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Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

MESSIANIC ALLUSIONS OF ZECHARIAH 13:6 REVISITED

A Research Paper
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Course
OTST 555 Prophets

By
Ingram London
April 2011

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INTRODUCTION

Zechariah 13:6 can provide an interesting challenge to any scholar. The text has been traditionally used as prophetic evidence foreshadowing the death of the Christian Messiah, Jesus Christ, via crucifixion. However, more recent scholarship suggests that the text has been misapplied by over eager Christian scholars practicing something akin to eisegesis and that the text rather points to hypothetical false-prophets, a view which seems to be strongly supported exegetically. This is usually taken in one of two directions. Either the prophets are scared for their lives and resort to lying to hide the signs of their prior profession (including the self-inflicted wounds applied during ecstatic cultic worships) or the false-prophets are genuinely repentant of their prior professions but don't deny their former practice by admitting that they were disciplined (struck/wounded), and thus deterred from false ecstatic experiences, in the house of their friends. The messianic approach intimates that the text is a foreshadowing of the manner of Christ's death or the floggings he received before crucifixion. As will be seen later, Zech 13:6 is quite a

controversial text that seems to compel the exegete to conclude that the text is not messianic.

However this study will show that the text may still be interpreted as messianic through at least two possibilities. This study seeks to demonstrate that the best way to understand Zech 13:6 is to locate the text within the larger structure of Zechariah in relation to parallel passages and the theological center of the larger context combined with careful textual analysis reveals that the text does indeed have at the very least messianic applications if not direct allusions whether primary or secondary.

Understanding Zech 13:6 in a Messianic perspective may give the reader a clearer picture of the role of the Messiah¹ in salvation history not only as a monarch but also as sufferer, especially when compared to the life of Jesus in the New Testament.²

¹This becomes especially clear in conjunction with other verses in Zechariah and other parts of the Hebrew Bible such as Ps 22:16 which have been interpreted as descriptions of the Messiah's sufferings. See Kenneth L. Barker, *Zechariah, The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Daniel-Minor Prophets*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 7:684.

²As a clarification, the purpose of this study is not to prove that Zech 13:6 is messianic but rather messianic allusions are not discredited by the text itself.

HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

Though there are many interpretations in the literature, there are in essence four possibilities that follow the false prophet hypothesis. These theories can be divided into two subcategories; either the false-prophet is lying or telling the truth in regards to how he was wounded and by whom.

One of the most prevalent interpretations found by this study is that the prophet of Zech 13:6 is lying in regards to his wounds and espouses that he was in a fight with friends³ when in reality he had inflicted the wounds upon himself in ecstatic cultic self-mutilation.⁴ Another possibility agrees that the prophet is lying but attribute the prophet's mentioning of the "house of my friends" as a reference to discipline he received as a child as opposed to an altercation between friends.⁵ In

³It seems unlikely that he was wounded by "friends" since the word translated as such should probably be translated "lovers" instead since it is the intensified piel participle form of the verb. See Mark Allen Hahlen and Alan Clay Ham, *Nahum-Malachi*, The College Press NIV Commentary: Minor Prophets. (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 2006), 2:471

⁴Leipzig J. Conrad, "יְדָהּ," *TDOT*. (1998), 9:422.

other words, the prophet is saying he was disciplined harshly as a child by his parents in order to hide the fact that his wounds are really self-inflicted mutilations.

The second subcategory supposes that the prophet is actually telling the truth in that he was caught while involved in pagan sexual cultic rituals and was beaten for his involvement.⁶ Lastly another suggestion follows the same logic of the previous argument but excludes the idea that the prophet was caught and beaten but rather his wounds are actually from his parents who disciplined him to keep him from prophesying falsely.

In addition to the false-prophet hypotheses, there have also been messianic theories proposed. Some expositors assign a more purely messianic meaning to verse 6 such as Unger's but these have generally been regarded as weak arguments.⁷ Others suggest that the passage is primarily speaking of false prophets who have received wounds from either themselves or others but also profess that the passage has a secondary application to

⁵Kenneth L. Barker, *Zechariah*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Daniel-Minor Prophets. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 7:686.

⁶Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, Berit Olam. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 2:695.

Jesus Christ forming a hybrid theory.⁸ These have been summarized in the table below.

Interpretations of Zechariah 13:6					
False-Prophet Hypotheses				Hybrid	Messianic Hypothesis
The Lying False-prophet		The Honest False-Prophet			
The false prophet is unrepentant or repentant but lies about his wounds to hide the marks of his old profession. He states that he was in <u>a brawl with friends</u> , to hide the fact that the wounds are self-inflicted from ecstatic cultic activity.	The false prophet is unrepentant or repentant but lies about his wounds to hide the marks of his old profession. He states that he was <u>beaten as a child</u> , to hide the fact that the wounds are self-inflicted from ecstatic cultic activity.	The false prophet is telling the truth in that he was <u>beaten severely</u> after being <u>caught in the act of ecstatic sexual cultic practices</u> .	The false prophet is repentant and is telling the truth about his wounds in that <u>he was disciplined</u> by his parents (Zech. 13:3) or by friends <u>to keep him from prophesying</u> .	The text <u>primarily references false-prophets</u> but a <u>secondary application can be made to Christ</u> when connected to Zech. 13:7.	The text is <u>purely messianic</u> and is connected to Zech. 13:7 which is more widely accepted as messianic.

⁷Kenneth L. Barker, *Zechariah, The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Daniel-Minor Prophets*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 7:686.

⁸"Zechariah." *SDA Bible Commentary*, ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub Assn., 1977), 7:1115

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Though the false-prophet hypotheses seems rather convincing and appears to deal more faithfully with the text than a messianic viewpoint, there may still be room to demonstrate that the prophecy is messianic for the following reasons: (1) the proximity of the verse to a more recognized messianic prophecy (2) the position of the text in relation to a parallel chiasmic arm that appears to be messianic (3) and finally the uncertainty of the translation of אָמַר at the beginning of the verse which directly calls into question the identity of the conversers in the passage.

Before analyzing these objections in more detail the study will now turn to the historical context of the passage. The authorship of the book of Zechariah is traditionally attributed to (or at least contains) the oracles and preaching of a post-exilic (6th century BCE) Judean prophet who was a contemporary of the prophet Haggai.⁹ The ministry of these two prophets took

⁹This study presupposes the unity of authorship behind the book of Zechariah and attributes it to his hand or a contemporary. Paul L. Reddit, "Book of Zechariah." *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (2000), 1412-1413.

place in Palestine, specifically Jerusalem, where construction of the temple had been halted for approximately ten years after the Persian decree giving permission for its reconstruction by Cyrus.¹⁰ Upon the arrival of a new governor, Zerubbabel, a descendant of King David, both Haggai and Zechariah's ministries arose by calling the people, Zerubbabel, and the High Priest, to recommence building the temple immediately.¹¹ In addition to this, and most relevant to this study is the existence and activities of false prophets which seems to have been an issue in post-exilic Judah.¹²

Along with this historical context, the reader should also consider the literary context of Zech 13:6. The book of Zechariah is generally accepted to possess a significant shift in style and in content between chapters 1-8 and chapters 9-14.¹³ These sections can be further segmented by the superscriptions contained within the text.¹⁴ Using this approach, the passage of

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Marvin A. Sweeney, *Berit Olam*. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 2:692.

¹³David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1999), 317.

¹⁴Zech 1:1; 1:7; 7:1-4; 6:9 9:1; 11:4; 12:1 contain superscriptions which some scholars use to segment the book of Zechariah beyond the common delineation made between Zech

this study is found within the confines of the last section of the book which is Zech 12-14. This literary unit is the last of seven according to David Dorsey.¹⁵ Dorsey also proposes a chiastic structure for this final literary unit, an abbreviated version of which is shown below.¹⁶

- a** All the nations of the earth will gather against Jerusalem, but Yahweh will defeat them (12:1-4)
- b** Judah's leaders will be strengthened (12:5-9)
- c** Repentance of the house of David and the people (12:10-14)
- d CENTER: Cleansing from sin and uncleanness (13:1-2)**
- c'** Repentance of prophets (13:3-6)
- b'** Judah's leader will be struck and the sheep scattered (13:7-9)
- a'** All the nations will gather against Jerusalem; but Yahweh will defeat them (14:1-21)

Within this final unit of Zechariah, is found a mix of prophecies of "disaster and salvation," the latter seeming to take the preeminence.¹⁷ This is also validated by what appears to be the theological center of Zech 12-14 as depicted by Dorsey's structure.

If Dorsey's model of Zech 12-14 is correct, this study suggests that Zech 13:6 can be best understood when at least three factors are taken into consideration including: (1) awareness of the theological center of Zech 12-14, the

chapter 8 and 9. This creates a seven unit linear structure for the entire book of Zechariah. Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid. 317

¹⁶Ibid. 320

"cleansing from sin and uncleanness" or salvation¹⁸ (2) comparing Zech 13:6 with what appears to be its parallel/symmetric arm, Zech 12:10-14 (3) and conducting a textual analysis comparing the use of key words in Zech 13:6 with other uses in the Old Testament.

Assuming Dorsey's model is correct care must be taken not to study Zech 13:6 without the theological context set forth in Zech 12-14. The theological implications must be in harmony with what appears to be the theological center of the passage contained in Zech 13:1-2.¹⁹

Zech 13:1-2 possesses a message of salvation.²⁰ Specifically, the message is a declaration of Yahweh that He will cleanse the house of David via a fountain.²¹

¹⁷Paul L. Reddit, *Introduction to the Prophets* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), 335-336.

¹⁸David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1999), 320.

¹⁹Mark Allen Hahlen and Alan Clay Ham, *Nahum-Malachi*, The College Press NIV Commentary: Minor Prophets. (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 2006), 2:468.

²⁰Paul L. Reddit, *Introduction to the Prophets* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), 335-336.

²¹It is also interesting to note that the beginning of this oracle in Zech 12 is said to be "against Israel" (as opposed to Judah only) and what appears to be a picture of the final period of earth's history depicting battles between Yahweh and the nations. All of this may denote that this passage is in reference to a messianic period in the future since only Judah is in existence at this time as a province of Persia and

Elaborating on the cleansing that will take place, Yahweh also declares that he will (1) cause the people of Judah to forget the practice of idolatry,²² (2) remove prophets from the land,²³ (3) and finally remove a spirit of uncleanness or an unclean spirit from Judah. In light of this it appears that Zech 13:6 is a prophesied fulfillment or elaboration of Yahweh's cleansing of Judah in that the false prophets will be driven out of Judah.

Turning attention to the parallel arm of Zech 13:6 which appears to be Zech 12:10-14, the texts appear to share two common elements: (1) the piercing of an individual and (2) the repentance of the entire population of Judah.²⁴ As with Zech 13:6, Zech 12:10-14 must also be interpreted in light of the theological center of the passage since both passages flank Zech 13:1-2 and should also flank the central text in meaning by

Jerusalem would hardly be a conquest worth gathering the nations of the earth against in 6th century BCE. Kenneth L. Barker, *Zechariah, The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Daniel-Minor Prophets*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 7:680-681.

²²Mark Allen Hahlen and Alan Clay Ham, *Nahum-Malachi, The College Press NIV Commentary: Minor Prophets*. (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 2006), 2:469.

²³Ibid. 469-470.

²⁴There also appears to be a tie between Zech 12:10 and Zech 13:1 which both have reference to water as a cleansing agent bestowing grace.

supporting the theological center. With this in mind, Zech 12:11-14 seems to indicate that the repentance of Judah is brought about through the recognition that their sins have pierced Yahweh.²⁵ Furthermore, the cleansing and grace bestowed on Judah, in Zech 12:10 and Zech 13:1, seems to be connected by the act of repentance. If this is so we must now determine how the parallel arms of Zech 12:10-14 and Zech 13:3-6 serve the same purpose. Indeed if the repentance brought about by the recognition of one's sins (piercing Yahweh) is the cause of the fountain in Zech 13:1-2 than Zech 13:3-6 must play a similar role or at the very least be a part of the cleansing mentioned in Zech 13:1-2 just as repentance is a precursor but also an essential part of cleansing. In Zech 12:10-14 there are individuals weeping in repentance while in Zech 13:3-6 there are individuals denying and wishing to be exonerated from their syncretic religious experimentation. It is grace and the fountain of cleansing that moves the weepers of Zech 12:10-14 and the false prophets of Zech 13:1-6 for both of them have pierced Yahweh.

²⁵The Expositor's Bible Commentary identifies the one pierced as the Messiah (Messiah son of Joseph or suffering messiah) drawing from the Talmud Sukkah 52a. Kenneth L. Barker, Zechariah, The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Daniel-Minor Prophets. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 7:684.

Conducting a proper word study necessitates a general overview of the text, examining the basic meaning of the words composing the text with running commentary supplied by the author of the study.²⁶

And he will say to him "What [are] the wounds, these between/within your hands?" And he will say "That I was struck [in] the house [of] those who love me."²⁷

וְאָמַר אֵלָיו מָה הַמַּכּוֹת הָאֵלֶּה בֵּין יָדַי
וְאָמַר אֲשֶׁר הִכִּיתִי בַּיִת מְאַהֲבָי: ס

The text begins with the word **וְאָמַר**, a common term found throughout the Hebrew Bible. The root of the word is the basic qalal perfect 3rd masculine singular form of the verb **אָמַר** which means "he said."²⁸ **אָמַר** is prefixed by a waw consecutive conjunction **וְ** which changes the perfect form of **אָמַר** which usually denotes a past-tense complete action to a future-tense incomplete action. Thus the meaning of **וְאָמַר** becomes "and he will say."

²⁶Unless otherwise stated the English translation is composed by the author using Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicon. Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A Briggs, ed. The New Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008).

²⁷An alternate rendering of the last phrase is "in the house of my friends."

The next word **אֵלָיו** is a combination of the preposition **אֶל** meaning "to," "towards," or "into" and a 3rd person masculine singular suffix the meaning of which can be rendered as "to him." Thus the text indicates that there is a receiver of the message that will be given next.

The message starts with the interrogative pronoun **מָה** which indicates the beginning of a question that the speaker, who will be referred to as the "inquirer" or "questioner," is posing towards the receiver of the question who will be referred to as the "respondent" or "responder."

The inquirer continues by stating **הַמַּכּוֹת הָאֵלֶּה בֵּין יָדָיךָ**.

הַמַּכּוֹת is the plural form of the feminine noun **מַכָּה** which means "wound," "a blow," or "slaughter." The form used in Zech 13:6 is also prefixed by **הַ**, a definite article, thus "the wounds" refers to specific wounds in view of the inquirer. The questioner continues by giving the respondent more detail in regards to which wounds he has in mind with the words **הָאֵלֶּה בֵּין יָדָיךָ**.

הָאֵלֶּה , literally "the these," adds emphasis to the questioner's inquiry displaying his curiosity and interest in

²⁸An alternate rendering is "one will say."

the “wounds” he sees. **בֵּין יָדָיךָ** gives the location of the wounds as being “between your hands” or “within your hands” referring to the respondent’s hands. This phrase will be discussed in more detail later in the study.

The text now moves to the response given by the respondent starting with the word previously used **וְאָמַר**. This is followed by the actual words of the response starting with **אֲשֶׁר** a particle of relation meaning who, which, that, because, etc. This is followed by **הִכִּיתִי**, the hophal perfect 1st common singular form of **נָכָה** which means “to be hit” or “to be struck.” Thus the respondent explains “That I was struck.” The text ends with further explanation in regards to where the respondent was when he was struck by stating **בֵּית מְאַהֲבָי**, which means “in the house of those who love me” or “in the house of my friends.” This phrase will also be examined in more detail later in the study. The dialogue between the inquirer and the respondent is highlighted in the text below.²⁹

²⁹The words of the narrator appear in **black** text. The questioner’s words appear in **red** text. The respondent’s words appear in **green** text.

And he will say to him "What these wounds between/within your hands?"

And he will say "That [with which] I was struck [in] the house [of] those who love me."

וְאָמַר אֵלָיו מָה הַמַּכּוֹת הָאֵלֶּה בֵּין יָדַי
וְאָמַר אֲשֶׁר הִכִּיתִי בֵּית מְאַהֲבָי:

Now that a brief overview of the text has been conducted the study will turn attention to some of the ambiguities of the text including: the identity of the narrator,³⁰ the identity of the questioner, the identity of the respondent, the nature of the wounds on the body of the respondent, the reason for why these wounds were inflicted upon the respondent, and the significance of why the respondent felt it necessary to specify that he was wounded "in the house of those who love him."

Focusing attention upon the identity of the narrator we will attempt to ascertain who this individual is. The simplest way to ascertain this information is to examine the superscription of chapter 12 which states that the words contained in this section of the book are the "word of Yahweh." This study assumes that Zechariah is the prophet who delivered this "word" and thus the narrator is Yahweh who delivers his "word" through the instrument of Zechariah. We can see frequent shifts from 1st to 3rd person and vice-versa as Zechariah delivers the word of Yahweh and Yahweh is sometimes presented as

³⁰Is God speaking, Zechariah, or someone else narrating this conversation?

delivering the word himself in the 1st person.³¹ In addition, even if Zechariah is relating the word of Yahweh as a dictation making Yahweh the primary speaker it is not odd for Yahweh to refer to Himself in the 3rd person which seems to be an acceptable literary practice in the ancient world.³²

The identity of the questioner is ambiguous since וְאָמַר can be translated "and he will say" or "and one will say" the former being the more literal translation. The problem arises when examining the next part of the text וְאֵלָיו, meaning "to him." This begs the question of who is "he?" and who is "him?" or in other words who plays the role of the "questioner" and who plays the role of the "respondent." If the meaning of וְאָמַר should be interpreted as "and one will say," the identity of the questioner is probably irrelevant.³³ However, if we are to interpret וְאָמַר in its plainest sense, "and he will say," the

³¹Marvin A. Sweeney, *Berit Olam*. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 2:687.

³²This can be seen in several places throughout the Hebrew Bible. Two examples passages are Exod 20 and Zech 12-14. Specifically, see Zech 12:1-10 which exhibits frequent shifts in person.

³³In essence a new hypothetical character is introduced whose only function is to give more detail in regards to the fear/repentance of the false prophet.

identity of the questioner is plainly revealed by the previous verse which appears to be that of a former false-prophet.³⁴ Consequently, the respondent is not a false-prophet yet remains unidentified.³⁵ Since there appears to be evidence in either case to translate **וְאָמַר** with two different renderings attention must now be given to the respondent whose identity may be the key to identifying the questioner. To do this, structural evidence within the passage may be helpful. A structure proposed by Dorsey has been previously seen, however this study suggests a modification to this structure. The reader should pay special attention to "c" and "c'."

³⁴Richard Davidson. Unpublished email by Dr. Richard Davidson to an inquiry made in regards to Zechariah 13:6. January 2011. Please note that Dr. Davidson's conclusions are preliminary and not an in-depth analysis.

³⁵It appears inconsistent yet not impossible to render **וְאָמַר** in verse 5 as "and/but he will say" and verse 6 as "and one will say." To render verse 5 as "and/but one will say" tends to break the linkage to the previous verse. Furthermore, structural evidence may indicate later in the study which rendering is more appropriate.

- a** All the nations of the earth will gather against Jerusalem, but Yahweh will defeat them (12:1-4)
- b** Judah placed in fire and strengthened (12:5-9)
- c** Piercing of Yahweh (12:10a)
- d** Repentance of the house of David and the people. The cleansing of the people.³⁶ (12:10b-14)
- e** CENTER: Cleansing from sin and uncleanness (13:1-2)
- d'** Repentance of prophets The cleansing of the land.³⁷ (13:3-5)
- c'** Piercing of Yahweh? (13:6-7)
- b'** Judah refined in fire and tested (13:8-9)
- a'** All the nations will gather against Jerusalem; but Yahweh will defeat them (14:1-21)

What prompts this modification is the literal sense of **וְאָמַר** and the close connection between verse 6 and 7 which both refer to **וְנָקָה**.

Next, the study will examine the description of the wounds on the person of the respondent. It has already been shown that **הַמַּכּוֹת** is the plural form of the feminine noun **מַכָּה** which means "wound," "a blow," or "slaughter." In addition, it appears that these wounds are visible since they are addressed as being on the body of the respondent. In addition to the basic understanding, **הַמַּכָּה** the word is also prefixed by a definite article this shows that these are not just "any wounds" or "a wound" but "the wounds," which is also denoted by the following

³⁶Kenneth L. Barker, *Zechariah, The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Daniel-Minor Prophets*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 7:685.

³⁷Ibid.

word **הַאֵלֶּה** which means literally “the these.” Thus **הַמַּכּוֹת הַאֵלֶּה** could be translated as “the wounds, the these” or “these wounds.” The text further explains that the questioner who proposes the inquiry about the wounds seems to be able to see them in relation to the prophet’s hands (whether within or between his hands which would denote the body). Consequently, if the wounds can be seen by the questioner, the wounds are at least primarily physical disfigurements on the person of the responder as opposed to invisible, psychological, or spiritual wounds.³⁸ Thus these are physical wounds inflicted on Yahweh in addition to the spiritual wounds mentioned in Zech 12:10. **מִכָּה** appears 48 times in the Hebrew Bible in various circumstances.³⁹ These circumstances include God’s inflicting wounds upon Israel’s enemies, God inflicting wounds or plagues on His people as disciplinary measures, and in descriptions of the spiritual wounds of God’s people in regards to sin.⁴⁰ As already discussed, the verbal root of **מִכָּה** is **נָכַה** which is the root of the word

³⁸Jeremiah 3:22 seems to denote that apostasy against God is the equivalent of a spiritual wound that must be healed.

³⁹Leipzig J. Conrad, “**נָכַה**,” *TDOT*. (1998), 9:415.

⁴⁰Cornelis Van Dam, “**נָכַה**,” *NIDOTTE*. (1997), 3:103-104.

הַכִּיתִי as well. The verb נָכָה can be found 513 times in the Hebrew Bible including Zech 13:7 forming a possible connection Zech 13:6.⁴¹ נָכָה can have a range of meanings from hitting to killing.⁴² However, it is usually used to indicate a mortal wound.⁴³ If this is the case than the wounds are most likely not self-inflicted and corroborates with the respondents answer in that he received the wounds from someone else. If indeed נָכָה is usually meant to indicate a mortal wound the respondent is not lying but actually confessing or explaining what happened to him since it would seem quite bizarre (though not entirely impossible) for an individual to inflict mortal wounds upon their own person.

This study will now analyze the meaning of בֵּית מְאֵהָבִי. בֵּית is the construct form of the word בֵּית which means "house," "household," and when modifying other words while in construct

⁴¹Zech 13:7 has been traditionally interpreted as Messianic due to its quotation by Jesus Himself in the New Testament. Cornelis Van Dam, "נָכָה," NIDOTTE (1997), 3:104.

⁴²Cornelis Van Dam, "נָכָה," NIDOTTE (1997), 3:103.

form "in the house/household of." This is followed by the word **מֵאֲהָבֵי**, which is the piel participle form of the verb **אָהַב** which means "love" in its simplest form. However, since the text presents the form as a piel participle it should be understood as an intensified verbal noun denoting "loving" or a person doing the action "one who loves." Furthermore, the word also possesses a first common singular suffix which when combined with the rest of phrase can be translated "in the house of those who love me" or "in the house of my friends." According to Halle Gerhard Wallis, the piel participle form of **אָהַב**, which appears 16 times, usually means a lover, illicit lover or paramour but not necessarily sexual love but the desire of love.⁴⁴ It is also interesting to note that **אָהַב** usually indicates one who cleaves to another and is faithful to another.⁴⁵ However, if this is the case the wounds that were inflicted should not have happened, especially not from the

⁴³See Gen 14:5; Ex. 21:12; 22:1; Lev. 24:17, 21; Dt. 21:1; 2 Samuel 14:6; 2 Kings 19:37; Jeremiah 33:5; 41:3. Leipzig J. Conrad, "נִכְהָה," *TDOT* (1998). 9:416.

⁴⁴Halle Gerhard Wallis, "אָהַב," *TDOT* (1974) 1:102.

⁴⁵See Deut. 11:22; 30:20. Halle Gerhard Wallis, "אָהַב," *TDOT* (1974), 1:102.

hands of a lover. However, the nature of אָהַב as a concept also allows for its violent transformation into hate in the Hebrew Bible such as the case between King Saul and David or Amnon and Tamar.⁴⁶ With the circumstances presented by the respondent, this would seem to be the case with him as well, in which a lover turned into an enemy.⁴⁷ This aspect of love once again reinforces the idea that the one wounded is indeed telling the truth and if the one wounded is Yahweh Himself nothing else akin to deceit should be expected.

Another difficulty of the text lies in the meaning of the word בֵּין and the phrase בֵּין יְדָיָהּ which identifies the location of the wounds which have sparked the questioner's inquiry. The location of the wounds can be interpreted in at least two different scenarios. If the wounds are located between the man's hands this would indicate that the wounds on the man's body could be practically anywhere on his person excepting his hands.⁴⁸ However, if the wounds are located within his hands

⁴⁶See 1 Samuel 16:21, 1 Samuel 18:8, and 2 Samuel 13:15. Halle Gerhard Wallis, "אָהַב," *TDOT* (1974), 1:102.

⁴⁷This may also be reflected in Zech 13:7 where the fellow/companion of Yahweh is struck.

the reader must then attempt to understand under what circumstances a person would receive severe enough wounds in the hands that would provoke inquiry.

בֵּין the absolute form of בֵּין is commonly defined as “in the interval of, between” and on a few occasions “among” or “within.”⁴⁹ It can also mean “from the midst” or “from amongst”⁵⁰ in a few cases. To determine the exact meaning of בֵּין in Zech 13:6 would require, at the very least, an examination of how the word and its variations are used by the assumed singular authorship of Zechariah.⁵¹

⁴⁸Some Bible translations such as the New International Version (NIV) translate בֵּין יְדֵיךָ as “wounds on your body.” Thus the phrase is interpreted as a figure of speech.

⁴⁹“בֵּין,” *BDB* (2008), 107.

⁵⁰These translations of בֵּין are usually prefixed by מִן denoting “from among” or “from the midst.” *Ibid.*

⁵¹However, this exercise is not pertinent to the outcome of this study being that the Messiah depicted in the New Testament received wounds both “in” and “between” his hands or on his body. The 10 uses of בֵּין by the assumed singular authorship of Zechariah are as follows: Zech 1:11; 3:7; 5:9; 6:1, 13; 9:7; 11:12; 13:6.

כַּף can mean "hand," "arm," or "power," and it occurs approximately 1617 times in the Hebrew Bible.⁵² However, it is probably best to interpret this use of כַּף as the literal bodily appendages since the questioner appears to be able to literally see that the respondent possesses wounds in relation to the respondent's hands. However when combining the use of כַּף and כַּף the location of the wounds does not seem to exclude the wounds of a flogging and crucifixion victim such as those applied to Christ. This is corroborated with the New Testament record.⁵³

⁵²Manfred Dreytza, "כַּף," *NIDOTTE* (1997), 2:402-404.

⁵³See Matt 26:67; 27:26-30; 27:35; Mark 14:65; 15:15, 17, 19; Luke 22:63, 64; 23:33; 24:39; John 18:22; 19:1-3, 18, 34; 20:27.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the analysis of this study it appears from the text and from the passage of Zech 13:3-6 that two scenarios are presented to demonstrate to the reader the repentance of false prophets in Judah. Verse 3 seems to indicate that love for God and truth will be upheld regardless of family ties exemplified by parents who at the first sign of their children practicing ecstatic spiritual phenomena will immediately deliver a mortal wound to their son. In verse 4-5 it is declared that false prophets will be ashamed of their visions and will no longer attempt to deceive God's people by wearing the traditional garb of prophets of God. Furthermore, they will no longer claim to be prophets but rather farmers and herders. Finally, in verse 6 it appears that the hypothetical repentant prophet of verse 4-5 now takes on the role of questioner and crosses paths with an "unidentified" individual that has physical wounds on his person. This study proposes that when comparing this text to its parallel arm it can be deduced that this unidentified individual of Zech 13:6 is Yahweh personified especially when taking into consideration the next

verse which may be an elaboration of the wounds given in Zech 13:6.

It appears that the wounds on this person do not have to be interpreted as self-inflicted wounds that were applied to achieve an ecstatic experience similar to the actions described in 1 Kings 18:28 since the text may not be referring to the false-prophet as respondent but rather as the questioner.

Hopefully it has been shown that there is sufficient evidence and probable cause to not rule out a messianic interpretation of Zech 13:6 due to linguistic ambiguities, structural parallels, and the subtle ties between Zech 13:6 and Zech 13:7. Furthermore, even if Zech 13:6 were primarily in reference to false-prophets it does not necessitate the exclusion of a secondary application to a suffering Messiah.

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