

Midweek of Lent 5

March 25, 2026

Text: Zechariah 12:10-11

Other Texts: The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ Part V: Calvary

“Look at the One Who Was Pierced”

Grace, mercy and peace be yours from God our Father through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the One who was pierced for our transgressions.

The text for this evening is from Zechariah chapter 12:(10-11):

“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.”¹

The plain of Megiddo is where Judah’s last good king was mortally wounded, pierced by an arrow in a battle against Pharaoh Neco of Egypt. 2 Chronicles relates the events:

And the archers shot King Josiah. And the king said to his servants, “Take me away, for I am badly wounded.” So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried him in his second chariot and brought him to Jerusalem. And he died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah; and all the singing men and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these a rule in Israel; behold, they are written in the Laments.²

Jeremiah’s laments for the fallen king became a tradition.³ They survived the exile to Babylon and were still known, perhaps even sung, at the time of Zechariah, a century after Josiah’s death. Yet, more painful than the death of a national leader is the death of a child. Parents grieve that loss for the remainder of their time on earth. It is a hole in the heart that is never filled. A hole made even deeper still if it was their only child who died. Now fast forward about 640 years. Another king and son dies. But He is not just a good king, He’s the perfect King. He is not just a son, but *the only begotten Son of God*.

Dear Christians, look at Him hanging there on the cross. Blood dripping from His head, where thorns have pierced His brow. Blood dripping from His hands and feet, where nails have pierced Him through. Blood dripping from His side, where a spear has pierced Him to His heart. This is

¹ Zechariah 12:10-11. All quotes are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version* (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

² 2 Chronicles 35:23-25.

³ This is not to be confused with the Book of Lamentations which Jeremiah also wrote. The biblical book deals with the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians. However, we can see with these two examples why Jeremiah is sometimes referred to as “the weeping prophet.” Certainly, there were many tragic occurrences during his ministry.

one of Zechariah's most vivid Holy Week prophecies. The Lord says, "When they look on *me*, on him whom they have pierced." *God himself* was dying on the cross in the person of His incarnate Son, Jesus the Christ. John quotes this prophecy as he records its direct fulfillment:

But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. . . . For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken." And again another Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced."⁴

There God hangs: Pierced all over. Pierced through. Bleeding. Dying. Dead. We're tempted to look away. The sight is horrible. But we must look. We must see. We must understand. Understand *why* He is there. *Why* He is pierced. *Why* the sinless Son of God was turned into a bloody mess on that day when the midday sun was darkened for three full hours.

We grieve over many things. Sometimes we grieve over little, even foolish things: the loss of a sports game or some sentimental hand-me-down. Sometimes we grieve over serious things: the loss of a job, the loss of a relationship, the loss of health, the loss of a loved one. Yes, we mourn the loss of earthly things. But do we mourn when we look at Jesus' pierced body?

Do we grieve over our sin? Do we weep over the pain we have caused others by our sins? Greater still, do we weep over the pain we have caused our Savior? Do we mourn the selfish desires that took priority over serving our Savior and our neighbor in true love? Do we weep over the selfish desires that led us into wicked sin by which we joined those who mocked Him In His suffering on the cross? For it is true; *we* are the ones who deserve to be pierced. Pierced in time. Pierced in eternity. Pierced for our sins. Pierced for our lack of sorrow over them.

Yet, *despite us*, Jesus willingly took our place by *hanging on the cross for us*. "He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities."⁵ As horrific as the physical pain was, even more excruciating was the agony of abandonment by His Father. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"⁶ *Understand Jesus' words*. This is the complete loss of God's love and mercy, which are replaced, not by nothing, but by His unfathomable fury. This is absolute agony of body and soul. *This is Hell*. The sinless Son who deserved only good, enduring Hell to protect us from divine wrath. The wrath we deserve. Are we truly mourning for Him, not just because it was horrible for Him, but because it was horrible *because of us and our sins*?

He bore our sins, guilt, and transgressions, making them His own. Jesus is God's Son, the King of kings, the Lord of Glory. And we pierced Him. Killed Him. Unless our heart is as hard as a lifeless rock due to unbelief, unless our conscience has become seared by impenitent sin, this truth should be enough to make us mourn and weep in heartfelt repentance until our last breath.

Yes, we look to the cross to see the result and due reward of our sins. And so we hate our sins and our sinful nature from the depths of our renewed spirit. But that is not the only reason to look

⁴ John 19:33-34, 36-37.

⁵ Isaiah 53:5.

⁶ Matthew 27:46.

on the One whom we have pierced. The Lord, speaking through Zechariah, declares: “I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced.”

The Lord has poured out on His people *a* spirit of grace. He has done this by pouring out on us *the* Spirit of grace, the Holy Spirit, in Holy Baptism. *The* Spirit who gives us faith to look *to* the One we pierced for in Him alone do we find healing and hope, pardon and peace—blessings that flow from Him even as the water and blood flow from His pierced side. *The* Spirit who teaches us that we are saved by God’s grace and Christ’s obedience and merits and that, because of Him, we can present pleas for mercy. *The* Spirit who fills our spirit with the confidence to pray to God, for Jesus’ priestly sacrifice has paid for our sins and His ongoing priestly mediation and intercession for us sinners make us sure that the Father hears us in love.

Dear Christians, keep looking to the One we pierced in faith, for *there* is found forgiveness of sins and new life in the Holy Spirit. A life that lasts forever in heavenly glory. For Jesus is no longer on the cross, nor in a grave, but He is risen, ascended, and on His throne in heaven. As you walk daily as a Christian, bearing the fruits of repentance, also be looking *for* Him, because He will return one day. “Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will mourn on account of him.”⁷

Everyone will see Jesus when He returns to judge the living and the dead. And everyone will mourn because of Him. But there are two groups. There are those who do not mourn in this life in sincere sorrow over their sin and so then change their sinful ways which true repentance produces. They will mourn eternally, wailing forever as they endure the agony of hell. An agony made all the worse in their recognition that they should not be there. That it was their own stubborn refusal to repent and turn to Jesus in faith that put them again under God’s wrath.

But for we who mourn as we look on Him whom our sins have pierced, who weep in true repentance, our mourning will come to an end. Already now, in faith, we stand beneath His pierced body, and in repentant joy wash our robes until they are white in the blood of the Lamb. But also now, in faith, we look at His resurrected, glorious body in heaven and, seeing Him, we also our own future when our bodies are raised in imitation of His glorious body. And finally then He will fully fulfill His Beatitude, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”⁸ For we who mourn in repentance now will be completely comforted:

“Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”⁹

⁷ Revelation 1:7. The ESV indicates in a footnote that the word translated as “wail” in the text can also be translated as “mourn,” which fits well with Zechariah’s prophecy.

⁸ Matthew 5:4.

⁹ Revelation 21:3-4.

May we mourn now in repentance in the hope of life everlasting. In the name of Jesus, our pierced Savior. Amen.