

I. Chapter 3:1-5

Zechariah 3:1–5 is one of the key visions in the book of Zechariah, and it is part of the series of five visions in chapters 1–4. The central figure here is Joshua the high priest, standing before the Angel of the Lord. In the overall structure of these visions, the Angel of the Lord represents Christ, who is sent by God and continually present among His people, caring for them, measuring them, and strengthening them.

In this vision, Joshua is not simply standing in a neutral position. He is actually standing before the Angel of the Lord to be measured, perfected, and strengthened. This connects directly with the earlier vision in chapter 2, where Jerusalem is measured. Here we see that Christ not only measures the city but also measures the person. Through this measuring, Christ is actually caring for God's people, building them up, and establishing them.

Joshua is shown to the prophet Zechariah as the high priest. On one hand, he prefigures Christ as the true High Priest sent by God; on the other hand, he also represents God's people as a priestly nation. He stands before the Angel of the Lord in order to be perfected and established, not to be condemned.

However, at the same time, Satan is also standing at Joshua's right hand to resist him. As the adversary, Satan's goal is to accuse and humiliate Joshua in front of others, and to hinder the rebuilding of God's temple. This reveals a very real spiritual situation: whenever God is working to build, Satan is there to resist and accuse.

But the key point is that the Lord Himself rebukes Satan. God defends Joshua by saying, "Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?" This means that although Joshua is weak and defiled, he has already been rescued by God. He is not someone to be condemned, but someone chosen and preserved by God. This also shows God's firm intention to rebuild Jerusalem and complete His purpose.

Then we see the work of Christ, the Angel of the Lord, in perfecting Joshua. First,

Joshua is clothed in filthy garments, which represent human sin, weakness, and defilement—even among God’s chosen servants. But the Lord commands that these filthy garments be removed, declaring that his iniquity is taken away. This shows that God Himself deals with sin; He does not wait for man to improve himself.

After that, Joshua is given rich and beautiful garments. These garments represent not only cleansing but also restoration of identity and function. They are suitable clothing for his priestly office, meaning he is restored to his proper position before God and reestablished in his service.

Finally, a clean turban is placed on his head. This signifies a further step of restoration: not only cleansing and identity, but also dignity, authority, and consecration for service. Joshua is fully reinstated as a priest, able to stand before God and minister again.

In conclusion, this passage reveals a clear spiritual picture. Christ, as the Angel of the Lord, is always present with God’s people, measuring them, caring for them, and strengthening them. Although Satan accuses and man is truly defiled, God’s intention is not to end with condemnation. Instead, He cleanses, restores, and re-clothes His people, fully recovering their identity, function, and ministry, so that they may be used for His building purpose.

II. Chapter 3:6-10

1. The Priestly System Of The Old Testament Typifies Christ (v.8)

Zechariah 3:8 is a special revelation spoken by God to Joshua and his companions. God first says, “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your companions who sit before you,” meaning they are being called to pay close attention

because what they are involved in is not merely a personal matter, but something with deep spiritual significance.

The phrase “you and your fellows are a sign” means that Joshua and his companions are a “sign” or “symbol.” Here, “you and your fellows” refers to the entire priestly system, meaning that the Old Testament priesthood itself is a type or a foreshadowing. It is not the ultimate reality, but a symbolic representation pointing to God’s greater plan. In other words, the priestly office, the temple service, and their experiences are all shadows that prefigure something greater to come.

When the Scripture says they are “a sign,” it means their existence has a representative and symbolic function. They are not the goal itself, but they point beyond themselves to a greater reality. In the Old Testament, everything related to the priesthood and the temple arrangement serves as a shadow pointing forward to the fulfillment of God’s redemptive plan.

Then the verse continues: “I am going to bring my servant, the Branch.” The “Branch” clearly refers to the Messiah, Christ Himself. He is the One who comes forth as the life-giving shoot from the line of David and is the true center of God’s redemption and restoration.

Your office and experience are only a “type” or “foreshadowing,” while the true fulfillment is the coming “Branch” (Christ). He is the center of God’s purpose and the One who ultimately brings cleansing, restoration, and building.

Therefore, this verse shifts the focus of the whole vision from Joshua and the restoration of the Old Testament priestly system to Christ Himself. Joshua and his companions, together with the entire priestly system, are only shadows and signs, while the true reality is Christ. He comes to accomplish God’s full work of redemption, cleanse His people, and complete God’s eternal building purpose.

2. Stone with Seven Eyes (v.9)

The "stone" mentioned in Zechariah 3:9, viewed in the context of the entire vision, is not an isolated symbol but closely connected with the revelation in verse 8.

Verse 8 emphasizes the concepts of "type" and "shadow". Joshua and his companions are called "a sign", which means the entire priestly system of the Old Testament was merely a symbolic arrangement, not the ultimate reality. Their office, experiences, and ministry in the temple all point to a deeper reality—the Messiah Christ, who would be fully revealed in God's plan of redemption.

Since verse 8 has already turned the focus from the "shadow" to the reality typified by it, verse 9 immediately moves to the revelation of the "stone". This stone set before Joshua typifies Zerubbabel's place in God's building work on a typical level, yet its deeper spiritual meaning points directly to Christ Himself. For in the overall revelation of the Bible, it is no ordinary person but Christ, the cornerstone appointed by God, who bears the work of building God's temple and becomes its foundation. As Isaiah 28:16 speaks of the "precious cornerstone" and Matthew 21:42 refers to "the stone the builders rejected", both point to one unchanging truth: Christ alone is the true foundation of God's building.

This stone is of great significance because it is far more than a static symbol; it carries the very core of God's complete work. The Scripture states, "on one stone are seven eyes". These seven eyes represent the sevenfold intensified Spirit, the full operation and filling of the Holy Spirit. This reveals that Christ is not a lifeless stone, but a living stone filled with the moving of God's Spirit. All of God's work, revelation, and execution are accomplished in Him and through Him.

The passage then mentions, "the Lord will engrave this stone". The word "engrave" carries profound spiritual meaning, pointing to Christ's suffering and death on the cross. God's working upon this stone signifies that Christ's death was no accident, but a necessary step in God's redemptive plan. He was stricken and dealt with on the cross so that God's redemption, salvation, and building purpose might be fulfilled.

3. Sin Removed in One Day (v.10)

“The statement ‘In a single day I will remove the sin of this land’ refers to Christ’s completed work of redemption on the cross. It is not a gradual forgiveness, but a complete and decisive dealing with the problem of sin in one single ‘day’ — that is, the day of Christ’s crucifixion. Through His death, the sin of the world is taken away, and the barrier between God and man is fully and finally removed.”