

EXEGETICAL STUDY NOTES · ZECHARIAH 12 IN ITS BIBLICAL CONTEXT

“They Will Look on the One They Have Pierced”

*Why This Prophecy Is Not About Modern Turkey – But About the
Betrayal and Crucifixion of Jesus Christ and the Outpouring of the
Spirit in Acts 2*

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Main Thesis

Zechariah 12 is not a geopolitical forecast about modern nations threatening the modern state of Israel. It is a Messianic oracle whose fulfillment the New Testament explicitly locates in the betrayal, crucifixion, and piercing of Jesus Christ (John 19:37; Matthew 26:31; 27:9–10) and in the Spirit of grace poured out on Jerusalem at Pentecost, producing mourning, repentance, and cleansing (Acts 2:36–41; Zechariah 13:1).

We do not have to guess what “that day” means. The inspired apostles already told us. Where an apostle has interpreted a prophecy, no teacher — charismatic, dispensational, or otherwise — has the authority to reassign it to a news cycle.

INTERPRETIVE RULE FOR THIS STUDY — *Scripture interprets Scripture. New Testament citation of an Old Testament prophecy is the final, inspired word on its meaning.*

PART 1

Historical and Covenant Context

1.1 Author, Audience, and Setting

- Zechariah son of Berechiah, son of Iddo (Zech 1:1), prophesied to the post-exilic remnant of Judah beginning in 520 BC (cf. Ezra 5:1–2; 6:14), alongside Haggai.
- His audience: a small, discouraged community that had returned from Babylonian captivity to rebuild the temple under Persian rule.
- Chapters 1–8: dated visions and oracles encouraging temple rebuilding.
- Chapters 9–14: two undated “burdens” (Hebrew *massaʾ*, מַסָּא — oracle/burden) — Zechariah 9–11 and Zechariah 12–14. These look beyond the immediate rebuilding to the coming of the Messiah and the consequences of His arrival.

1.2 The Purpose of Chapters 9–14

These oracles answer the remnant's unspoken question: "Is this small, struggling Jerusalem really the place where God's promises will be kept?" God's answer: yes — because from this city and this people will come the King (9:9), the Shepherd (11:4–14; 13:7), the Pierced One (12:10), the Fountain for sin (13:1), and living waters flowing to all nations (14:8).

The oracles are Messianic and redemptive in their trajectory — not a map of 21st-century diplomacy.

1.3 The Controlling Phrase: "In That Day"

The phrase "in that day" (בַּיּוֹם-הַהוּא, *bayyom hahu*) appears approximately 16 times in Zechariah 12–14 (12:3, 4, 6, 8 [x2], 9, 11; 13:1, 2, 4; 14:4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 20). It is the structural glue of the whole oracle.

Key principle: whatever day 12:10 refers to — the day they look on the Pierced One — governs the whole unit. And the New Testament dates that day for us: the crucifixion and its aftermath (John 19:37). The fountain of 13:1 opens "on that day" — the day connected to the piercing. The Shepherd of 13:7 is struck in that same complex of events — and Jesus quotes it the night of His betrayal (Matt 26:31).

PART 2

Zechariah 9–11: The King Comes, the Shepherd Is Betrayed

Before touching chapter 12, we must see that the New Testament has already been interpreting this section of Zechariah as fulfilled in Christ. The pattern is unmistakable.

2.1 Zechariah 9:9 – The King on a Donkey

"Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your King comes to you, righteous and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Zechariah 9:9, BSB

New Testament fulfillment — stated explicitly:

- **Matthew 21:4–5** — “This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet...” (the Triumphal Entry)
- **John 12:14–16** — John cites Zechariah 9:9 and adds that the disciples understood after Jesus was glorified.

So the first “act” of this oracle section is fulfilled — by apostolic declaration — in Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem during Passion Week.

2.2 Zechariah 11:12–13 — Thirty Pieces of Silver: The Betrayal

“Then I told them, ‘If it seems right to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.’ So they weighed out my wages, thirty pieces of silver. And the LORD said to me, ‘Throw it to the potter’ — this magnificent price at which they valued Me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD.”

Zechariah 11:12–13, BSB

Note carefully: the LORD Himself says “this magnificent price at which they valued Me.” The rejected Shepherd’s wage is the price placed on Yahweh Himself — thirty pieces of silver, the compensation price of a gored slave (Exodus 21:32).

New Testament fulfillment — stated explicitly:

- **Matthew 26:14–15** — Judas asks the chief priests, “What are you willing to give me if I hand Him over to you?” And they set out for him thirty pieces of silver.
- **Matthew 27:3–10** — Judas throws the silver into the temple; the priests use it to buy the potter’s field. Matthew declares: “Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: ‘They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price set on Him by the people of Israel, and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord had commanded me.’”

(Note: Matthew attributes the composite citation to Jeremiah — the named major prophet heading a merged allusion to Jeremiah 19:1–13; 32:6–9 and Zechariah 11:12–13, a recognized citation convention. The Zechariah wording — thirty pieces, the potter, the house of the LORD — is unmistakable.)

Exegetical payoff: The betrayal of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, the throwing of the money into the temple, and the purchase of the potter's field fulfill Zechariah 11 to the letter. This is the immediate literary lead-in to Zechariah 12. The oracle's storyline has already arrived at the betrayal of the Messiah before chapter 12 even begins.

2.3 The Rejected Shepherd Theme

Zechariah 11:4–14 portrays the Good Shepherd rejected by the flock, His pay an insult, the covenant staffs ("Favor" and "Union") broken. This is the theological setup: what happens when Israel rejects and sells her Shepherd-King? Chapters 12–14 are the answer — judgment, yes, but astonishingly, also grace: the pierced Shepherd becomes the fountain of cleansing.

PART 3

Zechariah 12: Verse-by-Verse Exegesis

3.1 Verse 1 – The Creator's Credentials

"This is the burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel: Thus declares the LORD, who stretches out the heavens and lays the foundation of the earth, who forms the spirit of man within him..."

Zechariah 12:1, BSB

- *Massa'* (מַסָּא') — "burden/oracle." The second burden (the first began at 9:1).
- The One speaking is the Creator who "forms the spirit (*ruach*, רֹחַ) of man within him" — a deliberate anticipation of 12:10, where He pours out "a spirit of grace and supplication." The God who forms the human spirit will pour out His Spirit.

3.2 Verses 2–3 – The Cup of Reeling and the Immovable Stone

"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples... I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the nations; all who would heave it away will be severely injured."

Zechariah 12:2–3, BSB

Hebrew insight:

“Cup of drunkenness/reeling” — **saph ra'al** (סֵף-רָעַל). The nations who come against Jerusalem drink judgment and stagger. This is stock prophetic judgment imagery, not novel geopolitics:

- Isaiah 51:17, 22 — “the cup of His fury... the goblet of reeling”
- Jeremiah 25:15-17 — “Take this cup of the wine of wrath from My hand, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it”
- Psalm 75:8 — the cup in the LORD’s hand

“Heavy/burdensome stone” — **eben ma'amasah** (אֶבֶן מַעֲמָסָה). All who try to lift it rupture themselves.

Interpretation: God pledges to defend His redemptive purposes centered in Jerusalem. Those purposes culminate in the events of 12:10 — the piercing of the LORD’s own representative and the outpoured Spirit. The nations’ opposition to God’s purpose in Jerusalem is answered by God Himself.

Where does the New Testament locate the nations “gathered against” God’s Anointed in Jerusalem?

“For truly against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, gathered together in this city to do what Your hand and will had decided beforehand would happen.”

Acts 4:27-28, BSB, citing Psalm 2

The apostles themselves, praying in Jerusalem, interpret the “gathering of nations and peoples against the LORD and His Anointed” as fulfilled at the cross — Rome (the Gentile world power) and the rulers of Israel united against Jesus. This is the inspired apostolic frame for reading “all nations gathered against Jerusalem” language: it converges on the Messiah event, not on modern statecraft.

3.3 Verses 4–9 – The LORD Defends; the House of David Like God

“On that day, declares the LORD, I will strike every horse with panic... The house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD going before them. So on that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”

Zechariah 12:4, 8-9, BSB

- The feeblest in Jerusalem “will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of the LORD” (v. 8). The Davidic house rises to divine representation — a trajectory that lands on David’s greater Son, in whom the house of David is not merely like God but is “God with us” (Matt 1:23) and “the Son of David” (Matt 21:9; Rom 1:3–4).
- God alone wins the victory (vv. 4, 9). Salvation is His act, not Judah’s military prowess — preparing us for the shocking means of victory revealed in v. 10: not a sword drawn by Jerusalem, but a spear driven into the LORD’s own Anointed.

3.4 Verse 10 – The Anchor Text: “They Will Look on Me, the One They Have Pierced”

“Then I will pour out on the house of David and on the residents of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and prayer, and they will look on Me, the One they have pierced. They will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a firstborn son.”

Zechariah 12:10, BSB

Hebrew insight:

“I will pour out” — **shaphak** (שָׁפַךְ). The same verb family and concept as Joel 2:28–29: “I will pour out My Spirit on all people.” Two prophetic promises of an eschatological outpouring — and Peter stands up on Pentecost and says of Joel’s promise, “this is what was spoken” (Acts 2:16). The outpouring texts converge on the same event.

“A spirit of grace and supplication” — **ruach chen v’tachanunim** (רוּחַ חֵן וְתַחֲנוּנִים). Not merely an attitude — the gracious working of God’s Spirit producing conviction and pleading for mercy. Grace (*chen*) initiates; supplication (*tachanunim*) responds.

“They will look on ME... they will mourn for HIM” — the staggering pronoun shift. Yahweh is the speaker (“I will pour out... they will look on Me”), yet the mourning is “for Him.” The One pierced is identified with Yahweh Himself and yet distinguished — fully coherent only in the incarnation: God the Son, pierced, while the Father and Spirit are distinguished from Him. (Compare Zech 11:13 — thirty pieces as the price “at which they valued Me,” again Yahweh speaking.)

“Pierced” — **daqar** (דָּקַר). To pierce through, to run through with a weapon — used of thrusting through with sword or spear (Num 25:8; 1 Sam 31:4; Zech 13:3). Not a metaphorical wounding of feelings. A lethal, physical piercing.

“As one mourns for an only child... a firstborn son” — **yachid** (יָחִיד, only/unique one) and **bekor** (בְּכוֹר, firstborn). The vocabulary of Genesis 22 (Isaac, the *yachid*) and of Israel’s firstborn theology (Exod 4:22). The New Testament applies both to Christ: the *monogenēs* — the one and only Son (John 3:16) — and “the firstborn” (*prōtotokos*, Col 1:15, 18; Rev 1:5).

NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT — STATED EXPLICITLY, TWICE:

(a) John 19:34–37 — at the cross:

“Instead, one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out... These things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: ‘Not one of His bones will be broken.’ And, as another Scripture says: ‘They will look on the One they have pierced.’”

John 19:34–37, BSB

John — an eyewitness (19:35) — declares Zechariah 12:10 fulfilled in the spear thrust into Jesus’ side. The Greek verb John uses, *exekentēsan* (ἐξεκέντησαν, from *ekkenteō* — to pierce through), translates *daqar* precisely. This is the inspired, apostolic, eyewitness interpretation of Zechariah 12:10. The case is closed at Calvary.

(b) Revelation 1:7 — the same fulfilled identification:

“Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him — even those who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.”

Revelation 1:7, BSB

John again fuses Zechariah 12:10 with Daniel 7:13. The Pierced One is Jesus — permanently. Any future dimension of “seeing Him” in Revelation 1:7 still identifies the piercing as an accomplished past event at the cross. No text anywhere reassigns the piercing to a future geopolitical crisis.

3.5 Verses 11–14 — The Great Mourning

“On that day the wailing in Jerusalem will be as great as the wailing of Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. The land will mourn, each clan on its own: the clan of the house of David and their wives, the clan of the house of Nathan... the house of Levi... the Shimeites... and all the remaining clans and their wives.”

Zechariah 12:11–14, BSB

- “Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo” — almost certainly the national mourning for King Josiah, slain at Megiddo (2 Chron 35:22–25), the deepest civic grief in Judah’s memory, memorialized in laments “to this day.” The mourning over the Pierced One will match the mourning over the death of the righteous king.
- The mourning is family by family, each apart — David’s line (royal), Nathan’s (Davidic, cf. Luke 3:31), Levi’s (priestly), Shimei’s (Levitical, Num 3:18) — royal and priestly houses convicted individually. Personal, penetrating conviction, not a staged national ceremony.

Where do we see Jerusalem convulsed with grief over the One they pierced?

- At the cross itself: “And all the crowds who had gathered for this spectacle, when they saw what had happened, returned home beating their breasts.” (Luke 23:48, BSB) The mourning begins the very afternoon of the piercing.
- At Pentecost — the full arrival (see Part 5 below): “When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart...” (Acts 2:37).

PART 4

Zechariah 13: The Fountain and the Stricken Shepherd

Chapter 13 continues the same “day” — do not let the chapter break sever the oracle.

4.1 Zechariah 13:1 – The Fountain Opened

“On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the residents of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.”

Zechariah 13:1, BSB

The logical flow of 12:10 → 13:1 is the gospel order itself:

1. The Spirit of grace is poured out →
2. They look on the Pierced One →
3. They mourn in conviction →
4. A fountain is opened for cleansing from sin.

Compare Acts 2: the Spirit poured out (2:1–4, 17, 33) → Peter proclaims the Pierced One (“whom you crucified,” 2:23, 36) → they are cut to the heart (2:37) → “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins”

(2:38). The fountain for sin and impurity opened in Jerusalem, to the house of David's city first — exactly as Zechariah said, "beginning in Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47).

Blood and water flowed from the pierced side (John 19:34); cleansing flows from the pierced One (1 John 1:7; 5:6–8; Heb 9:14; Titus 3:5).

4.2 Zechariah 13:7 – “Strike the Shepherd” – Jesus Quotes This of His Own Betrayal Night

“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the man who is My Companion, declares the LORD of Hosts. Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn My hand against the little ones.”

Zechariah 13:7, BSB

- “The man who is My Companion” — *geber amiti* (גִּבֹּר עִמִּיתִי). *Amit* means an associate, an equal, one's fellow — used elsewhere only in Leviticus of one's fellow/neighbor (e.g., Lev 6:2; 19:15, 17). Yahweh calls the Shepherd His equal-companion — divine identity again, matching the “look on Me” of 12:10.
- It is the LORD's own sword that strikes Him: “Awake, O sword... Strike.” The death of the Shepherd is God's deliberate redemptive act — “this Man, delivered up by God's set plan and foreknowledge” (Acts 2:23); “it was the LORD's will to crush Him” (Isa 53:10).

NEW TESTAMENT FULFILLMENT — QUOTED BY JESUS HIMSELF, THE NIGHT OF THE BETRAYAL:

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘This very night you will all fall away on account of Me. For it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’”

Matthew 26:31, BSB; parallel Mark 14:27

Jesus, walking to Gethsemane — hours after Judas took the thirty pieces (Zech 11:12–13 // Matt 26:14–15), hours before the piercing (Zech 12:10 // John 19:37) — cites Zechariah 13:7 as Scripture being fulfilled that very night in His arrest and the scattering of the disciples (Matt 26:56, “Then all the disciples deserted Him and fled”).

Summary of the fulfillment chain — all within Passion Week and its harvest:

ZECHARIAH	EVENT	NT FULFILLMENT CITATION
9:9	King on a donkey	Triumphal Entry — Matt 21:4-5; John 12:14-16
11:12-13	Thirty pieces of silver, thrown in the temple, to the potter	Judas' betrayal and the potter's field — Matt 26:14-15; 27:3-10
13:7	Strike the Shepherd, sheep scattered	Arrest in Gethsemane; disciples flee — Matt 26:31, 56; Mark 14:27
12:10	They will look on Me, the One they have pierced	The spear in Jesus' side at the cross — John 19:34-37; cf. Rev 1:7
12:10-14	Spirit of grace poured out; great mourning	Pentecost: Spirit poured out; Jerusalem cut to the heart — Acts 2:16-17, 33, 36-37; cf. Luke 23:48
13:1	Fountain opened for sin and impurity	"Repent and be baptized... for the forgiveness of your sins" — Acts 2:38; Luke 24:47

Five explicit New Testament citations anchor Zechariah 9–13 to one week in roughly AD 30 — and to the Pentecost that followed fifty days later. The apostles have already exegeted this oracle. Our job is to believe them.

PART 5

Acts 2: The Outpouring and the Mourning of Jerusalem

5.1 The Spirit Poured Out – on the Residents of Jerusalem

Zechariah 12:10: "I will pour out on the house of David and on the residents of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and prayer..."

Acts 2:1–5: the Spirit comes in Jerusalem, at the feast, with "God-fearing Jews from every nation" dwelling in Jerusalem. Peter announces:

“This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out My Spirit on all people.’”

Acts 2:16–17, BSB

And he traces the outpouring directly to the crucified-and-exalted Messiah:

“Exalted, then, to the right hand of God, He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.”

Acts 2:33, BSB

The Pierced One Himself pours out the Spirit of grace. Zechariah 12:10’s two halves — the outpouring and the piercing — are joined in one Person in Acts 2:33–36.

5.2 The Look and the Mourning

“Therefore let all Israel know with certainty that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and asked Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’”

Acts 2:36–37, BSB

- Peter makes Jerusalem look at the One they pierced — “whom you crucified” (2:23, 36). The prophetic “look” (Hebrew *nabat*, to look intently/regard) happens through apostolic proclamation.
- “Cut to the heart” — *katenugēsan tēn kardian* (κατενύγησαν τὴν καρδίαν), from *katanussomai*: to be pierced, stabbed with pain. The piercing comes full circle: they pierced Him; now the word about Him pierces them. This is the mourning of Zechariah 12:11–14 — deep, personal, convicting grief over the Pierced One, produced by the outpoured Spirit of grace and supplication (“Brothers, what shall we do?” — that is *tachanunim*, supplication, in action).

5.3 The Fountain Opened

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit... Those who embraced his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”

Acts 2:38, 41, BSB

Zechariah 13:1's fountain "to cleanse them from sin and impurity" opens "on that day" — and on the day of Pentecost, in Jerusalem, to the residents of Jerusalem, three thousand pass through the water into the forgiveness of sins purchased by the pierced Messiah. Repentance and remission preached "in His name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47) — exactly where Zechariah said the fountain would open.

5.4 The Firstborn Mourning Becomes Firstborn Joy

The mourning "as for a firstborn" (12:10) gives way, through the fountain, to the "church of the firstborn" (Heb 12:23) — because the *yachid*, the only Son, was given (John 3:16), and the Firstborn from the dead now lives (Rev 1:5, 7 — the very passage that cites Zech 12:10).

PART 6

The Correction: Why This Is Not About Modern Turkey

6.1 The Claim Being Made

With Turkish officials speaking of "taking control of" or "liberating" Jerusalem, and the escalating war of words between Israeli and Turkish leaders, popular prophecy teachers assert: "Zechariah 12 is being fulfilled before our eyes — the nations are gathering against Jerusalem; Jerusalem is the cup of trembling for Turkey!" Many stack this on the older claim that Turkey is Gog's coalition (reading Meshech, Tubal, Togarmah in Ezekiel 38 as Turkish territory).

6.2 Why the Claim Fails Exegetically

1. **It overrules an apostle.** John 19:37 says Zechariah 12:10 was fulfilled at the spear-thrust. Matthew 26:31 records Jesus applying Zechariah 13:7 to that very night. Matthew 27:9–10 declares the thirty pieces fulfilled in Judas. When a modern teacher relocates these texts to Ankara, he is not offering an alternative interpretation — he is contradicting the inspired interpretation. There is no hermeneutical category for "the apostle said fulfilled, but I say pending."

2. **It severs the oracle's unity.** "In that day" binds 12:1–13:9 (and beyond) into one complex of events. You cannot assign 12:2–3 (the cup, the stone) to 2026 while 12:10 (the piercing) sits in AD 30 and 13:7 (the stricken Shepherd) sits in Gethsemane. The day of the nations' judgment, the day of the outpoured Spirit, the day of the piercing, the day the fountain opens — the text presents one integrated "day" of Messianic accomplishment. The apostles anchor its center at the cross and Pentecost; the oracle's "day" is the Messianic age those events inaugurated (cf. Acts 2:17, "in the last days").
3. **It misidentifies the "gathering of the nations."** Scripture's own inspired commentary on the nations raging and gathering against Jerusalem's King is Acts 4:25–28 — Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, "gathered together in this city" against God's Anointed, doing "what Your hand and will had decided beforehand." The apostles saw Psalm 2's gathered nations at the cross. The cup-of-reeling judgment fell within that generation: the very city and temple establishment that pierced the Shepherd was judged in AD 70, exactly as Jesus warned (Matt 23:35–38; Luke 19:41–44; 21:20–24; 23:28–31) — "your house is left to you desolate." God defended His redemptive purpose, vindicated His Son, and judged the piercing generation — all within the "that day" horizon the New Testament establishes.
4. **It requires a perpetually resetting prophecy.** This same passage has been "fulfilled" by teachers in the Ottomans, in 1948, in 1967, in the Gulf War, in Russia, in Iran — and now in Turkey. A prophecy whose fulfillment is re-announced every news cycle and never lands has not been read; it has been recruited. Deuteronomy 18:22 gives the standard: the word that does not come to pass was not from the LORD. The apostolic reading, by contrast, landed once, precisely, and verifiably: donkey, silver, temple, potter's field, sword, scattered sheep, spear, blood and water, Pentecost, three thousand baptized.
5. **It confuses the covenant referent of "Israel" and "Jerusalem."** The burden concerns "Israel" (12:1) as God's covenant people in His redemptive storyline. The New Testament traces that storyline through the faithful remnant who looked on the Pierced One — the 3,000, then 5,000, the Israel of God (Gal 6:16), Jews first and also Greeks, the Jerusalem-born church that is "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb 12:22). The modern secular state — whatever one's view of its politics — is not the

covenant subject of Zechariah's oracle, and Erdoğan is not its villain. The oracle's villain was the unbelief that sold the Shepherd for thirty pieces; its hero is the LORD who turned the piercing into a fountain.

6. **It replaces exegesis with headlines.** The method itself is the error: start with CNN, hunt for verses, announce fulfillment. Biblical method runs the other way: start with the text, trace authorial intent, submit to inspired NT interpretation, then apply. Newspaper exegesis has a 100% failure rate over two thousand years. Apostolic exegesis has never missed.

6.3 What We Are NOT Saying

- We are not saying geopolitical tensions are unimportant, or that believers shouldn't be informed and prayerful about real conflicts (1 Tim 2:1–2).
- We are not mocking people who love prophecy — we are calling them to love it enough to read it in context.
- We are not teaching that God is finished acting in history. The Spirit indwells, God heals, Christ reigns and is coming again (Acts 1:11; 1 Cor 15:23–26). But the timing of His return is not encoded in Turkish press conferences (Acts 1:7; Matt 24:36).

The point is simple: real events do not need a hijacked prophecy to matter, and Zechariah does not need Erdoğan to be true. The prophecy already found its target — a spear, a Savior, a fountain, and three thousand souls.

PART 7

The Other Edge of the Oracle: Judgment on the Piercing Generation in AD 70

Zechariah's "day" has two edges. For those who looked on the Pierced One and mourned, the fountain opened — Acts 2, three thousand cleansed, the believing remnant. But for the generation that pierced the Shepherd and then refused to look — that hardened itself against the outpoured Spirit (Acts 7:51) — the cup of reeling and the burdensome stone became their own sentence. The oracle's judgment edge fell, in history, in AD 70.

7.1 The Cup Changes Hands

In Zechariah 12:2–3, the cup and the stone are aimed at “all the peoples” who set themselves against God’s purpose in Jerusalem. But Acts 4:27 records the shocking realignment: at the cross, “the people of Israel” gathered together WITH the Gentiles against the LORD’s Anointed. The leadership of the city joined the nations. And the covenant principle is fixed: whoever sets himself against God’s Anointed — Jew or Gentile — drinks the cup (Ps 2:9, 12).

Jesus made the transfer explicit. To the daughters of Jerusalem on the way to the cross:

“Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children... For if men do these things while the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

Luke 23:28–31, BSB

The green tree is the innocent One being pierced; the dry tree is the unbelieving city ripe for burning. The mourning Zechariah foresaw would come to Jerusalem one way or the other — the mourning of repentance (Acts 2:37) or the mourning of judgment (Luke 23:28).

7.2 Jesus’ Explicit Verdict on That Generation

The Lord did not leave the timing vague. He tied the judgment to the very generation that pierced Him:

- **Matthew 23:35–38** — “...so that upon you will come all the righteous blood shed on earth... Truly I tell you, all these things will come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... your house is left to you desolate.”
- **Matthew 24:1–2, 34** — “Do you see all these things?... Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down... this generation will not pass away until all these things have happened.”
- **Luke 19:41–44** — Jesus weeps over the city: “your enemies will barricade you and surround you... They will level you to the ground — you and the children within your walls... because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.” The city’s crime, stated by the Lord Himself: she did not look when the Pierced One visited her.

- **Luke 21:20–24** — “When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, you will know that her desolation is near... For these are the days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written.” Note the phrase carefully: Jesus says the written prophecies of judgment on Jerusalem — Zechariah’s oracle among them — reach fulfillment in that siege.
- **Matthew 22:7** — in the wedding parable, the king “sent his army, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city.” Spoken days after the Triumphal Entry (Zech 9:9), days before the silver changed hands (Zech 11:12).

Compare also Daniel 9:26 — after the Anointed One is “cut off,” “the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.” Messiah cut off first; city and temple destroyed after — the exact sequence of AD 30 → AD 70.

7.3 The Historical Fulfillment

Within that generation — roughly forty years after the piercing — Rome under Titus besieged Jerusalem (AD 66–70). The city fell, the temple burned to the ground in August of AD 70, and not one stone of the sanctuary structure was left upon another, precisely as Jesus said. The temple system that had rejected its Shepherd — the priesthood that paid the thirty pieces, the house that was “left desolate” — ended in fire. It has never been rebuilt. The historian Josephus, an eyewitness, chronicled a devastation so complete it staggers belief — famine, faction, slaughter, and the sanctuary in flames (Josephus, *The Jewish War*, Books 5–6, cited as historical corroboration, not as Scripture).

This was not random geopolitics. It was covenant verdict — “the days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written” (Luke 21:22).

7.4 Zechariah 13:8–9 and 14:1–2 – Siege, Sifting, and the Refined Remnant

The oracle itself describes this two-edged outcome:

“And in all the land, declares the LORD, two thirds will be cut off and perish, but a third will be left in it. This third I will bring through the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, ‘They are My people,’ and they will say, ‘The LORD is our God.’”

Zechariah 13:8–9, BSB

“Behold, a day of the LORD is coming... For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem for battle. The city will be captured, the houses looted... and half of the city will go into exile...”

Zechariah 14:1-2, BSB

Read in the oracle’s own sequence, this is the sifting of the piercing generation:

- The two thirds cut off — the unbelieving mass of that generation, swept away in the judgment of the siege.
- The third refined through fire — the believing remnant who looked on the Pierced One: the Jewish church, the three thousand and those added daily, who “call on My name” (Zech 13:9) exactly as Joel promised and Peter preached — “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21). “They are My people... The LORD is our God” is New Covenant language verbatim (Jer 31:33; Heb 8:10; 1 Pet 2:9–10).
- And notice the Lord’s provision: the disciples were not told to defend the city but to flee it — “then let those in Judea flee to the mountains” (Luke 21:21). Early church memory (Eusebius, *Church History* 3.5) records the Jerusalem believers escaping to Pella before the siege closed. The remnant passed through the fire and came out refined; the fountain-washed survived the day of vengeance.

7.5 Zechariah 14:8–9 – What Flows Out of the Judged City

The oracle does not end in ashes:

“And on that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem... And the LORD will be King over all the earth.”

Zechariah 14:8-9, BSB

Living waters flowing from Jerusalem to the whole earth — this is the gospel’s own itinerary: “beginning in Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47), “in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Jesus stood in the temple courts and cried, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink... rivers of living water” — and John adds, “He was speaking about the Spirit” (John 7:37–39). The water flowed; the stone temple burned; and the LORD reigns as King now over all the earth in His Son, to whom “all authority in heaven and on earth” has been given (Matt 28:18; Acts 2:33–36; 1 Cor 15:25).

The earthly sanctuary ended in AD 70 because God had already moved His dwelling. The true temple — the *naos* — is now the body of Christ, the church of the Pierced One: “Do you not know that you yourselves are God’s temple, and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Cor 3:16; cf. 6:19; Eph 2:19–22).

7.6 Why AD 70 Demolishes the Turkey Reading – Finally

Here is the complete arc, and it leaves no remainder for modern headlines:

1. The King came — donkey, AD 30 (Zech 9:9 // Matt 21:4–5).
2. The Shepherd was sold and struck — silver, sword, Gethsemane (Zech 11:12–13; 13:7 // Matt 26–27).
3. The LORD was pierced — the spear, Calvary (Zech 12:10 // John 19:37).
4. The Spirit was poured out, Jerusalem mourned, the fountain opened — Pentecost (Zech 12:10–13:1 // Acts 2).
5. The refined remnant called on His name; the living waters flowed to the nations (Zech 13:9; 14:8 // Acts 2:21; 1:8).
6. The generation that refused to look drank the cup — the city captured, the house left desolate, AD 70 (Zech 12:2–3; 13:8; 14:1–2 // Matt 23:36–38; Luke 21:20–24).

Grace and judgment — both edges — landed within one generation, exactly as Jesus said (Matt 24:34). The oracle is not idling in history waiting for a Turkish press conference. It is finished business with ongoing benefits: the fountain is still open, the living waters are still flowing, and the King is still reigning. What remains is not another siege of a Middle-Eastern city but the return of the Pierced One Himself, when “every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him” (Rev 1:7) — a day no headline can date (Acts 1:7; Matt 24:36).

PART 8

Teaching Points (Summary)

- Zechariah 9–14 is one Messianic tapestry, and the New Testament explicitly pins its threads to Passion Week and Pentecost: the donkey (9:9), the silver (11:12–13), the stricken Shepherd (13:7), the piercing (12:10), the outpoured Spirit and the mourning

(12:10–14), the fountain (13:1).

- “They will look on Me” — Yahweh is the Pierced One. Zechariah 12:10 is one of the Old Testament’s clearest witnesses to the deity of the Messiah, confirmed by the pronoun shift (“Me... Him”) and by 13:7 (“the man who is My Companion/equal”).
- John 19:37 is a closed case. An inspired eyewitness declared the prophecy fulfilled at the spear-thrust. No teacher may reopen what an apostle has closed.
- Acts 2 is Zechariah 12:10–13:1 in narrative form. Outpoured Spirit → proclaimed Pierced One → hearts pierced with conviction → fountain of forgiveness in baptism → beginning in Jerusalem, on the house of David’s city.
- The oracle has two edges, and both fell within one generation. The “gathered nations” met their match at the cross (Acts 4:25–28); those who looked and mourned were washed in the fountain and refined as the remnant (Zech 13:9; Acts 2:38–41); and the generation that refused to look drank the cup of reeling in AD 70 — city captured, house desolate, temple burned — “the days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written” (Zech 12:2–3; 13:8; 14:1–2; Matt 23:36–38; 24:34; Luke 21:20–24), exactly as Jesus warned.
- Newspaper exegesis is not a harmless hobby. It trains Christians to find certainty in headlines instead of in the finished work of Christ, breeds perpetual anxiety, discredits the church when predictions fail, and — most seriously — steals glory from the cross by relocating fulfilled prophecy to unfulfilled speculation.
- The right response to Zechariah 12 is the response of Acts 2: look on the One you pierced — for every sinner’s sins drove the nails (Isa 53:5–6; Acts 2:23, 36) — mourn, repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The fountain is still open.

Closing Exhortation

Zechariah saw a day when God's people would stop defending themselves, stop scanning the horizon for enemies, and finally look — look at the One their sins had pierced. On that day, grace would win. Mourning would turn to cleansing. A fountain would open that no empire could shut.

That day came. A spear opened His side, and blood and water flowed. Fifty days later, the Spirit fell on Jerusalem, three thousand hearts were pierced by the word, and the fountain opened in the waters of baptism — for the forgiveness of sins, in the name of the Pierced One who lives.

So do not let anyone move your eyes from the cross to the news crawl. The prophecy is not waiting on Turkey. It was never about Ankara, or Moscow, or any parliament of men. It was about a Shepherd sold for silver, struck by the sword of God, pierced for our transgressions, and raised to pour out the Spirit of grace.

Look on Him. Mourn your sin. Wash in the fountain. And follow the Shepherd who was struck for you.

“And I will pour out on the house of David and on the residents of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and prayer, and they will look on Me, the One they have pierced.” – Zechariah 12:10

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” – Acts 2:38

Appendix – Master Scripture Reference List

Zechariah (the oracle itself): Zech 1:1; 9:1, 9; 11:4–14; 11:12–13; 12:1–14; 13:1–9 (esp. 13:1, 7); 14:8

Betrayal fulfillment: Matt 26:14–16; Matt 27:3–10; (composite with Jer 19:1–13; 32:6–9);
Exod 21:32

Stricken Shepherd fulfillment: Matt 26:31, 56; Mark 14:27

Triumphal Entry fulfillment: Matt 21:4–5; John 12:14–16

Piercing fulfillment: John 19:34–37; Rev 1:5, 7; cf. Num 25:8; 1 Sam 31:4 (usage of *daqar*)

Cup of judgment imagery: Isa 51:17, 22; Jer 25:15–17; Ps 75:8

Nations gathered against the Anointed: Ps 2:1–6; Acts 4:25–28

Outpouring of the Spirit: Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2:1–5, 16–21, 33; Zech 12:10a

Mourning/conviction: Zech 12:11–14; 2 Chron 35:22–25 (Josiah/Megiddo); Luke 23:48; Acts
2:36–37

Fountain/cleansing: Zech 13:1; Acts 2:38–41; Luke 24:47; John 19:34; 1 John 1:7; 5:6–8; Heb
9:14; Titus 3:5

Deity of the Pierced One: Zech 12:10 ("look on Me"); Zech 13:7 (*geber amiti*, "My Companion");
Zech 11:13 ("valued Me"); Matt 1:23; John 3:16 (*monogenēs* // *yachid*); Col 1:15, 18; Rev 1:5

Judgment on the piercing generation (AD 70): Zech 12:2–3; 13:8; 14:1–2; Matt 22:7; 23:35–38;
24:1–2, 34; Luke 19:41–44; 21:20–24 (esp. v. 22, "days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written");
23:28–31; Dan 9:26; Ps 2:9, 12; Acts 7:51; (historical corroboration: Josephus, *The Jewish War* 5–
6; Eusebius, *Church History* 3.5)

The refined remnant and New Covenant people: Zech 13:9; Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21, 41, 47; Jer
31:33; Heb 8:10; 1 Pet 2:9–10; Luke 21:21

Living waters and the reign of the King: Zech 14:8–9; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; John 7:37–39; Matt
28:18; Acts 2:33–36; 1 Cor 15:25

The true temple (naos) after AD 70: 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; Eph 2:19–22; Heb 12:22

Sovereign plan of God in the cross: Isa 53:5–6, 10; Acts 2:23; 4:27–28

Guardrails against date-setting/newspaper exegesis: Deut 18:22; Acts 1:7; Matt 24:36; 1 Tim
2:1–2

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— Pastor Joshua David