

ZECHARIAH

Chapter Thirteen

Introduction

Water is the prominent element in these verses. You see both a **fountain** and a **flood**:

1. The fountain is obvious; it's in verse one, where you read, "In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."
2. The flood is not so obvious, but it is there. The majority of the chapter is a description of the future Great Tribulation, and especially the severe persecution of Jews in that day, when two-thirds of them "shall be cut off and die." In the Book of Revelation, this persecution of the Jews is compared to a flood: Revelation 12:15 & 16 reads, "So the [devil] spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the [devil] had spewed out of his mouth."

In the future, the Jews will face a *flood of persecution*, then find a *fountain of purification*.

These verses describe Israel during the Great Tribulation... But they are not without application to us. We will **not** be involved in any portion of the Great Tribulation, but while we are in the world, we will have tribulation. The world often comes upon us as a flood; but in the Lord we, too, have a fountain.

We'll organize our thoughts around these two points: #1 In The World You Face An Overwhelming Flood, and #2 In The Lord You Find An Overcoming Fountain.

- #1 In The World You Face
An Overwhelming Flood
(v7; 2-6, 8-9)

We're going to take the verses in a more chronological order. We'll see the *reason* for the Great Tribulation, and the *result* of the Great Tribulation.

We will begin with verse seven where you see the reason for the Great Tribulation:

Zechariah 13:7 "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion," says the LORD of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; then I will turn My hand against the little ones."

This verse was quoted by Jesus Christ in Matthew 26:31. He applied it to Himself; He was God's Shepherd over Israel. He was "struck" on the Cross, by His crucifixion, and His disciples were scattered. Further, Israel was "scattered" as a nation – a dispersion that has lasted over twenty-five hundred years.

The reference to a "sword" indicates that Jesus Christ's crucifixion was an official act of judgment. For example, in Romans 13:4 you learn that human governments have the power of the sword – life and death – by which to execute judgment. In the case of Jesus, Rome was the sword in God's hand as the Father judged the sin of the world – putting it upon Jesus Christ so that He might be your substitute and Savior.

Jesus is called "the Man who is My Companion." The KJV uses the word "fellow." It is a word of close association and descent; it is used of blood relatives. This Man cannot be a mere human being, but must be One who Himself is God. It would not be possible to state in stronger terms that this Person was and is God.

The reason for the Great Tribulation is the refusal of the Jews to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Their rejection of Him led to their dispersion. The Great Tribulation is the event that will prepare the Jews to receive Jesus in His Second Coming to earth. There is a hint of this in the phrase (in verse seven), "I will turn My hand against the little ones." A better translation would be, "I will cause My hand *to come back to, or upon*, the little ones." It is a promise from the Lord that He will keep and restore a remnant.

You next see some of the result of the Great Tribulation. First, in verses two through six, you see *false prophets*:

Zechariah 13:2 "It shall be in that day," says the LORD of hosts, "*that* I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land.

Zechariah 13:3 It shall come to pass *that* if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who begot him will say to him, 'You shall not live, because you have spoken lies in the name of the LORD.' And his father and mother who begot him shall thrust him through when he prophesies."

Jesus said concerning the Great Tribulation,

Matthew 24:4 ... "Take heed that no one deceives you..."

Matthew 24:11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many...

Matthew 24:23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.

Matthew 24:24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."

The Book of Revelation describes the man we call the antiChrist as entering the rebuilt Jewish Temple in Jerusalem and demanding to be worshipped as God. His companion is called the False Prophet; he sets up an idol of the antiChrist.

The false prophets will all be revealed at the Second Coming of Jesus. Their judgment will be harsh: Their own parents will kill them! This is according to a principle found in the Book of Deuteronomy, where you read,

Deuteronomy 13:6 "If your brother, the son of your mother, your son or your daughter, the wife of your bosom, or your friend who is as your own soul, secretly entices you, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods,' which you have not known, neither you nor your fathers,

Deuteronomy 13:7 of the gods of the people which *are* all around you, near to you or far off from you, from *one* end of the earth to the *other* end of the earth,

Deuteronomy 13:8 you shall not consent to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him;

Deuteronomy 13:9 but you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people.

Deuteronomy 13:10 And you shall stone him with stones until he dies..."

Some of the false prophets will seek to deny their activities:

Zechariah 13:4 "And it shall be in that day *that* every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies; they will not wear a robe of coarse hair to deceive.

Zechariah 13:5 But he will say, 'I *am* no prophet, I *am* a farmer; for a man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.'

Zechariah 13:6 And *one* will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'"

Apparently they will attempt to deny that they were false prophets. They will give up the “robe of coarse hair.” You remember that Elijah, then Elisha, wore a garment of coarse hair as the uniform of a prophet. These end-times false prophets will attempt to convince folks they were simple farmers. The “wounds” spoken of refer to the practice of inflicting wounds upon one’s self but cutting the skin. This cutting of the skin was a common practice associated with the worship of idols. The false prophets will attempt to convince others that these self-inflicted wounds were unjustly received, when in fact they mark them out as idol worshippers.

Once they see Jesus, the false prophets will be exposed and ashamed. Once you see Jesus clearly, as revealed by the Word of God, everything false is quickly exposed.

You face an overwhelming flood of false prophecy today:

2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.

1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Today, in the Church Age, we don’t kill false prophets! But we still ought to understand that our relationship to the Lord transcends all earthly ties.

We don’t kill false prophets. We are instructed to *resist* and *reveal* them by judging their words according to God’s Word.

There will not only be false prophets; there will also be fierce persecution:

Zechariah 13:8 And it shall come to pass in all the land,” says the LORD, “*That* two-thirds in it shall be cut off *and* die, but *one*-third shall be left in it:

Zechariah 13:9 I will bring the *one*-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, ‘This *is* My people’; and each one will say, ‘The LORD *is* my God.’”

Fully two-thirds of the Jewish people on earth will be killed by the flood of fierce persecution unleashed by the antiChrist, who will be possessed by the devil. You can read about it in Revelation, chapters six through nineteen.

One-third shall endure to the end. For them, the Great Tribulation is a time of testing and refining as they put their faith and trust in God.

Christians of the Church Age – you and I – have no part in this Great Tribulation. We will have been caught-up to heaven in the Rapture prior to any portion of it. Still, we face fierce persecution at times that is described as a flood:

1 Peter 4:3-4 "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles; when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you."

Peter's readers - which include you and I - live in what he calls "the flood of dissipation." The "lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries" that characterize the world of the unsaved are metaphorically described as a flood. The word for "flood" that Peter uses gives the picture of a liquid being poured out in an ever widening expanse. He is describing worldly living as an ever widening stream which soon becomes a flood of wild, immoral, selfish, idolatrous activities into which the unsaved plunge themselves. "Dissipation" means excess; it came to mean one who is destroying himself by willful and deliberate fleshly excesses.

The world around you is a "flood of dissipation." It is a rising, spreading, ever widening excess of fleshly immorality. Its currents seek to draw you in and entrap you in a deadly undertow.

The solution to the overwhelming flood you face in the world is the overcoming fountain you find in the Lord!

#2 In The Lord You Find
An Overcoming Fountain
(v1)

Look back at verse one:

Zechariah 13:1 "In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."

At the return of Jesus Christ, a “fountain shall be opened.” You can read about it in Ezekiel and in Revelation.

Ezekiel described the future Temple at Jerusalem, after the Great Tribulation, saying,

Ezekiel 47:1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar.

Ezekiel 47:2 He brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me around on the outside to the outer gateway that faces east; and there was water, running out on the right side.

Ezekiel 47:3 And when the man went out to the east with the line in his hand, he measured one thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the water *came up to my ankles*.

Ezekiel 47:4 Again he measured one thousand and brought me through the waters; the water *came up to my knees*. Again he measured one thousand and brought me through; the water *came up to my waist*.

Ezekiel 47:5 Again he measured one thousand, *and it was* a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed.

Ezekiel 47:6 He said to me, “Son of man, have you seen *this?*” Then he brought me and returned me to the bank of the river.

Ezekiel 47:7 When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, *were* very many trees on one side and the other.

Ezekiel 47:8 Then he said to me: “This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. *When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed*.

Ezekiel 47:9 And it shall be *that* every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes.

In the Revelation of Jesus Christ, this same fountain is described this way:

Revelation 22:1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Revelation 22:2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, *was* the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each *tree* yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

After coming through the flood of persecution, the Jews especially, but all people also, will be refreshed by the fountain of purification that issues forth from Jerusalem. It is a picture, a metaphor, to indicate the character of the kingdom Jesus will establish after the Great Tribulation. It will be pure and clean, a time of healing and refreshing upon the whole earth.

You and I will be caught-up to heaven in the Rapture prior to the Great Tribulation. We will return with Jesus in His Second Coming and be involved in His kingdom on the earth. We, too, will enjoy the fountain.

We can enjoy it today in a spiritual sense. Jesus said,

John 7:37 On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

John 7:38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

John 7:39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Rivers of living water; an inexhaustible fountain flowing from heaven through you. That is how Jesus described the filling of the Holy Spirit He would give as a gift to each and every believer. As with any gift, this filling of the Holy Spirit is received by faith. He is yours for the taking.

There are three words that grab your attention: “come,” “believe,” and “receive.” They are words of *faith* and are **not** a *formula*; but they do help you to understand the way your spiritual thirst is truly quenched.

“**Come** to [Jesus] and drink...” “Come” is an invitation. It is an invitation that makes no initial *distinctions* or *demands*.

It makes no initial distinctions with regard to who is invited.

“**Anyone**...” is invited. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever** believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

It makes no initial demands upon those who are invited. “Anyone **who thirsts**... is invited. You come just as you are – thirsty and needing to be satisfied. There are no prerequisites of reform or religion. There are no rules to keep, no rites or rituals to perform.

“**Believe** in Me...” is the next word from Jesus and it is directed to those who are invited to come. You are called upon to believe what the Bible reveals about your *sin* and God’s *Savior*. Jesus is God in human flesh, fully God and fully man, sent to die on the Cross as your substitute. He is your Savior from sin. This is what you must believe.

Those who believe this “receive” the “Holy Spirit.” That is the third word: “come,” “believe,” “**receive**.” After Jesus died and rose from the dead, He appeared to His disciples and “He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). They

received the Holy Spirit within them. They were born-again as God's Holy Spirit took up residence within them.

Perhaps you *have* already come, believed, and received... There is something more to discuss, for Jesus said,

John 7:38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

When the disciples received the Holy Spirit, when Jesus breathed on them, were torrents of living water flowing out from them, touching the lives of others around them? No; they were timid and unsure, huddling together in an upper room. Forty days later, though, the Holy Spirit Who was already *within* them also came *upon* them on the Day of Pentecost and a torrent was released from their lives that still floods the world today!

Conclusion

In the world you face an overwhelming flood... In the Lord you find an overcoming fountain.

If you are not a believer: Come, believe, and receive.

If you are a believer: You are God's Temple on the earth, from which this fountain flows so that others may know His spiritual help and healing.