

Zechariah 9:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite.

Analysis

And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth—this vivid imagery addresses pagan religious practices. "**His blood out of his mouth**" (damo mi-piw, דָּמוֹ מִפִּי) likely refers to consuming blood in pagan rituals, forbidden to Israel (Leviticus 17:10-14; Acts 15:20). "**His abominations from between his teeth**" (shiqqutsaw mi-beyn shinnayw, שִׁקְצָאוֹ מִבֵּין שִׁנָּיו) suggests eating sacrificial meat from idolatrous offerings. God will remove these ceremonially unclean practices, purifying the Philistines from pagan worship.

The remarkable shift follows: "**but he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God**" (ve-nish'ar gam-hu le-Eloheinu, וְנִשְׁאַר גַּם-הוּא לֵאלֹהֵינוּ). After judgment purges idolatry, a remnant will convert to worship Israel's God. The phrase "**shall be for our God**" indicates covenantal belonging—formerly pagan Philistines joining God's people. This anticipates the gospel's power to save even Israel's fiercest enemies.

"And he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite" (ve-hayah ke-alluph bi-Yhudah ve-Eqron ki-Yevusi, וְהָיָה כְּאַלּוּף בִּיהוּדָה וְעֶקְרוֹן כִּי-יְבֻסִי). The converted Philistine will have status like a clan leader (alluph, אַלּוּף) in Judah. Ekron will be like the Jebusites—the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Jerusalem whom David conquered but who were then absorbed into Israel (2 Samuel 5:6-9). Just as

Jebusites became part of God's people, so will Philistines. This prophecy envisions radical inclusion of former enemies into covenant community.

Historical Context

This prophecy found partial fulfillment in the Hellenistic and Roman periods when many Gentiles, including those from formerly Philistine territories, converted to Judaism or Christianity. The Ethiopian eunuch's conversion (Acts 8:26-39) occurred on the road to Gaza—a Philistine city. Philip preached in Azotus/Ashdod (Acts 8:40). Peter received the vision overturning dietary laws and Gentile exclusion in Joppa, on Philistia's border (Acts 10), then baptized Cornelius, a Roman centurion—demonstrating that God's covenant now includes all who believe, regardless of ethnic origin.

The comparison to Jebusites is illuminating. When David conquered Jerusalem, he allowed Jebusites to remain, and they were gradually assimilated (Joshua 15:63; Judges 1:21). Araunah the Jebusite sold David the threshing floor that became the temple site (2 Samuel 24:18-25)—a Jebusite facilitating Israel's worship! Similarly, former enemies like Philistines would not merely be tolerated but incorporated as equal members. This anticipates Ephesians 2:11-22, where Paul declares that Gentiles, once "alienated from the commonwealth of Israel," are now "fellow citizens with the saints." The gospel accomplishes what military conquest couldn't—true reconciliation and spiritual unity.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's removal of Philistine idolatry before converting them illustrate the gospel pattern of repentance preceding faith?

2. What does the inclusion of former enemies like Philistines teach about the scope of God's redemptive plan and the church's diversity?
3. In what ways should the church today actively pursue and welcome those from backgrounds or identities historically opposed to Christianity?

Interlinear Text

וְהִסְרֹתִי י	דָּמִי יו	מִפִּי יו	וְשִׁקְצִי	מִבִּי יו
And I will take away	his blood	out of his mouth	and his abominations	
H5493	H1818	H6310	H8251	H996
שֶׁן יו	וְנִשְׁאַר	גַּם	ה וְא	
from between his teeth	but he that remaineth			
H8127	H7604	H1571	H1931	
לֵאלֹהֵינוּ	וְהָיָה	כְּאֶלֶף	בְּיְהוּדָה	
even he shall be for our God		and he shall be as a governor	in Judah	
H430	H1961	H441	H3063	
וְעֶקְרוֹן	כִּיבוּסִי:			
and Ekron	as a Jebusite			
H6138	H2983			

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