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## **Israel Responds to Grace: A Study of Zechariah 12:10**

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The prophetic sections of the Word of God call forth a great variety of interpretations and applications. This is true in the New Testament, but the greatest divergences are encountered in the Old Testament. The book of Zechariah (chapters 12-14) is a clear example.

In this article Zechariah 12:10 will be examined specifically. Since this passage is disputed greatly, the theological presuppositions on which this article rests will be briefly stated. This text is being approached from a premillennial perspective which views the verse as a prophecy regarding the Jewish remnant in the tribulation period. Some have criticized this view. For instance, Allis writes,

They [dispensationalists] are emphatic that Zech. xii. 10 is a prophecy regarding the Jewish remnant and does not concern the Church. It skips, they tell us, to the end-time. It must do so, if their theory is a true one.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Oswald T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1945), 158.

This article will not seek to refute the amillennial position; rather, this article assumes that the premillennial approach is correct, and offers the key to understanding this text.

Three problems involved with this text will be considered. The first of these is a textual problem which also has theological significance. The second is the exegesis of the text. The third is the relationship of the text to prophetic events in general.

This text will be found to set forth the specific truth that the Messiah, whom Israel put to death, will one day be recognized in faith for who He is. That future event will transpire because of God's grace upon His people which will lead them to discern spiritually the Savior and bitterly mourn for their previous rejection of Him.

### **The Textual Problem**

#### **Textual Variants**

The question involved here is whether the text should read  $\text{אֶל־יְקָרְוֹ אֶחָד מֵאֵלֵינוּ}$  or not. This would be translated "unto me whom they have pierced." Some manuscripts have  $\text{אֶל־יְקָרְוֹ}$  ("unto him") instead of  $\text{אֶל־יְקָרְוֹ}$  ("unto me"). Other slight variants are also found, such as  $\text{אֶל־יְקָרְוֹ}^2$ , which omits the suffix on the preposition and also omits  $\text{אֶחָד}$ ; but they are not as significant, and will be examined in the next section of this article when the exegesis of the verse is given.

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<sup>2</sup>E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 446.

### Support For "Unto Him"

The reading וְלֵאמֹר is supported by some of the later manuscripts and several scholars.<sup>3</sup> This would be translated "unto him." This reading avoids the theological, historical, and seeming grammatical difficulties of the text.

The reading of the MT וְלֵאמֹר is translated "unto me." Concerning the evidence in favor of this reading Chambers observed that it,

is found in all the ancient MSS., and found not only in the best of the later ones but by far the largest number of

<sup>3</sup>Julius A. Bewer, *The Prophets* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1955), 627. Torrey likewise states that "the Hebrew text is corrupt at this point and no satisfactory suggestion of restoration has yet been made. Some phrase designating a person is obviously required." See Charles C. Torrey, "The Messiah Son of Ephraim," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 66 (September 1947): 272.

Laetsch states that "all extant Hebrew manuscripts read וְלֵאמֹר;" [see Theodore Laetsch, *The Minor Prophets: Bible Commentary* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), 482]. However, this does not seem to be totally accurate. Baron observes how in a few manuscripts "the marginal correction וְלֵאמֹר, 'unto Him,' instead of וְלֵאמֹר, 'unto Me,' was made by Jewish hands; and in several instances this 'keri,' or marginal reading, has, as is sometimes apt to be the case, crept into the text itself." David Baron, *The Visions and Prophecies of Zechariah* (London: Hebrew Christian Testimony to Israel, 1951), 442.

Some may also refer to John 19:37 as evidence that the apostle had before him a manuscript which read, "They shall look on Him" instead of "on Me." However, this verse "is rather his adaptation and application of the prophecy in the light of fulfillment (as far as the piercing is concerned) to our Lord Jesus." Baron, *Zechariah*, 442, fn. 2.

them; and it is sustained by LXX., Aq., Symm., Theod., Syr., Targ., Vulg., and Arab.<sup>4</sup>

In deciding questions of textual variation, the weight of the external evidence must be evaluated first. As seen above, the textual evidence is clearly and heavily in support of the reading  $\text{לְאֵל}$ . Waltke observes that when “the Hebrew MSS and ancient versions agree, it may be assumed that the original reading has been preserved.”<sup>5</sup> While this may seem to answer the questions, the internal evidence should also be examined.

The weight of internal evidence also supports the reading  $\text{לְאֵל}$ . In his book on Old Testament textual criticism, Klein gives three principles for deciding internal evidence which are applicable to this problem in Zechariah 12:10. Those principles are: (1) “Choose the reading which best explains the origin of the others;” (2) “The shorter reading is

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<sup>4</sup>Talbot W. Chambers, *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures Critical, Doctrinal and Homiletical: Zechariah*, ed. John Peter Lange (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), 94. See also Baron, *Zechariah*, 442-444; Charles L. Feinberg, *God Remembers: A Study in the Book of Zechariah* (Wheaton: Van Kampen Press, 1950), 230. Interestingly enough, some Jewish scholars also adopt this reading: see Eli Cashdan, “Zechariah,” in *The Twelve Prophets*, ed. A. Cohen (London: The Soncino Press, 1969), 321.

<sup>5</sup>Bruce K. Waltke, “The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament,” in *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), 226. For a full discussion of the various Hebrew manuscript evidence and a history of the development of the variant reading  $\text{לְאֵל}$ , see E. B. Pusey, *The Minor Prophets*, vol. 2 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1886), 438-439.

to be preferred;" and (3) "The more difficult reading is to be preferred."<sup>6</sup>

The second principle is not significant since the length difference between the two readings is only one letter. However, the third principle is significant. That the reading לִי is the more difficult, theologically as well as contextually, is readily admitted by all. Its difficulty is a main reason it has been rejected by some scholars.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, the first principle has direct relevance since accepting לִי as the original reading better explains the origin of לוֹ than if the reverse were the case. It is easier to see how a scribe may modify the reading "unto me" to bring it into a supposed harmony with the rest of the verse than it is to imagine a scribe modifying the reading "unto him" to bring it into an apparent disharmony with the rest of the verse.

For these reasons, the reading לִי ("unto me") should be accepted as the genuine text of Zechariah 12:10. A probable suggestion as to how the variant לוֹ ("unto him") originated is given by Baldwin: "Evidently some early copyist(s) felt that the prophet could not have intended to put into the mouth of the Lord the apparent contradiction that He had been put to death, and therefore changed the pronoun."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Ralph W. Klein, *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974, 74-75. See also Ellis R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994), 127-129.

<sup>7</sup>"It is the more difficult reading, and one which has always proved revolting to the mind of the Jew, as there is no other antecedent to whom it can be referred than יהוה, Jehovah, verses 1 and 4." Ebenezer Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets* (reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980), 430.

<sup>8</sup>Joyce G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: An Introduction and Commentary*, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, ed. D. J. Wiseman (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1972), 190.

### Exegesis of Zechariah 12:10

The language of Zechariah 12:10 is Messianic in nature. The verse presents positive evidence that the Old Testament prophets had the conscious hope of the nation turning from its rebelliousness and accepting by faith their Messiah whom they had first rejected. The detailed relationship of this verse to the context of Zechariah and the whole prophetic program of God will be treated in the following section of this article. However, since the verse cannot be totally isolated in its exegesis, there must be some discussion of the context of Zechariah and prophecy in general during the exegesis of the verse.

#### “Spirit Poured Out” (Zech 12:10a)

Chapter 12 has dealt with God’s judgment on the nations that attack Judah and Jerusalem. He has effectively delivered them physically, but He has a plan for them spiritually as well. This verse opens with the clear declaration that God will do a work in His people. The consecutive narration of events is set forth vividly and in powerful language that effectively conveys the sweeping change God will bring about in His chosen people. The various elements of the verse, when taken together, give the completed picture of God’s work for and in Israel. Zechariah begins, “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplications.”

**The “Pouring Out.”** The verb **וַשְׁפֹּךְ** (“and I will pour”) is the Qal perfect of **שָׁפַךְ**. The basic meaning of the verb is to “pour out,”<sup>9</sup> and it is used with reference to pouring out water (Amos 5:8), complaint (Psalm 102:1), and even

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<sup>9</sup>BDB, 1049.

wrath (Psalm 79:6).<sup>10</sup> The same word is used by the earlier prophet, Joel, in referring to the same event (Joel 3:1-2, Hebrew text).<sup>11</sup> The word indicates that, "The effusion is not to be fitful or scanty, but generous and abundant, a pouring rain from the skies, overcoming all obstacles, reaching all classes and effecting the most blessed and durable results."<sup>12</sup>

This demonstrates that when God pours out His Spirit in that future day upon His people, He will do so without reservation. Israel shall receive the Holy Spirit's ministry in all its fullness.

**The Recipients: The House of David.** The word **בֵּית** ("house") is capable of a wide range of meanings from a "tent" to a "temple."<sup>13</sup> In this verse it is used in a figurative sense, of "what in our mind belongs to a house, as wife, children, people, servants, who, taken together, make a family, race, people, hence for all these, e.g. house (people) of Israel; house (tribe) of Levi; house (family) of David . . ."<sup>14</sup> Since the idea

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Harkavy, *Students' Hebrew and Chaldean Dictionary to the Old Testament* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Co., 1914), 745.

<sup>11</sup>See Pusey, *Minor Prophets* 2:437. The prophet Ezekiel (39:29) also uses the term referring to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, and Isaiah (32:15; 44:3) uses synonymous terminology in a similar manner.

<sup>12</sup>Chambers, *Zechariah*, 97. Austel writes: ". . . there is the wonderful promise of the outpouring of the Spirit of God on His people, a lavish and blessed provision on God's part of His Spirit of grace which will bring about a startling change in men's hearts, lives, and condition (Joel 2:28-29 [H3:1-2]; Zech. 12:10; Ezk. 39:29)." *TWOT*, s.v. "בֵּית", by Hermann J. Austel, 2:950.

<sup>13</sup>BDB, 108-110.

<sup>14</sup>Benjamin Davies and Edward C. Mitchell, *Student's Hebrew Lexicon* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), 87.



of a household is predominant, the question must be answered as to whose household. Two possibilities emerge.

Unger says that the phrase "house of David" is used to represent all people of the ruling or princely class.<sup>15</sup> This may be correct; but the phrase can also mean those who are directly descended from David whether of a high position, as the king (Isaiah 7:2, 13), or a poor woman like Mary (Luke 1:27). Either view is a possibility, but in this context the latter appears more probable since the "house of David" has appeared earlier in this passage (12:7, 8) and especially later (12:12) in the apparent sense of actual family members.

**The Recipients: Inhabitants of Jerusalem.** The participial form translated "inhabitants," from *יֹשְׁבֵי*, appears about 215 times in the Old Testament.<sup>16</sup> The question concerning it here relates to who these inhabitants are.

The meaning of this phrase is open to two possible interpretations. One view says that it should be restricted to include only those who are actually living in the physical city of Jerusalem. This view has strong support from the context of 12:5-10 where the phrase is so restricted several times. This position may seem to be in conflict with the "all flesh" of Joel 3:1 (Hebrew text), but that problem can be explained by observing that Zechariah is viewing specifically the single trouble spot of Jerusalem while Joel is making a more general statement.

Considerable discussion exists related to the Joel passage because of Peter's use of it in Acts 2:16-21. That problem is outside the scope of this article. However, this writer generally agrees with Ryrie and Feinberg that Peter used

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<sup>15</sup>Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Commentary: Zechariah* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), 215.

<sup>16</sup>BDB, 443.

the Joel passage to illustrate that the Spirit is the one who produces such things as were happening at Pentecost.<sup>17</sup>

The phrase can also be taken, however, in the sense "of regarding the capital as the representative of the whole nation."<sup>18</sup> There are other parallels to this type of usage in the Old Testament. Again, either view is a possibility, but the former seems preferable in view of the preceding context (12:5-10) and also because of the expansion in 12:12-14 that includes everyone in the land.

This expansion could be viewed as merely a broader explanation of the phrase "inhabitants of Jerusalem" showing that the whole nation is involved in that phrase. However, it can also be an expansion of the idea to show that while the "inhabitants of Jerusalem" are specifically involved, it is also everyone in the land who is ultimately affected. The general development of the context from 12:5-14 favors this latter position.

Regardless of the position taken, however, the same end result is reached. The people of Israel will receive the outpouring of God's Spirit.

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<sup>17</sup>Charles C. Ryrie, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1961), 20-21; Charles Lee Feinberg, *The Major Messages of the Minor Prophets: Joel, Amos, and Obadiah* (New York: American Board of Missions to the Jews, Inc., 1948), 26-29. For more detailed examination of this problem, see John D. Schroeder, "An Investigation of the Prophecy of Joel 2:28-32 and Its Possible Fulfillment in Acts" (M.Div. Thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, IN, 1979).

<sup>18</sup>Carl Friedrich Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: The Twelve Minor Prophets*, vol. 2, translated by James Martin (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), 387.

**The Holy Spirit.** The word רִיחַ in this context clearly refers to the Holy Spirit.<sup>19</sup> God's Spirit will be involved with the grace and supplication.

Discussion must be given to the meanings of the two words translated "grace" and "supplication," and their relationship to each other. Barnes notes that, "The two Hebrew words for grace and supplication are related etymologically, both being derived from the same root."<sup>20</sup> This root is רָחַץ.

The word for "grace" (רָחַץ), although it generally "has little theological significance and is particularly weak in conveying the idea of redemption,"<sup>21</sup> was chosen here, because

<sup>19</sup>See Pusey, *Minor Prophets*, vol. 2, p. 437. Some may observe that in Joel 3:1 the word רִיחַ appears ("My Spirit"), the personal pronoun suffix being added to the noun making it definite, while in Zech. 12:10 the anarthrous רִיחַ appears. This causes some variety in interpretation. Baldwin, for example, translates the involved phrase, "spirit of compassion and supplication" and understands it as a "new attitude of heart" which has its source in the Lord. See Baldwin, *Zechariah*, p. 190. The NEB, RSV, NIV and Berkeley Version translate it in a similar fashion. However, several factors mitigate against Baldwin's view. First, the parallel with Joel is evident, even if the terminology is slightly altered (see Feinberg, *God Remembers*, 230). Second, רִיחַ can be anarthrous and still refer to the Holy Spirit [for a complete discussion of the uses of רִיחַ, see Hugh A. Apple, "The Significance of the word 'Rauch' in the Old Testament" (Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1974)]. Third, the context of Zech. 12:10 is best understood by keeping the reference to Deity here. Fourth, the reference to the Holy Spirit in this type of terminology has other biblical parallels (e.g. Heb. 10:29, "Spirit of grace"). For further discussion, see Unger, *Zechariah*, 214.

<sup>20</sup>W. Emery Barnes, *Haggai and Zechariah: With Notes and Introduction*, The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, ed., A.F. Kirkpatrick (Cambridge: University Press, 1917), 93.

<sup>21</sup>Charles C. Ryrie, *The Grace of God* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1963), 13.

it is the word which can express both temporal and spiritual blessing as well as physical and spiritual deliverance.<sup>22</sup> In this context, the word builds upon the promise of God back in verse 8 that, "he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them."<sup>23</sup> Clearly temporal, physical, and spiritual elements are involved. Thus,  $\text{רָחַם}$  is the appropriate word to choose. A similar reference to the "Spirit of grace" is seen in Hebrews 10:29.

The word for "supplication" ( $\text{רִחֻן}$ ) is "an intensive plural form denoting a singular abstract idea . . ." <sup>24</sup> It denotes "properly, the cry for mercy . . .,"<sup>25</sup> representing "less a formal entreaty . . . than the outpourings of a troubled soul; used in parallel to 'weepings' in Jer. 3:21; 31:9."<sup>26</sup> In this context the word anticipates and prepares the way for the great repentance described in verses 10-14.<sup>27</sup>

The relationship between these two words is explained by Baron, who says to "view them in the light of cause and effect, for grace is that which God bestows and the Holy Spirit conveys, and 'supplication' is the *fruit* of that condition of heart, or soul, which that same Spirit creates within us."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 20-21.

<sup>23</sup>Cf. Barnes, *Zechariah*, 93.

<sup>24</sup>Unger, *Zechariah*, 216.

<sup>25</sup>Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957), 861.

<sup>26</sup>*TWOT*, " $\text{רָחַם}$ ," 1:304.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. Barnes, *Zechariah*, 93.

<sup>28</sup>Baron, *Zechariah*, 445. Alexander similarly states it is best to take "the spirit of grace as that which produces or bestows grace, the spirit of supplications as that which leads to prayer and teaches to pray." W. Lindsay Alexander, *Zechariah: His Visions and Warnings* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1885), 259.

Although Mitchell incorrectly regards "grace" as referring

God, therefore, promises to pour out abundantly His Holy Spirit upon His people. The family of David will receive this outpouring. Those in Jerusalem will receive this outpouring. Ultimately everyone in the land will receive this outpouring. It will be an outpouring of God's grace involving temporal, physical, and spiritual elements. As God's grace reaches the hearts of His people, they will respond by crying out to Him for mercy. He is ready to hear.

### **The Accompanying Look (Zech 12:10b)**

Accompanying God's outpouring of His Spirit bringing grace to His people and their supplication to Him is a look from Israel to their Messiah. He whom they pierced now becomes the object of their faith.

**The Action Involved.** The verb translated "look" (רָאָה) has been taken to mean both physical and mental sight by various men. Peters, for example takes it as physical sight in this verse, and says the conversion of the Jews "is one dependent upon *seeing* the One whom they have pierced . . . , upon being pleaded with *face to face* . . . ." <sup>29</sup> However, this

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to the kindness of the people of Jerusalem, he does set forth a pertinent relation between the attitude of the people and the following clause. "The thought, therefore, is that the Spirit will produce in the persons named a kindness of disposition and a mildness of attitude by which they have not thus far been characterized. Toward whom? The answer to this question is found in the next clause, which describes the first act growing out of this changed character." Hinckley G. Mitchell, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Zechariah*, ICC (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), 330.

<sup>29</sup>Geo. N. H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom of Our Lord Jesus, the Christ, as Covenanted in the Old Testament, and Presented in the New Testament*, vol. 2 (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1884), 81.

word can also be taken in a figurative sense.<sup>30</sup> In this sense it would mean "to look trustfully" with לָנֶאֱדָר of the person Isa. 22, 11; 51, 1-2,<sup>31</sup> or "to rest one's hope in anything; followed by לָנֶאֱדָר Ps. 34:6."<sup>32</sup> The Old Testament clearly uses this verb in this figurative sense as Coppes has observed: "Men are to look, i.e., fix their eyes on and thus guide their lives according to the will of Jehovah as their only help (Isa. 51:1; 22:11; Ps. 34:5[H6]), and on his means, e.g. his covenantal framework (Isa. 51:2; Ps. 74:20), and his Messiah (Zech. 12:10)."<sup>33</sup>

With the emphasis on repentance and trust, this word is best taken here in the sense of to look with complete confidence and faith. It shows that the people are looking with hope resting in the object. It does not imply physical sight of the Messiah; rather, it stresses the people's trusting faith in Him, the recognition of who He is and what He will do on their behalf.

**The Object Involved.** The textual problem was discussed in the previous section, and the conclusion reached that לָנֶאֱדָר is the correct reading. Various views exist as to how that reading should be interpreted.

<sup>30</sup>BDB, 613, takes it figuratively here.

<sup>31</sup>Julius Fuerst, *A Hebrew & Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, trans. Samuel Davidson (London: Williams & Norgate, 1967), 897.

<sup>32</sup>Tregelles, *Lexicon*, 528. Concerning this looking to the Messiah, Barker cogently remarks: "The most common meaning of the Hebrew preposition translated 'on' is 'to' (NIV, mg.), and there is no good contextual reason to depart from it here. The emphasis, then, is not on looking 'on' (or 'at') the Messiah literally but on looking 'to' the Messiah in faith (cf. Num. 21:9; Isa. 45:22; John 3:14-15). Kenneth L. Barker, "Zechariah," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1985), 683.

<sup>33</sup>TWOT, "נָדָר," 2:546.

First, some suggest that the verse refers to a historical person such as Onias III, who was killed about 170 B.C., or Simon the Maccabee, killed about 134 B.C.<sup>34</sup> A serious problem exists with this view: no historical person or event even remotely satisfy the language of the text. Those holding this position admit that no certainty can be achieved in identification, and that some postulation is essential. This view is inadequate.

Second, Kirkpatrick suggests that it is "Jehovah who has been thrust through in the person of His representative," and when that representative died, then Jehovah is regarded as dying, too.<sup>35</sup> In his preceding and following discussions, Kirkpatrick does refer to Christ as the one in whom Zechariah's prophecies find fulfillment. Without question, Christ and the Father are intimately connected. Jesus even said, "He that hateth me hateth my Father also" (John 15:23). However, it is also clear that only the Son died on Calvary's cross. Nowhere does Scripture teach that the Father died there, too, which is actually what Kirkpatrick's view implies. Perhaps this is why he states the "passage as it stands is an unsolved enigma."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>W.O.E. Oesterley, *A History of Israel*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), 269. Barnes adopts a modification of this view. First, he accepts the reading "unto him" as giving the true sense. Second, he postulates this may refer to Zerubbabel. "The words 'whom they pierced' are used here in place of the proper name of the person referred to. He is too well known to need further description and the suppression of his name gives solemnity to the passage. Probably he was one whom Jehovah gave to the restored Jewish community, but they rejected him and put him to death. It is just possible that Zerubbabel met with a fate like that of Gedaliah (Jer. xli. 1, 2), and that he is the one 'whom they pierced.'" Barnes, *Zechariah*, 93-94.

<sup>35</sup>A.F. Kirkpatrick, *The Doctrine of the Prophets* (London: Macmillan & Co. 1892), 472.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 473.

A third viewpoint was suggested by Calvin. He advocated taking the thought in a metaphorical sense: "Now God speaks . . . after the manner of men, declaring that He is wounded by the sins of His people, and especially by their obstinate contempt of His Word, in the same manner, as a mortal man receives a deadly wound, when his heart is pierced."<sup>37</sup> While this metaphorical use does attempt to deal with the language as it is, it falls short of satisfactorily explaining the obvious sense of the text in its context. If the text can be understood as it literally stands, then no need exists for taking the language metaphorically.

Before suggesting an answer to this problem of interpretation of  $\text{לֹא}$ , some basic concepts need to be

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<sup>37</sup>John Calvin, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John*, vol. 2, trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 242. Other views have also been set forth. Mason summarizes some common ones: "Many have found it difficult to understand how the people could have been said to 'pierce' Yahweh, and so they have emended the text to read 'they shall look to him whom they have pierced' (the version found in John 19:37). Others have taken it to mean that they have pierced Yahweh by their treatment of his representative. Some have rendered the verse, 'They shall look to me. (As for) him whom they have pierced, they will mourn for him . . . .' Some have linked the 'pierced one' with the Good Shepherd of chapter 11. Some have found a messianic reference here. Others have thought that there is an allusion to the Suffering Servant of Second Isaiah, or to a supposed feature of the earlier enthronement festival in which the king was ritually humiliated. Several have attempted to identify the 'pierced one' with some historical figure, e.g. Onias III, the high priest, while still others have taken the 'him' in a collective sense to represent the godly community which has been persecuted." Rex A. Mason, *The Books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi* (Cambridge: University Press, 1977), 118-119.



understood.<sup>38</sup> First, the context of this passage clearly describes a work of the Lord in regeneration and renewal. Second, this work of God is accomplished by the Holy Spirit and, as observed earlier, results in their repentance as seen in their supplications. Third, the weeping over the one pierced is the natural result of that repentance and regeneration. Fourth, since the context stresses the people's return to the Lord, then the looking "to me" (אֵלַי) is appropriate since, as Keil observes: "The suffix in אֵלַי (to me) refers to the speaker. This is *Jehovah*, according to verse 1, the creator of heaven and earth."<sup>39</sup>

Keil's observation is correct as far as it goes. However, between Zechariah 12:1 and 12:10 more than one person of the trinity is mentioned. The Holy Spirit is clearly mentioned in 12:10, but He obviously cannot be the antecedent involved. Additionally, in 12:8 the "angel of the Lord" is also mentioned, who is none other than the Son of God Himself.<sup>40</sup> In essence, then, all three persons of the Godhead are in this context. While it is true that the unity of the Godhead is stressed all through the Old Testament, on occasion a glimpse of the trinity does emerge. Such a glimpse is seen in Zechariah 12:10, and the word אֵלַי opens the way for the Son to be involved in this text. The object, therefore, of the look of faith

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<sup>38</sup>These are adapted from Rex A. Mason, "The Relation of Zech. 9-14 to Proto-Zechariah," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 88 (1976): 232. Although Mason does not hold to a conservative theology, his thoughts are helpful in seeing the development of thought in this passage.

<sup>39</sup>Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2:387.

<sup>40</sup>On the identification of the "angel of the Lord" as the preincarnate Son of God, see: Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1975), 78-84; James R. Battenfield, "An Exegetical Study of the מַלְאָךְ אֵלֹהִים in the Old Testament," postgraduate seminar paper in Old Testament Theology, Grace Theological Seminary, 5 January 1971.

is none other than the Messiah Himself. The New Testament references, which will be examined later, serve to verify this interpretation, as does also the following verb for piercing.

The phrase **וַאֲשֶׁר הֵאָחַז** must next be considered. Some regard the **הֵאָחַז** as a problem and omit it from the text, conjecturing that the text should merely read **וַאֲשֶׁר הֵאָחַז**.<sup>41</sup> However, since **הֵאָחַז** is a particle placed before a definite accusative,<sup>42</sup> it was purposely placed in this text "to mark **וַאֲשֶׁר** more clearly as an accusative, since the simple **וַאֲשֶׁר** might also be rendered 'who pierced (me)' . . . ."<sup>43</sup> The translation "whom they have pierced" is therefore correct.

**The Piercing Involved.** The verb **וַאֲשֶׁר** is variously translated and understood. Some say that in this verse it is used figuratively meaning "to curse, contemn,"<sup>44</sup> and that it is used in the same way in 13:3 meaning "to revile, calumniate."<sup>45</sup> In opposition to this, others maintain that the verb only means "to pierce," "to run through," or "to thrust through."<sup>46</sup> The verb's usage in the OT decides the issue.

The verb appears several times in the OT, and in all cases outside of Zechariah it is used in its literal sense of

<sup>41</sup>Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 446.

<sup>42</sup>William R. Harper, *Introductory Hebrew Method and Manual* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), 231.

<sup>43</sup>Keil, *Minor Prophets* 2:387-388.

<sup>44</sup>Davies and Mitchell, *Lexicon*, 151.

<sup>45</sup>Fuerst, *Lexicon*, 336. Leupold also takes the word in a figurative sense "for God cannot be literally pierced," and he refuses to "introduce the Messiah already at this place . . . ." H.C. Leupold, *Exposition of Zechariah* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965), 237.

<sup>46</sup>Tregelles, *Lexicon*, 206; BDB, 201; Samuel Lee, *A Lexicon, Hebrew, Chaldee, and English* (London: Duncan and Malcolm 1840), 142.

“pierce.”<sup>47</sup> The concept of a pierced Messiah is not limited to Zechariah alone. Isaiah also has the idea in 53:5, although he uses the verb לָלַחַץ, translated “wounded” in the AV. However, as Wiseman observes, the two words לָלַחַץ and קָרַח are used as synonyms in Jer. 51:4 and Lam. 4:9. The distinction between them is that לָלַחַץ usually stresses a fatal wounding of persons, while קָרַח emphasizes the concept of retribution in the piercing.<sup>48</sup> In view of the crucifixion of Christ, the verb קָרַח clearly best fits the context of Zech. 12:10.

Furthermore, the context of 12:10 itself demands the word be understood literally. The verb translated “mourn” expresses mourning for the dead in this type of construction, as will be observed later in this article. Therefore, the piercing here must be that which results in death. The verb must be taken in its usual literal sense. The LXX translated this word with καταχέομαι which means “to dance in triumph over one, treat despitely.”<sup>49</sup> This shows that Jews before the time of Christ were having a problem as to how to understand this verse. However, the New Testament references to this verse (John 19:37; Rev. 1:7) both use the verb ἐκκεντέω which

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<sup>47</sup>The verb occurs in Num. 25:8; Judg. 9:54; 1 Sam. 31:4; 1 Chron. 10:4; Isa. 13:15; Jer. 37:10; 51:4; Lam. 4:9; Zech. 12:10; 13:3. Lowe observes that in all these references “(except perhaps Jer. xxxvii. 10, where at any rate it means ‘severely wounded’) it denotes ‘to thrust through’ so as to kill. The only passage which could be cited to justify a figurative meaning of the word is Prov. xii. 18, where the substantive *madqārōh* is used, בִּרְטַח כַּמְדַּקְרוֹחַ חֶרֶב, שֵׁי ‘[the words of] an idler-talker are sometimes like sword-thrusts: but the speech of the wise is healing.’ But there, the gnomic nature of the composition, and the use of the comparative כּ, prepare one for the figurative use of the word. Such is not the case here.” W.H. Lowe, *The Hebrew Student's Commentary on Zechariah* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1882), 111.

<sup>48</sup> TWOT, “לָלַחַץ,” 1:288.

<sup>49</sup> LSJ, 930.

means to "pierce . . . someone" which is equal to killing him.<sup>50</sup> John, therefore, testifies to the fact that the "Old Testament prophecy of the piercing of the only Son and Firstborn is fulfilled when the spear is thrust into the dead body of Jesus."<sup>51</sup> Once again, the Messianic thrust of Zech. 12:10 is verified. T.V. Moore remarks that,

As God is here the speaker, this passage has always been a stumbling-block to the Jews for how could God be pierced? The only fact that explains it is that which they have not yet admitted, that they have crucified and slain that prince of peace who was God manifest in the flesh. As soon as they admit this fact, they will see the consistency of the passage. . .<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>BAGD, 240.

<sup>51</sup>"ἔκκεντέω," *TDNT*, 2:447. Wolf observes that the "weapon associated with *dāgar* is usually the sword, though a spear is the instrument in Num. 25:8;" "רֶקֶב," *TWOT*, 1:195. This use of the spear with רֶקֶב correlates well with John 19:37 which follows the piercing of Christ's side by the spear in 19:34.

<sup>52</sup>T.V. Moore, *A Commentary on Zechariah* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1958), 198. Mitchell objects to the Messianic identification of the pierced one in Zech. 12:10: "Those who adopt this view, however, overlook a point of great importance, namely, that while the effusion of the spirit and the effect produced by it are evidently future, the act of piercing the nameless victim belongs to the past. This means that the one pierced is not the Messiah, whose advent, all will agree, was still future when these words were written, but someone who had at the time already suffered martyrdom" (Mitchell, *Zechariah*, ICC, 330). What Mitchell fails to appreciate is that what Zech. 12:10 views is that at the time of the outpouring of the Spirit the Messiah shall have been pierced. More than one future time is involved in the verse. The future time when Messiah will be pierced (which is now past) and the future time of the Spirit's outpouring (which is even yet future). The text does not demand that the one pierced had already been pierced at the time of writing.

**The Resultant Mourning (Zech 12:10c)**

When the Jewish remnant sees in their mind's eye what they have done to their Messiah, a great cry will go up from their hearts and their lips. Intense mourning and bitterness accompany their look of faith to their Messiah.

**The Mourning Involved.** The word for mourning (נִפְּדָ) paints a picture of a person beating on the breasts in intense grief. "The action signified is 'wailing or mourning' with profuse smiting of the breast, loud cries, and deeply moving, emotional demonstrations, especially for the dead (I Sam. 25:1; 28:3; I Kings 14:13; Jer. 16:6)."<sup>53</sup>

For whom is this mourning made? The answer to this question is found in the preposition following the verb. "When לַע follows the verb נִפְּדָ, though it may denote the cause generally, it is universally connected with the person for whom lamentation is made."<sup>54</sup>

Thus, the mourning is not so much for the act of piercing which was committed, but is for the Person who was pierced. The people are mourning for the Messiah who was pierced and in whom they now place their faith.

The suffix on the preposition (לַע) is the third masculine singular (לְאֵל) a change of person from אֵל, which uses the first person. However, this change of persons is not uncommon in Hebrew. Kautzsch recognizes this: "In poetic (or prophetic) language there sometimes occurs . . . a more or less abrupt transition from one person to another."<sup>55</sup> However, in this change of persons an important distinction is maintained.

Rather, the text indicates that He must be pierced before the Spirit's outpouring.

<sup>53</sup>Unger, *Zechariah*, 218.

<sup>54</sup>E. W. Hengstenberg, *Christology of the Old Testament*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1956), 66.

<sup>55</sup>Kautzsch, *Grammar*, 462.

Baron succinctly details this distinction of the persons within the trinity:

But just as the words “they shall look unto Me,” set forth the essential oneness of the pierced One with Jehovah, so does the sudden transition in the same verse from the first person to the third, and the words, “they shall mourn for Him,” teach us that, as to His person, He is yet distinct from God.<sup>56</sup>

The noun translated “mourning” (מִסְפָּד) is from the same root as the verb and is also followed by לְ of the person involved in this verse. This mourning is like the mourning for an “only son.” The word יָחִיד means “*only one* esp. of an only son,”<sup>57</sup> and is used of Isaac, the son of Abraham, in Genesis 22:2, 12, 16. It stresses the preciousness of the son and is certainly appropriate of the Son of God, as another Jewish writer wrote to another Jewish audience: “Unto you, therefore, who believe he is precious.” (1 Peter 2:7).

**The Bitterness Involved.** The hiphil infinitive absolute, מְרַר, is used for the finite verb, and is from מָרַר which means “to weep bitterly,” again with לְ of the person.

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<sup>56</sup>Baron, *Zechariah*, 447-448. Laetsch states: “So here Jehovah speaks of the Messiah as of a different person who nevertheless is One with Him in the undivided and indivisible Essence of Jehovah.” Laetsch, *Minor Prophets*, 484.

<sup>57</sup>BDB, 402. In the LXX the word “only” is even translated “beloved” (ἀγαπητός) on occasion to show its significant preciousness (see Gen. 22:2; Jer. 6:26; Amos 8:10).

It is here used in an intransitive sense rather than that transitive which means "to make bitter" (cf. Job 27:2; Ruth 1:20).<sup>58</sup>

This bitterness is "for the first-born." The word *בְּכוֹר* means "first-born, whether of men, Gen. 25:13; 35:23; or of animals, Ex. 11:5; 12:29; 13:15."<sup>59</sup> The "first-born" son was especially precious in Jewish families as well as in much of the rest of the ancient near east. Oswalt recognizes the importance of this:

Among other rights, the first-born was entitled to a double portion of the inheritance (Deut. 21:17), to the father's blessing (Gen. 27; cf. also 48:17-19), and to preferential treatment . . . . Israel is called the first-born (Ex. 4:22; cf. Jer. 31:9) to show that though it was the youngest of the nations, it occupied the position of leadership and privilege over them.<sup>60</sup>

The phrase "as one mourns" (*כְּהִימָר*) and "like the bitter weeping" (*כְּהִימָר*) are both introduced by the preposition *כְּ* showing that these statements are similes. The mourning and the bitterness evidenced by this Jewish remnant will be like that which comes when the only son, the first-born, dies.

The appropriateness of the use of these similes in a Messianic context is pointed. Of the birth of the Savior, Matthew clearly states that Mary "brought forth her first-born son (Matt. 1:25), and Paul stresses the unique position of Christ "who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all

<sup>58</sup>Unger, *Zechariah*, 218; BDB, 700. "It is interesting to note that the Hebrews expressed tragic, unpleasant experiences in terms of the sense of taste, the bitter. Actually, we employ the same figure of speech in our English language: it was a galling experience; his actions were not in very good taste, I thought; your wife is always so tastefully dressed;" "מָרָר," *TWOT*, 1:528.

<sup>59</sup>Tregelles, *Lexicon*, 119.

<sup>60</sup>"בְּכוֹר," *TWOT*, 1:109.

creation" (Col. 1:15). The Jewish nation will mourn over Him like a father mourns over a first-born, and in reality Jesus is Himself a first-born.

Zechariah 12:10 bears precise witness to the fact that in a future day God will work in His chosen people Israel in a special way. He will abundantly pour forth His Holy Spirit bringing grace to them. They will, in turn, respond in repentance to Him as they see by faith their Messiah and Savior whom the nation crucified. Their remorse and grief will be deeply felt as they turn trustingly to Him.

### Relation to Prophetic Events

Having seen the basic interpretation of Zechariah 12:10, a further question remains. What is the relation of the events of the verse to other prophetic events? Zechariah 12:10 is placed by many premillennialists at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation, more specifically at the battle of Armageddon when Christ personally returns. However, this is not the only possibility for it. The verse may also be placed in the middle of the tribulation at the time of the invasion of God. Both views will now be examined.

### The Tribulation View

**Arguments in Favor.** Many writers who place the verse in the conclusion of the tribulation merely assume this is correct; these offer no definite proof for their position other than to say Zechariah 12 and 14 speak of the same event.<sup>61</sup> A

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<sup>61</sup>For examples, see: G. Coleman Luck, *Zechariah* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1957), 104-107; H.A. Ironside, *Notes on the Minor Prophets* (New York: Loizeaux Brothers, Publishers, 1942), 417; Charles L. Feinberg, *God Remembers: A Study in the Book of Zechariah* (Wheaton: Van Kampen Press, 1950), 228; Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol 4, p. 318; Louis T. Talbot, *God's Plan of*



slight variation in this view is that of McClain. He relates Zech. 12:10 to the repentance of Israel in the land, and distinguishes it from the spiritual revival of regathered Israel which he says takes place immediately after the repentance of those in the land. He presents his general argument in some detail, but does not deal conclusively with the time element.<sup>62</sup> This writer agrees with McClain in the distinction he makes between Israel in the land and regathered Israel, but disagrees that the two are so closely related in time. Interestingly enough, Marcus Dods, who is not a premillennialist, supports the position that Zechariah 12-14 describe only one time period:

It is obvious that from the beginning of the twelfth chapter to the end of the book it is one period that is described. This is indicated especially by the actual contents of the prophecy, but also by the continuous use of the phrase "in that day," and by the fact that while a fresh heading is given in chap. xii. 1 no further heading occurs.<sup>63</sup>

If it is all one period described, then why the differences between chapters 12 and 14? That evident differences exist is easily recognized. An explanation for these differences was given by Morgan as he views the two major sections in chapters 12-14:

In the first [section] he is looking at the oppressing nations as they are dealt with in judgment, and at Israel as she is

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*the Ages* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1936), 169; Paul Lee Tan, *The Interpretation of Prophecy* (Winona Lake: Assurance Publishers, 1974), 179, 350.

<sup>62</sup>Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1959), 197-201.

<sup>63</sup>Marcus Dods, *The Post-Exilic Prophets* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1897), 112.

restored through the acknowledgment of her true though rejected King, and by her own spiritual cleansing (12-13:6). In the second he views the same events from the standpoint of the King, going back first to His rejection, and then describing His coming day, process and administration (13:7-14).<sup>64</sup>

**Arguments Answered.** Many interpreters hold the position that chapters 12-14 are one period, and they have reasonable arguments to support that view. However, in response to Dods certain items may be observed: (a) it is believed the actual contents of the prophecy do *not* point to one period; (b) the phrase "in that day" refers to an extended time period, as is seen in many of its occurrences in the OT, and not a single point of time; and (c) the heading at 12:1 serves to

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<sup>64</sup>G. Campbell Morgan, *The Minor Prophets: the Men and their Messages* (London: Pickering & Inglis Limited, 1960), 142. Unger has also dealt with the same problem: "Chapter 14 in presenting a prophetic portraiture of full kingdom blessing and worship (vss. 8-21) first recapitulates the pivotal events leading up to this grand consummation of Israelite hope (14:1-7); namely the last siege of Jerusalem (vss. 1-3) and the personal advent of the Messiah (vss. 4-7). Already these climactic episodes have been presented in chapter 12—the siege and deliverance (12:1-9), and the second advent (12:10), but from a different point of view, from a slightly different point of time (although in 'the day of the Lord') and for a different purpose. In chapter 12 the siege is presented in its later developments when divine interposition has been vouchsafed. Chapter 14 presents the siege in its earlier more drastic and cataclysmic phase of apparent hopelessness and helplessness, when only divine intervention could save the day. Therefore, the coming of the Lord to Olivet in power and glory working deliverance is portrayed over against His coming in grace and salvation, effecting the spiritual regeneration of the remnant (12:10-13:6)." Unger, *Zechariah*, 240.

introduce the events associated with the entire last half of the tribulation, and no other heading is necessary.

In response to Morgan it may be said that the actual contents of chapters 12 and 14 do not necessarily support his contentions, and an alternate view can also explain the chapters. This will be shown in the next section of this article.

### **The Midtribulation View**

If chapters 12 and 14 detail the same occasion, then the contents of those chapters should be parallel and complementary to each other. If, however, the chapters detail different occasions, then the contents of those chapters should contain significant variation from each another.

**The Events of Zechariah 12.** A few of the key events of chapter 12 will be noticed to demonstrate its overall significance. These will then be contrasted to chapter 14.

In 12:2ff Jerusalem stands undefeated. The attacking nations fail in their attack. This was accurately observed by Chambers.<sup>65</sup> This is significant in seeing the emphasis of this section.

In 12:2 the people “round about” Jerusalem attack. The word כְּרִיבֵי means the immediate areas round about, “*circumjacent places*” or the neighborhood.”<sup>66</sup> It shows how Jerusalem is completely surrounded during this attack by the advancing armies, and how they are actually in the land of Palestine. This same word is used in 14:14 to show that all the wealth of the plundering nations that are then “round about” Jerusalem will be brought into the city.

In 12:3 the word translated “the earth” is אֶרֶץ, which can just as well be translated “land,” and even refer to a

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<sup>65</sup>Chambers, *Zechariah*, 91. For recognition of this same point, see Unger, *Zechariah*, 209 and Leupold, *Zechariah*, 227.

<sup>66</sup>Tregelles, *Lexicon*, 577; BDB, 686-687.

“district, region,” “tribal territory,” “and still smaller territories.”<sup>67</sup> In view of the word **בְּרִיץ** in 12:2 it seems that **אֶרֶץ** should be rendered “land” in 12:3.

Verse four goes on to present the way in which God will intervene through smiting “every horse with bewilderment, and his rider with madness.” The expression “I will open my eyes” indicates that “the supervision and protection of God is promised.”<sup>68</sup> This supervising protection correlates well with the emphasis of the context.

All the way from 12:5 through 12:8 there is every indication that Jerusalem is completely spared from the attack. In 12:9 the word translated “I will seek” (**שָׁקַץ**) may lead someone to think that God seeks to destroy the enemy but does not do so. However, **שָׁקַץ** means “to aim at”<sup>69</sup> in the sense of concentrating full attention on the object. Therefore, God will destroy the nations which come against Jerusalem and will spare the city.

In summary, then, chapter 12 gives every indication that Jerusalem is delivered. It is not defeated at this time.

**The Events of Zechariah 14.** As the first four verses of this chapter are read, one is certainly left with a different impression than the one gained from chapter 12. Chambers comments,

The prophet begins with the account of an attack upon the holy city by all nations, who, instead of being destroyed . . . before getting possession of the holy city, seize and plunder it and carry away half its population, and then are met and thwarted by Jehovah, who provides escape for His people.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>67</sup>BDB, 76.

<sup>68</sup>Moore, *Zechariah*, 191.

<sup>69</sup>BDB, 134.

<sup>70</sup>Chambers, *Zechariah*, 110.

**Contrasting Zechariah 12 and 14.** Several contrasting points between the two chapters should be observed. (1) In chapter 12 Jerusalem is delivered while in 14:2 it is destroyed. (2) In chapter 12 there is no fleeing from the city. Indeed, the stress is on the fact that the inhabitants remain there. However, in 14:5 the people are definitely said to flee. (3) While 14:4-5 refer to an earthquake that specifically makes the way for the people to flee, no such event is given in chapter 12 as the people remain in the city. (4) In chapter 12 God is not the one who is said to gather the nations to Jerusalem to fight. In contrast, He is specifically stated to have gathered them (14:2). (5) In chapter 12 no indication exists that the Lord personally goes forth to fight. Instead the stress is on Him working indirectly upon the horses and riders and using His people to defend the land. However, 14:3 specifically refers to Him fighting through direct intervention, as at the Red Sea.

These contrasts seem to indicate that a distinction is to be made between the events of chapters 12 and 14. When these contrasts are examined in view of the exegesis of 12:10 itself (for example the fact that "look" is best taken in the figurative rather than the literal sense), further credence is given to the position that two different occasions are in view. Rather than trying to harmonize the events of the two chapters into the one specific time frame of the Lord's second advent, it is better not to so equate them.

**The People of Zechariah 12.** Throughout the entire chapter of Zechariah 12, the emphasis is on Israel in the land, not on Israel scattered throughout the world. That a remnant of Israel will be saved beginning at the middle of the tribulation because of their persecution is demonstrated by Pentecost.<sup>71</sup> He further states: "passages such as Malachi 3:16; Ezekiel 20:33-38; 37:11-28; Zechariah 13:8-9; Revelation 7:1-8, and many

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<sup>71</sup>J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Dunham Publishing Co., 1964), 295-296, 279-280.

others, indicate clearly that when the Lord returns to earth there will be a believing remnant in Israel awaiting His return.<sup>72</sup>

This believing remnant, not the national salvation of all Israel, is the subject of Zechariah 12:10. This same remnant is referred to also in Joel 3:1-5.<sup>73</sup> This remnant begins to look in faith to their Messiah as a result of God's grace poured upon them through His Spirit.

What event is it that causes this remnant which is living in the land to turn to the Lord in the middle of the tribulation? The answer to this question is found in Ezekiel 38-39 with the battle of Gog.<sup>74</sup> The events of those chapters are believed to coincide with the events of Zechariah 12, and it is the deliverance from that attack that effects the salvation of the remnant of Zechariah 12 (cf. Ezek. 38:7, 22).

### National Salvation of Israel

This event will take place at the second advent of Christ as is demonstrated specifically from Romans 11:25-29.<sup>75</sup> At this time the whole nation of Israel will be regathered through the ministration of angels (Matt. 24:31), and all Israel shall be saved.<sup>76</sup> However, this is distinct from Zechariah 12 and

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 214.

<sup>73</sup>For the argument of the Joel passage see: Bernard E. Northrup, "Joel's Concept of the Day of the Lord" (Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1961), 192-210.

<sup>74</sup>This writer is aware of the diversity of opinions concerning the time of the event of Ezek. 38-39. However, the evidence does point to the middle of the tribulation as being the time when it takes place. See Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 324-355.

<sup>75</sup>John F. Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom* (Findlay: Dunham Publishing Co., 1963), 19-192; David A. Wolfe, "A Critical Look at Romans 11:25-26," postgraduate seminar paper, Grace Theological Seminary, 20 March 1980.

<sup>76</sup>Chafer, *Systematic Theology* 3:106-107.

separated from it by a time of about three and one-half years; it is equivalent in time to the events of Zechariah 14:1ff.

### **Conclusion**

Zechariah 12:10 contains valuable information concerning God's prophetic program for His people Israel. Although God has set aside Israel from the place of blessing in this dispensation of grace, He is not at all through dealing with them. This fact is clearly presented in the book of Zechariah.

God will protect the land, especially the city of Jerusalem, from the attack by Gog, and, as a result, many will look trustfully to Him realizing what they had done to their Messiah. Some three-and-one-half years later God will work to bring destruction to Jerusalem, but He will bring salvation to the whole nation of Israel.

God keeps His promises. Those unconditional covenants He has made with Israel will one day be fulfilled to the glory of His name, and a converted Israel will inhabit the promised land. God's people will turn to their promised Messiah. The one they pierced shall be their Savior.