Zechariah 3:1-10

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

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***Zechariah 3:1–10*** (ESV)  
**1** Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of YHWH, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. **2** And YHWH said to Satan, “YHWH rebuke you, O Satan! YHWH who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?” **3** Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. **4** And the angel said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he said, “Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.” **5** And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of YHWH was standing by. **6** And the angel of YHWH solemnly assured Joshua, **7** “Thus says YHWH of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my charge, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here. **8** Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch. **9** For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes, I will engrave its inscription, declares YHWH of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day. **10** In that day, declares YHWH of hosts, every one of you will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and under his fig tree.”

1. Chapter three presents the FOURTH vision of Zechariah. Review again the main points of the previous sections of Zechariah:  
   a) Introduction, Zech 1:-1-6  
   b) First Vision, “Man & horses in the myrtle trees”: Zech 1:7-17   
   c) Second Vision, “Four horns and craftsmen”: Zech 1:18-21 .   
   d) Third Vision & Oracle, “ Man with measuring line”: Zech 2.

a) Introduction, Zech 1:-1-6  
Repent! Don’t be like your ancestors! Return to me and I will return to you.

b) First Vision, “Man & horses in the myrtle trees”: Zech 1:7-17   
Be encouraged – YHWH will rebuild His city and His land, and with dwell with His people again, bringing prosperity to them.

c) Second Vision, “Four horns and craftsmen”: Zech 1:18-21 .   
YHWH knows His people have been suffering under the hands of others nations, and is going to punish those nations. The abuses will be paid for. Take heart, be encouraged, for I am your God.

d) Third Vision & Oracle, “ Man with measuring line”: Zech 2.  
YHWH will be rebuild the city like never before. It will be filled with people so walls cannot contain it. It will be prosperous and powerful… they will plunder the nations that have plundered them. And they will have the protection and presence of YHWH. Judgment day is coming!

1. Who is Joshua of Zech 3:1? Who is his father? What is his role? Note also Zech 6:11. Compare also to Hag 1:1 – 2:9. (Remember that Haggai was another prophet contemporary with Zechariah.)

Joshua, son of Jehozadak, was the high priest at the time of Zechariah and Haggai.

1. What were the Hebrew names of Joshua and his father, and what do they mean?

Joshua יְהוֹשׁוּעַ **Yehoshua** *“YHWH saves”*Jehozadak יְהוֹצָדָק **Yehotsadak** *“YHWH is righteous”*

1. Joshua is also mentioned in Ezra 3:2 but his name, as well as the name of his father, is spelled slightly differently. How are the names spelled here, and what is the difference in Hebrew?

Jeshua יֵשׁוּעַ **Yeshua**Jozadak יוֹצָדָק **Yotsadak**In both cases, the part of the name “Yeho” which is short for the first part YHWH, is abbreviated.

1. This type of abbreviation of names is apparently not uncommon. We also see the same thing for Joshua, son on Nun, who assisted Moses and then took over the leadership of Israel when Moses died. Compare the Hebrew for Joshua, son of Nun, in Ex 17:10 and Neh 8:17.

Nehemiah 8:17 יֵשׁוּעַ **Yeshua**

Exodus 17:10 יְהוֹשֻׁעַ **Yehoshua**

1. What is the Hebrew name of Jesus, the Messiah? (Note that the Septuagint translates all occurrences of “Joshua” (both Yeshua and Yehoshua) into the Greek as **Iesous** , which is the same Greek name that is used for the Messiah throughout the New Testament.)

English **Jesus** > Greek **Iesous** > Hebrew **Yeshua** or **Yehoshua**

1. All this is to suggest that in Zechariah’s prophesy, it may be that Joshua son of Jehozadak is in some way symbolic of Yeshua the Messiah. Keep in mind that possibility as you study this vision. For now, consider Moses’ assistant, Joshua son of Nun. Based on what you know from Scriptures, how was Joshua son of Nun symbolic of (or a foreshadow of) Yeshua the Messiah?

They both had the same name.  
They were both leaders of Israel.  
They both lead the people into “the promised land.”

1. Satan is used 3 times in verses and 1 and 2. This is one of the few passages in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) that Satan is directly used. Actually, in Hebrew, all three of these times the term is **“ha satan”**. What does **“ha”** mean and what does **“satan”** mean in Hebrew? Do you think **“ha satan”** is being used as a name here, or just as a descriptive term about the “Evil One”? Why?

**ha satan** = “the adversary”. The first two uses in Zech 3:1-2a are ambiguous since “ha satan” could be used as a name or simple as a descriptive term “the adversary”, referring to the Evil One. The third instance (Zech 3:2b) however is a command referring the Evil One in the second person (YHWH rebuke YOU) followed by “ha Satan”. In this case it seems clear that “ha Satan” is used as a name. It wouldn’t make sense to say, “YHWH rebuke you, the adversary” but it would make sense to say, “YHWH rebuke you, Ha-Satan” if Ha-Satan were being used as a personal name for the Evil One.

1. Who is the “angel of YHWH”, and where are Yeshua and Ha-Satan in relation to this angel? What is happening? What kind of a scene is this? Compare to Job 1:6-12.

***Job 1:6–12*** (ESV)  
**6** Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. **7** The Lord said to Satan, “From where have you come?” Satan answered the Lord and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.” **8** And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?” **9** Then Satan answered the Lord and said, “Does Job fear God for no reason? **10** Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. **11** But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.” **12** And the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.” So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord.

The angel is a messenger / spokesman / representative of YHWH. It seems like there is the angel, Yeshua, and Ha-Satan, all standing before YHWH. This seems to be like a courtroom scene with the Adversary standing before the Judge making his accusation against Yeshua.

1. Who is the “brand plucked from the fire”? What does that mean? Compare also Amos 4:11.

***Amos 4:11***“I overthrew some of you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as a brand plucked out of the burning; yet you did not return to me,” declares the Lord.

This refers primarily to Yeshua the high priest, saying he is part of the remnant that was not destroyed in the punishment of Israel. He has been plucked from the fire of YHWH’s punishment in Babylon.

But on another level, it seems to refer to Yeshua the Messiah. Yeshua is the brand (burning stick) rescued from the fire of destruction (death for the sins of mankind). He was being destroyed, or had the appearance of being destroyed, but then was saved from destruction.

1. Why does it say “YHWH who chose Jerusalem” rebukes Ha-Satan? What is significance of mentioning Jerusalem here in reference to rebuking Satan?

Assuming this is symbolic of Yeshua the Messiah, it was what took place in Jerusalem that won the spiritual battle Satan was waging. It was in Jerusalem that the crucifixion and resurrection took place. The crucifixion was the fire; the Messiah was about to burned up, but then the “burning stick” was rescued from the fire, and the battle was won. Satan was defeated at that point. And it happened in Jerusalem.

Yeshua the High Priest (the man, not the Messiah) could also be seen as unfit for service as high priest because of his sins and the “unclean” lifestyle of Babylon. So Ha-Satan could be accusing him too, saying he is unfit. Yet YHWH chose him to be serve as high priest, and to be involved in the rebuilding of the temple. The same God that chose Jerusalem (as the site of the temple and the service of the High Priest) also chose Yeshua to be that High Priest. Jerusalem was desecrated; unfit at this point for the residence of YHWH. Likewise Yeshua was unclean, coming out of Babylon, unfit at this point for service as high priest. But YHWH, by his grace, is the one that makes pure those who are unclean. He will do this for Yeshua the high priest, if he is obedient to the Father, just He will do it for Yeshua the Messiah.

1. What was the most honored duty of the High Priest, and how was he to prepare for that duty, which took place on Yom Kippur? Look at Lev 16:3-4.

***Leviticus 16:4***He shall put on the holy linen coat and shall have the linen undergarment on his body, and he shall tie the linen sash around his waist, and wear the linen turban; these are the holy garments. He shall bathe his body in water and then put them on.

He entered the Holy of Holies in the Temple. He had to purify himself, and wear special pure and clean garments.

1. What would happen if the high priest did not properly prepare himself for his duty, when he entered into the presence of YHWH? For example look at Lev 16:2 and Lev 22:3.

***Leviticus 16:2***and the Lord said to Moses, “Tell Aaron your brother not to come at any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat that is on the ark, so that he may not die. For I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat.

***Leviticus 22:3***Say to them, ‘If any one of all your offspring throughout your generations approaches the holy things that the people of Israel dedicate to the Lord, while he has an uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from my presence: I am the Lord.

He would die. He would be cut off from YHWH. Why? No sin can stand in the presence of the Father.

1. In this vision, Yeshua the High Priest was wearing filthy garments. The Hebrew word used for “filthy” is צֹאִי **tso’i** from the root word **tso’a**. What does that word really mean? Compare to Isaiah 4:2-4 where this same word “**tso’a**” is used in verse 4. What is the symbolism? What do you think Ha-Satan was accusing Yeshua of?

***Isaiah 4:2–4*** (ESV)  
**2** In that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of the survivors of Israel. **3** And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, **4** when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning.

Tso’a really means “excrement” – a sign of the vilest defilement. This word used in Isaiah 4:2 to describe the sins of Israel.

Yeshua the man / high priest and just come out of Babylon. He was no doubt unclean from that life, soiled with that culture, and therefore unfit to come into the presence of YHWH. The filthy garments reflect this state of total ritual impurity.

For the Messiah, the filthy garments probably symbolized the sins of all mankind. In the next verse the angel takes off the garments and then says “I have taken your iniquity away from you.” Ha-Satan was saying Yeshua was guilty! He was not fit to stand before YHWH. He was covered with sin. He should die.

1. Why was Yeshua given a clean turban and clean garments to wear? What does that symbolize?

In spite of his sins, Yeshua the man / high priest was made clean in the sight of YHWH, and deemed acceptable to serve as high priest. He was clothed accordingly.

Yeshua the Messiah was given a crown of thorns at the crucifixion. He clothes were taken and he was left naked in shame and humiliation because of the sins of man. Now he gets a clean turban, and clean clothes. The effects of sin are removed, no longer visible.

1. Who is doing the speaking in Zech 3:5, which starts out “And I said…” ?

It is not totally clear WHO is speaking in Zech 3:5 but it would seem to be Zechariah who speaks, interacting with the vision that is being shown to him. Some suggest it could be angel of YHWH, but then it seems odd that after the statement comes the next statement “And the angel of YHWH was standing by.”

1. In Zech 3:7 what is the promise made to Yeshua? What does Yeshua have to do, and what are the three things he is promised?

Yeshua must **walk in the ways** of YHWH, and **keep his commands** (these seem to be the same)He will receive: a) rule over YHWH’s house,   
 b) charge over YHWH’s court  
 c) right of access to YWHW

All these three promises are really the responsibility of the high priest. So the promise to Yeshua the man is that he will indeed be able to function in all the ways that a high priest should function. The same applies to Yeshua the Messiah, except the meaning & scope are much broader. **House** means not just temple, but kingdom. **Court** refers not just to the priests serving under him, but to all God’s people. **Access** means not just the holy of holies, but total, continuous living in the presence of YHWH.

1. Yeshua is a given “right of access among those who are standing here”. What do you think that means? Who is standing there? What access is given? Is Yeshua the only one with access, or do all those standing there have access too?

Yeshua, as a high priest who walks in the ways of YHWH, is granted access to YHWH. Perhaps he is the only one with access, since the high priest was the only one even allowed to enter the holy of holies. Ha-Satan and presumably others are in the courtroom, but perhaps they are not given access. Scripture are not entirely clear, so this is left to our speculation. The next verse (Zech 3:8) speaks of Yeshua’s friends who sit before him, so perhaps it is these “others” that is referred to. From among these (Yeshua and those who sit with him), Yeshua is granted access to YHWH.

1. Zech 3:8 begins with “hear”. In Hebrew this word for “hear” is שָׁמַע “shema, but it means more than just “to hear”. What does “shema” really mean?

It means to hear and take appropriate action. Like hear and obey; hear and do accordingly.

1. Why is it so important for Joshua and his friends to “shema”?

They are “men who are a sign”. In other words, they need to be careful to hear and obey the directions from YHWH because they are in some way symbols of things to come in the future. Their lives and actions are more than just about themselves. They are being prepared for a larger role in the covenant community. And on another level, their lives and actions are in some way prophetic, relating to the Messiah and the end times.

1. “I will bring my servant the branch.” Who is the branch? Compare to Jer 23:5, Jer 33:15, Isaiah 4:2-4, Isaiah 11:1-9.

***Jeremiah 23:5***“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

***Jeremiah 33:14–16***“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness.’

***Isaiah 4:2–4***In that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of the survivors of Israel. And he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning.

***Isaiah 11:1***There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

These references are all strong indicators that the Branch = the Messiah. The Branch would be the one that rebuilds the temple. In the present context, it could refer either to Yeshua the high priest or Zerubbabel, but from other passages it seems clear that The Branch refers to Zerabbabel. We can reexamine this when we study Zech 6:12.

1. Zech 3:9a refers to “a single stone with seven eyes”. Maybe this refers to seven imbedded jewels or smaller crystals / stones set in a larger stone. This phrase could also be translated as a single stone with seven facets. What might this stone and seven eyes/jewels/facets represent? Compare Gen 49:24, Isaiah 8:13-15, Isaiah 28:16, Ps 118:22, Acts 4:11, 1 Pet 2:4-7, Zech 4:10 and Rev 5:6.

***Zechariah 4:10***For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. “These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range through the whole earth.”

***Revelation 5:6***And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

***Genesis 49:24***yet his bow remained unmoved; his arms were made agile by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),

***Isaiah 28:16***therefore thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: ‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’

***Psalm 118:22***The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

***Acts 4:11***This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.

***1 Peter 2:4–7***As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,”

***Isaiah 8:13–15***But the Lord of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many shall stumble on it. They shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken.”

The stone in question could be the cornerstone foundation stone of a building, in this case most likely the Temple of YHWH. So the stone could symbolize the cornerstone as the foundation of the temple, the house of YHWH, where he is to dwell among his people, as the Almighty One, the One with complete knowledge and dominion.

**Or, based on Zech 4:7, it could be the capstone (lit. head stone)**, or uppermost finishing stone, like the final one put in place at the top of an arch. Yeshua is both the foundation stone and the cap stone. He laid the foundation at his first coming, and will finish the with the cap stone at this second coming.

Since the foundation stone of the temple had already been laid at the time of this vision, the temporal context would suggest that the stone refers to the capstone, not the cornerstone. This seems to agree with Zech 4:7 too.

Seven means fullness or completeness, so seven eyes complete and unlimited knowledge. The seven eyes on the stone could be seven jewels, which like the seven lamps of Zech 4:7 the all-seeing eyes of YHWH, seeing over all the earth, and also providing light for all to see.

1. “Eyes” in Zech 3:9 can also be translated as “springs” or “fountains”. This is another possibility, and would be make sense too, since Yeshua was the Rock from which living waters flowed. Look at Neh 9:15, Isaiah 48:21, Psalm 105:41, and 1 Cor 10:4. Do you think this could be the meaning in Zechariah? Why or why not?

***Nehemiah 9:15*** (ESV)  
**15** You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and brought water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you had sworn to give them.

***Isaiah 48:21*** (ESV)  
**21** They did not thirst when he led them through the deserts; he made water flow for them from the rock; he split the rock and the water gushed out.

***Psalm 105:41*** (ESV)  
**41** He opened the rock, and water gushed out; it flowed through the desert like a river.

***1 Corinthians 10:4*** (ESV)  
**4** and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.

It could be a rock with 7 seven springs / fountains / sources of water. This would make sense if it were not for the next vision where there seems to be a connection in Zech 4:7 with the seven lamps and the seven eyes of YHWH. Both the rock and the number seven seem to have common meanings in the visions of Zech 3 and Zech 4.

1. What do you think was inscribed on the stone (Zech 3:9)?

Merrill suggests the inscription is “And I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day”.

Some suggest the seven “eyes” are what is inscribed (or embedded / inlaid) in the stone.

Others think the inscription is like a building dedication inscription that would be on the capstone (or even perhaps on the foundation stone) of a building, as would have been done to honor someone who contributed to the completion of the building. Perhaps it would have said “Yeshua, King of the Jews”, as it said above him on the cross.

I think Merrill is close to be right. However, it could be that “its inscription” refers the Branch’s inscription that will be inscribed on the stone. In both instances of Jer 23:6 and Jer 33:16, it says the Branch’s name will be “YHWH is our Righteousness”. (The Hebrew is a ambiguous here, as it is not clear where the name “YHWH is our righteousness” refers to the name of place Judah / Jerusalem or the name of the person who is the Branch. But it seems to me that the context best suggests that it refers to the person.) So the Branch (Messiah) will be called by the name “YHWH is our righteousness”. Now in Zech 3:8-9, God says I will bring my servant the Branch, and on a stone set before Joshua, He will engrave its inscription. It is possible that “it” can refer to the stone or the Branch. If the Branch, then it seems plausible that the Branch’s inscription would be His name. So perhaps on the stone is engraved the inscription of the Branch, “YHWH is our righteousness”. This seems to make sense in light of the next phrase, “and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.” It also makes sense in the context of this vision, where Satan is accusing Yeshua of being unclean and unfit to carry out his duties.

1. Zech 3:9b says “I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day”. How is this linked to the branch and stone? What is the possible connection with verse 2 which says “YHWH has chosen Jerusalem to rebuke you? What “single day” is referred to? Has it happened already?

The Branch will build the temple. The stone is the cornerstone of the temple of YHWH, who will dwell in this temple, and who has complete knowledge and dominion over all. The Messiah, crucified and resurrected in Jerusalem will return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple again, and to reign as both King and High Priest.

One idea is that “the day” could be the resurrection day, in which case it already happened. Or it could be the final day of judgment after Messiah returns. I think it is the latter – the final day of judgment – since the next verse seems to suggest life in Messiah’s future kingdom. This ties in also with the stone being the capstone… the final finishing stone on the building, when Messiah returns and completes his temple.

1. In Zech 3:10 we see that in that day when all sin is removed, everyone “will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and under his fig tree”. Compare to 1 Kings 4:25 and Micah 4:4. What does this phrase seem to mean?

***1 Kings 4:25***And Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, all the days of Solomon.

***Micah 4:3–4***He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide for strong nations far away; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore; but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.

It seems to describe a day of complete peace. No more war, no more fighting, no more fear. Everyone can relax in their gardens and enjoy the fruit of the land with their neighbors.

1. How would you summarize the message of this vision?

Vision four describes a day of redemption in which Yeshua the high priest, representing all of Israel as a priestly people, will be cleansed of his impurities and reinstalled as high priest. This presupposes a Temple in which this can take place. Yeshua will rebuild that temple, whose cornerstone is YHWH. This entire vision can is also be a picture of Yeshua the Messiah and his return.

1. What would it have meant to the people hearing it in Zechariah’s day? How would it have changed their lives? What does it mean to us today, and how does it change our lives?

It would have made people have more respect for Yeshua and the other leaders. They are “men who are a sign”, called by YHWH for a greater purpose. Something big is happening, being orchestrated by YHWH himself. We better get on board with his plan. This is way bigger than what we see happening around us.

1. What did you learn about YHWH or about yourself and your relationship with Him from this passage?