

Devotion for Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Zechariah 12:10-11 EHV

*<sup>10</sup>"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace, who pleads for mercy. Then they will look at me, the one they have pierced."  
They will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child. They will grieve bitterly for him, as one grieves over his firstborn. <sup>11</sup>On that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, as great as the mourning for Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.*

Introduction

There Josiah lay in his chariot on the plain of Megiddo, pierced through with Egyptian arrows. Blood flowed from his body as a cry went out through all Israel.

Not only was Josiah a physical descendant of David, but also a spiritual one. He was the last of Judah's righteous kings, a reformer who led his people to repent of their idolatry and restored proper worship to the LORD.

But there he lay – pierced, bleeding, dying. Believers felt his loss so deeply that the author of Chronicles (who lived after Zechariah) notes that male and female singers were still singing his lament centuries later!<sup>i</sup>

As great as the believers' lament was for that pierced descendant of David, Zechariah prophesies that God's people would offer a greater lament in the future over another pierced King – a lament God's people still offer to this day with one significant difference: we don't mourn in despair, but in hope – trusting that our King's death is not the end of an era, but the beginning of one.

Let us consider these things under the theme: ***Look at the One who was pierced. Mourn the Messiah's sacrifice in repentant hope.***

Part One: Look at the One who was pierced.

King Josiah lived about 89 years before Zechariah. After he died, everything went downhill. Wicked kings succeeded him, and Judah soon faced God's judgment, resulting in 70 years of exile in Babylon.

In keeping with His promise to provide a Saviour, the LORD brought His people back to Judah, inspiring the prophet Zechariah to prepare His people for what He was about to do.

In the past, because of their unfaithfulness, the LORD allowed the nations to terrorize His people. Now, through Zechariah, He foretells a time when He would again delight in His people, protect them, and destroy the nations that harassed them. The LORD would take pleasure in His people once more.

We read:

*<sup>10</sup>"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace, who pleads for mercy."*

What a fascinating verse! Even though the people had been nothing but rebellious, the LORD would graciously pour out His Spirit on them, prompting them to repent of their sins and look to Him for mercy. Even more astonishing is when the LORD says this would happen:

*Then they will look at me, the one they have pierced. They will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child. They will grieve bitterly for him, as one grieves over his firstborn.*

Did you notice the pronoun shift in this verse? First, the LORD speaks of "*me, the one they have pierced,*" and then says, "*they will mourn for him.*" In doing this, the LORD hints that One who is pierced is both "me" – true God – and yet also a distinct person, "him" – pointing ahead to the Messiah, who is both true God and true man – a distinct person from the Father, yet one with Him and the Spirit.

Jesus is the only begotten Son of the Father, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. God sent Him into the world to redeem the world so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.<sup>ii</sup>

But why is that a cause for grief and mourning? Because God's people would only recognize Him and repent after they had crucified Him.

Only then would they realize what they had done: rejected the one who never rejected them, but came to forgive them. They would mourn in shame – not only over the act of crucifying God's Son, but because He came in love to be pierced for them. The people would mourn in genuine repentance, looking for mercy because the LORD himself would pour His Spirit over them – calling, gathering, and enlightening them to the truth of His forgiving love.

After Jesus died on the cross, John records how the Roman soldiers pierced Jesus' side to make sure he was dead.<sup>iii</sup> He adds:

*<sup>36</sup>Indeed, these things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, "Not one of his bones will be broken." <sup>37</sup>Again another Scripture says, "They will look at the one they pierced."<sup>iv</sup>*

But Jesus' death on the cross is just part of the fulfillment of this wonderful prophecy from Zechariah. Do you remember how our sermon text began? The LORD said:

*<sup>10</sup>"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace, who pleads for mercy. Then they will look at me, the one they have pierced."*

While hanging on the cross, everyone saw only a man. It was only after Pentecost, when Jesus poured out His Spirit upon His disciples, that the Lord revealed to the crowds in Jerusalem who Jesus is.

Peter proclaimed,

*<sup>36</sup>“Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”<sup>v</sup>*

What effect did this truth have on the crowd that gathered at Pentecost? Luke tells us:

*“Now when the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Gentlemen, brothers, what should we do?’*

*<sup>38</sup>Peter answered them, “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... <sup>41</sup>Those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added.”<sup>vi</sup>*

At Pentecost, God pierced His people’s hearts with guilt so that He could heal them with grace - revealing Jesus to them in a different light. He was not a nobody, as they supposed. He was their God, whom they crucified. Oh, how great a sin! And yet, God was willing to forgive it. He desired their repentance: their sorrow over sin and turning to Him in faith. Why? Because Jesus’ death didn’t mark the end of an era, but the beginning of a new one, as described by the prophet Jeremiah:

*<sup>31</sup>Yes, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah...I will be their God, and they will be my people...for I will forgive their guilt, and I will remember their sins no more.<sup>vii</sup>*

Jesus’ death and resurrection ushered in this new covenant era, in which God remembers our sins no more and pours out His Spirit on His people.

Part Two: Mourn the Messiah’s sacrifice in repentant hope.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, what God did for the crowd gathered in Jerusalem, He continues to do today. He sends His Spirit wherever His Word is preached in truth and purity to gather His people from every nation on earth. He wants us to look at Jesus and realize that...

*... it was because of our rebellion that he was pierced. He was crushed for the guilt our sins deserved. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.<sup>viii</sup>*

Yes, you have every reason to mourn when you look at Jesus’ cross. Do you think you are a good person who deserves God’s love?

Look at Jesus' cross and understand that your sins caused that! The only thing you deserve from God is the wrath and punishment He suffered.

Look at Jesus' cross and join the Christian hymn writers from throughout the centuries in their great laments: God's only begotten Son and heir of heaven died because of you. He died for you.

Look at the One your sins have pierced. See your pride, anger, lust, distrust, and selfishness hanging there with Him. See the weight of your sins and repent. Turn to the LORD for mercy, and He will grant it.

Why?

Because Jesus died for you to save you from yourself. He died for you even though you in no way deserved it. He died to reconcile you to God. The punishment that brought you peace was upon Him. By His wounds you are healed.

Yes, it is good to mourn over sin as you see Jesus nailed to the cross, but don't let that mourning end in despair. Mourn in hope, because, as He yelled from the cross, "It is finished" - Every one of your disgusting thoughts, words, and actions has been paid in full. It is finished - you are reconciled to God.

And to prove it is finished, Jesus rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sent His Spirit of grace into your heart to plead for the mercy He promises to give. He washed you clean from all sin in Holy Baptism, clothed you with Christ's righteousness, and adopted you as His own.<sup>ix</sup>

Jesus' death and resurrection ushered in a new era: one that grants us such a decisive victory over the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh that, on the Last Day, they will bother us no more.

Yes, when Christ comes again to judge the world, *every eye will see him, including those who pierced him. And all the nations of the earth will mourn because of him.*<sup>x</sup>

They will mourn because they rejected Him. We, on the other hand, will rejoice because He was pierced for us. By His wounds we are healed.

So, until that day comes, keep looking at the One pierced for you, mourning His sacrifice in repentant hope.

We pray:

Gracious Spirit, who moves us to turn to God for mercy, keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities. Move us to mourn over our sins and remember the forgiveness we have in Christ. Strengthen us to live in repentant hope, looking forward to the everlasting life He won for us. In His name, we pray. Amen.

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<sup>i</sup> 2 Chronicles 35:23-25

<sup>ii</sup> Cf John 3:16

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iii Cf. John 19:33-35

iv John 19:36-37 EHV

v Acts 2:36 EHV

vi Acts 2:37-38, 41 EHV

vii Jeremiah 31:31, 33b, 34b EHV

viii Isaiah 53:5 EHV

ix Cf. Zechariah 13:1 & Galatians 3:26-27

x Revelation 1:7