



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

The Jewish People, Jesus Christ, and World History

Zechariah 13:1-9

"Israel's National Cleansing"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the marvelous future that is set forth in the word of God for the people of God, for the nation Israel, for the gentiles who are grafted into the olive tree, for the whole of the people of God. And as we think of the things that lie ahead of us we give Thee praise and thanks. We trace it all to the fact that there has been opened at calvary a fountain for cleansing from sin and from uncleanness. And we thank Thee for the grace that Thou hast shown to us and bringing us apart from our own works to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as the solution to our problems, and questions, and perils, and the solution to also for the problems and perils of this world.

We thank Thee for him who loved us and gave himself of us. We know that we shall never enter into the fullness of understanding of all that is involved in that penal sacrifice by substitution for us, but we understand enough, Lord to know something of the debt that we do owe give Thee thanks and praise. We pray that Thou wilt continue to remove the veil from our eyes that we may appreciate what Christ has done, see, and understand, and respond in gratitude and true service of Thee. We commit each one present to Thee. We pray that the problems of our lives may be looked at in the light of

the Scriptures and that through the power of the Holy Spirit we may please Thee. We commit the hour to Thee in. In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] One only has to read the newspapers a bit to discover that there is something of excitement and thrill in the fact that today there is a country called Israel in the Near East after so many centuries of nonexistence. And as we look back and think about what has happened over the past thirty or forty years now, one cannot help but be amazed and thankful to God for what appears to be at least the beginnings of the ultimate restoration of the nation. There is a since in many quarters in Israel of the fact that it is God who has done this, that it is God who controls history, that it is God who will preserve the nation in the midst of their enemies and that ultimately he will bring them forth in some measure at least in possession of the ancient promises. There is, of course, one thing lacking in Israel. And that one thing lacking is the sense of sin and the sense of the forgiveness that is available through the Messiah who has come and appeal to him for forgiveness. There is no indication, as far as I know, of any serious turning of Israelites to the Lord God. We are still living in the days in which there is a remnant according to the election of grace. But as far as the nation as a whole, that still lies in the future.

A few days ago I received a copy of a periodical that I take, Theology Today. And this article, this particular issue is devoted to primarily anti-Semitism and a number of articles touch on that particular subject, such as; the Jewish Christian Agenda, Whence Anti-Semitism, Buber Biography as Dialog, Martin Buber was Jewish philosopher, A Jewish Feminist View, Anti-Semitism is the heart. I was interested in one of these articles particularly called the Jewish Christian Agenda. It's written by Solomon Bernards who is the national director of Friends of Congregation Mevak-shei Derech Jerusalem and past director of Interfaith Affairs of the Anti-defamation League of Beni Berith, New York. He said that some years ago in the course of long conversation with Lubavitch Kosiv, a Holocaust survivor, he asked what I, and Solomon Bernards is talking, about what I did

for a living. I replied that I was working fulltime to improve relations between Christians and Jews to develop attitudes of mutual respect, and trust, and even friendship so that what happened during the Holocaust would not happen again. He reacted, "You're wasting your time. Anti-Semitism is inseparable from Christianity. It's impossible for a Christian not to be an anti-Semite." That is the attitude, of course, of some Jewish people and unfortunately on the other side, on the Christian side, there are many Christians who are anti-Semitic. It's unfortunate, but nevertheless it is true.

Now, of course, when we say there are Christians who are anti-Semitic if one were to examine their background and their confession of faith and their relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ I think, I've never done this scientifically so I cannot say with any since of certainty, but I think that we would find that the vast majority, I wouldn't even be surprised that it were not ninety-five plus percent of those who are anti-Semitic or Christians in name only and not genuine believing Christians in our Lord Jesus Christ. But, of course, it's difficult for a Jewish man to make the distinction between a person who is a member of a Christian church and stands in the tradition of orthodox Christianity but who may not have a personal faith in our Lord and the individual who is a member of the same church who does have a personal faith in our Lord. Even we who are Christians, who have a personal faith in our Lord and think that we have something of true vitality in Christianity find it very difficult to know whether some people who claim to be Christians really are Christians or not.

The thing I think that is interesting about this is that there is a great deal of movement in Jewish circles today to try to bridge the gap between Judaism and Christianity. And there's a great deal of attempt, at least as much perhaps more, on the part of professing Christians to close the gap as well. And obviously there is a since in which both feel that a good bit of the right of the case is with them. But what is interesting is that there is this attempt and is being made in a very serious way by a number of people. I think, as I mentioned last week or the week before, on the campus

of Trinity Seminary last winter there was a conference. If it wasn't last winter my memory may be failing me. I know what you're thinking, "It is failing you, Dr. Johnson."

[Laughter]

But anyway, my memory may be failing me. And it may have been the winter before but I think it was last winter that there was a conference held on the campus of Trinity Seminary by Jewish leaders and Christian leaders not simply from Trinity Seminary, although some were from Trinity Seminary, but from a number who met there for several days, read papers, and discussed the relationship between evangelical Christians and Jews. It behooves us as Christians to know what is transpiring because we are thrown into contact with Jewish people from time to time. Most of us have many contacts with them. But I think you would be surprised at how many Jewish people today really would not be offended at all if you approach them with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, when we turn to the great passages of the Old Testament what more wonderful future can a nation have than Israel has. And what is set out in Zechariah chapter 13 verse 1 though verse 9 is the one thing that is missing in Judaism today. And, of course, it's the one thing that has been missing in professing Christianity so often down through the years, and is missing, in my opinion, in the great majority of professing Christians of today, and that is spiritual cleansing. The since of the need of cleansing and the since of the adequacy of the provision made by Jesus Christ and also the personal relationship with our Lord in which we make confession of our sin and receive freely the cleansing that Jesus Christ has provided.

When we look at this in the context of Israel, of course, we must think about the way in which God has spoken to Israel from ancient times. When Israel was getting ready to enter into the land God had some words to say with reference to his future dealing with them. And in effect he said to them, "When you enter into the land your enjoyment of the land is going to be based upon your faith in me." And remember in Leviticus chapter 26 and Deuteronomy 28, I'm going to read a few verses from Leviticus 26 and if you want

to turn there you can. In Leviticus 26 he set out the things that would determine their enjoyment of the land. And they were going to enter it and he nevertheless said to them in effect that, "If you're going to enjoy the land and stay in the land you must be obedient to the law which I am giving to you. Now, if you turn away from me, then there is going to be a series of disciplines that I will affect. Now, these disciplines become more and more severe as time goes by. If, for example, Israel doesn't respond to the first cycle of discipline then the second cycle of discipline will be instituted. And finally, the last cycle of discipline set out in Leviticus 26 is the dispersion to the four corners of the world. And that is what Israel is experiencing as a nation today. But strikingly in verse 40 of Leviticus chapter 26 Moses giving the words of God says, "If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that they have walked contrary unto me." I'd like for you to notice that that's a singular trespass. In the Hebrew text it is also a singular.

Now, I don't want to make too much over this because it's possible that this trespass is looked at as kind of collective term for all of the ways in which the nation departs from the Lord. But the fact that it is a singular may suggest, of course, the ultimate expression of Israel's rejection of the word of God in the crucifixion of their Messiah the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, in verse 41,

"And that I also have walked contrary unto them (this is what they're to confess) and have brought them unto the land of their enemies. If then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember, and I will remember the land."

So what, in effect, God says is, "If you do not respond to the statutes and the laws that I have given you, you're going to lose the enjoyment of the land. And if you persist

in that I'm going to execute a series of disciplines, the last of which is the dispersion. And you'll be sent to the four corners of the earth. And when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD and since that time Jewish people have been scattered to the four corners of the earth. They've been abiding under this fifth cycle of discipline.

Now, but the Lord says through Leviticus that if they confess their sin and confess that they have walked contrary to the Lord God then he will bring them back into the possession of the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. He will remember his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and with Jacob. And he will remember the land, that is he will bring them back into the land so that they enjoy the blessings of the land.

Now, that is precisely what the Apostle Paul states in Romans 11 when he says in verse 22 as he reflects upon the things that have happened to Israel and the things that have happened to the gentiles. He says,

"Behold (this is Romans 11 verse 22) Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God on them which fail (severity, scattered to the four corners of the earth, cut off out of the olive tree and the connection with the Abrahamic promises severed) but toward thee (gentiles, he's writing to gentile believers) toward thee goodness if you continue in his goodness otherwise you too will be cut off."

This is a word of warning and admonition to the gentiles. But look at verse 23, "And they also if they abide not still in unbelief shall be grafted in for God is able to graft them in again." So you see the one thing that stands between the nation Israel and the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant today is unbelief. And when unbelief departs from the nation as a nation they'll be grafted in again, and as Paul will say in just a moment, "And so Israel as a whole shall be saved." And as a result of the salvation of Israel, "the salvation of God shall extend to the world," so Paul says and Romans 11. That's a magnificent future; of course, because he goes on to say that they shall be grafted in. It's logically

expected since they are the natural branches and it's prophetically set out in the Old Testament Scriptures. And the Apostle gives his own interpretation of it and in effect says, "It will happen."

Now, it's interesting to take ourselves back to the days of Zechariah and the nation is now composed of people who have been faithful to the word of God like Zechariah and others. But then there are those who are departing from the word of God. It's very obvious that the same kinds of sins and the same rejection of the Lord God that will ultimately reach its climax in the crucifixion of Christ are there present in the nation. So let's turn to chapter 13 now. And I want you notice first the prophecy of national cleansing because that's the one thing necessary. And you know, I haven't read every article in this yet but I've been reading a good bit about things just like this over the past year. And I've not found any indication from Jewish leaders of any since of repentance whatsoever for what happened in the 1st Century with reference to our Lord Jesus Christ. So we should not be surprised that the time has not yet come, evidently, for Israel to enter into these blessings. But that time will come.

Now, let me read verse 1 through 6. And you'll recognize if you've been following along with me all of our studies together and particularly if you were here when we studied Zechariah chapter 3. You remember that don't you? Well, you think my memory is bad. You remember Zechariah 3 don't you? Do you remember what the prophet said in Zechariah 3, 9? Come on confess you don't remember. [Laughter] All right, well look at Zechariah 3, 9 and this is what he had said, "For behold the stone that I've laid before Joshua upon one stone shall be seven eyes, behold, I will engrave the graving thereof saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day."

Now, that indicates that that which has brought the dispersion of Israel to the four corners of the earth and the divine judgment upon the land for so many centuries will be suddenly removed in the future. Now, what he says in chapter 3 verse 9 is spelled out in more detail in chapter 13. So beginning with verse 1,

"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. (Incidentally that verb is the same verb that is used in chapter 12 and verse 10 where we read that, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, thrust through." So the same kind of activity toward the Lord Jesus Christ will be carried out by father and mother with reference to a son who is a false prophet.) thrust him through him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive: But he shall say, (He's talking about false prophets here in the future) and he shall say, I am no more, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth. And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? (Remember it was the custom for the false prophets to cut themselves, to gash themselves as evidence of their dedication for seeking the will of their false god. And so this is what's referred to here. Perhaps Paul is talking of that in Philippians chapter 3. But that's another subject. We'll just let it go with that.) Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends (Or my companions, or my lovers, that word "friends" may mean.)

So here is the prophecy of national cleansing. This is so close to chapter 12 and verse 10 that all of the students of Zechariah, speaking very generally, almost all of them have seen a very definite connection between the cleansing here and the piercing of Jehovah in

verse 10 of chapter 12. Remember last week we considered verse 10, "And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first born."

Now, if you will skip over the intervening words which simply detail the mourning.

Chapter 13 begins with, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David." In other words, national repentance expressed by, "They shall mourn for him whom they've pierced," is met by national cleansing, "in that day a fountain opened to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness." One notices as you look at this when it says, "There is fountain open to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem," that that is very suggestive of our Lord's crucifixion in the sense that the Romans soldiers pierced his side and forth with there came out blood and water. That's the visible picture, of course, that John and other saw. But the spiritual reality behind it was that when our Lord was crucified it is out of this that the fountain for sin and uncleanness comes. And the blood that flowed from his side, the blood and water, are suggestive of the cleansing from the guilt and the filth of sin provided by what our Lord was doing there.

One might ask the question, why does the prophet Zechariah say, "In that day there shall be a fountain open to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem," when after all did not calvary occur hundreds of years ago? So how can we say, "In that day"? Now, remember the term, "In that day," is almost always used of the Messianic day, the day of the Lord. So in what sense can we say that calvary has taken place but yet in the future in that day the fountain shall be opened for sin and uncleanness. Perhaps the illustration of Hagar and Ishmael may explain what is meant.

Remember when Hagar and Abram had Ishmael. It was Sarah's suggestion but, of course, it was in the power of the flesh that Abraham sought to fulfill the will of God that he would have a seed through whom he and others would receive blessing. You never are

able in your own strength to fulfill the promises of God. It's characteristic of human beings to lean on the flesh and try to do what God wants us to do. So Abram thought that by doing this he could have the son for which he longed. But, of course, he discovered that actually what he did was create trouble for himself. And so the day came when Ishmael mocked Isaac, the true son, and there was a conflict between the two. In fact, it's often been pointed out that the conflict between the Arabs of today and the Israelites of today is simply the continuation of the struggle between Ishmael and Isaac because in Isaac was the promised seed.

Well, Ishmael was mocking Isaac. And so Sarah went to Abraham and she said, "You've got to do something about Hagar and Ishmael." And the Lord God said, "Yes, Abram. You've got to do something." He seconded his wife's suggestion. And so Hagar and Ishmael were sent off into the wilderness. And Genesis chapter 21 tells the story of that. And they went off in the wilderness and they had a little, some provisions. They had some food and they had some water, but the time came when it was all gone and Hagar thought the end was drawing nigh. And she took her child and she put her child over behind a bush. And she went off and she began to weep. And the Lord spoke to her and he said to Hagar essentially this, "Hagar, don't weep. I'm going to take care of Ishmael. I'm going to make a great nation out of him." And he said, "Furthermore, I'm going to take care of him." And he said, "I want you to look over there and you'll find the necessary water." And the Scripture say something like, "She opened her eyes and she saw a spring."

Well, now actually the spring was there all along but she had not been able to see it. So when the time came for God to fulfill his purpose through Hagar and Ishmael what he said in effect was, "Look and you shall see." And the scale, or the whatever was hindering her from seeing, was removed and she saw. Well, the same thing is true with reference to calvary. Calvary took place nineteen hundred years ago, but Israel does not yet perceive it. And gentiles also who have not truly believed in our Lord Jesus Christ

have not seen it either. They are blind, and rebellious, and cannot see. "A veil is over their eyes," as Paul says with reference to Israel. A veil is over the eyes of the gentiles who do not believe too, except that in the case of Israel is a double veil. There is a veil individually because we are all unbelievers and rejecters of God by nature. But they too have a national judicial blindness as part of that nation. So there is a difference of time between the accomplishment of the redemption and the application of the redemption through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The redemption was accomplished hundreds of years ago. With reference to the Nation Israel, the benefits that Christ has wrought will be applied to her in the future. So, "In that day there shall be a fountain open to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness." This is not some new fountain. This is the fountain of calvary referred to by, "They shall look up unto me whom they have pierced."

And then God goes on to say that he's going to make the land holy in that day. He's going to cut off the names of the idols out of the land. Now, he doesn't say, "I'm going to remove the idols." He says, "I'm going to cut off the names of the idols." Now, the name was a term that referred to the inner essence of a thing. In fact, that was thing. So he's going to do away with idolatry.

"I'm going to cut off the names of the idols out of the land. They shall be no more remembered and I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land (Now, of course, he's talking about the false prophets.) And so when anyone prophesies and his father and mother that begat him shall say unto him, (they'll say unto him) You shall not live (because they know that false prophecy deserves instant judgment in the days of the kingdom) Thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord. And his father and mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth."

Now the prophets, of course, wore prophets' clothes. Remember Elijah had a mantle. And so they were known by the clothes that they wore just as today there are certain segments of Christianity that are known by the clothes that they wear. That is they wear a different kind of color from the rest of men. They were a different kind of clothes. Sometimes they wear robes. They set themselves out as separate from the people. That's what he's talking about here. He's saying, "It shall come to pass that the prophet shall be ashamed, every one of his vision when hath prophesied, and they won't wear those ruff garments to deceive again." In other words, the day is coming when they'll embarrassed that they are false prophets.

And when he's quizzed about it he'll say, "I'm no prophet. I'm a husbandman for men taught me to keep cattle from my youth." And one shall say unto him, as he takes of his prophet's garments that marked him out different from others, "Then what are those wounds in your hands?" Those were the signs of the things that he practiced when he cut himself when he was a false prophet. Just the like the prophets the Baal cut themselves when they were contending with Elijah on Mount Carmel. That's what they did. They cut themselves in order to call on God. They were showing, of course, how dedicated they were to the Lord God. And these individuals are going to be asked the question, "What are those wounds in thine hands?" And he shall answer, "Well, those were wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my lovers." He will deny that they really were religious wounds.

Many have thought, incidentally, that that might be a Messianic prophecy because the language sounds as if it might refer to Christ because he was wounded in the house of his friends. One might say he was wounded by the people who were Jewish as he was Jewish. But it probably is a reference to the false prophets.

Now then notice the seventh verse because here we have the means of the national cleansing. After all, national cleansing must have a righteous basis. You might since that from Zechariah 12, 10, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced and they shall

mourn for him." But here, look at this text in the seventh verse, "Awake, O sword, (the Lord God says now) Awake, O sword against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." What is referred to here is the righteous basis upon which cleansing takes place. It is because the Lord Jesus Christ is smitten by the Lord God that the forgiveness of sins is possible for us and for the nation Israel.

I'd like for you to notice the difference between chapter 12 and verse 10 where we read, "And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." There it is plainly said that Israel is responsible for the crucifixion that is referred to there, or the thrusting through. But notice who is responsible for the crucifixion here, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." Who is calling upon the one who is the Lord's fellow to be thrust through with the sword, to be slain? Why, it's the Lord God who's calling upon the redeemer to be slain. Remember, we've often said that the crucifixion of Jesus Christ was accomplished by individuals. It was accomplished by our Lord in the sense that he voluntarily gave himself to death. It was a crucifixion that could have been lodged against Satan, for he everything that he could to secure the removal of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But it is also ultimately the work of the Lord God in heaven. Some people find that very difficult to understand. But it's plainly taught in the word of God. Listen to the great chapter, the Messianic chapter of Isaiah chapter 53, and listen to what Isaiah says there when he is talking about the crucifixion of the Messiah. He says, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; He hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands." In other words, the Lord God is ultimately responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Why? Because of what is to come from the crucifixion of Christ. Because out of that great event will come his plans and purposes for the people of God and for this earth, and for the new heavens and the new earth. So the Lord God is the one who

is also responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. That's what Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. He said, "Remember by the determinant counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have with wicked hands taken this person, nailed him to a tree, and you have slain him. So it is by wicked hands but by the determinant counsel and foreknowledge of God."

So Zechariah says, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow." So the judgment then is a judgment that is carried out by the Lord God. Notice that he calls our Lord the shepherd. I'm sure you know, you've read the New Testament enough to know that Jesus quotes this text in the context of his passion. In effect he says, "This text is concerning me." You might ask where the Lord Jesus got his concept of himself as the good shepherd. Well, this is one of the passages. He read these passages. He understood them of himself. He read those passages in Ezekiel that had to do with the shepherd work of the Lord God. He also read the passages in the psalms. He went all the way back to the Book of Genesis when he was referred to there as the shepherd. So out of these great passages came our Lord's concept of himself as the shepherd. We often sing a hymn that's built on this, remember? Remember the stanza we sing in our evening services, "Jehovah, bade his sword awake. O Christ, it woke against thee. Thy blood, the flaming blade must slake, thy heart its sheath must be. All for my sake, my peace to make, now sleeps that sword for me." We sing that right here in this auditorium. That's something of which we can sing from our hearts. "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and the man that is my fellow." And the Lord God did call upon his sword to smite the shepherd and we have life as a result of it.

Now, I'm interested in another thing here that's, I think, extremely interesting. Notice the statement, "The man that is my fellow." Now, Judaism today would like to think of Jesus Christ as simply a man. That's why they contend that they are not guilty of diicide. And they're very happy when large religious organizations like the Roman Catholic Church or the Luther Church, as has happened in the present century, have acknowledged that Israel

is not guilty of diacide. The reason for this, of course, is that these large prophesying religious organizations have abandoned their teaching which they historically believed, in which they historically promulgated that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the second person of the eternal trinity.

Now, of course, we should never believe that Israel alone is guilty of diacide. And of course, we should also be careful to define what diacide is. In the since that it contends that God died, that's impossible. God does not die. He's the living one. But our Lord is the God man, the divine son who had two natures. And he experiences in his divine personality all that the experiences in his two natures. And so while his death is in the realm of his humanity, the Son of God truly died. So there is a since in which that is, it's true to say that we have crucified the Son of God. But there is also a since in which we can say God did not die, the Son of God died. So we must be sound in our theology. But let us not forget that Israel is responsible for the death of our Lord and we gentiles are responsible, too. We are all responsible for the death of our Lord.

Now, I said something about this, "The man that is my fellow." Now, the term "man", of course, incidentally in the Hebrew text this is the word Geber which means "a mighty man". Geber is a term that means "a mighty man." This is built on the same root. But the word that follows, "The man that is my fellow," is the interesting one. "Amith" is the Hebrew word and this word "amith" is a word that is used only in Leviticus, except for here. And in Leviticus it's used of ones neighbors, Jewish neighbors. One who is my fellow, one who is my fellow Israelite. It was a word that was a synonym for *acb*, the Hebrew word that means brother, so that it's a term that suggests an equality. Fellow Israelite, brother, now that's the term that Yahweh uses of the shepherd. He says, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man who is my fellow."

Well, my fellow Israelite means equal, equality. Or, in other words, it indicates that there is an equality between them. It's what our Lord talks about when he says in John 10, 30, "I and my Father are one thing." And what lends support for this is the fact that in

chapter 12 verse 10, again it's Jehovah speaking, and he says, "I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon me (Jehovah) whom they have pierced." And so, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord," you put those texts together and it's clear that the person who is crucified may be properly called Yahweh, as well. He is God, the second person of the trinity. And the one who is calling upon the sword to awake is God the father, the first person of the trinity.

Now, we read, "And the sheep shall be scattered and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." And Jesus refers to this just before he's crucified and he cites this text. And then he goes on to talk about how he will meet them following the crucifixion and the resurrection in Galilee. And so the statement here is probably a reference to the fact that our Lord was crucified and the apostles were ones who left the scene, leaving him to suffer the death, did not stand there to give him any support at all, went off into hiding like wounded animals. And yet they were gathered together again in Galilee and our Lord appeared to them and ultimately gave them commission to preach the Gospel. So there is a since here of the dispersion of the apostles and the regathering of the remnant after the resurrection, implied in this text.

Now, finally in the last two verses he says,

"And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. And they shall call on my name and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people. And they shall say, "The Lord is my God."

Now, one doesn't have to read the Bible too much to realize that that didn't happen after our Lord's crucifixion. But as is often the case in Old Testament prophecy, sometimes

between a texts an age may intervene. Our present age intervenes between verse 7 and verse 8. And in verse 8 and verse 9 we have a reference to the tribulation period when Israel shall experience divine discipline, "And many shall lose their lives," we have a reference to the purification that will ultimately take place. And then we have reference to the reconciliation that will take place between the Lord God and the nation when he will say, "It's my people. And they shall say, The Lord is my God." In other words, the one thing lacking today in Israel will truly be their experience in the future.

Many of you've heard of Thomas Chalmers. He was a Scott, very prominent in Scottish history and Scottish theology. And he was the man who really led the Scottish Free Church out of the moderating, liberalizing tendencies of the Church of Scotland to form a new denomination, the Free Church of Scotland about a hundred and forty years ago, a hundred and forty-one to be exact. In eighteen forty-three Thomas Chalmers was born in the little village of Astrata . It's right on the North Sea, just a little north of Edinburgh. You start up around the course toward St. Andrews. It's a little fishing town. And then after he went through St. Andrews he went to the manse at Kilmani.

Now, he was twenty-three years of age when he was inducted into that particular church as pastor of the church, but he was not saved. He was in the Church of Scotland, wasn't saved just like Merrill Weaver back then. [Laughter] Eight years later, incidentally, was a, had a magnificent mind. He taught mathematics part time at the University of St. Andrews up the road a bit. And when he was thirty-one years of age he suddenly realized that he was not a believer at all. He said it came home to him that though he was a mathematician he didn't really understand true mathematics, the vastness of eternity. And he was marvelously converted, entered into the experience of salvation and became the dominant force in Scottish church history at that time. Over two hundred churches were formed through the ministry that began through Thomas Chalmers. He had entered into the experience of true conversion, which is to acknowledge our lost condition, to flee to Christ within, in the heart, lean upon him, and receive as a free gift eternal life. Thomas

Chalmers later taught systematic theology for a while in his latter days. That's what's referred to here when the Lord God says, "I will say it's my people. They shall say, The Lord is my God."

There's a wonderful little story of a shepherd boy. I know some of you've heard it before but some of you maybe have not. There was preacher, it was Scottish preacher too supposedly, who was visiting a Christian home and he was trying to train the family in some of the things of the Lord. And there was little boy in the family. He helped his father with the sheep and he tried to teach him a verse when he was visiting the home one day. And he decided he would teach him, "The Lord is my Shepherd". So he turned to the passage in Psalm 23, 1 and he said, "Read that." And the little boy, he read, "The Lord is my shepherd." And the preacher said, "You're not reading that right. Read it again." "The Lord is my shepherd." "You're not reading it right." He said, "This is the way you read it. The Lord is," and then he took his hand and he did this, "is my shepherd." That's the way you read that. You make it personal. The Lord is my shepherd. It wasn't long after that the little boy was out tending to the sheep, tripped, and stumbled over the side of a cliff. And when they found him he was in the last stages of life. But they all received a tremendous blessing when they realized that as they looked down upon him, he had his hand around that finger of his hand. The Lord is my shepherd, that's what he was reflecting on.

That's what it means to enter into personal faith. And when that happens and when Israel enters into it, they'll receive the cleansing that has been promised for them in the word of God. And you will too if you lean upon him who's had the sword thrust and out of which has come the blood that cleanses from sin. If you've never come to Christ come to him, believe on him, receive the cleansing from sin and uncleanness. Let's bow in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for these magnificent words from the prophet Zechariah. We look forward to the future of Israel with great anticipation. And especially Lord, do we thank Thee that we shall hear Thee say, "It's my people. And they shall say, The Lord is my God." Oh Father, may not a person leave this auditorium who has not within his own heart, through Christ's death, come to know Thee and to say to Thee, "Thou art my God." For Jesus' sake. Amen.