



## No 4

## 'The One they Pierced'

## Zechariah 12:10 to 14

You may well be asking why we are looking at one of the minor prophets written soon after the Jews returned from exile in Babylon and not long before the Bible writers fell silent for over 400 years. The people had been partially restored to their land but it was not an easy time after the havoc that Nebuchadnezzar had left when he ransacked Jerusalem in BC 587.

But we're encountering something special here. We may not know exactly what Jesus said on the Emmaus Road. But we keep finding events and writings that clearly point to the Messiah figure of Jesus. We've seen it in the Passover story - the Psalms are loaded with pointers to Jesus – last week we found Jesus in the suffering servant of Isaiah 52 and 53..

Zechariah served God at a critical time when some of the Jews had returned from exile in Babylon (around 520 BC). He was from a priestly family (Nehemiah 12:16) and lived at the same time as the prophet Haggai. The two of them supported the high priest Joshua and the governor Zerubbabel in the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 5:1 & 2)

1. This was a time of rebuilding and re-establishing the people in their home land.

What do you think they hoped for in this new start?

What would be their concerns?

What was key if the returning people of God were to flourish?

It is true to say that the prophets of the Old Testament were looking for the coming of their promised Messiah. Israel had a complex system of sacrifices to deal with sin but they longed for that 'once and for all sacrifice' which would give them a living Saviour. Isaiah has already described that as the suffering servant (Isaiah 52 and 53). Zechariah is over 200 years later than Isaiah but he speaks about the one 'whom they have pierced' (12:10)

2. The picture in the first part of chapter 12 is Jerusalem (God's people) surrounded by enemies – it's not just the geographical location – it is a picture of all of God's people. The odds are hopeless but God will triumph over this evil that surrounds God's chosen ones. They are in that position because of continuous disobedience to God's commands. A very potent image just after the exile.

Does our rejection of God before we were believers cause us to realise how great God's deliverance of us really was?

Do we really take seriously what it would have been like NOT to be delivered?

The connection between the 'pierced one' of Zechariah and pierced body of Jesus is not just one we have made. Read John 19: 36 and 37

***'These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled. 'Not one of his bones will be broken' (Psalm 34:20) and as another scripture says, 'they will look on one they have pierced'' (Zech 12:10)***

3. This is pointing us to how much pain we cause God when we rebel against him. For God it's like being pierced with a spear which didn't break any bones.  
Think about the pain that was inflicted on Jesus when he was on the cross?  
Was it just physical?

Look at what happens in Jerusalem – remember, this is almost certainly not the literal place but a picture of the place where you will find God's people. There will be weeping like there was at Haddad Rimon (the place where King Josiah was killed in a great battle with the Egyptians on the plain of Megiddo (2 Kings 23:30). But there will also be a great outpouring of grace and supplication when God's people see the 'pierced one'.

4. Does this help us in our response to the cross?  
We weep at the sight of our beloved Saviour being so cruelly treated.  
But we rejoice when we realise what this means for us his people.

The extent of the weeping in Jerusalem (God's people) is shown in verses 12 to 14. Various groupings are singled out. We see that clans mourn by themselves – wives mourn separately. Each household mourns separately so that no one can blame another group for the piercing of the Saviour. Each person takes responsibility.

5. Do we feel that sense of responsibility?  
Do we own up to the fact that I am to blame for the piercing of the Saviour?

Historically it is the Jewish leaders who were responsible for the death of Jesus. Yet when God pours out his spirit on the house of David (God's people) there is no attempt to blame the leaders by any of the households of Israel.

We must have the grace to say we need to come to God in repentance at our own sin. It's so easy to point out the sins of other people and not look in our 'spiritual mirror'.

6. In the suffering of the Saviour (his piercing) grace is poured out. We saw it at the cross – Jesus' steadfast walk to the cross is the only thing that opens up a wonderful relationship with the God who made us.  
Take time to thank God that he made his son go through the agony that our sin might be covered (Psalm 32) by the sacrifice of Jesus.

***His sacrifice is our victory and it means there is a place for us in glory***

***If we believe on his name.***

***Hallelujah, what a Saviour !***