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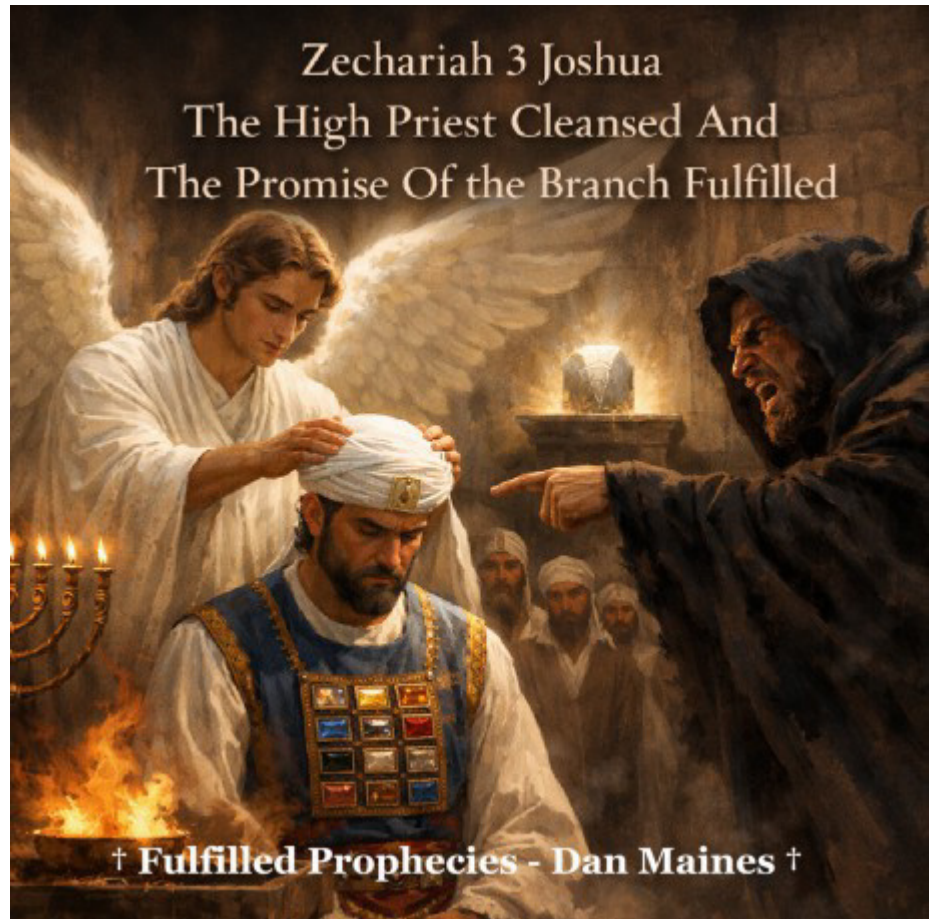
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Zechariah 3 Joshua The High Priest Cleansed And The Promise Of The Branch Fulfilled



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† Zechariah 3 shows a courtroom scene where Joshua the high priest stands accused, yet God Himself removes the accusation and clothes him in righteousness

† This is not just about one man, it points to the complete removal of sin and the establishment of a new priesthood fulfilled in Christ

† From the fulfilled perspective, this vision reaches its completion in the first century when sin was taken away and access to God was fully opened

Zechariah 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 accuse him.

† Joshua represents the priesthood under the Old Covenant, standing guilty before God (Hebrews 7:27)

† Satan is the accuser, showing the law's role in exposing sin and condemnation (Revelation 12:10)

† This scene reveals the need for divine intervention, not human effort, to remove guilt

Zechariah 3:2

The Lord said to Satan, The Lord rebuke you, Satan Indeed, the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a log snatched from the fire?

† God Himself rebukes the accuser, showing that justification comes from Him alone (Romans 8:33)

† Jerusalem being chosen points to covenant purpose, not human merit (Deuteronomy 7:7)

† A brand plucked from the fire shows deliverance from judgment, pointing forward to salvation fulfilled in Christ

Zechariah 3:3

Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and was standing before the angel.

† The filthy garments represent sin and uncleanness under the law (Isaiah 64:6)

† Even the high priest stands defiled, proving the Old Covenant could not cleanse completely (Hebrews 10:1)

† This exposes the total inability of the old system to produce

righteousness

Zechariah 3:4

And he responded and said to those who were standing before him, saying, Remove the filthy garments from him Again he said to him, See, I have taken your guilt away from you and will clothe you with festive robes.

† God removes the iniquity, showing forgiveness is an act of divine grace (Psalm 103:12)

† The change of garments represents imputed righteousness, not earned righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21)

† This points directly to the completed work of Christ removing sin once for all

Zechariah 3:5

Then 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, while the angel of the Lord was standing by.

† The clean turban signifies restored priestly authority and acceptance (Exodus 28:36-38)

† This restoration shows that access to God has been reestablished

† It foreshadows the full restoration of God's people as a holy priesthood (1 Peter 2:5)

Zechariah 3:6

And the angel of the Lord admonished Joshua, saying,

† This introduces covenant responsibility following cleansing

† Grace isn't separate from obedience, it establishes it (Titus 2:11-12)

† The restored priesthood is now called to walk in God's ways

Zechariah 3:7

This is what the Lord of armies says, If you will walk in My ways

and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courtyards, and I will grant you free access among these who are standing here.

† Walking in God's ways reflects covenant faithfulness (Deuteronomy 10:12)

† Governing His house points to spiritual authority fulfilled in Christ's kingdom (Hebrews 3:6)

† Free access shows the removal of barriers, fulfilled in full access to God (Hebrews 10:19-22)

Zechariah 3:8

Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you, indeed they are men who are a sign, for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the Branch.

† Joshua and his companions are symbolic, pointing forward to something greater

† The Branch is clearly the Messiah, Jesus Christ (Isaiah 11:1)

† This connects the cleansing directly to the coming of Christ and His work

Zechariah 3:9

For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua, on one stone are seven eyes Behold, I will engrave an inscription on it, declares the Lord of armies, and I will remove the guilt of that land in one day.

† The stone represents Christ as the foundation (Psalm 118:22)

† Seven eyes show complete knowledge and divine authority (Revelation 5:6)

† Removing iniquity in one day points to the cross, where sin was decisively dealt with

Zechariah 3:10

On that day, declares the Lord of armies, every one of you will

invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and under his fig tree.

† This describes peace, security, and covenant rest (Micah 4:4)

† It reflects the blessings of the fulfilled kingdom, not a future earthly system

† The imagery shows reconciliation and fellowship among God's people

Historical References

† Justin Martyr connected the Branch to Christ as the one who removes sin and establishes righteousness

† Irenaeus taught that Christ fulfilled the priesthood and removed sin once for all

† Eusebius saw the cleansing of Joshua as fulfilled in the gospel age and the removal of sin through Christ

† Josephus records the corruption of the priesthood before AD 70, showing the need for this divine cleansing

How It Applies To Us Today

† We're no longer standing in filthy garments, our sin has been removed in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)

† The accuser has no standing against us because God has justified us (Romans 8:1)

† We have full access to God now, not waiting for a future temple or system (Hebrews 10:19)

† We're part of the restored priesthood, called to walk in His ways (1 Peter 2:9)

† The peace described is present reality in the kingdom, not something postponed

Q & A Appendix

Q How do we know Joshua represents more than himself

A Zechariah 3:8 says they are men who are a sign, pointing to

Christ as the Branch

Q When was the iniquity removed in one day

A Hebrews 10:12 says Christ offered one sacrifice for sins for all time

Q What do the filthy garments represent

A Isaiah 64:6 shows our righteousness is like filthy garments apart from God

Q Who is the Branch

A Isaiah 11:1 identifies the Branch as the Messiah, fulfilled in Jesus

Q What does free access mean

A Hebrews 10:19-22 shows we now have confidence to enter the holy place

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Zechariah 3

† Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho; Irenaeus, Against Heresies; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History; Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews

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