

Chapter 64

An Intensely Personal Matter

“And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.” (Zechariah 12:9-13:1)

God’s great salvation is an intensely personal matter. Repentance toward God is an intensely personal matter. Faith in Christ is an intensely personal matter. If ever you come to experience the grace of God, if ever you come to know the Lord Jesus Christ, if ever you experience the blessedness of sins forgiven, it will be an intensely personal matter! This fact is clearly set forth in the paragraph before us.

The entire Book of Zechariah is about one great day, not a twenty-four hour day, but this gospel day, this day of mercy and grace, that which God the Holy Spirit twice calls, “*the day of salvation*” (Isaiah 49:8; 2 Corinthians 6:2). As we have seen, the phrase “*in that day*” is used repeatedly in these fourteen chapters (2:11; 3:10; 9:16; 11:11; 12:3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11; 13:1, 2, 4; 14:4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 20, 21). This is the great day of which all the prophets spoke. Just read what Isaiah wrote about this great day of grace and salvation, in which God’s visits his people and gathers them from the four corners of the earth (Isaiah 2:11, 17, 20; 4:2; 11:10; 12:1, 4; 25:9; 28:5; 29:18).

This great day began with our Savior’s incarnation and continues until time shall be no more, when our great Redeemer, Jehovah’s Righteous Servant, shall lift his hand to his Father and say, “*It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely*” (Revelation 21:6). In this day God is gathering his elect from the nations by his omnipotent mercy. In Zechariah 12:9-13:1 the prophet Zechariah tells us exactly how he does it.

A Day of Judgment

This is a day of grace and salvation for God’s elect; but it is also a day of judgment. Zechariah begins by asserting the certainty of divine judgment upon all who set themselves against God’s church. — “*And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem*” (v. 9).

It seems obvious to me that Zechariah is talking about the Battle of Armageddon described

by the Prophet Ezekiel and by the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation (Ezekiel 38:1-39:29; Revelation 16:12-16). Armageddon is not a great nuclear holocaust. It is not a terrible world war. I do not deny that such things may come upon the earth. Indeed, they probably will. But Armageddon is a spiritual warfare, with consequences far more severe than any war between nations could ever be. It will end in the final conquest of Christ over Satan at his glorious advent. But Armageddon is going on right now. It will end with the conquest of Christ over all evil. The word “*Armageddon*” takes its name from the Valley of Megiddo (Judges 5:9; 2 Chronicles 35:22). The word means “assembly of troops,” referring to the assembled armies of the nations against God’s elect. But Megiddo, Armageddon, is the place of God’s victory.

The River Euphrates represents the wicked, unbelieving world (Revelation 16:12). When the great river dries up, when the economy and resources of the world are dried up by the hand of God, the way is prepared for the kings and people of the earth to move against the people of God in persecution. As it has been in the past, so shall it be in the future. In this last day the kings of the earth are being moved by hell inspired religious leaders against Christ and his church (Revelation 16:13-14). John saw three unclean spirits proceeding out of the mouth of the dragon (Satan), and the beast (pagan world government), and the false prophet (false religion). He compared those spirits to frogs to indicate the abominable, repulsive, loathsome character of the world’s government and the world’s religion in that last little season (Revelation 20:3), when Satan is loosed upon the earth. They represent all hell born philosophy and religion.

Are these things applicable to our day and our society? Without question, they are! There is particular reference made to the charismatic influence of our day in Revelation 16:14. — “*The spirits of devils, working miracles*”. It is both demonic and universal! Then, just when all the forces of the world, political, philosophical, and religious, are gathered against God, the Lord Jesus Christ will suddenly appear (Revelation 16:15). He comes as a thief in the night upon his enemies, suddenly, unexpectedly (Matthew 24:29; Judges 5:4; Habakkuk 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10). Even now, as God gathers his elect to Christ by the preaching of the gospel, he brings judgment upon the reprobate. The same sun that melts the wax hardens the clay (Matthew 13:30; 2 Corinthians 2:14-16). Those whom God seeks to destroy shall be destroyed. — “*He hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end*” (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thessalonians 2:7-14)

Repentance Wrought

In Zechariah 12:10 the prophet moves from judgment to mercy, and declares how repentance is wrought in chosen, redeemed sinners by God the Holy Spirit. Our Savior said, “*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*” Repentance is something we must do; but before any sinner can or will repent, repentance must be wrought in him by God the Holy Spirit. Here the Spirit of God tells us how he performs that work in us.

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn” (v. 10).

Robert Hawker wrote, “Had the Prophet *Zechariah* been raised up by God the Holy Ghost, to have brought the Church of Jesus this one promise only, every true believer in Christ would have found cause to bless the Lord for the ministry of this man, through every period of the Church.”

Repentance is the result of Holy Spirit conviction; and Holy Spirit conviction is the result of Christ being revealed in us in the day of grace and salvation.

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” (John 16:7-11)

This gift of God the Holy Spirit is the sure result of redemption by Christ (Galatians 3:13-14). It is the great blessing of God in the charter of grace, that which the triune Jehovah promised Christ as our God-man Mediator in the everlasting covenant. Pastor Henry Mahan observed...

“True repentance, true mourning for sin has a distinct and constant reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. If I hate sin because I am exposed, I have not repented; I merely regret that I have been found out. If I hate sin because of judgment and hell, I have not repented; I merely regret that God is just. But if I see my sin as a hateful offense against my Lord, and I see my sin as crucifying him, then I mourn with a truly broken and repentant heart (Psalm 51:3-4).”

‘Lord, let me weep for naught but sin
And after none but Thee;
Then I would, oh, that I might,
A constant weeper be!’

A broken heart over sin is a work of the Spirit of God and will be healed (Psalm 51:17; 34:18).”

Spurgeon said, “Even when Christ is clearly seen, and pardon is enjoyed, mourning for sin does not cease; say rather, it is both deepened and purified.”

Intensely Personal

Many vainly imagine that grace runs in blood-lines, that salvation is the result of being born into the right family, or that multitudes are saved when they are swept up in the excitement of a religious crowd. Sometimes God may save vast multitudes at once, as he did in Acts 2; but even then each believing sinner received Christ personally, experienced grace personally, repented personally, and believed the gospel personally. No one has ever been saved because he was a member of an imaginary “covenant family,” or sprinkled as a baby. Salvation is an intensely personal matter (John 1:12-13). You must be born again. You must have Christ revealed in you. You must repent. You must believe. That is what the Spirit of God teaches us in verses 11-14. — Repentance is an intensely personal matter.

“In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart” (vv. 11-14).

The mourning Zechariah describes here has one special characteristic. — It is personal, the act of an individual, and the act of the individual apart from any others. The key word in these four verses is “*apart*.” The whole land (all God’s elect) mourns, but each one “*apart*.” Sometimes whole families mourn, but each one “*apart*.” The family of the rich and influential, like “*the family of the house of David*,” mourns, but each one “*apart*.” The family of the prophet, like “*the family of the house of Nathan*,” may mourn, but each one “*apart*.” The priest’s family, the family of that man who teaches God’s people, “*like the family of the house of Levi*,” may mourn, but each one “*apart*.” The families of common, laboring men, like “*the family of Shimei*,” may mourn, but each one “*apart*.” Those who are nearest and dearest to us, our wives, may be granted the blessed mourning of repentance, but each one “*apart*.”

The fact is, when God deals with his people in grace, he always deals with each one alone. As Hosea said of Gomer, our God says of his elect, “*Behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her*” (Hosea 2:14). Our Lord spoke forgiveness and peace to the adulterous woman (John 8:1-11) only when he had her alone with himself. Though thousands were gathered around his cross, watching him die, our Savior dealt with the dying thief alone (Luke 23:43). Many were travelling with Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus Road; but the Lord Jesus spoke and revealed himself to Saul alone (Acts 9:1-9). Every sinner convinced of his sin finds himself utterly alone before God, and feels a need to be alone with his Savior. None can enter into his soul’s bitterness. He has a secret hidden away in his soul called “sin,” that cannot be revealed to any but God his Savior, whom he has pierced. You must come to Christ yourself, personally. You must repent yourself, personally. You must mourn for your sin yourself, personally and alone. Any third person (parent, peer, preacher, or priest) is an intrusion!

Pardon and Cleansing

As soon as Christ is revealed in you and to you, as soon as you look on him whom you have pierced and find yourself mourning for him, as soon as your soul is in bitterness because of him, as soon as you are convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, as soon as you know your guilt before God and your filth, as soon as you taste your corruption, *“in that day there shall be a fountain opened”* to you *“for sin and for uncleanness.”*

“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness” (13:1).

Christ is the Fountain, the Fountain opened by God to our souls in saving mercy, *“the Fountain of Living Waters,” “the Fountain of Life!”* The Fountain was opened in eternity by the decree of God (Revelation 13:8). The Fountain was opened at Calvary by the sword of divine justice (John 19:34-37; Zechariah 13:7). The Fountain is opened to the guilty, unclean sinner in the day of grace. The Fountain remains open for all who need it. The Fountain is opened for sin to remove our guilt. The Fountain is opened for uncleanness to sanctify our souls. The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s dear Son, *“cleanseth us from all sin!”*

“O now I see the cleansing wave!
The fountain deep and wide;
Jesus, my Lord, mighty to save,
Points to His wounded side.

I see the dear Redeemer raised,
I hear the speaking blood;
It speaks! My spirit is amazed!
And quickened by its flood.

I rise to walk in God’s own light
Above the world and sin,
With heart renewed and garments white
And Christ enthroned within.

The cleansing stream, I see, I see,
I plunge and oh! it cleanseth me.
Oh, praise the Lord it cleanseth me!
It cleanseth me, yes, cleanseth me!”