



## river west church

### Why We Cherish the Scars of Christ

Zechariah 12-14

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Passion week, also known as Easter Week or Holy Week, is the week that led up to the crucifixion of Christ, and after that His resurrection on Easter Sunday. The events that took place during that week are the most important events in the history of the world. That is why the Bible puts such an intense focus on the events of Passion Week. As we approach our celebration of Passion Week this year, we have turned to the Book of Zechariah for insight. Last week we saw that the Book of Zechariah, especially chapters 9-14, is a key to understanding the events of Passion Week. Today, as we look again at Zechariah, we will see three more themes that give us insight into the events of Passion Week. As we do, we discover the true meaning of the scars that Christ received in His crucifixion. There are three passages from Zechariah that will guide our study: Zechariah 12:10, Zechariah 13:1 and Zechariah 14:1-5. Each one is incredibly important!

#### **The One Who Was Pierced**

*"And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born." [Zechariah 12:10]*

This is a verse which points forward to Jesus. It can only be truly understood in the light of its fulfillment in Christ. This verse is referenced many times in the New Testament: John 19:34-37; Matthew 24:30; Acts 2:37; Revelation 1:7.

The amazing thing about this verse is that it clearly indicates that God Himself is the one who is pierced. And yet... it changes from first person to third person in its grammar. It says that, "They will look upon ME whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for HIM." All of this is applied directly to Jesus in the New Testament. This is a dramatic revelation of the true identity of Jesus as God incarnate. It was God Himself who was pierced on the Cross, because Jesus was indeed God in human flesh. This is amazing and truly powerful. This is why Christians cherish the scars of Christ. They are a sign to us, forever, that, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19-21). The scars of Christ remind us that the ultimate payment has been made for our sins through the blood of Christ, because it was God's own blood (see Acts 20:28). The scars of Christ give us the ultimate assurance of our salvation.

#### **The Fountain That Was Opened**

Zechariah 13:1 speaks of the fountain that will be opened for cleansing from sin. This was fulfilled through the Cross of Christ. But this leads us back to the first part of Zechariah 12:10, where God said that He would pour out a spirit of grace and supplication that would cause Israel to look on the one who was pierced. This is exactly what happened in the Book of Acts when Peter preached his first sermon about the crucified and risen Messiah; and many of those who had called for Christ's crucifixion were converted to faith in Christ. What grace and mercy! Now we know that this fountain is open to all who will believe.

#### **When Christ Returns**

But the story doesn't end there. In Zechariah 14, the story does a fast-forward to the "end point" of all history when Christ returns in glory to reign over all things. This is also a huge part of the meaning of Passion Week, for during Passion Week, Christ spoke in depth about the end point of history and His return in glory (see Matthew 24-25). When Christ does return, one thing is certain, the scars He received when He was pierced will be visible to all! That is why Zechariah 12:10 is also quoted in Revelation 1:7,

“Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen.”

This is why we cherish the scars of Christ. They remind us that the events of Passion Week were at the very center of God’s larger master plan for the entire world. It’s a master plan that spans the entire course of world history, including Israel and all nations and peoples. And at the very center of it is the Cross of Christ. Christians know that Christ will return one day in glory. We know that Jesus will be the judge of all people and all nations. But we know that the one who will judge will still have the scars of His piercing upon him. This is the perfect blend of justice and mercy. The conquering King is also the Lamb that was slain for our sins. Those who see this truth cherish Christ above all things.