

The Sanctification Gap June 3 2017 Branson Gathering message

Thank you Jon, Welcome brothers and sisters in Christ and most importantly welcome Jesus and the Holy Spirit because Jesus stated in Matthew 18:20:

For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them – Mt18:20

So praise Jesus, welcome Holy Spirit.

The title of this message is the “*Sanctification Gap*” and I will cover four areas

1. the definition, purpose and need for sanctification
2. the different levels of sanctification
3. personal and national sanctification and
4. a call to action

Definition

In the Old Testament the word sanctify is strong’s number 6942, qadash, and it means “to be set apart or consecrate”.

In the new testament is strong’s number 38 is used in the scriptures as sanctification and sanctifying. Number 38 is derived from strong’s number 37 and 37, hagiazo, is used in the scriptures as sanctify, sanctifies and sanctified.

Strong’s definition of 37 is “to make holy”. Thayer’s Greek lexicon definition of 37 is “to separate from things profane and dedicate to God” and “to consecrate and so render inviolable” inviolable means to never to be broken or dishonored.

The definition of “to make holy” is significant. To make is an action word. It’s someone doing something over a certain length of time in order to arrive at the state of being Holy. Holiness is not according to your idea or view that would be self-righteous but according to Jesus’ view.

Sanctification is a transformational process that changes one state to another. A cleansing, a purification or a release of sins, iniquities and transgressions from one’s life. Once the sanctification process is complete the person is transformed to a different person with a new capacity/capability to do additional kingdom work for Jesus.

Boot camp is a radical transformational process that changes a civilian into a soldier in a matter of weeks. You learn to control your body, your mind, you learn to deal with stress and how to use various weapons. Further training enhances a soldier's basic skills. The soldier's commander has no reservations in sending that soldier into combat.

You throw a civilian into a midst of a battle and he/she has a very high likelihood on being chewed up in a short time. A civilian hasn't studied the enemy and it's tactics. Paul said in 2Corinthians2:11

“so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, *for we are not ignorant of his schemes.*” NASB 2Cor2:11

A properly trained and prepared soldier will not be ignorant of Satan's schemes and will live and fight in many battles.

The Apostle Paul calls us Christian soldiers did he not? In 2Timothy2:3-4 says:
3 Suffer hardship with me, *as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.*
4 No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. – NASB 2Tim2:3-4

Our sanctification process transforms us into good soldiers for the Lord for His kingdom purpose.

The more we sanctify all areas of our lives then the more versatile a soldier we will become.

Why should we sanctify? The Lord uses His sanctified ones in His anger as stated in Isaiah 13:3

“I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness.” -KJV IS13:3

An example of how the Lord commands His sanctified ones is found in 2 Chronicles chapter 30 and 31. King Hezekiah calls forth and celebrates Passover and the 7 day feast of unleavened bread in a big way. King Hezekiah has to pray to the Lord to pardon those not sanctified by the book but were prepared in their hearts to seek the Lord.

2Chronicles 30:17-20

17 For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the LORD.

:18 For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written. But **Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon every one**

:19 **That prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.**

:20 And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.

The Lord sanctified the people not because of the letter of the law but because they properly prepared their hearts.

The Lord used the Israelites as a weapon after they were pardoned, sanctified and returned home. How? In 2Chronicles 31:1 states that:

Now when all this was finished, **all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all.** Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities. – 2Chronicles31:1 KJV

The people went out and destroyed the idols only after they prepared their hearts and were sanctified. They rose up as an army and laid waste to all the pagan places that the Lord Jesus Christ of the old testament hated.

Don't ever think that sanctification is not a powerful weapon – it's a mighty weapon. Think of sanctification as the act of turning off the safety button on your weapon. When the safety is on the weapon can't be fired. Once the safety is turned off then the weapon can be fired.

When does sanctification happen?

Jerimiah was sanctified while he was in the womb according to Jeremiah1:5

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and ***before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee***, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. –KJV Jer1:5

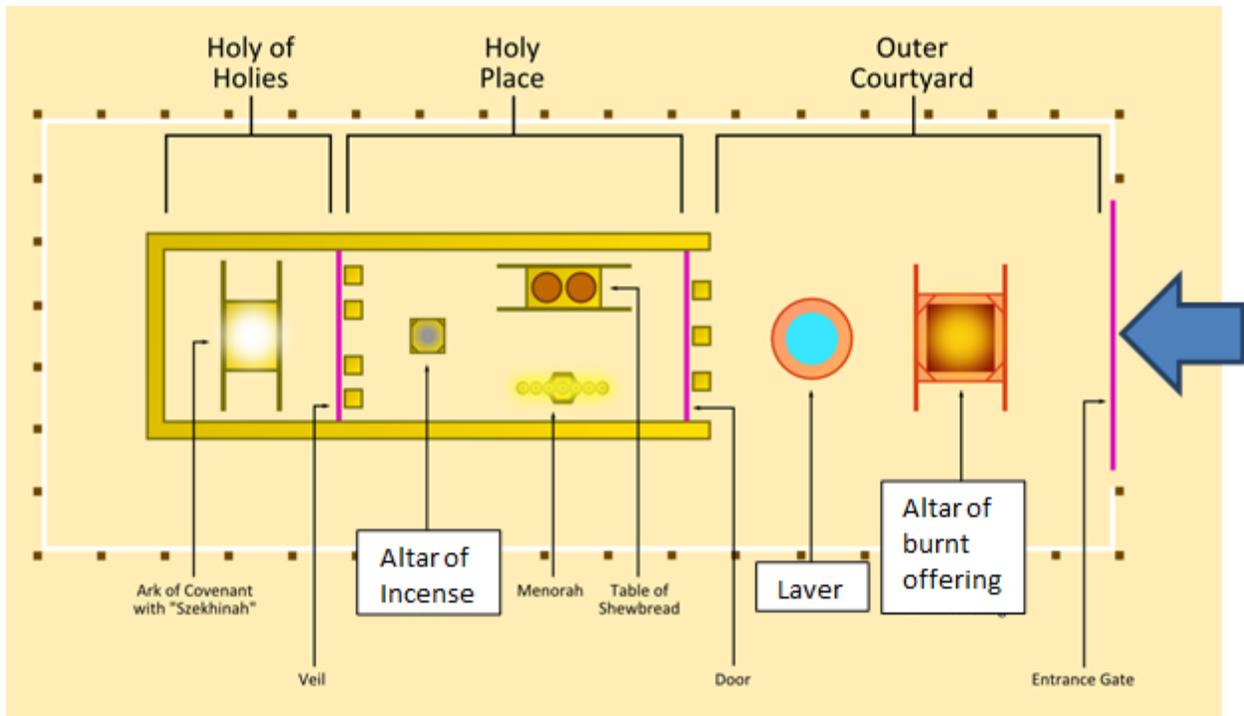
If you are not a Jerimiah then how about being sanctified when you are properly baptized? Yes, it could happen.

Jesus was most definitely sanctified when he was baptized because when he arose out of the water he was fully engaged in the ministry work of casting out demons, raising the dead, healing the sick, walking on water becoming invisible and stopping the storm. Jesus was already fully prepared. How did Jesus prepare himself? A clue is found in the name people called him.

Jesus was called Rabbi by John's disciples (Jn1:38), by Jesus' own disciples (Jn4:31,1:49,9:2,11:8), by the people Jesus ministered to (Jn6:25) and by some of the religious leaders (Jn1:49). To be called Rabbi at that time you had to have memorized the entire scriptures of that day. Let me see a show of hands of those who have memorized the entire bible word for word. By the show of hands here we haven't but Jesus did. Jesus prioritized the study of the scriptures over everything else.

If you are not a Jerimiah or a Jesus then sanctification happens sometime after your baptism. An example of this is found by looking at the tabernacle that the Lord told Moses to build.

Imagine the perimeter of this Grand Pavilion building to be the tabernacle.



The main double door in the back is the only entrance to the tabernacle. As you enter the tabernacle you come into the outer court where the altar of burnt offerings is located at. Imagine the food tables in the back as the altar of burnt offerings.

No offense to the hard working women, I'm not saying that any of the food was burnt, I've enjoyed all of it and I'm looking forward to continue to eat there.

Moving further in to the tabernacle you come to the wash basin or the laver where the priest will wash their feet and hands before going to the altar or into the sanctuary. Imagine the middle area of this room where the white tables end is where the great wash basin is found.

Moving past the laver you coming towards the front of this room you reach the sanctuary. Imagine these steps of the podium are the beginning of the sanctuary. The back wall represents the veil covering the Holy of Holies where the ark would be located at. The projector that is before the wall would be the location of the Alter of Incense.

If you have a very active imagination then you can see that the back wall being torn down and the ark resting on the other side of where the wall was.

The altar of incense is describe in Exodus 30 verses 1, 6 and 7

Exo 30:1 "Moreover, you shall make *an altar as a place for burning incense*; you shall make it of acacia wood.

Exo 30:6 "You shall put this altar in front of the veil that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over the ark of the testimony, where I will meet with you.

Exo 30:7 "Aaron shall burn *fragrant incense* on it; he shall *burn it every morning when he trims the lamps*.

In this example the alter of burnt offerings where the animals after they are killed are offered on this altar is the cross of Christ. Peter said in 1Peter 3:18 that

1Pe_3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

That altar of burnt offerings also represents our death, burial and resurrection with Jesus thru baptism as Roman 6:6 states:

Rom 6:6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

When Jesus arose after 3 days in the tomb he wasn't in his glorified body. Mary met Jesus after his resurrection and for joy she clinged onto him and Jesus rebuked her in John 20:17

Joh 20:17 Jesus *said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'"

Jesus had to walk from the altar of burnt offerings aka the crucifixion in the back of the room and come carrying the sins of the world to the altar of incense in the sanctuary in order to present Himself to the Father. Why did Jesus have to do that? Good question.

Once a year during the 7 day feast of unleavened bread the wave sheaf offering would be made on the day after the weekly Sabbath which was the day Mary clung to Jesus. This is found in Leviticus 23:10-12

Lev 23:10 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the **sheaf of the first fruits** of your harvest to the priest.

Lev 23:11 'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

Lev 23:12 'Now on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a **male lamb one year old without defect** for a burnt offering to the LORD.

1 Corinthians 5:7 defines Jesus as the Passover Lamb and 1 Corinthians 15:23 states that "Christ the first fruits"

Revelation 8:3 shows the altar of incense in heaven which Moses made a copy of

Rev 8:3 Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne.

Jesus became that fragrant incense as it is stated in Ephesians 5:2

Eph_5:2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

Jesus was accepted by the Father once Jesus presented himself to the Father in heaven on the golden altar as the perfect offering for all our sins. The altar sanctified Jesus' sacrifice in Matthew 23:19.

Mat 23:19 "You blind men, which is more important, the offering, or the altar that sanctifies the offering?"

Jesus then showed himself to the apostles later that day and he allowed them to touch him only after the Father sanctified him.

Our prayers and offerings are to be offered not at the altar of burnt offerings but at the altar of incense.

King David wrote in Psalms 141:2 that our prayers are incense before the Lord

Psa_141:2 May my prayer be counted as incense before You; The lifting up of my hands as the evening offering.

Paul thanked the Philippians in Philippians 4:18 of supporting his ministry with provisions showing that our Christian works which demonstrate our faith are a fragrant aroma.

Php_4:18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God

These two altars is what I am calling **the sanctification gap**. It's from the altar of burnt offerings where you are baptized to the daily altar where you present your prayers and Christian works of faith. All of our prayers and works are useless if the offering is not accepted and that is where sanctification comes in.

Sanctify means "to make holy". 2Corinthians7:1 describes the sanctification process we Christians must go thru

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness* in the fear of God. NSAB 2Cor7:1

How do you perfect Holiness? This verse states you sanctify all defilements of the flesh and the spirit behind it. Paul was writing to baptized Christians at Corinth but yet they still had to continue to sanctify various areas of their lives. Isaiah 66:20 tells us we are to bring offerings in a clean vessel.

Is66:20 bring grain offering in a **clean vessel** to the house of the Lord.

Sanctification cleans up our mind, body and spirit. Sanctification also cleans up our attitude on how we we present the offering.

Psalms 51:17 describes the attitude we are to be in

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. Ps51:17

A sanctified mind, body and attitude allows us to go before the altar of incense with our sacrifice as it is stated in Hebrews 13:15

Heb13:15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a **sacrifice of praise** to God, that is, **the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.**

Between both altars is the Laver. The Laver is described in Exodus 30 verses 18 thru 21 and it is a large bronze bowl that the priest cleaned themselves before going to the altars

Exo 30:18 "You shall also make a **laver of bronze**, with its base of bronze, **for washing**; and you shall put it **between the tent of meeting and the altar**, and you shall put water in it.

Exo 30:19 "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it;

Exo 30:20 when they **enter the tent of meeting**, they shall wash with water, so that they will not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to the LORD.

Exo 30:21 "So they shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they will not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

Just to enter into the tent of meeting where the alter of Incense is located required you to wash your feet and hands so you would be clean. Jesus washed the feet of the apostles in the same likeness in John 13:5 to 9:

Joh 13:5 Then He *poured water into the basin [type of laver], and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

Joh 13:6 So He *came to Simon Peter. He *said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?"

Joh 13:7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter."

Joh 13:8 Peter *said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

Joh 13:9 Simon Peter *said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head."

Joh 13:10 Jesus *said to him, "He who has bathed [ie baptized] needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."

Personal Sanctification

We are called to clean ourselves continually in all areas of our lives before we present our gifts on the altar. There are some sins, transgressions and iniquities that we have no problems of letting go but there are others that are not so easy to let go.

We have to let go of those sins, transgressions and iniquities because the wrath of God is coming. Colossians 3:5 and 6 says:

Col 3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

Col 3:6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience,

Proverbs 6:27 and 28 says you can't have one foot in the kingdom of this world and another foot in Jesus' kingdom

Pro 6:27 Can a man take fire in his bosom And his clothes not be burned?

Pro 6:28 Or can a man walk on hot coals And his feet not be scorched?

As Christians after baptism there are many different areas that you have to clean up. Imagine all the areas that you need to clean up needs to be washed at the wash basin and then taken up to the altar of incense.

Let say you have a problem with impure thoughts Brother Jon presented a message of using the Perish the thought command. Everytime you have a impure thought you continually say perish the thought until it leaves. Eventually all your thoughts will be taken captive and that is one area of your life you can present before the Lord.

Everyone has different areas to clean up. Some areas in your life are a quick walk from the wash basin to the altar of incense and others there is a struggle.

There are some areas you don't know that they need to be cleaned up. Jesus will step in and raise the heat on you for you to correct that area of your life and it's much better for you to clean that area than for Jesus to keep raising the heat on you.

Jesus is crying out to Israel don't force me to use my full power of my wrath on you. Let go, turn back from your evil ways, repent and I will forgive you but Israel as a nation has refused and Jesus has to raise His purification level.

Several people are welders here – excellent welders that get paid for laying down a good bead – I'm not in that group. I was using an arc welder at the house and the power dialed up to nearly the highest level to join 2 metal pieces. My wife then asked me to fix a decorative thin metal watering can. After I made one pass I discovered that the current was too high and it blew holes into the sides of the water can – ruining it.

The wrath of God is the same way at its full force. The delicate and the hardened are hit with the same destructive force from the Lord and the delicate are always destroyed.

Purification levels

Sanctification leads to higher levels of your Christian walk. It raises your maturity level. There is the mature and the infant in Hebrews5:12-13

Hebrews 5:12-14

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.

14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

The infant Christians didn't sanctify their time in learning the gospel. In 1Cor 13:11 Paul brings out the child and adult sanctification. An adult is to sanctify their tongue and thoughts.

1Cor13:11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

Jesus said to follow him and Paul said to imitate him. What happens if you don't sanctify your life according to the bible. Luke 12:47-48 happens.

Luk 12:47 "And that slave who knew his master's will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes,
Luk 12:48 but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

As a Christian you will be chastised by the Lord so you may rise to the next level of your Christian walk.

Hebrews 12:7-14 ties together Disciple, endurance, holiness and sanctification

Heb12:7 **It is for discipline that you endure**; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that **we may share His holiness**.

11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

12 Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble,

13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

14 Pursue peace with all men, and **the sanctification** without which no one will see the Lord.

The new testament also uses seeds to show different levels of Christianity in the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:18 to 23. It shows those who don't spend time in the word seeking answers, those not enduring persecution, those not giving up the pleasures of the world to those that have sanctified their lives and have fertile ground who understand the scriptures, who rejoice when going thru persecution and who have not been sucked in the cares of the world and wealth.

Mat 13:18 "Hear then the parable of the sower.

Mat 13:19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and **does not understand it**, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed **was sown beside the road.**

Mat 13:20 "The one on whom seed was sown on the **rocky places**, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

Mat 13:21 yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when **affliction or persecution** arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.

Mat 13:22 "And the one on whom seed was **sown among the thorns**, this is the man who hears the word, and the **worry of the world** and the **deceitfulness of wealth** choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

Mat 13:23 "And the one on whom seed was **sown on the good soil**, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

We are at a time when the full wrath of God hasn't been poured out He sends chastisements based on our ability to endure. Jesus will select the punishments and Isaiah 66:4 states you don't want him to choose the punishments.

Isa 66:4 So **I will choose their punishments And will bring on them what they dread.** Because I called, but no one answered; I spoke, but they did not listen. And they did evil in My sight And chose that in which I did not delight."

Isaiah 28:24-28 compares the levels of chastisements based on the tenderness of the seed. Dill, Cummin, Wheat and Rye have different levels of harvesting.

Isa 28:24 Does the farmer plow continually to plant seed? Does he continually turn and harrow the ground?

Isa 28:25 Does he not level its surface And sow dill and scatter cummin And plant wheat in rows, Barley in its place and rye within its area?

Isa 28:26 For his God instructs and teaches him properly.

Isa 28:27 For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, Nor is the cartwheel driven over cummin; But **dill is beaten out with a rod**, and **cummin with a club**.

Isa 28:28 **Grain for bread is crushed**, Indeed, he does not continue to thresh it forever. Because the wheel of his cart and his horses eventually damage it, He does not thresh it longer.

The threshing sledge is a heavy wooden plank, 2 or 3 feet by 5 or 6 feet, with sharp spikes on the bottom. The farmer would harvest the grain into sheaves and lay them down in the field and pull the threshing sledge over the sheaves with oxen. This process would separate the grain from stalks and weeds

3 types of moderate chastisements: rod to lightly knock the Dill seeds loose, a club to beat the Cummin seeds loose and a threshing sledge to rip apart the Wheat and Rye seeds from the stalk. All the seeds are fragile with fire and a full fire of persecution hits then they will be burnt up.

1Corinthians 3:12-13 shows the testing of fire and wood, hay, straw and seeds will be destroyed by fire however gold, silver and precious stones will remain

1Co 3:12 Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

1Co 3:13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

We are to grow beyond the burnable level and into the metal area of our lives to sanctify. The bible speaks of 7 metals in the bible: lead, tin, bronze, iron, copper, silver and gold. Each one is not dug up from the earth not in a purified state but as an alloy. An alloy is metal mixed with other substances that need to be removed thru a refining process of applied a lot of heat to the metal in which the impurities will rise to the surface as dross to be scooped off. This refinement process is referred in Isaiah 1:25 as the smelting process

Isa 1:25 "I will also turn My hand against you, And will smelt away your dross as with lye And will remove all your alloy.

Even with metal there are different melting points. Lead and tin have a low melting point but silver and gold require a furnace to melt it. Coal is used for fuel and bellows are used to blow air into the fire to raise the temperature.

Psa 66:10 For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined.

Isa 48:10 "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.

Why does Jesus have to make us go thru the furnace of affliction? Zechariah 13:8-9 gives the reason

Zec 13:8 "It will come about in all the land," Declares the LORD, "That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it.

Zec 13:9 "And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. 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.'"

Only the furnace of affliction could remove the impurities from the people. When all the impurities have been removed from the silver the silver will have a mirror like finish on it and will radiate a bright light. But only a third passed thru the fire while the other two thirds were consumed by the fire. Why? Jerimiah 6:27-30 describes the Lord refining for silver and no matter how much heat was applied the impurity never separated from the metal to be scooped away.

When the refinement process fails a sludge forms over the top of the silver and it becomes worthless to refine it any more – it is rejected.

The Israelites in Jerimiah 6:27-30 says they refused to repent of rebelliousness which is the sin of witchcraft and of being gossipers.

Jer 6:27 "I have made you an assayer and a tester among My people, That you may know and assay their way."

Jer 6:28 All of them are stubbornly rebellious, Going about as a talebearer. They are bronze and iron; They, all of them, are corrupt.

Jer 6:29 The bellows blow fiercely, The lead is consumed by the fire; In vain the refining goes on, But the wicked are not separated.

Jer 6:30 They call them rejected silver, Because the LORD has rejected them.

Dan 12:10 "Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.

Jesus has sent prophet after prophet to warn the people. They were beaten, killed or ignored and Israel moved forward in their sinful ways but there is always a few that repent.

Job is a gold standard of refinement. Job had what seemed to be a perfect life but testing came upon him. 4 friends came to him and 3 of them were rebuked by the Lord. The 4th friend, Elihu, told Job of his impurity. Job32:2 states that Job justified himself before God. That was the opportunity that Satan used to attack Job. Job repented of this sin and was rewarded with twice of what was taken away.

Job 32:2 But the anger of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram burned; against Job his anger burned because he justified himself before God.

Nebuchadnezzar is also another gold standard of refinement. Nebuchadnezzar lost all due to pride and he was forced to live like an animal for 7 years but at the end of 7 years Nebuchadnezzar made this statement

Daniel 4:34-37

34“But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever;

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,

And His kingdom endures from generation to generation.

35“All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,

But He does according to His will in the host of heaven

And among the inhabitants of earth;

And no one can ward off His hand

Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’

37“Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride.”

Jonah2:4-9

4“So I said, ‘I have been expelled from Your sight.

Nevertheless I will look again toward Your holy temple.’
 5“Water encompassed me to the point of death.
 The great deep engulfed me,
 Weeds were wrapped around my head.
 6“I descended to the roots of the mountains.
 The earth with its bars was around me forever,
 But You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God.
 7“While I was fainting away,
 I remembered the LORD,
 And my prayer came to You,
 Into Your holy temple.
 8“Those who regard vain idols
 Forsake their faithfulness,
 9 But I will sacrifice to You
 With the voice of thanksgiving.
 That which I have vowed I will pay.
 Salvation is from the LORD.”

Was Jesus’ death an example of the gold standard of persecution? No. Jesus was at another level of persecution – he was at the stone level. 1 Peter 2:6 calls Jesus the corner stone and 1 Peter 2:4-5 calls us Christians to be living stones for a spiritual house.

1Pe 2:6 For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

1Pe 2:4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God,

1Pe 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

You can’t find any remains of the gold, silver and bronze items from the temple of Jerusalem but the stones remain. The temple was burnt down during the Jerusalem siege at 70 AD by the romans. The gold melted and the romans pried up the stones to get the gold. What happened to the gold. Archeologist have discovered that Titus brought back the stones from the temple in Jerusalem and built the roman coliseum. The temple stones have remained where all the metal has been taken.

You are called to be living stones that can endure great hardships, not seeds that will burn, or metal which rust or gets melted into another object. It's your responsibility to read the word and find out what the Lord is telling you to fix in your life and in your family's life. You have an excellent opportunity as you read the bible this year to highlight everything the scripture states that God hates and stop doing those things and start doing the things that the scriptures says God likes.

National sanctification comes down to individuals across the land fixing themselves and their families. One leader can't save a nation. King David, Hezekiah and Josiah were Godly kings but the nation didn't last. Ezekial 14:20 states when the wrath of God is being poured out even Noah, Daniel and Job couldn't stop the wrath.

Eze_14:20 even though Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "they could not deliver either their son or their daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness."

2 Chronicles 7:14 states if my people

Kjv 2Ch 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land..

It doesn't state If my leader humbles himself, but if my people humble themselves. Change begins with us.

I'm not sure if anyone has read the book "Where the red fern grows by Wilson Rawls". It's a book about a boy and his 2 redbone coonhounds. The Grandfather in [Chapter 7](#) tells his grandson how to trap a Raccoon by using its lust and desires of their eyes. The Grandfather says that you put a shiny object in a container and drilling a hole in the side just enough for the raccoon's paw to enter. The Raccoon sees the shiny object and desires it and reaches in and grabs it. The raccoon can't pull the object out of the container while holding onto it but it won't release it. The Raccoon can release the object and walk away but it doesn't.

The raccoon can hear the barking of the dogs on the trail **and it doesn't let go.**
The raccoon can hear the rustling of the grass and the voice of the hunters **and it doesn't let go.**

The raccoon can hear see the spot lights searching for the trap **and it doesn't let go.**

The raccoon can then see the red dot from the hunter's rifle and now it's too late to let go.

The raccoon's lust leading to its death is the same with Christian's lust which leads them to death. Christians release your sins, iniquities and transgressions to Jesus. The wrath of the Lord is coming and it's a consuming fire that will burn all who are not sanctified.

END