

Zechariah 12-13

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[0 : 00] Good evening, a warm welcome to the service this evening. The intimations you have on the white sheets and you've had on the screen, so I will leave you to go through these at your own convenience.

All I will say is that any who know the Lord and who are trusting the Lord and who haven't yet professed their faith, if there's any who in view of next week's communion are thinking about the reality of that call and who want to speak about that, please be encouraged to come and speak to me or to any of the elders in advance of the weekend.

Let's just as we turn back to God's word, pray again, let's unite our hearts in prayer. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for the psalm that we have been singing, a psalm which is so familiar to us and so precious to us, a psalm that reminds us of many times when we have taken it upon our lips and our hearts have been sore.

And yet, a psalm where we receive such comfort as we are enabled to say, the Lord is my shepherd. And yet, Lord, we know that the comfort that we receive from having the Lord as our shepherd is a comfort that came at great price.

We thank you that the Lord Jesus is the one who loved us so much that he was willing to feel the strike of judgment upon his own body in order that our sin would be paid for and our salvation would be secured.

[1 : 52] And so we pray that as we think upon that psalm and as we come now to the passage that we've read, we pray that you would give us that clear view of Jesus. Help us to see the beauty and the glory of Christ.

Help us to see our great need of Jesus and to come in faith to the one who promises to receive us and not to drive us away. We pray for all who are here this evening and for any in particular who may not have come to you or may have no assurance of faith at this time, we ask that you would be working in each of our hearts that we would have that conviction, that assurance, that clarity of knowing where we stand before you.

We thank you that as we see our sin and as we have that sense of need, you are working in our lives and we thank you that we are promised that all who look to the Lord will be saved.

So enable each one, we pray, to look to the Lord Jesus and to know the reality of that salvation. We pray for many, Lord, who don't know their need and who don't feel their need.

Some, perhaps who may be here, many who are absent. And we ask, Father, that you would work in this community, in this congregation, that you would work in the hearts of many, that you may impress upon each one the seriousness of our sin and the desperate need that we have of Christ as our Saviour.

[3 : 34] Be at work, Lord, we pray. Do for them what we cannot do for them and what they cannot do for themselves. Work, Lord, we pray, and awaken souls so that many in this place would be drawn to the Lord Jesus.

We know that you are the God who gives the increase. One word is sufficient to give the increase. We have known times in the past where there has been huge revival of your people and awakening of those who were once far from you.

And we know that you are still able to do this again. And we know, Lord, that you are the God who hears and who answers prayer. And so as we seek to humble ourselves before you, as we seek to turn away from our sin, as we call upon your name, as we turn from our wicked ways, we ask, Lord, that you would hear our prayer, that you would heal our hearts, that you would heal our community, that you would heal this land, which once was so close to you, and now has drifted so far.

We pray, Lord, that you would be with us in the course of this week. We pray especially for Gordon as he begins this new job that you have given him.

We thank you, Lord, that you have called him into the position of youth discipleship worker in the area. And we ask, Lord, that you would guide him, that you would lead him, that you would equip him for the task that you have called him to.

[5 : 08] And we pray that you would use him in a mighty way for your glory, that he may be given the wisdom to encourage and to guide and to direct different congregations in different places, that they and that we may seek to reach out with the gospel message.

And, Lord, that we would not stand in the way, that we would not cause any young people to be held back from Jesus. But we pray that in our prayers and with all our efforts, we may cause them to come to the Lord Jesus, the one who each one of us, young and old, need.

To hear our prayers, take away our sin, be with those who would desire to be present, but who are struggling with their health, who are frail, who have a desire but no opportunity.

And at work, Lord, we pray, in the power of your spirit, to minister to them where they are. And be at work, Lord, we pray, with those who have opportunity and who have health and who have strength, but who have no desire.

Work in the hearts of each one, we pray. And we ask all this, together with the forgiveness of our sins, in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. If you want to get to know someone, this is true in the playground, it's true for the boys and girls, it's true for us all.

[6 : 40] If you want to get to know someone, then the person that you want to get to know actually has to be willing to let you get to know them.

I remember once knocking on a door in a place called Kinloch U. You can probably see that now. It's been a few years. And there was a family that had moved in quite recently to the place.

And it was quite a small place. And I was going and visiting in various places. And I was knocking on all the doors. And I went to this one particular door. And I knew the family had come in. And I knocked on the door.

And this guy came to the door with his chest out, his fists clenched. And I said, Hello. I'm here from the church. You've not met me before. My name's David.

I'm a minister. And the church's just along the road there. And I just wanted to say, it's nice to have you. I heard you moved into the community. And you'd be really welcome in the church at any time.

[7 : 38] So I suppose I'm just here to welcome you and to say hello. And he looked at me. And he said nothing for a second.

And then he said, Well, you've said it. I said, What? He says, You've said hello. And I said, Okay. Would you like it now if I said goodbye?

Before I could even respond to that, bang, door was closed. It's the last I saw him. Somebody has to be willing for you to actually get to know them if you're going to have any kind of relationship.

Sometimes you can be having a conversation. It's a bit of chit-chat. But you're aware that the person you're trying to speak to, although they're being polite, they're holding you at a distance. They're saying, Stay back.

Or with their phones even, social media. If you want to connect with somebody, if you want to get to know someone, they have to agree to connect with you before you can become any kind of a so-called friend.

[8 : 44] The point I want to begin with tonight is the point that we we left off last time we were in Zechariah. And it's it's to note the fact that God wants us to know about him.

And God wants us to know him. We don't have a God who plays hide and seek with us, we said last time. We don't have a God who hides himself from us, but in creation, in scripture, and supremely through Jesus, God the Son, God is revealing himself to us.

And we see that as we carry on in Zechariah chapter 12 and chapter 13. The last time we met together, we noted the fact that God as he reveals himself to us, he reveals himself to us as our creator, the one who made us, and our sustainer, the one who keeps everything going.

It's verse 1 chapter 12. And the second point that we looked at is the fact that God is our protector. There's many dangers, there's many risks, there's many things that these people were struggling with in these days and God says to them, don't worry, I'm your protector.

And the third thing that we see here that we never got to last time but I want to focus on tonight is that God, he reveals himself to us as our saviour.

[10 : 17] God is our saviour. And that takes us all the way from chapter 12 verse 7 right the way through to the end of chapter 13.

so we're going to just think this through and I want to ask three questions tonight as we think through the reality of the fact that God is our saviour. And as we think through the nature of the salvation that he offers.

Three questions. First question is who will save? Who will save? And the second question to ask is how are we saved?

And the final question is where are we saved? And we'll try to answer that looking at these verses. So the first question is who will save?

And the answer to that question emphatically is that the Lord will save. Look at verse 7 it's made clear there in chapter 12 that it's the Lord who will save his people.

[11 : 29] And that runs all the way through the chapter. All the salvation all the deliverance all the protection that God's people needed they received it but they didn't do it.

they didn't earn it. They didn't win it. God gave it. Verse 2 I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding nations reeling.

Verse 3 God says I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. Verse 4 God says on that day I will strike every horse with panic and its riders with madness.

So as you were attacking God's people still in verse 4 God says I will keep a watchful eye over the house of Judah I will blind all the horses of the nations. The horses were like tanks in these days.

And people heard horses coming in that they were fearful horses and chariots were like tanks invading. God is saying to his people don't worry I will blind all the horses of the nations.

[12 : 44] Verse 5 Then all the leaders of Judah will say in their hearts the people of Jerusalem are strong because the Lord Almighty is their God. And we can go on with this but the point I want to just very briefly make in the first instance is that all the doing all the saving all the delivering all the protecting is God's work.

And we see that in this chapter we see that running all through the Old Testament we see it even more clearly if we went from the Old Testament into the New Testament remember when Jesus was on the cross the crying the last cry that John records as Jesus takes his last breath from the cross the cry of Jesus is it is finished.

And with that cry the work of saving us it was done. Who will save back then God will save.

Who will save still now tonight God will save. and that's good news for us to take hold of tonight.

If you and I want to to be saved if we want to be delivered if we want to be protected from the devil from sin's penalty from death from hell we don't have to roll our sleeves up and start a work that we hope somehow we'll be able to keep on going with and ultimately succeed with.

[14 : 36] We can't save ourselves no one else can save us but the Lord can save us and the work of saving us has been done.

All we have to do is believe and receive. So tonight for those who are listening tonight if you're still with me it's a great comfort and joy to know that none of us need walk out that door without knowing assuredly where we are in our souls.

It's not about us. It's not about what we have done are doing or hope to do. It's about what Jesus has already done. The work of salvation is complete and if we want to know that security for eternity all we have to do is believe who will save the Lord will save.

Second question how are we saved? And the answer which we begin to see in the verses here and it becomes clearer as scripture continues the answer that we see here is that we're saved by grace.

Verse 7 the Lord will save the dwellings of Judah first so that the honor of the house of David and of Jerusalem's inhabitants may not be greater than that of Judah.

[16 : 21] On that day the Lord will shield those who live in Jerusalem so that the feeblest among them will be like David and the house of David will be like God like the angel of the Lord going before them.

And so it goes on there. But what I want us to notice there is the order. God says I'm going to save. But he says that he will save the dwellings of Judah first.

Now Judah were the small people. We have Jerusalem and they're the stronger people. They're the people that would be perceived to have the greater value and the more clout about them.

Judah were just the underdogs. You know what an underdog is. You might have a football team in the Champions League and they're top of the world.

Some team like Barcelona or like Inter Milan. One of the big guns. And then you might have a little team.

[17 : 34] St. Mirren. And you would look at these two teams and you would say well the big guys, the ones we're interested in now, the Barcelonas, the St. Mirren's, we're not really interested in them.

And God is saying here that he is going to save the small ones first. He's going to be interested in saving the weaker nation first.

God is now, why does he say that? Why does he not overlook the smaller people like everybody else do?

It's because he is gracious. That's how God works. God doesn't choose us on the basis of how strong and how powerful and how attractive and how valuable we are.

He chooses to save us, not because of who we are and what we've done. He chooses to save us because he's gracious. We're not deserving of his salvation.

[18 : 50] We can't merit his salvation, but he saves us in spite of who we are. He saves us because of who he is.

That's what Paul came to recognize in Ephesians chapter 2. We read a verse or two of it this morning. Paul had been Saul. Boys and girls, you remember Saul who turned into Paul.

Saul's life had been devoted to being anti-Christ. He poured all his time and all his energy into opposing Jesus and all those who were following Jesus.

He did everything he could to try and crush the church of Jesus. If there was a Franklin, Graham, Raleigh, in Paul's neighborhood, he would have been the first man to try and get it closed down.

Everything Christ-centered, he wanted to crush. But one day on the Damascus road, Paul's eyes and his ears were open to Jesus and Paul realized suddenly that he was wrong to live the way he had.

[20 : 10] He realized he had a serious problem. But could someone like Paul, the chief of sinners as he called himself, could he be saved?

When he'd done so many bad things, when he'd been so hateful towards Christ, when he'd been so cruel towards Christians, could Paul, after all that, be saved?

Oh, yes, he could. How? Because we are saved by grace. And God's grace is much more powerful than our sin.

Ephesians 2, for it's by grace you've been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works that no one can boast.

And that was true for little Judah, in Zechariah 12, little Judah. And God says, I'm going to save them first.

[21 : 20] It's true for the apostle Paul. And it's true for every one of us. We are saved by grace. God, in his grace, he opens our eyes so that we see our smallness.

we see our need of him. And we see the salvation that he offers to us. We are saved by grace. It's the gift of God.

But the question that I want to ask before we move on is, have you received it? There's many things that were offered, precious things that were offered.

But have we received it? You might have been offered pudding today. Delicious pavlova was on our table.

Sliced up. So ask the question, would you like a slice? Absolutely. Let me have it. And God's salvation, his saving of us, in a way, is like that.

[22 : 29] It's the most amazing thing to know that our sins are forgiven. The sheet is clear. The stains are removed. We don't have to be frightened of death anymore.

We don't have to wonder where we're going. We have the promise of heaven. That's what God offers. We have to come to him in prayer and say, yes, Lord, I don't deserve it.

but I want it. I accept it. We're saved by grace. That's how we're saved.

And the final question for tonight is, where are we saved? Sometimes when we are given an offer, especially when it's a really good offer, we want to see the small print.

Because some offers when they come onto our desk, they seem almost too good to be true. And so we want to say, give me that bit of paper. Let me see that deal that's been offered.

[23 : 42] Is it really for me? Can it really be true that this is actually as good as it says it is? So we take hold of it and we want to see a bit more detail.

And when we think about the offer of salvation, when we think about how holy and how pure and how good God is, and when we think about how small and how sinful and how unworthy we are, it's a fair question to ask, how can I be saved?

We might look around us and say, well, there's some people who seem to live a good life. I can understand how God would save them, but when we know our own hearts, the devil comes along to us and he says, that's for them, it's not for you.

You're too dark, you're too bad, you're past it. And yet as we're in the Bible, God is saying, no, no, if you know your badness, this is for you. So how are we saved?

We're saved by grace, but the next question here is where are we saved? What's the detail of this? Where are we saved and how can we be saved? And from verse 10 of chapter 12 down to the end of chapter 13, we're given some more detail on how it was possible and where it was made possible for us to be saved.

[25 : 15] and we have three pictures. And each picture that we're given points us to a particular place and that particular place is Calvary, it's the cross.

So here, hundreds of years before the cross, we see that we are being pointed forward to the cross where Jesus would go as Savior.

Three pictures. first picture here we see in verse 10. And the picture we're given is the picture of a sun being pierced.

The sun is pierced. God says to Ezekiel, and I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication.

They will look on me. This is God speaking. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him, as one grieves for a firstborn son.

[26 : 22] So who do we see here in verse 10? Well, we see Jesus. It makes no sense until we see Jesus.

He's the one who was pierced on the cross. God's and he was pierced for our sin on the cross. He is the only child of God, the son of God who was given so that we might not perish, but so that we would be saved.

So as we read here about the one who was pierced, we're reading here about Jesus. Jesus. And if you have any doubts about that, listen to John chapter 19.

John chapter 19 and verse 34. It says there, one of the soldiers, we're at the cross here, you don't need to go there, but it says here in John 19 verse 34, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

The man who saw it is given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells you the truth, and he testifies that you may also believe. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled.

[27 : 53] Not one of his bones will be broken, and as another scripture says, they will look on the one they have pierced. So who do we see here?

Working out our salvation, we see Jesus. That piercing was for us. The second picture we see here is the picture of a fountain that is opened.

Verse one of chapter 13. It says there on that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and impurity.

Where was the fountain opened for the cleansing of sin? Well, it was the cross. In Zechariah's day, we have priests, and they're forever filling and emptying basins to try to make efforts to cleanse from sin.

There's sacrifice after sacrifice to make efforts to cleanse from sin and yet it never cleanses from sin. But here there's the promise of a fountain, a glorious fountain that's always flowing where cleansing from sin would always be available.

[29 : 22] And that fountain was the fountain that we sang of, that was opened at the cross. There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day, and there may I, though vilest he, wash all my sins away. Dear dying lamb, thy precious blood shall never lose its power till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more.

It's the second picture. We see the picture of the sun, Christ, being pierced. And all who see him, all who look to him, all who mourn for what our sins have done are cleansed, are saved through him.

We have the picture of the fountain that has opened, that fountain that flowed from the cross, the fountain where Christ's blood, as Michael was trying to tell me this morning, washes through so that our sins are taken away.

And the final picture is the picture of the shepherd being struck.

[30 : 57] Verse 7 of chapter 12, 13, sorry. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me, declares the Lord Almighty.

Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered. Again, we see Jesus here, that the sword represents that legal punishment that was necessary for our sin.

The sword was what was due to strike us. It's the sword of God's wrath, against our sin. But on the cross we see Jesus, the good shepherd.

And we know, because we read it just a few weeks ago in Mark 14, 27, that before Jesus went to the cross, he took these very words upon his own lips.

And then he proceeded to that place where he would be struck. he would be punished for our sin so that we could be saved.

[32 : 21] So, where are we saved? We're saved at the cross. There's no other place. We're saved at that place where we see the sun pierced.

we're saved at that place where we see the fountain of blood being opened. We're saved at that place where we see the good shepherd, the sinless one, being struck for our sin so that we could be saved.

saved. So, what do we do in response to this? What are we to do if we are to receive this salvation?

Well, we call upon the name of the Lord. That's what we're directed to do in verse 9. we call on the name of the Lord and he will answer.

You know, there are many false prophets back then and still today who try to direct us to another place. And if you glance verses 2 to verse 6, there's that strong and quite difficult to read message of idols and false prophets.

[33 : 49] And there's the directive in these verses that anyone who seeks to preach a different message to this message of coming to the fountain and looking to the sun and trusting in the good shepherd, anyone who seeks to take us away from that place, to take us away from that cross is to be silenced.

The lie of that is to be stabbed right through. It's the picture of it. you know, that makes sense when you think about it for a moment.

You know, if the fire service got a call out here, they're called to a building and the building is in flames and Cammy and the guys arrive and they see someone on the first floor and they shout out to them, you need to get out of there.

The building is burning, you're going to lose your life, you need to get out of there. And the people listen and they start to move towards the exit of the building and then someone else comes along and says, no, don't listen to them, just stay there, you'll be fine.

if that was happening in two seconds flat, Cammy and the guys with him would be closing down that message of stay in the building and saying, don't listen to them, listen to us, get out of there.

[35 : 18] And that's the message that's coming through in the early part of verse 13. Any idol, any false prophet that seeks to take us away from Jesus and the cross is to close down and shut up.

Any influence in your life is seeking to take you away from Christ, you need to close that down because the only way that we can be saved is by calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

And we have the promise in verse 9 that if we call, he will answer. and he through Christ's finished work on the cross will claim him, claim us as his people and give to us that salvation that he has bought.

So if you've never done so before, then call out to the Lord Jesus even tonight, especially tonight. He will answer.

If you believe and if you will come to the cross, he will save. save. But if you've done so, and you're one of his people, then you must be willing to say, the Lord is my God.

[36 : 57] God, that's what it says at the end of the chapter. They will call on my name, and I will answer them.

I will say, they are my people, and they will say, the Lord is our God. Actually, the translation there is not good.

The literal translation for that last bit of that verse is, and each one will say, the Lord is my God.

And that's what we're called to do. If we are believers, who have taken hold of the salvation that Christ has worked out for us, if we are those who have received the grace of Jesus, we are called each one to say openly, publicly, the Lord is my God.

And we have opportunity to do that, even as we think about the prospect of next weekend, if we see it. As we take the bread, as we take the wine, as we step forward, we do so to say, the Lord is my God.

[38 : 29] So may God enable us to do so. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we pray that you would help us as we go from here, that you would crystallize the truth of this chapter in our minds and take the disordered words that perhaps I have spoken and bring them into a shape whereby we may be able to see and hear the message of salvation and respond by taking hold of the grace that is offered to us and responding further by saying, as those who have received grace, the Lord is my God.

we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.