

Post-Exile Prophets
THE ONE THEY HAVE PIERCED

Saturday, September 13

Reading: Zechariah 12:10-14

Zechariah 12:10 *They will look on Me, the One they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child*

Israel's response to the coming of Messiah is one of mournful repentance. Ancient Jewish rabbis applied these verses to Messiah, but through the centuries Jewish interpreters have tried to make this verse apply to someone else. A simple reading of the text, however, leaves little doubt that this refers to the Messiah. This is the way the apostle John understands it as he quotes verse 10 in his account of Jesus' crucifixion (John 19:37) and again in the opening of the book of Revelation (1:7).

Centuries before Zechariah, the prophet Isaiah wrote, "He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on Him, and by His wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). The word "pierced" speaks of a violent death. Jesus' rejection and crucifixion was due (in part) to Israel's rejection their Messiah. At His 2nd Coming, the Jewish nation that had continued to pierce Him through their on-going rejection will finally realize the truth and turn to Him in faith.

The apostle Paul reminds us that "godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). That is what Israel will do "on that day." Their mourning will be as strong as the weeping for an only son. Without the firstborn son, a family had lost their security and hope for the future. And Israel had rejected God's only Son. There will be private mourning and repentance, but also public mourning. The "weeping...in the plain of Megiddo" refers to the death of King Josiah, the last godly king of Judah, which caused public mourning (2 Chronicles 35:20-27). This was a great tragedy and ultimately led to the Babylonian exile. These statements express the intensity of Israel's grief at seeing their Messiah they had so long rejected.

Zechariah also explains the scope of this heartfelt repentance. It would include the political leadership from top to bottom. The house of David is the line of kings from Solomon. The house of Nathan probably refers to David's 3rd son through Bathsheba. The line of Nathan ultimately led to Jesus' mother Mary (Luke 3:23-31). The religious leadership will also repent. From the house of Levi came the high priests and the house of Shimei were assistants to the priests, coming through the line of Gershon (Numbers 3:17-18). Finally, "all the rest of the clans" will mourn in repentance. And this is not limited to the men as "their wives" are listed with each group. The nation will turn to Messiah Jesus in faith and He will cleanse them (13:1).

Romans 11:25 I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, 26 and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written: "The Deliverer will come from Zion; He will turn godlessness away from Jacob. 27 And this is My covenant with them when I take away their sins."

What a comfort to know that God will always keep His promises. And that no matter how far someone is away from God – no matter how stubbornly they reject Him – the Lord Jesus will save them if they will acknowledge their sin and turn to Him in repentance! Pray for someone in your life who needs to "look on the One they have pierced" and have godly sorrow that leads to repentance.