

The Day of the Lord

(Look on Him whom you have pierced)

Zechariah 12–14

Key Verse: 12:10

“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.”

Once I was navigating my way through a maze. I entered confidently, thinking I could easily find the exit. But after reaching one dead end after another, I began to panic. Have you ever felt lost in your life—in your family, relationships, career, ministry, or future? Sometimes life feels like a maze with no way out. Our world often feels the same. Nations are divided, wars continue, and even creation groans under the weight of sin.

The apocalyptic books of the Bible proclaim good news: God has prepared the way out. The Bible calls it the Day of the Lord. Through the first and second Comings of the Messiah, God is bringing this broken world into a new creation. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” In Zechariah 12–14, God reveals what he will do on the Day of the Lord. He will deliver, cleanse, and ultimately reign over his people. At the center of this prophecy stands the Messiah who was pierced. God calls his people to look on Him whom they pierced and receive his grace. The Day of the Lord is not only for Israel but for all mankind. God created humanity to share in his rest, but sin robbed us of it. Through Jesus Christ, God has inaugurated the true Day of rest. It began with the Messiah's first coming and will be consummated at his second coming.

How, then, can we participate in the Day of the Lord? Zechariah gives one answer: Look on Him whom you have pierced. This message has three parts. The Day of the Lord is the day of 1) Great deliverance, 2) Great cleansing, 3) Great victory. May God bless us to look on Him whom we have pierced and experience his great deliverance, great cleansing, and great victory.

Part I. The Day of Great Deliverance (Chapter 12)

Verse 1a says that this prophecy concerns Israel. The Lord is introduced as the Creator of the heavens, the earth, and the human spirit. This reminds us that although the

prophecy focuses on Israel, God has the whole world in view. The Creator who formed mankind is able to deliver both Israel and all who trust in him.

First, God's physical deliverance of Israel (12:2–9). Verse 3 says, "...all the nations of the earth will gather against it (Jerusalem)." Such a worldwide attack against Israel has never happened before. It points ahead to the final battle against the Lord at Armageddon (Rev. 16:16). Throughout verses 2–9, God repeatedly declares what the Lord will do: "I will make" (2), "I will make" (3), "I will strike" (4), "I will make" (6), "the Lord will give" (7), "the Lord will protect" (8), and "I will seek to destroy" (9). Israel's deliverance will not come through military strength but through the Lord himself. On that day, he will physically save ethnic Israel, and they will recognize him as the Lord Almighty (5).

Why will God deliver a people who pierced the Messiah? They rejected him and crucified him. Yet God remembers his covenant. His love is greater than their sin. His covenant faithfulness is stronger than their rebellion.

Second, God's spiritual deliverance of Israel (12:10–14). God's work goes far beyond rescuing Israel from her enemies. He will rescue her heart. Let's read verse 10. "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn."

After crucifying Jesus, many looked up at him and mocked him, saying, "If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross... He saved others; he cannot save himself" (Mt. 27:40, 42). Their continued rejection eventually led to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Yet God was not finished with them.

On the Day of the Lord, everything changes. God himself will pour out the Spirit of grace. Then the people will look on the One whom they pierced. Instead of mocking him, they will mourn over him. Instead of hardening their hearts, they will repent. Their tears will not come from human effort but from God's gracious work through the Holy Spirit. Verses 11–14 describe a nationwide repentance. Their mourning will be as great as the nation's mourning over King Josiah (2 Chr. 35:20). Every family—the royal family, the priestly family, and the common people—will mourn individually before God. The nation that once rejected the Messiah will finally look on him with faith.

We see a foretaste of this on the Day of Pentecost. Peter proclaimed, "Jesus... you crucified and killed... God raised him up." When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and cried out, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter answered, "Repent and be

baptized...” That day about three thousand Jews crossed from death to life. Yet Pentecost points forward to the even greater national repentance that Zechariah prophesied.

What did this prophecy mean to Zechariah’s original audience? They would soon enter four hundred years of prophetic silence and darkness. Yet they could wait in hope, looking by faith to the coming Messiah, just as Hebrews says the saints greeted God’s promises from afar (Heb. 11:13–16).

This prophecy is also true for us. God has only one way to save sinners, whether Jew or Gentile. We must look on Him whom we have pierced. We may never have driven the nails into Jesus’ hands, but our sins pierced him. Isaiah 53:5 says, “But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities... and with his wounds we are healed.” Jesus Christ is the way out of our maze-like existence of sin, failure, and death. If you feel trapped today, turn your eyes to the pierced Savior. Mourn over your sins, trust in his grace, and receive his healing.

While meditating on this passage, I examined my own heart. Was it softened by godly sorrow? Was it filled with God’s peace? Sadly, I found my heart dry. I became angry when the Korean soccer team lost. I pressured myself to write better messages every week. I was stressed and felt trapped in a maze. Then the Lord kept saying to me, “Look on me, whom you have pierced.” “Lord Jesus, I didn’t pierce you. The Jews and Roman soldiers did.” “Yes, you did. You still do whenever you live without looking on me. Do not look back. Do not look around. Do not even look within yourself. Look into my face.” As I looked on Jesus, I saw his love in his pierced body. Tears of godly sorrow began to flow, and my heart filled with praise for my Savior. Thank God that we now live in the Day of God’s grace and mercy.

Today, when you hear Jesus say, “Look on me, whom you have pierced,” do not harden your heart. Look to him, and you will find the way out of every dead end into his great deliverance.

Part II. The Day of Great Cleansing (Chapter 13)

The Day of the Lord is not only a day of great deliverance. It is also the day of great cleansing. Those whom God delivers, he also cleanses. Those who look on the pierced Messiah are washed and made holy.

Let’s read 13:1 together. “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.” What is this fountain? Under the Old Testament, the priests washed with water from the Bronze

Sea before entering God's presence. King David cried after his sins of adultery and murder were exposed, "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!" (Ps. 51:2). Where would God's people find such cleansing? Not in another basin or another sacrifice, but in the pierced Messiah himself. When Jesus died on the cross, a fountain was opened. 1 John 1:7 says, "...the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."

What amazing grace! The greatest sin Israel committed was piercing the Son of God, yet God made the pierced Messiah the very fountain that would cleanse them. From his pierced hands, feet, and side flows the grace that washes away sin. Look on Him whom you have pierced, and you will find cleansing. Verse 1b tells us that this fountain cleanses us from sin and uncleanness.

First, it cleanses us from sin. In this passage, sin is more than immoral behaviors such as lying, stealing, adultery, or murder. The greatest sin is rejecting God's Messiah. It is the pride that says, "I will rule my own life. I do not need God." Like someone wandering through a maze, we keep insisting, "I can find my own way." Yet every path ends in another dead end. That pride pierced the Messiah. What amazing love that the very One whom we pierced was pierced for us. Isaiah 53:5 says, "But he was pierced for our transgressions... and with his wounds we are healed."

Second, this fountain cleanses us from uncleanness. In Matthew 8:2–3, a leper knelt before Jesus and said, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." Jesus touched him and said, "I will; be clean." The man received much more than physical healing. He was restored to his family, his community, and the worship of God.

In the Day of the Lord there will be purification, restoration, and sanctification, both individually and nationally. Verses 2-6 say the Lord will cut off idols, false prophets, and the spirit of uncleanness from the land. God's cleansing reaches not only individuals but an entire nation.

God's cleansing does not end with forgiveness. He continues his work by refining his people. Let's read verse 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.'" Did you notice Jesus quoted the first part of this verse on the night of his arrest, when his disciples were scattered? But the second part points forward to God's continuing work during the Day of the Lord, the work of refining. Look at verses 8–9. "In the whole land, declares the Lord, two thirds shall be cut off and perish, and one third shall be left alive. 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.’” Like silver refined in the fire, our faith is tested until it becomes genuine. Peter writes, “Though now for a little while... you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith... may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:6–7). Every trial is another opportunity to look on the One who was pierced. As we keep looking to Christ, he burns away our pride, deepens our faith, and makes us more like himself.

Why does God cleanse and refine us? Peter answers, “As he who called you is holy, you also be holy” (1 Pet. 1:15). God is preparing us to stand in his holy presence. He does not merely forgive us; he transforms us.

Today, look on Him whom you have pierced. His fountain is still open. His blood still cleanses. His Spirit is still sanctifying his people. As you keep looking to Christ, he will wash away your sin, refine your faith, and prepare you for the day you will see him face to face.

Part III. The Day of Great Victory (Chapter 14)

Thus far, Zechariah has described the Day of the Lord as the period between the Messiah’s first and second comings—a day of great deliverance and great cleansing. Chapter 14 now points us to its glorious climax: the day of great victory (7). Why will that day be so glorious?

First, the pierced Messiah will reign as King over all the earth. Chapter 14 begins with a great battle. Surprisingly, the Lord himself gathers the nations against Jerusalem. At first, God’s people appear defeated. Jerusalem suffers greatly, and the nations seem victorious. But the story is not over. Look at verses 3–5. The Lord himself goes out to fight for his people. Standing on the Mount of Olives, he splits the mountain in two, creating a great valley through which his people can escape. The place associated with sorrow becomes the place of deliverance.

Then comes the glorious promise: “Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him” (5). Jesus understood this prophecy to point to his own return. In Matthew 24 he said that after the tribulation, the Son of Man will come with power and great glory, and he will gather his elect from the ends of the earth. Let us read verse 9. “And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day the Lord will be one and his name one.” The One who was pierced will be recognized as King by the whole world. Paul describes that day in Philippians 2:9–11, “Therefore God has highly exalted him... so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow... and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to

the glory of God the Father.” The world once crowned him with thorns. On that day, he will wear the crown of universal King. The hands that were pierced will rule over all creation. There will be no rival to King Jesus, and every trace of human pride and rebellion will finally come to an end. Psalm 2:11-12 warns all rulers: “Serve the Lord with fear... Kiss the Son... Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”

Second, the King will make all things new. When God created the heavens and the earth, everything was “very good.” But because of sin, creation came under God’s curse. That curse will not last forever. Verses 6–8 describe a transformed creation. Darkness gives way to everlasting light. Living waters flow from Jerusalem throughout the earth. Seasons no longer threaten life because God’s blessing fills his creation. This is not merely the repair of the old world. It is the beginning of the new creation. There will be no more curse, no more death, no more disasters, and no more sorrow. The new heavens and the new earth will be filled with the light, life, and glory of our victorious King.

Third, God’s people will worship him forever. God created mankind to know him, love him, and worship him. Sin shattered that relationship. In our pride, we rejected God’s rule and pierced his Son. Yet God turned humanity’s greatest act of rebellion into his greatest act of salvation. When we look on the One whom we pierced, we receive forgiveness, cleansing, and new life. As we continue looking to Christ throughout the Day of the Lord, he prepares us for the day we will see him face to face. Our present bodies are weak and perishable, but one day they will be raised imperishable, glorious, and powerful. Then we will join the redeemed from every nation in worship, crying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” (Rev. 5:12)

What a glorious day that will be! Not because we earned it. Not because we were faithful enough. But because of the grace of the One who was pierced for our sins. The prophet Zechariah points God’s people beyond the dead ends of this present world to the glorious future God has prepared through the Messiah. People, nations, and even creation still groan under the weight of sin. But this broken age is not the end of the story.

Today we are living in the Day of the Lord. Therefore, look on Him whom you have pierced. Look to the One who delivers you from sin, cleanses you by his blood, and will one day return as King over all the earth. May God help us keep looking to Christ until the day our faith becomes sight and we worship our pierced and victorious King forever.