

**Midweek 6**  
**Look at the One Who Was Pierced**  
**Text: Zechariah 12:10-11**

If you don't have piercings, it's hard not to look at a person who has them all over: bars through the tops of the ears, big hoops in the earlobes, studs in the eyebrows, rings through the lips and nose, another stud in the tongue. Some people may even display chains dangling from chest piercings. You don't want to be rude, but it's hard to look away.

In this week's prophecy from Zechariah, the Lord tells us to look at one who has been pierced. He's not talking about someone with pierced ears or a nose ring but about his own Son. The Lord encourages us to look long and hard—it's not rude—because he was pierced *for us*. Hear the Lord's message for his people from Zechariah 12:10-11:

“I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be as great as the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.”

**I. Look *On* the One Whom You Pierced**

Look at him hanging there. 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 open.

This is one of Zechariah's most vivid Holy Week prophecies. The Lord says, “They will look on *me*, the one they have pierced.” *God himself* was dying on the cross in the person of Jesus. John quotes this prophecy as he records its direct fulfillment:

When [the soldiers] came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken,” and, as another scripture says, “They will look on the one they have pierced.” (John 19:33-34,36-37)

We're tempted to look away, but it's okay to stare. There he hangs: Pierced. All. Over.

But why is he there? Why is he pierced? Why was the sinless Son of God turned into a bloody mess that day? In short, because of you . . . because of me.

We grieve the loss of some trinket. We weep when we lose some treasure. We mourn the loss of some material wealth. But do we grieve over our sin? Do we weep over the pain we have caused our Savior? Do we mourn the selfish desires that take priority over serving our Savior and our neighbor? Aren't we the ones who deserve to be pierced?

Instead, Jesus stood in for us. Actually, he *hung* in for us. “He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities” (Isaiah 53:5). As intense as the physical pain was, the agony of abandonment was even more excruciating. “But the deepest stroke that pierced him was the stroke that justice gave” (CW 430:2). The sinless Son, forsaken by his Father, endured hell itself to protect us from divine vengeance.

We confess that truth each time we recite the Nicene Creed (emphasis added): “For *us* and for *our* salvation, he came down from heaven. . . . For *our* sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.” We marvel each time we read Isaiah chapter 53 (emphasis added): “He was pierced for *our* transgressions, he was crushed for *our* iniquities.”

It’s enough to make you weep, isn’t it? That is what the Lord tells us in our text:

They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be as great as the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

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

Archers shot King Josiah, and he told his officers, “Take me away; I am badly wounded.” So they took him out of his chariot, put him in his other chariot and brought him to Jerusalem, where he died. He was buried in the tombs of his ancestors, and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for him. Jeremiah composed laments for Josiah, and to this day all the male and female singers commemorate Josiah in the laments. These became a tradition in Israel and are written in the Laments. (2 Chronicles 35:23-25)

Jeremiah’s laments for the fallen king became a tradition in Israel. They survived the exile to Babylon and were still being sung at the time of Zechariah, a century after Josiah’s death.

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.

We should also weep in sincere repentance as we look on the One we have pierced. It was *our* sins that nailed the King to the cross, *our* guilt that pierced him with pain, *our* transgressions that caused his grieving Father to turn away from his suffering Son. We should weep, because this dying man is God’s firstborn . . . and we killed him.

But there is another reason to keep staring at the pierced victim on that blood-soaked cross.

## **II. Look to the One Who Was 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 supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced.”

A footnote offers an alternative translation: “They will look *to* me, the one they have pierced.”

The Lord has poured out on us both *a* spirit of grace and *the* Spirit of grace. *The* Spirit directs us to look *to* the One we pierced to find healing and hope, pardon and peace—blessings that flow from the pierced one like an eternal waterfall. *The* Spirit teaches us that we are saved by God’s grace and Christ’s merits and that, because of his merits, we can present our supplications.

He was pierced for our transgressions,  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,  
and by his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

Keep looking to the One we pierced, who is no longer on the cross but on his throne. Look for him in the skies, because you know that he will return one day, when every knee will bow and every tongue will acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

“Look, he is coming with the clouds,”  
and “every eye will see him,  
even those who pierced him”;  
and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” (Revelation 1:7)

On that great and glorious day, our mourning over sin and the pain it cost our Savior will end. We look *on* the One we have pierced; we look *to* the One who was pierced for us. We stand beneath his pierced body, where we wash our robes until they are spotless in the blood of the Lamb. And we will look at his now-perfect body in heaven, where he will fulfill his promise of eternal joy to those who mourned over their sins while on earth.

“Never again will they hunger;  
never again will they thirst.  
The sun will not beat down on them,”  
nor any scorching heat.  
For the Lamb at the center of the throne  
will be their shepherd;  
“he will lead them to springs of living water.”  
“And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”  
(Revelation 7:16-17)

You may feel rude when you look too long at a person with multiple piercings. But you are *encouraged* to look at the One who was pierced for your sins. Go ahead and stare. Look at him and never look away. For in Jesus, you also see the grace of God.

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:1-3)

In the name of our pierced Savior, dear friends. Amen.