



Advent 3 – Zechariah 11 & 12:10-13:9 – the pierced shepherd

By Phil Bailey

Theme: YHWH himself is rejected as shepherd, but the human/divine shepherd's death will save the remnant of Israel.

Aim:

- See horror of human rejection, that even the people of Judah would rather have bad, abusive shepherds than the divine/human shepherd who exposes their sin (Zech 11:8, cf. John 3:19-20).
- Mourn and grieve our sin and that we would reject and pierce our Good Shepherd, left to ourselves (because true of Judah is surely true of us). To the extent that we do not mourn it, pray for more of God's Spirit of grace and supplication (Zech 12:10).
- Be amazed at the love of God, who would use the moment of humanity's greatest rejection to open up a fountain of cleansing for our salvation (Zech 13:1).

Questions:

- 1) If helpful, spend a little time reflecting on how the rejection, striking and piercing of the Good Shepherd, foretold in Zechariah 11 and 12:10-13:7 is fulfilled in Jesus. You could look at Matthew 26:14-16 + 31-35, 27:1-10 and John 19:16-37 (especially vv.33-37).
- 2) Where do you least want God to shepherd you, preferring to cling to sin or idols (cf. Zech 10:1-2 and 13:2 for the ongoing problems of idolatry, impurity and false teaching among God's people)? In other words, where are the keep out signs in your heart?
 - What makes you unwilling to trust the leading and instruction of your Good Shepherd in these areas?
- 3) Unless God had poured out his Spirit on us, none of us would mourn over sin or grieve our part in crucifying the Good Shepherd at all. Nor would we look to his death for cleansing from sin. Looking back, where have you seen God's Spirit change your heart already, teaching you to mourn sin and come to Jesus?

- 4) In what ways do you need to pray for more of that spirit of grace and supplication?
- 5) How are you moved/impacted by God's love for his people displayed in Zech 11 and 12:10-13:9?
 - How might his love help you to trust him as your shepherd in those areas mentioned in question 2 – the areas where you put up the keep out signs?