

# Zech 13:1-9

## Session Twelve, Zechariah

### Structure

13:1	A cleansing fountain
13:2-6	Condemning false prophets and idolaters
13:7-9	The Shepherd is struck and the flock is scattered

### Zechariah 13:1

“On that day” – a unifying concept in Zech 12-14

Why is natural for Zechariah to refer to purifying water (see Ezek 47:1-12)?

Where does the fountain flow from?

### Zechariah 13:2-6

Sources of uncleanness: 1) idols, 2) impurity, 3) false prophets

“The first item on YHWH’s sanctification agenda is his eradication of false prophets” (Lessing, 493). He’s done this before—see 1 Kings 15:12.

What do YHWH and the false prophets surprisingly have in common?

According to Deut 18:20, what is the proper punishment for false prophets?

A prophet was signified by what he wore—Elijah/Elisha (2 Kings 2:18-25) and John the Baptist (Matt 3:4). In v. 4, what the false prophet wears is a garment of deception.

Which major prophet had the most to say about false prophets?

Consider the role elders of the community had as “law enforcement”: Ex 21:15, 17 and Deut 21:18-21. Would/should parents really kill their own children over false prophecies?

“In Zech 13:3, though, no outside communal members are present. The parents themselves are to administer the execution. Justice is enacted at a grassroots level. Nothing will stand in the way of the complete elimination of false prophecy—not even an emotion as strong as parental love” (Lessing, 495).

“Zechariah habitually draws on earlier texts. In 13:4, he recalled Jacob and Elijah. Now in 13:5, he alludes to Amos and Cain to make his point....This connection suggest that the false prophet places himself in league with the world’s first murderer. It is fitting, then, the killer is killed” (Lessing, 495).

Deut 14:1 prohibited Israelites from self-harm. Why? See 1 Kings 18:28.

In v. 6, “my lovers” actually refers to male homosexuals and male temple prostitutes. The wounds came as they collectively engaged in self-mutilation and pagan worship. Consider the prophets’ behavior on Mt. Carmel (1 Kgs 18:28). Canaanite gods also had fertility cults.

### **Zechariah 13:7-9**

“The last three verses in Zechariah 13, written in the late sixth century BC, mirror Judah’s demise at the hand of Babylon in the early part of the sixth century BC. They describe both the Shepherd’s and the flock’s demise (13:7) as well as the wholesale slaughter, with only a third of the population surviving (13:8). The faithful \_\_\_\_\_ is subsequently \_\_\_\_\_, and their relationship with YHWH is renewed” (Lessing, 486).

The “sword” (a feminine noun) rouses itself. But the imperative “strike” is masculine. To whom is “strike” addressed? Who is doing the striking?

- a) Pontius Pilate
- b) YHWH
- c) Simon Peter
- d) Judas Isacariot

Who is struck?

- a) false shepherd (11:4-15)
- b) foolish shepherd (11:17)
- c) a Man, my Companion

YHWH and his Shepherd stand side by side. They are \_\_\_\_\_ .

Jesus quotes Zech 13:7 in Matt 26:31 and Mark 14:27 before his arrest and crucifixion. “I will strike” means the \_\_\_\_\_ strikes the Son.

“While many parents probably ignored Zech 13:3, YHWH did not. He implemented the death penalty against his Son, serving as the Executioner by commanding a sword to strike the Shepherd....If the thought of parents piercing their own son shocks us, the shock becomes a massive earthquake when we consider 13:7. Unlike the son who became a false prophet, this Shepherd/Close Associate has done nothing wrong. The great irony of the ages is the YHWH commands the sword to strike not only a person who is completely innocent and holy but who also stands closest to him” (Lessing, 496).

YHWH’s actions are intentional. Why scatter the flock?

Divine purification comes through the \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 1) and the \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 9).

Purifying fire will either:

- Destroy you
- Define you
- Develop you