

# Zechariah & Luke: The Returning King

## Lesson 17: The Sacrificial King

**Key Verse:** *On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness. ~Zechariah 13.1*

Having processed several different species of animal to eat, I can assure you it is a bloody mess. But, you cannot avoid that reality if you are going to include meat as a part of your diet. Likewise, per God's Law, the death of an animal was the bloody mess required year after year as **atonement** for the sins of God's people. With the death of Jesus, the Messiah, the final bloody mess was made to cleanse His people from their sin and uncleanness. It, too, was required as the only hope for salvation. Now, we enjoy confidence in our **refiner**, whose promises of keeping us as His are sealed by His Spirit in us.

*LORD of Hosts, who struck His own shepherd for me...I praise you. You alone are my God. Thank you for providing Your Son as an overflowing fountain to cleanse me from my sin and uncleanness. May I live every moment of every day in adoration and praise of what You have done for me, and for Your Church.*

**Zechariah 13.1-9: 13** "On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness. **2** "And on that day, declares the LORD of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more. And also I will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness. **3** And if anyone again prophesies, his father and mother who bore him will say to him, 'You shall not live, for you speak lies in the name of the LORD.' And his father and mother who bore him shall pierce him through when he prophesies.

**4** "On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies. He will not put on a hairy cloak in order to deceive, **5** but he will say, 'I am no prophet, I am a worker of the soil, for a man sold me in my youth.' **6** And if one asks him, 'What are these wounds on your back?' he will say, 'The wounds I received in the house of my friends.'

**7** "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me," declares the LORD of hosts. "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; I will turn my hand against the little ones. **8** In the whole land, declares the LORD, two thirds shall be cut off and perish, and one third shall be left alive. **9** And I will put this third into the fire, and refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call upon my name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'They are my people'; and they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

**Diamonds:** To better grasp this passage, we must understand the Law's sacrificial requirements. God's Law was established by Him to cleanse His people so that He can say, "They are my people", allowing them to call Him their God (V 9). Unfortunately, we see in this passage that God's people had mingled God's requirement with pagan rituals.

Studying the sacrificial requirement of God's Law in this lesson provides an exciting foundation as we approach Jesus's fulfillment of all God's Law as the Passover Lamb of God, who "cleanse[s] from sin and uncleanness... [who] removes from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness." (V 1-2)

1. What role or purpose does the bloody water play in the cleansing and restoration of lepers in Leviticus 14.1-7? Use several translations to fully understand the role of the bloody water.

2. In the space below take notes about the use and purposes of the water in Numbers 19:

3. Finally (I promise!), read Deuteronomy 13.1-11 to better understand why parents would kill their own children who “speak lies in the name of the LORD” (V 3). What are God's intentions in this command in Deuteronomy (the Old Covenant)?

The wounds received from the required self-mutilation of pagan rituals reveal the shameful, deceptive, lying prophet (V 4-6). Recall that these final three chapters in Zechariah prophesy a purification in Jesus progressing toward His final purification upon Christ's return. (See Zechariah 12, Lesson 15, “The King of Creation”.) In Zechariah 12, God's wrath is revealed in destruction and judgment. In Zechariah 13, God fulfills the purification requirement of the Law through Jesus, the “fountain opened” for His people “to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness” (V 1).

4. As we prepare to join Jesus at His Passover table to partake of His New Covenant (in Lesson 18), review the legal requirements for cleansing under the Old Covenant you studied in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy (Questions 1-3). Contrast the Law under the Old Covenant with the promise of the New Covenant prophesied in Ezekiel 36.25-29:
5. How do you understand Jesus as the “fountain opened” for His people “to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness” (V 1)? Try to use the information and knowledge of God you have obtained in Questions 1-4.

**Deity: Refiner~** (Zechariah 13.9) to refine is to remove impurities or unwanted elements from (a substance), typically as part of an industrial process. Its synonyms include to purify, clarify, cleanse, filter, distill, and more.<sup>1</sup>

While closely associated with the process of sanctification, God's refining work is unique. Sanctification is the work of His Spirit to daily make us into the likeness of His Son, Jesus (John 17.17; Philippians 2.12-13; 1 Thessalonians 5.23-24). God's refining is a more episodic test with the aim of purifying one's faith in Him (Job 1.8, 20-22; Job 2.3, 10, 13; Job 42; James 1.2-4; 1 Peter 1.6-7).

6. According to the last sentences of verse 9, what is God's purpose in the refinement of “this third” through the use of fire and testing? What will it cause the people to do, and how will God respond?
7. Consider a time when God has refined your faith in Him. Or, if you are going through God's fiery refinement, share how you see God claiming you as His own in the midst of it. Likewise, how are you responding as His daughter, enabled to say and live out that, “The LORD is my God” (V 9)?

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<sup>1</sup>Google dictionary

**Doctrine: Atonement**<sup>2</sup>~ (Zechariah 13.1) to atone is to make amends, to make things right. “Both the Old and New Testaments make it clear that all human beings are sinners. As our sins are against an infinite, holy God who cannot even look upon sin, atonement must be made in order for us to have fellowship with God. Because sin touches even our best acts, we are incapable of making a sufficient sacrifice...We have no gift valuable enough, no work righteous enough to atone for our sins. We are debtors who cannot pay their debts.” (Romans 5)

“In receiving the wrath of the Father on the cross, Christ was able to make atonement for His people. Christ carried, or bore, the punishment for the sins of human beings. He atoned for them by accepting the just punishment due for those sins (Matthew 1.21; 1 Thessalonians 1.10). The Old Testament covenant pronounced a curse upon any person who broke the law of God (Deuteronomy 30.15-20). On the cross, Jesus not only took that curse upon Himself, but He became ‘a curse for us’ (Galatians 3.13). He was forsaken by the Father and experienced the full measure of hell on the cross.” (Mark 15.34)

“Jesus did not die for Himself, but for us. His suffering was vicarious; He was our substitute. He took our place in fulfilling the role of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1.29; Ephesians 1.7)...The Son did not persuade the Father to save those whom the Father was loath to save (Titus 3.3-7). On the contrary, both the Father and Son willed the salvation of the elect and worked together to bring it to pass (Acts 20.28; 2 Corinthians 5.19).”

“The atonement of Christ was not a divine afterthought. The purpose of God in Christ’s death was determined at the foundation of the world. The design was not guesswork but according to a specific plan and purpose, which God is sovereignly bringing to pass. All for whom Christ died are redeemed by His sacrificial act (Romans 3.21-28).”

8. Read Zechariah 13.7 in at least one additional translation. It is alarming to hear God shout with anticipatory excitement to the sword to “Awake” to “strike against” His own shepherd. This is God’s own Son, “the man who stands next to me.” Why do you think God desires this? Consider all you have studied in Zechariah as well as all your observations as you stood as one of the crowd of disciples following Jesus town to town, healing to healing, religious legal battle to religious legal battle. Is there a prophecy, parable, or miracle you have studied this year that helps you conceive of why God would be so eager to see His Son crucified?

9. What does your answer teach you about your value to God?

### **Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer:**

### **Lecture Outline:**

**Aim:** Only God can purify sin-stained people.

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<sup>2</sup>Sproul, pgs. 181-185

- I. Purifying Blood (Zechariah 13.1-6) **T1**: Christ's atoning blood purifies sinners to rightly worship God and apply His Word.
  - a. How does your life prove you have not only been saved but are also being sanctified by Christ's blood?
  - b. What are the names of the idols that are still on your lips and in your life?
  - c. How is the Holy Spirit equipping you to recognize and refute false teaching?
- II. Purifying Blaze (Zechariah 13.7-9) **T2**: Christ's atoning blood purchased, purifies, and preserves His Church.
  - a. Which gospel truth do you need to preach to yourself today?
  - b. How do you see God's purifying blaze at work in the Church?
  - c. How might the truth that God preserves His Church prepare, comfort, and/or sustain you amid fiery trials and persecution?

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Duguid, Iain M., *Haggai Zechariah Malachi*, Evangelical Press Commentary (Leyland, England, 2010) pgs.168-172  
Phillips, Richard D., *Zechariah*, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2007) pgs.278-301  
Sproul, R.C., *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 1992)