

# Zechariah 13:1-6 – Reformation of People and Preachers

TSK, HebrewLexicon, Handfuls, Henry, Geneva, Poole, Clarke, JFB, Barnes, Delitzsch, Spurgeon, Moore, Calvin, Gill, INT, Phillip? Beloved in the Lord: We desperately need reformation among the people and the preachers in the church. Yes, it is good to pray for things to change in Canada...that we would stop murdering babies and protecting murderers, that we should stop attacking the nuclear family, as God made it, that we stop murdering two old or sick people every single day, that we should stop removing responsibility from children for wrong doing by blaming their upbringing(教养, 家教) and that we should start evangelizing.

But none of these things is as critical as the need for reformation in the pulpit (讲台) and in the pew (教堂长椅). Even evangelism (传教) would have little value if there were nothing worthwhile to which new converts (皈依者) could come. Hear God call for reformation among the people and the preachers under these headings, this New Year's Day:

## Reformation of the People Reformation of the Preachers

Our goals are: That we might desire, pray, and work for true reformation inside the church, starting with ourselves!

### Reformation of the People

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.

1. In that day, the day when Jesus came, there was a fountain filled with blood, blood flowing from Immanuel's veins 静脉, and sinners who plunged beneath that flood, lost all their guilty stains. In other words, God forgave men's sins through Jesus.

1 John 3:5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Symbolically, you see this fountain that brought forgiveness when Jesus' pierced side produced the blood and water.

1 Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified 成圣, 成为圣洁, but you were justified 被称为义 in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

For true reformation, the people would stop pursuing their own pleasure and profit and pursue penitential 悔罪的 preaching.

And make no mistake about it: Repentance (悔改) was not something that occurred naturally. Repentance was the work of Christ, through his Word and Holy Spirit.

2. This picture of waters of repentance was not new. Consider 3 instances.

a. In the Garden of Eden, before the Fall, there were 4 rivers that flowed. Water is a symbol of life.

b. After the Fall, those who were healed of deadly diseases were washed with water to symbolized their purification.

Numbers 8:7 "Thus you shall do to them to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purification (洁净) on them, and let them shave all their body, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.

b. Even the priests were washed with water so that they were not killed when they went into the presence of God and make supplication (代求, 祈求) for the people. They had the laver (洗濯盆) and the sea (铜海) – 2 containers for water in the temple worship.

3. Zechariah pointed out that the water of repentance was a fountain, not a trickle 涓流, 细流. The water was abundant.

Isaiah 41:17 "The poor and needy seek water, but there is none, Their tongues fail for thirst. I, the LORD, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. 18 I will open rivers in desolate heights, And fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water...

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.

This was enough for the world!

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.

#### **4. Accompanying repentance, God would do 3 more things to secure his people's reformation.**

**a. God would so work in their hearts that his people would forget the name of the idols that once graced their lips.**

It is true that the Jews were particularly scorning (鄙视) of idolatry (拜偶像) after captivity (被掳), but they had redeveloped a love for idols. This is why when the Apostles preached, and people believed, they would burn all their idols!

**b. God would so work that he would remove his people's enemies...and there were in the covenant community!**

Matthew 7:15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous (凶残的) wolves.

**c. God would so work that he would remove unclean spirits from among the people.** God would drive out the spirits of all kinds of uncleanness, including sexual impurities, etc.

#### **5. Lessons:**

**a. Have you ever reflected on how dirty the human heart is? This is why you, of the New Jerusalem, must come and be washed regularly of all your sins – sins that keep you from a close relationship with the Savior.**

Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. **To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,** 6 and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father...

**b. Have you reflected on how filthy (肮脏的) the church, even those who are named with the name of Christ, has become...how complacent (自满的)?** There are churches that don't even preach the resurrection...churches that would never discipline someone living in unrepentant sins...churches that are more focused on position and influence!

**c. Have you reflected on how evil our governments have become.** The fall of these nations is based on their fall into a state of unconfessed sin. PM Trudeau, and President-elect Trump can't save the nation.

Jeremiah 2:13 "For My people have committed two evils: They have **forsaken Me**, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns (水池) — broken cisterns that can hold no water.

**d. This means there can never be true reformation unless it is in the heart.** But the church, for it to be strong again, and for the nation, for it to be strong again, must start with a reformation of the heart! And when "the sun rises, darkness necessarily must flee!"

#### **Reformation of the Preachers**

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**.

**1. God wanted reformation among the prophets as well, and he would see that it would happen.**

**2. Why? These false prophets were doing what was in their own interests, instead of the sheep's interest.** They told the sheep what they wanted to hear and tickled their ears, even as the hungry lions were near. And there were many such teachers:

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

So God wanted those wicked preachers replaced if they would not reform. This was essential for the kingdom to expand throughout the earth.

**3. God would silence the wicked from peddling (兜售, 传播) their lies by destroying them, and he would do by by using those close to them.** This was not a literal killing though. No individual has this power. Why would God silence them?

**The false prophets tried to deceive those close to them.** (What is a greater sin?)

**At the same time, consider the courage these parents had!** Close relatives would pierce through the argument of false teachers and show them their lies. What a blessed day this was! But this was not new!

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, 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, "you shall not consent to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him or conceal him; 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. 10 "And you shall stone him with stones until he dies..."

While there was no blatant 露骨的，公开于众的 idolatry during Jesus' day, there was surely idolatry of Pharisaic 法利赛人的 self-righteousness 自以为义 – huge idol. And these idolaters deserved nothing but death.

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

#### 4. God would bring **shame** on the wicked for peddling their lies. He would do so by shining the light of his Word on them.

They (donkeys, as Calvin called them) would then stop pretending they are prophets. (They wore robes of camel's hairs.) The clothing covered the wolf so that he was unrecognizable. These shamed prophets would then go back to work that they were fit to do: Be a farmer...care for land, cattle, and 4-legged sheep. Were there really fake prophets and did God really shame them?

Acts 19:13 Then some of the itinerant ( 游行各处的 ) Jewish exorcists ( 赶鬼之人 ) took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." 14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against ( 制服了 ) them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

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.'

#### 5. God would make the guilty **sensible** of their sin of peddling sins.

To do this, God used a picture of the guilty person trying to ward off ( 避开 , 挡开 ) the attacker and getting defensive wounds on his hands. The wounds were between his "hands" not "arms" as our translation says. The meaning is that God would cause the false teachers' friends (not enemies as before) to bring the faulty teachers to their senses... wounding them so they would pay attention.

Proverbs 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

#### 6. Lessons:

a. There will always be things that lure ministers from faithful preaching– things that blind their eyes. They, like Adam and Eve, listen to the snake and fall into sin. This is also a warning to you in any position of leadership. Other ministers teach falsehoods – teaching what people want to hear because they don't want to rock the boat or "cause trouble." Don't trust these men!

b. While the church does not have the power of capital punishment ( 极刑 ) , it doesn't mean it has no power. If fact, the church must declare these wicked leaders are outside of God's kingdom, if they would not reform their ways. And the church must urge them to go back to carpentry or being mechanics. God's kingdom must expand!

c. Love of God requires that you do not ignore discipline ( 管教 ) , even if the one accused of wrong doing is a relative or friend. There is no room for cliques ( 小集团 , 派系 ) in the church.

d. Do you have this kind of zeal for the kingdom...a zeal where you would respectfully challenge a minister of the Gospel who is not speaking the truth? Elders need to consider and do this also!

#### Conclusion:

God desired reformation in the pulpit and the pew! He expected his people would pursue this reformation!

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

**1. Are you pursuing true reformation within the church? The church badly needs it in 2017.**

**2. The motivation for pursuing true reformation is knowing who you are in Jesus Christ because of what he did for you on the cross.** As the redeemed of the Lord, redeem the church!

Finally: God does not want pretenders ( 伪装者 ) in church. If you have been pretending, stop! Don't wait for God to pronounce eternal judgment on you. Repent of your sins today. Ask him to cleanse you, declare you righteous, and give you the hope of heaven because of what the Lord Jesus did.