

This is, I believe, referring to the judgment that came on Israel in AD 70. The majority fell prey to the Roman invasion, either by actual death by the sword, or else by being burned up in the temple, or else by being taken away into captivity as slaves into all lands. About two-thirds, which isn't literal.

It could be, but it needn't be thought to be. Two-thirds simply means a majority. One-third means a significant minority.

And that being so, that third, that minority, that remnant that was left, was, of course, that portion of Israel that followed Jesus, the Christian Jews. And we've said this before. The Christian Jews escaped.

They were not in Jerusalem when it fell to the Romans. They were not carried away captive like the rest. They escaped.

The Lord warned them in advance to flee, and they fled to Pella. This is recorded in history. And the Christian Jews, therefore, are the third that were preserved, that didn't destroy.

They stayed. They remained in Jerusalem. That is, they are the remainder of Jerusalem that became the new Jerusalem, the remnant.

So, the survival of a remnant who followed Jesus and the judgment coming upon the other two-thirds is simply a reference to the fact that the majority of the Jews are going to come under this severe judgment when God turns His hand against them. And only a minority will be preserved and exempt from that judgment. And that did happen.

Now, I want to say that those who see this as future, the dispensationists, they see this as referring to something that will happen during the tribulation. They believe that during the tribulation, the Antichrist will persecute the Jews. Now, by the way, there's no mention of any Antichrist in the book of Zechariah, but nonetheless, they believe this is talking about that.

The Antichrist will persecute the Jews, and with the result that two-thirds of the Jews in Jerusalem or in Israel will be killed. They take this quite literally. Two-thirds are going to die.

Only a third will survive. And they believe that third that survives will be like the 144,000, the ones that God preserves, the ones who turn to Christ at the end of the tribulation, and so forth. But they actually believe that two-thirds of the world Jewish population will be killed in Israel during the tribulation.

These are the same people who are advising us to help the Jews get to Israel. These are the people who are asking us to help contribute to the plane fare to fly Jews from Poland and Russia to Israel. Why? So that two out of three of them can die there? It's a very strange mentality because they want the Jews to go there because it's the end times, and they want to see Bible prophecy fulfilled.

Well, what precisely is the filament that they're looking for? The destruction of two-thirds of the Jewish population in Israel. That is what they believe this is predicting, and that is what they are looking forward to. Now, is there a more anti-Semitic viewpoint available than that? Even Hitler didn't kill two-thirds.

But dispensationalists, they believe God's going to see to it that the Antichrist does. So let's get those Jews over there so this could start happening, man. Let's get this show on the road so Jesus can come back.

What a mentality. And yet this is the dispensational expectation. And they get it from this.

This is the passage where they believe two-thirds of the Jews will be killed during the tribulation in Israel. Now, I don't believe that's what this is. I believe that the majority of the Jews did come under God's judgment.

A great number of them killed various ways, the sword and flames and so forth, and the rest of them carried away as slaves into captivity. But the third that are preserved are the church that escaped from that. So Jerusalem came to an end in AD 70.

The temple was burned. Not one stone was left standing on another. No significant number of Jews even stayed in the land.

They were all carried away that survived. But the Christian Jews, the third that survived,

it says something about them here. It says, I will bring the third, the one-third, that's the Christians, through the fire.

I will refine them as silver is refined and test them as gold is tested. Do you know of any scriptures that might speak of Christians being tested and refined like silver and gold? Well, there's a great number of them, actually. One of them is actually in the only remaining prophet after Zechariah, that's Malachi 3. In Malachi 3, verses 1 through 3, it says, Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me.

That's John the Baptist. This line is quoted in all four gospels and applied to John the Baptist. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple.

That's Jesus. Even the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight. Behold, he is coming, says the Lord host.

But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? Oh, this is not a friendly coming. Essentially what he's saying is God's going to send John the Baptist to prepare people, and he's going to do so prior to God sending Jesus in a very unfriendly coming. This, I believe, is a reference to Christ's coming in judgment.

Not his second coming, and not his earthly coming, but the figuratively coming in judgment in AD 70. Jesus did come on earth, but it seems to pass over that. And when John the Baptist came, his message was that the flames of God's judgment are about to consume the fruitless trees in Israel, that is the people who are fruitless trees, and the chaff.

He says he's got his fan in his hand. He's going to purge his threshing floor. The grain he's going to gather into his barn, that's the third.

And the chaff, which is the two-thirds, he's going to burn up with unquenchable fire. John is referring to the judgment that is to come within that generation that Jesus also later spoke about. John was a messenger of judgment and of repentance.

And so Malachi speaks of John coming and then of the Messiah comes angry. It skips over his earthly life and so forth, as many prophecies do. But here, what's he saying? In verse 2, Malachi 3, 2, Who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like a fuller's soap.

He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. He will purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness. The sons of Levi would refer to, I think, the priesthood.

He's going to purify the priesthood. How? By getting rid of the old corrupt priests, the ones who crucified Jesus, the chief priests like Caiaphas and Annas and the people of the Sanhedrin who were the chief priests. He's going to purify the priesthood by getting rid

of the wretched ones.

And what's he going to do? He's going to create a kingdom of priests. All Christians are going to be the priesthood to offer up pure sacrifices. It doesn't say it in those terms, but we know the New Testament does.

John came, then Jesus came, and then the priesthood was replaced. The dross priesthood was removed and the pure gold priesthood was preserved. And this was a time of refining.

And if you look at 1 Peter 1, he uses this very language of Zechariah and applies it to us, or at least to the Christians of his day. He says in 1 Peter 1, verses 6 and 7, In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Your faith is being tested like gold is tested by fire.

God is testing through trial His people and purifying His people. He's purifying the sons of Levi, as it were, the new church, the new priesthood, the new sons of Levi. I pointed this out when we were talking about a different passage in Zechariah earlier, but in Isaiah chapter 66, it talks about God taking some of the Gentiles who have come in in the gospel era.

He says in Isaiah 66, 21, I will also take some of them for priests and Levites. Who? The Gentiles that are coming in in the previous verse. I'm going to take some of them to be priests and Levites.

I'm going to replace the corrupt priesthood and corrupt Levites. I'm going to have a new priest and Levites. That's Isaiah 66, verses 20 and 21.

So, he purges the priesthood. He purges the sons of Levi, gets rid of the wicked ones in that judgment that came on Jerusalem, and he replaces it with pure priests who offer up spiritual sacrifices, holy and acceptable to the Lord, as the New Testament often says we do. This is the purging that we are going through even as we are made pure so we can offer up spiritual sacrifices purely.

So, Zechariah talks about this, and then he says in the last lines of Zechariah 13, and I will say, this is my people, and each one will say, the Lord is my God. Now, this statement, they will say, you're my God, and he says, I'm going to say you're my people. This is, of course, also stated in Hosea 2, which is quoted in the New Testament, but just so you know what Hosea 2 says in verse 23.

Hosea 2, 23 says, then I will sow her for myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy. Then I will say to those who were not my people, you are my people, and they shall say, you are my God. Okay, God's going to say to somebody,

you are my people, and they're going to say back, you are my God.

That's what Zechariah says. I will say, this is my people, and each one will say, the Lord is my God. It's the same thing Hosea said, but Hosea is quoted about this more than once, actually, because in Romans chapter 9, verses 25 and 26, Paul quotes this as being about the Gentiles coming to Christ, that those who are not a people will be called the people of God, that Hosea, according to Paul, is talking about the Gentile inclusion in the church.

And if Paul wasn't enough, we've got Peter doing the same thing in 1 Peter chapter 2. 1 Peter 2, 9 and 10, but you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, his own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, who once were not a people, but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. This last line is quoting from Hosea 2.23, we just looked at. They had not obtained mercy, but they will obtain mercy.

They were not my people, they'll be my people. These prophecies in Hosea are fulfilled in us, in the church. And the verbalization of the same thing in slightly different words at the end of Zechariah 13 strongly suggests it's about the same fulfillment.

The church is the ones that God will say, these are my people, and they'll say, the Lord is my God. Now, while I'm at 1 Peter, I just will point one other thing out, because he says all this about us in 1 Peter 2, we just read verses 9 and 10, which says that these prophecies of Hosea and therefore of Zechariah, which says the same thing, are fulfilled in us. But notice earlier in the same chapter, he says in verse 5, 1 Peter 2.5, you also as living stones are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

That also agrees with some of the other passages we looked at, him purifying the sons of Levi and having a new priesthood and all of that. And that's part of the refining, he's refining the priesthood, and we are now a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices. All of these concepts are woven throughout the New Testament, Old Testament predictions, Old Testament lines and ideas, woven throughout the New Testament writers as being fulfilled in the church.

And therefore, I'm persuaded that the material we covered tonight, chapters 12 and 13 of Zechariah, as I say, begin prior to the coming of Christ with the Maccabean victories where God protects Jerusalem and Jerusalem is like a burdensome stone to anyone who tries to move it, and they get hurt trying to move it. But then the Messiah comes. The Messiah is smitten, and the Spirit is poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem and a fountain for sin and uncleanness.

And there's a purified people who will not tolerate the disloyalty to God, the idolatry and



the false prophets that the older Israel endured and which got them into so much trouble. And because the shepherd is smitten, God turns His hand against the little ones, the sheep, the people of Israel, and He causes the majority of them to suffer horrible judgment through fire and destruction. The other third He takes through fire and purifies them, and He calls them His people, and they say that He's their God.

This is, to my mind, when you look at the New Testament references to these things, it's like a no-brainer, that this would be somehow in the minds of certain people postponed till the end of the world, and the final chapter of history seems so unnecessary when after Zechariah made these predictions, all these things came true according to the New Testament writers and Jesus Himself in at least one case. So, I think we're looking at the beginning, not the end of the church history. And when we come to chapter 14, it doesn't jump forward 2,000 years.

It's still, I believe, well, I mean, just look at the opening verses. We won't go into chapter 14 right now, but look at the verses here. It says, Okay, this time He doesn't protect the city this time like He did before.

The city will be taken, the house is rifled, the women ravished, half the city goes into captivity, the remnant of the people shall be saved, the remnant of Israel. But you see, this is the destruction of Jerusalem. He doesn't protect it.

He gives it over. The invaders come and rape the women and destroy the city and what could this be? But what actually did happen? This is one reason that I'm going to be looking at chapter 14 not as the Armageddon at the end of the world, but as the events that it describes that actually happened in the time frame that the prophecy, chapters 12, 13, and 14 is leading up to. We'll go into detail in chapter 14 next time and we'll be finishing up the book that way.

There are some real challenges in chapter 14, but there's also some real help from the New Testament in it. And so, we'll stop there.