

Prayer Meeting Address by Mr.J.Delves at "Ebenezer" Clapham
on Saturday evening 19th. April, 1962

Hymns:536, 160 Reading:Zechariah 13 Hebrews 9 from v.21

There is no question that this chapter, as do a number of others, refers to the great Messiah and His coming in the flesh, and what He shall accomplish or what shall be accomplished by means of what He shall pass through as the substitute of His people.

There are two or three points and one is a smiting sword. "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered". This may have some reference to certain events that happened at the time of the Lord's apprehension in the garden and what followed in His crucifixion but it is usually looked upon as the unsheathing of the sword of justice smiting the Lord's fellow, that is the Father's fellow; having relation to His eternal Godhead and Deity and also to His human nature that was smitten by the hand or sword of justice. The hymnwriter refers very strikingly to this where he says,

"Many hands were raised to wound him,
None would interpose to save,
But the awful stroke that found him,
Was the stroke that justice gave."

Justice smote the Shepherd to spare the sheep and this is the mystery. Though the sheep were guilty and had sinned and brought the hand of justice upon them but such was the provision that the smiting fell upon the Shepherd and not the sheep. If it had fallen upon the sheep it would have been to their eternal destruction, but the glorious God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, bore the stroke and endured all that justice claimed, paid the ransom price and delivered the sheep.

As well as the smiting sword there is also the Fountain opened. "In that day" - what a wonderful day it was when His blood was shed, when the fountain was opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the "fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins." This fountain served a two-fold purpose both to sanctify and justify and

where it does one it will do the other. His people are said to be justified by His blood, that is by the shedding of it, and are also sanctified by it through Jesus who, "that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate".

Another point refers to the people that have some part in it, they are a tried people who will suffer a refining process and are described as the "third part", "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried". We cannot be brought into a knowledge of a once suffering Christ without much loss, stripping, wounding and killing, a refining fire, to purge our dross and to make us to more resemble Him. The effect of this refining is not to consume them but to produce the power of prayer in them, they shall call upon My name and I will hear them. This refers to those people who have been in the Refiner's fire, whose dross has been purged to some extent and who have been refined and moulded more into the image of a suffering Christ, "they shall call upon My name and I will hear them". Not only will the Lord hear them but He will own them, "I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God". This is the spirit of adoption that results from the refining fire as has often been the case. So it is in the Hebrews where the apostle refers to the Lord's chastening bringing forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness. "They shall say, the Lord is my God." They will prove this by the Lord's chastening or refining process. What a wonderful mercy to have some interest in this, to feel some humble hope in our souls that the Surety was smitten on our behalf and the fountain open for us, such as are the spiritual inheritance of Jerusalem, to cleanse from sin, to purge and sanctify, and not only so, but to bear our sins away and present us without spot before God, washed in His blood and clothed in His righteousness. Amen

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I.Fuller and Friends, 9 Sibella Road, London, SW4 6JA, England