

# Connection Group Participant Guide

August 29, 2021

## Zechariah 13:7-9

### Introduction

Echoing the language of Isaiah 53 (and Ps. 22:15), which says that the Messiah would be smitten and afflicted by God, Zechariah pictures God as calling for the implement of death (sword) against His Shepherd. In the garden, with reference to Himself, Jesus cited the phrase, "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered," just before the disciples all left Him and fled (Matt. 26:31).

Woven into Zechariah 13:7 are several crucial theological concepts. First, God's Shepherd, Jesus Christ, is both man and God. He had to take on our flesh in the incarnation or He could not die for the sins of the fallen human race. But in so doing, He did not cease to be what He is from eternity, the fulness of God (Col. 2:9).

The scattering of the sheep after the Shepherd is struck down refers initially to the apostles' reaction to Jesus' arrest. Beyond that, it refers to the dispersion of the Jewish nation after Titus destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Then God says that He will turn His hand "against the little ones." In light of verses 8 and 9, it probably here refers to God's protection of the remnant of Jewish believers, both in history and especially during the Great Tribulation, when the majority of the nation ("two thirds," a general term for the majority) will perish, but God will bring the third part through the fire to refine them. The final result is, "They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'The Lord is my God.'"

### Highlight

Who is the shepherd of verse seven and to what does this prophesy refer (Zech. 13:7; Matt. 26:31; Mark 14:27)?

### Explain

When people don't look to the Shepherd, what other sources do they look to for guidance, comfort and peace?

### Apply

Are you submitting to God as He refines you through trials, calling out to Him as your God, and knowing His assurance that you are His child?

### Respond in Prayer

Read through Eph. 1:3-14 and listen with your heart to what it has to say. We recommend praying through this text on your own at home and together with your Connection Group.

