

Zechariah 1-3

Good evening, Church. It is so wonderful to be here with you tonight.

When Jess and I first moved back out here in 2009, there was all this talk about the Yucca Loma Bridge, which would connect another part of Apple Valley to Victorville to help traffic flow.

It was going to change everything: commerce, travel, and ease of access to many businesses.

The talk of it all excited people; movement got underway, but then the opposition came.

Environmentalists, the economy tanked, and all kinds of hurdles came up, and funding got tight... it seemed workers got tired, and eventually the project stalled.

Years passed, and it became a joke here in the desert.

This road that went to a place where a bridge was supposed to be one day...

People began to say, “I guess it was never meant to be.”

“It will never work.”

We began to think the bridge would always remain unfinished.

Then, really, one day, without much announcement, the engineers returned, the surveyors started measuring again, and all the equipment and supplies started showing up.

Work quietly resumed. And some wondered why now?

But the old-timers, who had been part of the project from the get-go, knew the plan had never changed; just because it stopped for a while did not mean the whole thing was abandoned.

And little by little, what looked like a town failure began to look like fulfillment.

Now, I drive over that bridge, and I have to take back all my snarky comments I once had, as I saw what looked like an abandoned project.

Well, this is what we step into with Zechariah here.

God's people had started rebuilding the Temple after returning from exile, but they had stopped now for some time.

Opposition came to them.

Discouragement had set in, and their lives got busy. And what once began with excitement now turn into what looked like a forgotten project.

The foundation was laid, but nothing had been added to it in years.

It looked like a failure.

It felt like abandonment.

But God had not changed His plan at all.

And we will see through the prophet Zechariah that God will intervene, not with condemnation at first, but with a call.

“Return to Me, and I will return to you.”

What looks like a stalled project here on earth was still very much alive in God's eyes.

Just because God has been delayed does not mean He has abandoned the work.

So let's pray, and we will get into it here...

Last time we were together, we finished the prophet Haggai, who God raised up to encourage the Jews to finish the Temple as well.

Zechariah will be a second voice that God will raise up to challenge the people to be Holy, to walk in the Spirit, and to put their hands to this incredible work.

The two prophets served the Lord at the same time. Zechariah began his ministry two months after Haggai.

They have two completely different approaches to the ministry, however.

God tends to do this in ministry, bringing two different men, often opposites, together to do the same work...

He uses their diversity of thought, their different gifts, their different methods, to reach the broader scope of those He is trying to reach.

Haggai is a doer, the blue-collar guy who brought his tool belt into the ministry, some power tools, and uncouth speech.

He was direct and got to the point, demanding the Jews get back to the business of Temple building.

I asked the staff this week about a new T-shirt for the church, and I realized I might be a little Haggai-ish...

My old boss, Marty, when we would have anyone on the job trying to complain about why they couldn't do something, or explaining how hard something was, or why they didn't think they could accomplish something they were asked to do, he would stop in mid-sentence and say, "No one cares, get back to work."

I thought that would be a cool slogan for ministry... Eliminating the excuses we hear of why people don't serve the Lord or get involved... Using Jesus's parable of the Minas or something like that...

But I was talked out of it... We won't have the Church Shirt made...

The Zechariahs won out in the ministry...

He was a dreamer... Where Haggai said what he had to say in 3 chapters, Zechariah will need 14 chapters to express his 8 God-given visions.

Haggai is a more practical prophet, whereas Zechariah was more spiritual.

Both cared for the things of God, but had two different approaches.

Haggai wore a tool belt and didn't mind getting his hands a little dirty, whereas Zechariah wore a prayer shawl, and his poor hands were a little soft.

Haggai would be swinging a 32oz hammer, Zechariah would be playing a flute...

Haggai might have a finger or two missing... Zechariah might be writing poetry.

Haggai was about action, Zechariah about vision...

Both are very necessary in the Body of Christ... One is not superior to the other... some of us are a blend of both.

As we serve the Lord, we need to learn to work and wait, to press on and pray, to be doers of the Word, but it is also good to be dreamers...

Look at verse 1 now...

A Call to Repentance

1:1 In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD CAME to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

This would be in the fall of 520 BC.

Zechariah dates his writing according to the years of the Persian King Darius.

Before the fall of Jerusalem and the exile to Babylon, all dates were based on the Jewish kings.

But the kings of Judah have ceased... And since the Babylonian captivity, the Prophet Daniel and even

Jesus have referred to the period as “The Times of the Gentiles.”

Paul refers to it as well when he talks about the partial hardening of the hearts of the Jews... He says this blindness will be upon them until...

Rom 11:25 The fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

We see today, now that the Jews are once again enjoying self-rule in Israel, we are getting closer and closer to the end of the Times of the Gentiles...

When the Bible tells us God will turn His attention back to Israel, when the Messiah will return, and fulfill all the promises for the Jews and the rest of humanity.

So Zechariah is dating his writing according to the Gentile ruler...

In the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, which means “Yahweh remembers.”

He is the son of Berechiah, which means “Yahweh Blesses.”

Who was the son of Iddo, which means “In His Time.”

Pretty neat family tree there, meaning, “God remembers and blesses in His time.”

That is a message in itself to the Jews here who had spent seven decades in captivity there in Babylon.

Now, they are back in the Holy Land, the city was in ruins, the Temple was reduced to rocks and ash, and hope was lost.

They wondered if God had forgotten them...

But the prophet’s very name would bring them hope.

Now, hope cannot truly come until we deal with things openly and honestly... we have to be real...

Jess and I were talking about this this week, the spiritual climate today, people do not want to be real anymore...

They like to keep up a protective barrier, an outside spiritual layer, that puts off the idea that everything is

okay, that they are great, so they can keep everyone believing all is well.

They advertise the best parts of their spiritual lives, keep their struggles hidden, safely locked away so that no one can see their reality...

We want a church where fake dies, but a tough reality is, many people don't like that kind of environment... they do not like vulnerability...

And they will almost flee to where they can safely hide behind the fake smiles and overly energized hellos...

But we can't skip the hard stuff in life if we want hope and healing... we need to deal with it head on... we have to face the hard stuff... we can't just keep stuffing it in a closet hoping no one will see, because sooner or later that closet is going to burst open... and it will all be laid out...

Deal with it as it comes, honestly, through brokenness... this is how hope comes...

Look at verse 2...

2 "The LORD has been very angry with your fathers.

I know this is a slow start, but I believe this is important to talk about...

Notice, God gets angry.

There is emotion and passion in the God we worship.

You can bless Him and grieve the heart of God by going against His will for your life.

The fathers mentioned were the Jews who were sent into captivity for 70 years because they chose false gods and even worshipped idols.

They were warned what would happen, God sent messenger after messenger, but they stopped up their ears to the prophets.

God used the Babylonians ultimately to bring chastening upon their fathers, but this was a new generation now.

They needed to learn from their father's mistakes and repent.

The prophet Zechariah will give four pleas to the people who had returned to the Land, for them to repent.

Starting with the first here in verse 3...

3 Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Return to Me," says the LORD of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts.

Not only did this generation of Jews return to the Land, but they also needed to return to the Lord.

Repent means to Return... So many today want God's blessing upon their life, without repentance...

They want to remain unchanged in their offensive ways toward the Lord... their sinful lifestyles, and they wake up in the morning, and they still pray, "God bless me, God give to me, God help me..."

Repentance is missing from the modern Christian mindset...

Today's spiritual thinking is that God is a tool to get me to where I want faster... He can get me higher... He can make me more successful...

Rarely is it considered God might want to change our course... this is repentance... turning from our path to His path...

We have to stop dictating our terms to God, and open our hearts to His plan for our lives...

To pray "Your will be done, not mine."

That is a dangerous prayer... but it is the one God desires and accepts...

We have to adjust our lives to Him, not He to us... If you are in sin tonight, God is not going to move the line for your convenience... You have to move to Him... that is how you find yourself in His blessings.

So, they needed to look up and return, repent, and now God tells them to look back and return... Verse 4...

4 "Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds.'" But they did not hear nor heed Me," says the LORD.

God needed them now to learn from their father's mistakes... to look back at them so they did not repeat them.

So many blame their upbringing for the way they are...

I was raised this way... so I am this way...

No, we have to break that cycle... turn to the Lord... and begin the influence of Light and Truth...

When you are the one in the family who says, "I will not repeat the cycle, I will be the one who makes a stand for Jesus and righteousness," you will have a huge impact on those around you.

The prophet continues... Verse 5...

5 "Your fathers, where *are* they?
And the prophets, do they live forever?

6 Yet surely My words and My statutes,
Which I commanded My servants the prophets,
Did they not overtake your fathers?

"So they returned and said:

'Just as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us,
According to our ways and according to our deeds,
So He has dealt with us.'""

Now they are instructed to look to God's Word and the warnings within it, and adjust their lives accordingly.

And here at this ultimatum, the Jews come to the prophet and say, "You know what, you are right, we have been down this road before, we don't want to do it again."

My daughter Sofia taught me a valuable lesson this year...

Last year, she tried out for the Volleyball team at her Christian School, and that girl is built for soccer. She is a great Athlete, but Volleyball is a whole different

set of skills than the field sport she was used to playing her whole life.

She couldn't get that overhand serve down; her ability to run long distances fast didn't translate well on the court, and her strong power to run through people didn't translate into the skill set she needed out there.

And she looked a little clunky, and she did not make the cut, she was a little embarrassed...

I saw her crying and said, "You don't need Volleyball in your life, just stick to what you know."

I did not want to see her fail again...

But she spent the next year practicing... she was bashing up our walls in the house so much, we had to buy her this indoor ball with this soft outer skin...

And she was at a bigger public school this year, and she wanted to try out again... I actually was afraid she would be in tears again... I said, "Just stick with soccer, babe..."

But she went out there, her friend told me yesterday, 80 girls tried out, and Sofia was one of 8

to 10 that made the team, and she ended up starting...

After her earlier failure, had she just cried about it, made excuses about how mean and unfair the coaches were, and how it's a dumb sport anyway, like her dad was doing... the same results would have followed.

But she repented, she changed directions, made different choices, set a different course, focused on new habits, and it paid off for her...

This is repentance – it is a willingness to change and set a new course...

When some will make excuses and try to blame others for their sins or messed-up life, the Christian way is to turn from the things that are destroying our lives, turn to God, learn from our past, and adjust to God's Word... Make a new life course... change the direction...

Look now at verse 7...

Vision of the Horses

7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet:

This would now be in the winter, in February, 519 BC, when Zechariah had this vision.

This is the first of the eight...

He will, over the course of his visions, see much of human history laid out and see what will happen to Israel in the last days.

Jesus, the Messiah, will be central to what Zechariah sees.

While Haggai is swinging away, working on the Temple, Zechariah is turning in his bed, taking in these wild visions.

Starting in verse 8...

8 I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the

hollow; and behind him *were* horses: red, sorrel, and white. **9** Then I said, "My lord, what *are* these?" So the angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they *are*."

10 And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These *are the ones* whom the LORD HAS sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth."

11 So they answered the Angel of the LORD, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, "We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly."

The Angel of the Lord is seen here in the Myrtle Trees...

And throughout the Old Testament, when we have seen the Angel of the Lord, we have come to understand this as a Theophany, more precisely a Christophany or a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus.

Here, the Angel of the Lord directs the four horsemen from the myrtles.

This is a small evergreen tree; we see them along the road in Israel...

We have Myrtle Trees out here...

It does put off a sweet aroma when it is crushed...
Being small, the aroma it puts off symbolizes Israel's tendency to come out of persecution time and time again throughout history.

In Zechariah's vision, the horse riders have surveyed the world and found it resting and complacent.

It is unaware of God's concerns.

Now, in Zechariah's final vision, there will be four chariots pulled by horses that go out to execute vengeance for God.

But here the horses are used for surveying.

Verse 12...

The LORD WILL Comfort Zion

12 Then the Angel of the LORD ANSWERED and said, "O LORD OF hosts, how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry these seventy years?"

13 And the LORD ANSWERED the angel who talked to me, *with good and* comforting words. **14** So the angel who spoke with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD OF hosts:

"I am zealous for Jerusalem
And for Zion with great zeal.

15 I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease;
For I was a little angry,
And they helped — *but with evil intent.*"

16 'Therefore thus says the LORD:

"I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy;
My house shall be built in it," says the LORD OF hosts,
"And a *surveyor's* line shall be stretched out over
Jerusalem."

17 "Again proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD OF hosts:

"My cities shall again spread out through prosperity;

The LORD WILL again comfort Zion,
And will again choose Jerusalem."'''

We see here that the Lord still loves Israel...

When God displaced the Jews and destroyed their Holy City... as God states it, when He was a little angry... He used the Babylonians to enforce His discipline.

God's heart was to turn His children's hearts back to Himself.

But the instrument that He used in His hand had evil intent.

The Babylonians went too far in their evil and greed. Remember the prophet Jeremiah called Nebuchadnezzar God's servant.

But overall, the Babylonians failed to honor God. God wanted the Jews to repent and turn back to Him.

Yet the Babylonians got carried away in their satanic rage against the Jews, and God would get more than a little angry with them.

He promises here to restore Jerusalem, and the surveyor's line will be stretched.

Haggai had already gotten started on this.

We can hear his hammer pinging away now...

God promises a future prosperity to Jerusalem.

He tells them that one day the Times of the Gentiles will end, and God will turn His attention to Jerusalem and even to His future Kingdom there.

Verse 18 now...

Vision of the Horns

18 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there *were* four horns. **19** And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What *are* these?"

So he answered me, "These *are* the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

The prophet does not give the meaning of these horns, but history does...

Assyria was the first empire that the Lord used against the Israelites, as they destroyed Samaria.

Babylon would destroy Jerusalem.

Greece would come later and torment the Jews, and the last horn would be Rome, which would ultimately scatter them all over the world.

Verse 20...

20 Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. **21** And I said, "What are these coming to do?"

So he said, "These *are* the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head; but the craftsmen are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up *their* horn against the land of Judah to scatter it."

These four craftsmen will be raised to destroy the four horns, who scattered the Jews.

God is promising to scatter the enemies who scattered them.

Now, history also gives us these craftsmen.

It was Babylon who defeated Assyria.

It was Persia who defeated Babylon.

Rome conquered Greece.

And in the Last Days, it will be the Messiah who will overthrow the Revived Roman Empire...

Rome was never defeated, it fell from within... but in the last days it will be restored in some fashion...

This will be the empire the Beast rises to power within...

So, here in Chapter 2, we come to the third vision...

Vision of the Measuring Line

2:1 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. **2** So I said, "Where are you going?"

And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what *is* its width and what *is* its length."

3 And there *was* the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him,

4 who said to him, "Run, speak to this young man, saying: 'Jerusalem shall be inhabited *as* towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. **5** For I,' says the LORD, 'will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.'"

After Jerusalem was conquered and destroyed, the city's dimensions were changed.

The city is growing and needs to be measured again.

Zechariah is called a young man here, whereas Haggai was the more experienced prophet.

The young dreamer sees the day when Jerusalem's population and trade will be growing.

The expanding city will go beyond its normal borders, like modern Jerusalem.

When you are there, you see expansion everywhere, with large cranes all over the horizon.

Now, a city without walls would be an enigma in Zechariah's day.

Those old cities had to have walls to protect them from invading armies, robbers, and even beasts.

But the prophet here looks ahead to a day when God Himself will be the city's security and protection.

He will be a fire around her.

He promises to one day be the glory once again in her midst.

If you remember from our study of Ezekiel, the Shekinah Glory slowly departed from the Holy of Holies.

Eventually, it made its way out of the walls, up to the Top of the Mount of Olives, and left this world.

It was the same path that the Lord's presence had descended and ascended multiple times throughout human history.

On Palm Sunday, it is the path our Lord Jesus took, and when He left our world, He departed from the top of the mount.

The prophet Zechariah, when we finish his writings in a few weeks, we will see in Chapter 14 that the Messiah, when He returns, will come again to that glorious Mt. of Olives...

His Glory will return one day, and every eye will see it!

Verse 6 now...

Future Joy of Zion and Many Nations

6 "Up, up! Flee from the land of the north," says the LORD; "for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven," says the LORD. **7** "Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon."

8 For thus says the LORD of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. **9** For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall

become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me.

Understand that when Zerubbabel returned to the land in 536 BC, only 50,000 of the millions of captives returned.

Most of the Jews had gotten comfortable in Babylon; they liked the mercantilism and the trade, the way of life.

They were not up for the sacrifice of starting over.

And Zechariah calls them out for not going home.

God calls Israel of old here the apple of His eye.

The pupil, being the most important and sensitive part of our eyes, reacts when threatened; this shield comes down to protect it instantly.

Well, the same way God would protect His people.

I have seen Him do this time and time again for believers...

He loves His kids, and He protects those He loves from those who might do them harm...

He never hesitates to run to our defense; we don't need to be defensive ourselves... He will care for us...

God is even seen here shaking His fist at their enemies...

Look at verse 10...

10 "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says the LORD . **11** "Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. **12** And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. **13** Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!"

Now, this would be such a comfort to those who were already working at the Temple.

They would know that the Lord would dwell in the midst of His people.

This would definitely up their motivation.

This is the same incentive we have here, Church. When we come to this place to serve, we have the joy of knowing that Jesus is in our midst.

Imagine if we knew a movie star was coming to Church this Sunday, or a politician, or some famous athlete, how would we prepare ourselves to see them?

Well, we come to gather with the King of kings every week, multiple times, shouldn't that excite us all the more?

He is here, with us, when we gather in His Name.

We see here in verse 12, the only place in the Bible where the Biblical lands of Judea and Samaria are called the Holy Land...

I want to be clear, today, when you go to Israel, you will be disappointed, as many are... it is not Holy at all...

Most Jews are not practicing Judaism; many are atheists. They really do not like Christians... well, they do like our money... and our friendship... so we do tour the Holy Land with delight...

But there is no evangelism... You can be persecuted... And since Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, even if they are practicing Jews, they are still lost and doomed for hell without Jesus...

So, I believe it is our job to reach the Jew for Jesus, as well as the Muslim, as well as anyone else...

And ultimately, that is our goal with Israel, we support the Gospel efforts there, missions there, and we want to see Jews saved...

But Israel is far from Holy, they are far from their God...

Now, secular living is fine... religious freedom, yes, to a certain degree... You can be any belief you want in Israel... where you can get yourself into trouble is trying to share your faith with others.

But when Jesus returns, He will choose Jerusalem, and He will make it His habitation, and it will be the Holy Land.

Let's move into chapter 3, where God promises to restore the spiritual relationship with Himself and the Jews.

He is speaking to the religious leaders in this chapter, in particular, the High Priest Joshua...

The date is the same, this is the fourth vision now...

Vision of the High Priest

3:1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.

Here we get this glimpse into heaven... this conflict that takes place.

The Angel of the Lord, or Jesus, and before him is Joshua the High Priest, a trial of sorts, and there is Satan to oppose, of course.

We saw something similar in our study of Job, where Satan came before God to accuse Job.

He is known in the New Testament as the accuser of the brethren.

He is relentless in pointing out our faults and sins.

Because he failed himself and lost his place forever, he works endlessly to prove that no one else is worthy.

We are under surveillance; one of his goons is studying our lives, so he can make accusations when we fall or make mistakes.

Of course, we are all guilty on our own merit...

But we have the best Defender... Jesus, and the Scriptures testify of Him...

1 John 2:1 if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous

Look at verse 2 now...

2 And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?"

God refused to impute the sins of Jerusalem to her.

In Christ, this is the same way He sees us, Romans 8:30 says, "Whom He predestined these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

Just like Joshua here, God chooses us, He justifies us, and with all that Satan can accuse us of today, God sees us as though we never sinned, through His Son.

Zechariah tells Joshua, "Is this not a brand plucked from the fire.

A cowboy will heat a brand in the fire until it is red hot, then press it on the cattle to give it a scar to mark it.

And we are like that brand plucked from the fire; if God left us in the heat, we would melt in judgment.

But out of mercy, He pulls us out; we find salvation from the fire, and we are used in His hands.

We are plucked from the burning.

Verse 3...

3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.

4 Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes."

5 And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head."

So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the LORD stood by.

We are dirty, and Satan is so good at reminding us of this...

He points out our flaws, our shortcomings, our detestable past...

We are not worthy to be God's child...

Joshua's clothes are dirty here... and Satan wants to bury him under that filth...

Under all that guilt and condemnation...

This is what Satan does to us... Maybe that is what he is doing to you tonight...

Reminding you what a wreck you have made your life...

There comes a point in our household when we are in the thick of the fight... and the battle is raging...

My wife, in the early days, used to shout, "Oh, when is he going to learn? He can't have us back, you can't have us back, that devil won't get us back."

She was standing in Christ's righteousness now...,

You've got to repeat these words... I have taught them to my kids... "The Lord rebuke you, Satan."

Freedom was having nights of terrible thoughts, dark things little kids shouldn't be thinking about. He sees things in the ministry sometimes that are rough...

And a while back, I told him when those thoughts come on, say, "In the Name of Jesus, Leave me alone."

I told him good night, we prayed...

It was three nights later, like 9 at night, and Jess and I are in the room, "Daaaad, Daaaad," "Yes Son..." "I just wanted to tell you that thing you told me to say, it worked."

But when Satan comes at you, we need to understand where we stand in Christ, we are no longer wearing those filthy garments...

Literally, "dung splattered" garments.

They have been replaced with the rich robes of righteousness in Jesus Christ.

They are pricey, bought by the spilled blood of our Savior.

Never think you have earned it; they were given to you to cherish and behold.

We see here that Joshua also got a clean turban, which the priests wore.

A neat picture of keeping our thoughts pure, taking our thoughts captive... keeping our minds holy to the Lord.

Look now, verse 6...

The Coming Branch

6 Then the Angel of the LORD admonished Joshua, saying, **7** "Thus says the LORD of hosts:
'If you will walk in My ways,
And if you will keep My command,
Then you shall also judge My house,

And likewise have charge of My courts;
I will give you places to walk
Among these who stand here.

8 'Hear, O Joshua, the high priest,
You and your companions who sit before you,
For they are a wondrous sign;
For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the
BRANCH.

9 For behold, the stone
That I have laid before Joshua:
Upon the stone *are* seven eyes.
Behold, I will engrave its inscription,
Says the LORD of hosts,
'And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one
day.

10 In that day,' says the LORD of hosts,
'Everyone will invite his neighbor
Under his vine and under his fig tree.'"

Like our own pardon, Joshua's forgiveness here had nothing to do with what he had done.

It was all a gift from God.

But Joshua is promised a reward if he keeps God's Word and commands.

He will judge God's house, and have charge of God's courts, and He will give him places to walk among those who stand there.

Joshua would be blessed for obedience...

He is told he is a sign, wondrous sign...

Joshua, in Greek, means Jesus, signifying our Great High Priest.

Zechariah uses two idioms to clarify this further, comparing Joshua to a Servant and the Branch.

Jesus, as we are seeing in Mark on Sundays, is the Father's servant, and He is also a Branch from David's family tree.

Jesus is a fulfillment of this Servant, the Branch...

In verse 9, he is called the stone, another depiction of Christ, who was the stone that the builders rejected.

A stone with seven eyes is an interesting picture, but in Isaiah 11 we see a sevenfold description of the Branch... or Jesus...

Isa 11:1-2 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.
The eyes could be a manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

Notice in verse 9, the inscription, “I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”

This was fulfilled in Jesus on Calvary, where Jesus would say, “It is finished.”

All that needed to be done for the world’s sins and rebellion was taken care of...

The Jew’s eyes will be open one day to this reality as well.

Today, everyone comes through Jesus, who did all that was necessary to remove sin.

He is the stone...

Jesus said...

Luke 20:17-18

'The stone which the builders rejected

*Has it become the chief cornerstone?**

18 Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

Listen today, you can fall on Him and receive Grace, but you have to come honestly, be real, and deal with things.

We cannot hide them, or cover them, or put them behind a smile and praise the Lord...

Jesus wants to heal your life; it will come through brokenness... but hope comes through brokenness...

If you have been fighting Jesus, tonight let Him in, so He can get to work on healing... be real with Him, with your struggle tonight...

The reality is... those who don't fall on Him, the Stone, one day that Stone will fall on them...

Today is the day of Grace... come to Him through Grace...

The window is closing... judgment is coming...

He loves you... He has allowed you this time to hear Him... now come and receive...

Let's pray...