

Hope has a Name - Zechariah 13

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[0:00] Would you pray with me? Lord, may that be our hearts cry.! Lord, I need you. Lord, thank you for the opportunity to gather,!

Lord, I pray our need for you would be just as great. So, Lord, as you speak through your word, I pray that our answer and response to you is yes, Lord.

Thank you for this living and beautiful word. In your name we pray, amen. You may be seated. I have had opportunity over the years to travel to places where malaria medicine is helpful.

And I remember being prescribed malaria, an anti-malarial drug, and I was visiting with a medical doctor shortly thereafter, that appointment, and the medical doctor said to me, be sure to take that on an empty stomach, that drug on an empty stomach.

And I said, oh, why is that? And he said, well, whether you're taking the drug for acne or malaria, it's good to take that drug on an empty stomach so that the drug is not absorbed by food and its potency is not diluted.

[1:36] And I thought, acne? So I said, okay, well, help me understand that now. I've got more questions. And he said, yeah, it's the same drug that people take for acne.

And so it's the same dosage, it's the same drug, it's the same prescription, whether you take it for acne or anti-malarial drug. It's an antibacterial drug.

I had no clue. But I got thinking about it, that over 600 and something thousand people die from malaria.

To my knowledge, no one dies from acne. But my point is this, that the cross of Jesus Christ saves from that's what kills, death.

But there's other benefits that the cross of Christ has to sanctify one, to present that person pure before the Lord, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[2:46] Also, the gospel is good for, not just to forgive sin. Today, we're going to be studying if you're new with us, another chapter in the book of Zechariah.

And Zechariah is writing to a people of Israel who they are, we saw last week, they were saved physically. Then they were saved spiritually.

And today we're going to see an additional benefit. So if you're new with us today, we're in the book of Zechariah. Zechariah was prophesying about 600, or sorry, 500 years prior to Christ.

These two pillars with the cross and the horse illustrate the two different advents of Christ. So Zechariah is writing to encourage the people of Israel in his day about the future that he sees for the people of God, for Israel.

Then we know that Christ condescended to earth, took on human flesh, lived a sinless life, died a death for sin, rose victoriously over sin and death. We today have this privilege of living in the church age.

[3:55] And then we know one day he's going to return on his white horse, on a white horse. And I'm sorry that this isn't more magnificent than that. I'm sure his white horse is much more beautiful.

So, where are we in Zechariah when he is writing to Israel and he's writing to encourage them?

He's writing, we saw last week in the book of, in chapter 12, that the battle of Armageddon.

And so we see that the Euphrates River, if you remember, dries up and the armies of the nations come down to the south and they gather in the valley of Megiddo as a staging area as they push south to Jerusalem.

And as they push south to Jerusalem, Jerusalem is like a stone that they just keep beating up against the enemies of God. And they hurt themselves by trying to attack Jerusalem and its inhabitants.

And so we see the Lord protecting and saving and preserving Israel physically from these warring armies that will happen at the end of time. Then we see that the people of Israel, and we will see this today, that they, God saves them spiritually.

[5:14] We see this in Zechariah 12, verse 10. We see this in the last verse that we read, chapter 13, verse 1. He saves them spiritually. And then today, what will happen is we're going to read about the Lord purifying the land additionally.

So He saves them physically. He saves them spiritually. And now we're going to read about God cleansing the land as well. So if you have your Bible with you, if you can turn to Zechariah, chapter 13, we're going to pick up our text today in verse 2.

And we're going to see that the Lord is going to purify the land in two ways. He's going to purify it from two different evils. Let me read in verse, chapter 13, verse 2 through 6.

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 not be remembered no more. And also I will remove from the land the prophets and the spirits of uncleanness.

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 with when he prophesies.

[6:40] And on that day, every prophet will be ashamed of his vision who he prophesies, when he prophesies. He will not put a hairy cloak on, a cloak in order to deceive.

But he will say, I am no prophet. I am a worker of the soil for a man sold me in my youth. And if one asks him, what are those wounds on your back?

He will say, the wounds I've received in the house of my friends. What are the two evils that the Lord will cleanse from the land after he saves them physically, he saves them spiritually?

What does he do? These two evils are idolatry, and false prophecy. Idolatry and false prophets are often found together in the Bible. You remember King Ahab of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah.

When Micaiah was called to prophesy the death of Ahab, there were 400 false prophets and there was one prophet of the Lord. You may also remember Elijah who appeared on Mount Carmel.

[7:50] There was 450 prophets of Baal and one Elijah. Later in the southern kingdom, Jeremiah was plagued with many false prophets who predicted the peace of Jerusalem when in fact the destruction was coming, Babylon was coming.

And the point is, the idolatry and false prophets and prophecies often come together when they are found together widespread. Zechariah is foretelling a day when the Lord unilaterally cuts off idolatry and false prophets to the point where they will not even be remembered anymore.

Look with me in verse 2. So that they shall be remembered no more. These idols and these prophets. They won't even be remembered. Can you imagine a day when idolatry won't even be remembered anymore?

Won't that be a glorious day and what a promise. We all have wrestled with sin. We are familiar with the memory of that sin and accompanied with a persistent desire for sin.

Often it continues long after the sin itself is even repudiated. There will be a day when the idols will be removed and the memory of them will even be forgotten. There's a second point.

[9:06] There's three points. Zechariah makes the second point. The zeal for the Lord will be so great that the people will no longer even tolerate the existence of false prophets or the existence of false prophecies.

Look with me in verse 3. And if anyone again prophesies, his father and mother, his own parents 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.

There will be so little tolerance for anyone who false prophesies that even mothers and fathers will esteem the Lord greater than their own child who is deceiving people.

And you say, well, what is the big deal with these false prophets? I want us to look at Deuteronomy for a moment. How tolerant should the people of Israel be to false prophecies and the reason is given found in Deuteronomy.

Look with me in Deuteronomy 13 verse 6. It says this. And if your brother, the son of your mother or your son and your daughter or wife you embrace or your friend who is as your own soul entices you secretly saying, let us go and serve other gods.

[10:29] So there's the idolatry which neither you or your father have known. Some of the gods of the people who are around you whether near or far off from you from the one end of the earth to the other you shall not yield to him or listen to him nor shall your eye have pity on him nor shall you spare him nor shall you conceal him but you shall kill him.

That's what you are to do to an idolatrous person. Your hand shall be first against him to put him to death and afterward the hand of all the people. You shall stone him to death with stones and here's the motivation.

Here's the reason for this. Why? Because he sought to draw you away from the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt out of the house of slavery.

What does idolatry do? What do those who deceive do? What does idolatry do in our own hearts? What is so destructive about this?

Why should there be no tolerance for this? Because they draw us away from the Lord our God.

There is some affection in our heart that eclipses the affection for the Lord and whatever it is that that affection is is an idol in our lives.

[11:57] And there is a day that Zechariah is writing to that he says that will not be tolerated.

And a parent who even learns that their son or daughter they should be put to death immediately because nothing in this era should ever have an affection that draws us away from the Lord and that eclipses our affection for the Lord.

That's the nature of idolatry. It draws us away from the Lord. Idolatry is ultimately a sin of the heart. John Calvin said it this way that the human heart is an idol factory.

I would posit to you that all of us here in some way are idolatrous. An idol is anything that we depend on as a source to meet the needs of our heart that is apart from Christ.

whether that be some identity or some love or some sense of security or worth or significance. Do you search for peace or identity through relationships or a substance or money or entertainment?

[13:05] Addictions are a form of idolatry as are a host of other worldly enticements. Good things also can be idols.

Ministry can be an idol. Hobbies, charity work, family can usurp the rightful place that only God should hold in our lives. When we emotionally rely on these things other than our relationship with the Lord to validate us we are breaking the second commandment you shall have no other gods before me.

That commandment contains a warning for future generations. God is saying if we don't deal with this idolatry in our generation we will pass it down to our children and to their children.

Children learn to handle life by watching parents and when children observe mom and dad running to a bottle to a pill to a romance to social media to a shopping spree to make them feel good about themselves or to some purchase they will follow in that pattern.

When children watch their parents to spend time and money and energy on worldly pursuits they naturally copy those values and raise their own children in the same manner.

[14:23] I agree with John Calvin the human heart is an idol factory. If that is true for all of us what is it that eclipses our affections our affection for the Lord alone?

There are symptoms to idolatry. One of the symptoms is a disproportionate time that we spend in a pursuit. A disproportionate amount of money toward a pursuit.

If you possess anger or anxiety when you don't get something that's a symptom of an idol. When you rationalize sin sinful actions in order to attain or keep something what are your true priorities? what does the Lord what eclipses the Lord's affections in your heart? There is a day when the zeal for the Lord will not tolerate anything that draws your affection from the Lord.

That's what we just read. Verse 3 If anyone again prophesies his mother and father who bore him will say you shall not live and he speaks lies in the name of the Lord his father and mother who bore him shall pierce him through when he prophesies.

[15:37] They will not tolerate anything or anyone will draw him away from the Lord. There is a day when that will happen. The third point that we read is the land will be so purified that even those who prophesy falsely will be ashamed of their past prophecy that they will do anything possible to deny it or to hide it.

Look with me in verse 4 through 6 one more time. On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision who prophesies. He will not put a hairy cloak on in order to deceive but he will say I am no prophet I am a worker of the soil for a man sold me in my youth and if one asks him what are those

wounds on your back he will say the wounds I received in the house of my friends.

Those who have prophesied falsely will put away their cloak that is of a prophet. What did Elijah this prophet in the Old Testament wear? He wore a garment of hair he wore a leather belt and he ate locusts and so what do these prophets do when they want to deceive they put on this cloak of hair that's what prophets wear and so they're saying hey there's a time when these cloaks will be put away they want nothing to do to say I want to distance myself from the false prophecy that I said and identifying any way with that so I'm going to put that away because I don't want anyone to know just as a Catholic priest or a nun because of the garments they wear are easy to spot so too was a prophet of God and they will deny every ever being a false prophet and they will try to blend in returning to the farm or to the working of the soil notice also they lie about the wounds on their back people will ask hey but if you're no false prophet what are those wounds on your back and they will say oh those wounds I received from the house of my friends you need to find better friends first but that's a lie why do these false prophets have scars on their back why is it easy to identify them because of these wounds on their back false prophets in the Bible at times inflicted wounds on themselves do physical harm to themselves to arouse a prophetic ecstatic state a frenzy or fervor if you remember

Elijah with the the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel it says this of those false prophets it says this they the prophets of Baal it says they slashed themselves with swords and spears and was cut as was their custom until the the blood flowed and so what would see false prophets doing they were either cutting themselves or having themselves cut cutting each other and they would have these wounds here's any action that we take that is self harming any cutting behavior bulimia anorexia any form of bodily mutilation we see today any in the most severe form of suicide would be the most extreme is associated with idolatry and ungodliness and if you are struggling with one of those activities at some level you are ultimately believing a lie a lie about yourself a lie about the Lord and we would love to visit with you about that but this is what the false prophets had and they were lying about how they got those scars next so you see this purification of Israel then you see this flashback and so if you will Zechariah is prophesying of a time before the Lord returns and now he's going to flashback to Christ and this is what we read before we see the flashback I want to share with you that I lament sometimes that believers often in times of adversity question God's love for them if this is happening does God love me I want us to consider before we read the flashback how much God I want to remind us how much God loves you

[20:06] I'm going to begin in Isaiah 53 verse 4 surely this is speaking of Christ surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows yet we esteemed him stricken smitten by God and afflicted why did the Lord die for sin it says he was smitten by God God the father is the causal agent of the reason why his son died for sin how much does God love you he's willing for his own son to die Isaiah 53 verse 6 all we like sheep have gone astray we have turned every one to his own way and the Lord has laid upon him the iniquity of us all who has laid upon him the sin of us all the

Lord the father has laid upon him the son the iniquity of us all how much does the Lord love you enough for his son to die for you verse 10 Isaiah 53 yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him he has put him to grief whose will was it to crush the son whose will was it to put him to grief the father crushed his son he has put him to grief how much does the Lord love you enough for his son to die so we read in Zechariah chapter 13 verse 7 this is how Zechariah does this flashback to the cross he says this awake oh 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 notice awake oh sword it's this instrument of death so it's like the father is calling for this instrument of death awake oh sword against my shepherd notice this is not the false teachers that he's already spoken of now he's not speaking of those who false prophesy falsely he's saying no awake this instrument of death against my shepherd and you say well who is this shepherd against the man who stands next to me who is the one in the God head father son holy spirit that gets the privilege to stand next to the father the son awake a sword this instrument of death against the one who stands next to me in proximity declares the

Lord of hosts strike that shepherd strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered I will turn my hand against the little one how much does the Lord love you enough to send to strike his son to forgiveness sin to make it possible that you may be forgiven and know the Lord Matthew writes of this in Matthew chapter 26 he refers to this passage in Zechariah watch this very moving and in a

moment we're going to take communion or the Lord's supper! together and when we do so the Lord it's done commemorating this event the Lord instituted when he took the Passover meal in the upper room this is right on the heels of the conclusion of the upper room after that meal and it says this when they had sung a hymn at the last conclusion of the last supper they went out to the Mount of Olives and so now the Lord is now moving from the upper room to the garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives and Jesus said to them you will fall away because of me this night for it is written I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered this is why I refer to it as a flashback we're reading of events about what to do with a false prophet in the latter times the purging of land and then he has this flashback to the time of the cross when Jesus dies and the shepherd is struck

[24 : 59] I find it interesting that in times of adversity and suffering when fortunes are reversed health is reversed the thing that is often most questioned!

is God's love but why did Jesus ultimately die? all we have to do is remember the most memorized verse in scripture for God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life motivated by love he sent his son to die because it was the will of the father motivated by his immeasurable love for mankind the father appointed his son to death to make payment for sin the only fitting sacrifice possible it is God the father striking the son the Lord Jesus Christ in our place as a sin bearer it is Jesus suffering for us in order that we might be delivered from the wrath of God have sin forgiven and be released to serve the Lord effectively pain and suffering often cause us to question and when when

I have and you may question God's love when those circumstances are just right it should reveal to us a few things firstly it should reveal to us this that I may have you may have a misunderstanding of the ultimate purpose of life the ultimate purpose of life is not for me to live with just favorable circumstances everything just going my way a pain free life a disease free life an ailment free life wealth beyond belief several months long vacations for life that is not the purpose of life if a life of favorable circumstances is our understanding for the purpose then adversity and suffering health reversals financial reversals ruins our faith it can undo us but it's not because the Lord is unloving it's because I had a misunderstanding of the purpose of life but if we envision our purpose for life for God's glory

I'm going to live for God's glory for the benefit of others and for the nations to know him no circumstance can undo that then no diagnosis no financial reversal no financial strain can thwart you from living for his glory can thwart you from benefiting others can thwart you from praying for the nations to know him so let us be a church that is confident in God's love he is willing to strike his own son causing his son to suffer death to make payment for sin to offer forgiveness to others we can live for God's glory we can benefit others and we concern ourselves for the nations coming to know him so what is the burden of the text the burden of the text when when the shepherd dies is that they are scattered and we look at the beginning at his death there's a scattering that that is pronounced at 70

AD when Titus destroys and levels Jerusalem and the temple the Roman army there's a bar cockpah revolt a generation later there's intense purgings of Jews in the middle ages that are recorded such that in the 16th century it is thought that only 1 million Jews existed on the face of the world fast forward to the 20th century world war ii saw 6 million Jews killed and the Holocaust the state sponsored genocide continuing through the tribulation known as a time of Jacob's trouble many in the world many Jews will die in the tribulation leaving one third of the Jews to remain to be purified at this time so look with me the rest of the passage verse 8 after the shepherd is struck and then it says in the whole land declares the Lord two thirds shall be cut off and perish one third shall be left alive and

[29 : 39] I will put a third into the fire and refine them as one refines silver and test them as gold is tested and they will call upon my name and I will answer them and they will be my people and I will say they are my people and they will say the Lord is my God so at the!

of the! tribulation after Israel has been purified refined and tested they will continue they can continue God's redemptive work on this earth they will recognize Jesus as their Messiah the one who has paid payment for their sin and God will call upon them and say they are my people and they will return and say he is our God in the 1700s Frederick the Great who was the king of Prussia he was influenced by the secular French philosopher Voltaire Frederick the Great had a chaplain on his staff and he was troubled by what he was hearing and he was being convinced by

what Voltaire was saying that there is no God and so he asked this chaplain if the Bible is really true it ought to be capable of providing a very brief proof of the inspiration of the Bible that's what his question was and he says I've been given enormous amounts of volumes of evidence in Frederick the Great's mind evidence for why the Bible is not true but he asked the chaplain give me very succinctly in one sentence the reason why I should believe the Bible is true the chaplain the chaplain answered thought for a minute and then he answered with one word Israel your majesty Israel may has given to humanity that he will never destroy the earth again with a global flood.

I want to give you another sign today. We read in Psalm 89, 35 through 37, Once for all, I have sworn in my holiness, I will not lie to David. His offspring shall endure forever. His throne as long as the sun before me. Like the moon, it was established forever.

What's the moon? A faithful witness in the skies to what? Israel still exists. So the next time you are warmed by the sun, the next evening you look up and see the moon, that's another celestial sign I want to give you to know. How do you know the Bible is true?

[33:10] Israel, your majesty. Israel. And he loves you. Let's pray. Father, thank you for this redemptive plan that you have for all humanity, not just Israel. Thank you that you came to die a death for sin, that all who place their faith in you may live and have sin forgiven.

Thank you that you have this beautiful and wonderful plan also for your people. You have not forgotten them. Lord, I pray that we would learn to trust you all the more. Lord, may we not tolerate any affection in our own lives that eclipses our affection for you.

May we not tolerate any form of idolatry. We love you, Lord. You are good. And it's in your beautiful name we pray. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.