

# Iniquity Taken Away

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[ 0 : 00 ] A warm welcome to our service today, and as we come together around the Word of God, let us seek his blessing upon his Word. Let us pray.

Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, we give thanks unto thee for the privilege that is ours today, when we can draw near unto thee into the very throne room of God, and when we can offer our petitions before thee, acknowledging, O Lord, that it is not because of our own merits, but that we have this boldness and confidence to come unto thee through the merits of thy Son, the Lord and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

That in his name we can approach thee, knowing that thou art the God who is the hearer of prayer.

And we pray that thou would incline thine ear unto us at this hour, and that thou would be pleased to grant to us the grace, to enable us to approach thee with reverence and with godly fear, being mindful of who thou art, that thou art the high and lofty one, that thou art the one that inhabiteth eternity, that thou art the sovereign God, that thou art our creator, and that we are the created, that we are the works of thine own hands, that thou art a God who is of purer eye, than to look upon sin.

And yet, O Lord, we come and we acknowledge our sinnership before thee, acknowledging that we sin in thought, in word, and in deed.

[ 2 : 02 ] But we give thanks that we can come to thee and that we can confess our sins, holding on to that promise that thou hast given to us, that if we confess our sins, that thou art faithful and just, to forgive us for all our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

We give thee thanks for the efficacy of the finished work of Christ. We give thee thanks that his blood is sufficient to wash away our sins, to reconcile us to our God, and so that we can have peace with God, and that we can know the peace of God flowing into our hearts.

We pray this day that it would please thee, O Lord, to come through thy spirit, to enlighten our understanding, to lead us into thy known truth, that we may learn and be instructed by thy word.

We give thee thanks for the work of thy grace in the hearts of sinners such as we are. And we pray that as the gospel is being proclaimed today, that through thy spirit there would be many, he would come to know thy salvation.

O Lord, that it may please thee to draw sinners to thyself, to convince them of their standing before thee as sinners, bringing them into that conviction of sin.

[ 3 : 41 ] And, O Lord, enlightening their understanding so that they can behold the wondrous grace of our God through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the sufficiency of his finished work to meet with their need as sinners.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless our homes and our families, that thou would bless our loved ones, wherever they may be, thou knowest, O Lord, and we pray that thou would meet with them out of the riches of thy grace into every particular need that they may have.

We pray that thou would bless our communities. O may thou descend through thy spirit, may thou bring days of revival into thy church and days of awakening among those who are still dead in trespasses and in sin, that the work of thy own right hand may be seen among us in bringing sinners to repentance and in the abuilding of thine own church.

Remember thy people. O Lord, grant to them that they may be faithful witnesses for thee, that they may grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they may be as shining lights in the midst of the darkness of the world that is around us.

Bless the witness of thy people in their homes and in their workplace and in our communities. We pray that thou would remember those who are ill.

[ 5 : 20 ] May thy healing hand be upon them. And those who mourn the passing away of loved ones, we pray that thine own comfort may fill their hearts.

Thou art reminding us so often, O Lord, that here we have no continuing city. But may we seek that city that has been promised to thy people, that inheritance that has been purchased for thy people through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless our young people and our children. Thou knowest, O Lord, their needs. Thou knowest how this world is out to entice and to draw them away from the gospel.

But may it please thee to raise up a generation that would fear thine own name and who would be thine own witnesses in this world.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless those who have been touched with this coronavirus. That thou, O Lord, would bring healing to them and bless them and their families and all those who are concerned regarding them.

[ 6 : 33 ] We give thee thanks for the measure of protection that thou hast given to us as a community. And we pray, O Lord, that thy protection would continue among us.

Not that we are worthy of such, but, O Lord, that thou would remember mercy and that thou, O Lord, would be merciful to us. We give thanks that thou art a God who delighteth in mercy, that thou art a gracious God, a God who is full of grace.

And we pray, O Lord, that thou would meet with us all at our point of need. We ask, O Lord, that thou would come among us as we come to read thy word and as we come to meditate upon it, knowing, O Lord, that without thee that we can do nothing, that we are dependent upon thy spirit to help us.

Grant to us, O Lord, that we would be waiting upon thee and that it would please thee to fill us up, our opening of our understanding and the opening of our heart to thyself, that we would become more devoted to thee and more committed to thee.

We give thanks unto thee, O Lord, for all the tokens of thy goodness and kindness to us. Remember those who are lonely today, O Lord, that thou would straw near to them, that they may not come to know that there is one that sticketh closer than any other.

[ 8 : 12 ] May they know thy presence this day. We pray, O Lord, that thou would continue with us now as we come to wait upon thee and all that we ask for the forgiveness of our many sins in Jesus' name and for his sake.

Amen. Let us now read the word of God as we find it in the Old Testament and in the prophecy of Zechariah and chapter 3.

And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee. O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him saying, Take away the filthy garments from him.

[ 9 : 19 ] And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head.

So they set a fair mitre upon his head and clothed him with garments and the angel of the Lord stood by. And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house and shall also keep my coats and I will give thee places to walk among those that stand by.

Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee. For they are men wondered at. For behold, I will bring forth my servant the branch.

For behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua upon one stone shall be seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree. May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word.

[ 10 : 40 ] And now, seeking his help and blessing, let us read again the first five verses of Zechariah chapter 3. And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

Now, Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him.

And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fire mitre upon his head.

So they set a fire mitre upon his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by. Zechariah, as we are told, was the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddu.

[ 11 : 53 ] Now, names can be incredibly significant in the Bible. Here, for instance, Berechiah means Jehovah blesses, and Iddu means the appointed time.

And of course, as we noted last week, the name Zechariah means the Lord remembers, or Yahweh remembers. Now, Zechariah was probably born in Babylon, and would have made a long journey back under the leadership of Zerubbabel.

But his name is reminding those who have returned from the Babylonian exile that God remembers them and will exercise his covenant love towards them.

Now, Zechariah was immediately concerned, like Haggai, was the rebuilding of the temple. However, he begins where we all have to begin, with a call to God's people to repent, with a call to God's covenant people to repent.

repent. It is a call for the covenant people to repent, and this is where repentance must always begin, with God's covenant people.

[ 13 : 15 ] It is of no use for us to be seeking God's blessings unless the church is in repentance. We must repent if we wish to experience all of God's blessings.

if we want to experience the power of the gospel, then the church must repent. Thus, saith the Lord of hosts, turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.

It is imperative that this message of repentance be preached today as it was in the days of Zechariah. just note the title that the Lord uses in his message.

Thus, saith the Lord of hosts, turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. That title, the Lord of hosts, it designates or assigns our Lord as ruler over the whole universe.

It is a title that celebrates God's sovereignty and omnipotence. He is Lord over all. He is ruler over all.

[ 14 : 40 ] He is completely, totally, absolutely sovereign. Now, here we are encouraged to reflect upon the past and to learn from it.

the Lord said to Zechariah to Israel, Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, turn ye now from your evil ways and from your evil doings.

But they did not hear nor hearken, unto me, saith the Lord. And he brings before this how we must recognize the brevity of time that we have. For he says, Your fathers, where are they?

And the prophets, do they live forever? Most of them are gone and we are on the self-same journey. Soon our place will be empty. And if there be so little time, how important that we redeem our time.

How important it is that we redeem our time and repent now while we have the opportunity to do so. We read that the words of the Lord endure forever.

[ 16 : 00 ] Here he says, But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants, the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? Peter writes in his first letter, chapter 1, For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.

The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

The words of the Lord endure forever. You see, this is what was happening there in Israel with their fathers. They did not grasp the word.

They did not take hold of the word of the Lord. But God's plan and purpose, will not be frustrated. He will carry out what he has said in judgment and in mercy, because his word endureth forever.

Both national and personal repentance is important if we are going to experience God's blessing as a nation, as individuals, as a community.

[ 17 : 17 ] after his initial message of repentance, some say that there was a period of three and a half months.

Zechariah was given eight visions. Possibly they were given to him in one night. Now the first and eighth vision, which we have in chapter six, are remarkably similar to one another.

Now while each of these visions are worthy of study, nevertheless we are going to be selective on this occasion and we shall focus on chapter three, which contains the fourth vision, which Zechariah saw.

In this vision he saw Joshua, the high priest who had returned with himself and Cerebubal from captivity. But we read, and he showed me Joshua, the high priest's daddy before the angel of the Lord.

Now what do we know about Joshua? Well, we have recorded for us in the book of Ezra and chapter three that he along with Cerebubal built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings thereon as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.

[ 18 : 38 ] So Joshua came from the line of Aaron and he built the altar to renew the burnt offerings. He was a man who held a high office among the people as their representative before God.

He was a man who served God as the high priest. And here we are told that he stood before the angel of the Lord.

Now Old Testament scholars identify the angel of the Lord as the second person of the Trinity. For instance, in Exodus chapter 23 we read, Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

Beware of him and obey his voice. Provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him. God's name was in him.

in chapter 1 we are told the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees. The myrtle tree was a shrub that grew all over Israel and it became symbolic of Israel as a nation.

[ 19 : 53 ] It is symbolic of the fact of the Lord being among his covenant people. The Lord stood among the myrtle trees.

So here we find Joshua the high priest and he stood before the angel of the Lord. In other words, he stood before the second person of the Trinity. He stood before Jesus.

And what we have here in the scene he said before us is actually a courtroom sitting. But in this courtroom sitting beside the angel of the Lord, the second person of the Trinity, Jesus, and Joshua the high priest, we read that there is someone else also present.

And Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. Satan is there as well with the whole purpose to resist or to oppose Joshua.

In the book of Revelation and chapter 12, Satan is brought before us as the accuser of the brethren. Of course, there is the well-known instance brought before us of Job.

[ 21 : 04 ] And in chapter 1 and 2 of the book called after his name, where Satan appears before the Lord and makes his request for Job. Paul in Ephesians chapter 6 reminds us that our battle is spiritual.

He says, Peter writes in his first letter, chapter 5, Be sober, be vigilant because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.

So here we have Joshua, the high priest, standing before Jesus, but along with him is Satan, ready to resist or accuse him.

Now we shall leave verse 2 for a moment and go to verse 3. And there we read, Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and stood before the angel.

As he stood before Jesus, he is wearing filthy garments. And standing before Jesus with filthy garments, he must have felt a sense of guilt and a sense of shame.

[ 22 : 31 ] see what Spurgeon says, Truly dear friend, if Satan wants to accuse us, any page of our history, any hour of the day will furnish him with material for his charges.

If the old accuser wants reasons for accusation, he may find indeed as many as he will and continue to accuse us as long as ever he pleases. For we are all together as an unclean thing.

As he stands there to resist Joshua, as he stands there to accuse us, Satan has plenty of evidence to support his accusations against us.

He may be known as a liar from the beginning, but when it comes to accusing us, he has plenty of truth on his side. truth on his side.

When he comes to accuse us, it is said of Martin Luther that Satan appeared to him in a dream, reading a long scroll, and on the scroll was ridden all his many sins from his birth.

[ 23 : 57 ] And as Satan continued to read from the scroll, Luther's terror grew until he finally jumped up and cried, it is all true, Satan, and many more sins I have committed in my life, which are known to God only.

Joshua stood silent before the angel of the Lord. You know, at this point, the words of Romans chapter 3 comes to mind, where Paul speaks about the law and writes, Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and that all the world may become guilty before God.

God. All the accusations were true, and Joshua's mouth was stopped, and he stood guilty before the angel of the Lord.

The accusations were true, Joshua's mouth was stopped, and he stood guilty before Jesus. There is a sense in which this brings before us what will happen on that final day when we shall all appear before the judgment seat of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When the books are opened and the scroll is read, we shall stand silent and guilty before God. Zechariah is going to be given the answer to the great problem of mankind.

[ 25 : 33 ] And what is the great problem of mankind? Well, the problem is this, how can a defiled person, how can a sinner be made fit to appear in the presence of God, and much less to be priests into God, to serve God?

Joshua, the high priest, is before us in filthy garments. But we know from the book of Exodus that the priests had to be spotless and clean to enter God's presence and to serve God.

God. But here, in this narrative that is set before us, Zechariah is shown how this is possible.

You see, although Joshua has been silenced, there is one who speaks. And let us therefore return to verse 2 where we read, And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee.

Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? It may be true that we as sinners have nothing to say, but the angel of the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ takes up our defence.

[ 26 : 51 ] John in his first letter writes, My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, and he is a propitiation for our sins, and not for us only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

He says, The Lord rebuke thee, Yahweh rebuke thee, not because we are not guilty, not because we are innocent.

He gives us two reasons. The first reason, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee.

The Lord Jesus Christ rebukes Satan on the basis of God's election. Even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee.

God deals with sinners all out from his sovereign purpose and grace. It is not because we are worthy or have in any way earned God's mercy.

[ 28 : 12 ] It all comes to us from his sovereign purpose and grace. Moses reminded Israel of this, as we have it written in Deuteronomy chapter 7, where he says, For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God.

The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you nor chose you because you were more in number than any people.

For you are the fewest of all people. But because the Lord loved you and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Paul writing to the Ephesians writes Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ according to the foundation of the love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved in whom we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace in the same book in chapter 2 Paul writes among whom also we all had our conversation in time past in the lusts of our flesh fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind and where by nature the children of wrath the even as others but

God who is rich in mercy but God who is rich in mercy David Barton in his commentary says he chose you because he loved you and he loved you because he chose you yes it is all comes out from his sovereignty sovereign purpose and grace things Paul wrote to the church at Rome and said to them in chapter 8 of his letter if God before us who can be against us he that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all how shall he not with him also freely give us all things who shall lay charge to charge against God's elect who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect it is God that justifieth who is he that condemneth it is Christ that died yet rather that is risen again who is even at the right hand of

[ 31 : 11 ] God to make intercession for us oh he is there as our spokesperson he is there as our mediator he is there as our advocate no wonder the apostle goes on to say who shall separate us from the love of Christ shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword as it is written for thy sake we are killed all the day long we accounted as sheep for the slaughter naid all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us so there then we have given for us the first reason the first reason but there is another reason and the second reason is this for his rebuke is not this a bran plucked out of the fire and this is a picture that is true of every

Christian who has been saved they have been saved as burning sticks that has been snatched from the fire oh how frustrating this must have been for Satan after being successful in leading Israel into sin and into captivity the Lord has snatched them from the burning we have the same figure of speech used by Amos in chapter 4 verse 11 we read regarding Israel he were as a fire brand plucked out of the burning in the New Testament in the book of Jude he uses the same figure of speech in verse 9 of that book yet Michael the archangel when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses doth not bring against him railing accusation but said the Lord rebuke thee and Jude uses two other phrases in verse 23 which are similar to the words of

Zechariah for there Jude writes and others saved with fear pulling them out of the fire hating even the garment spotted by the flesh oh Satan accuses us every moment of the day but what a comfort it is for us to know that the Lord Jesus Christ takes up our defense as our advocate in the courts of heaven you know our hope rests on the unchanging God the Lord rebuke thee and he gives the two reasons the Lord rebuke thee oh Satan even the Lord hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee is not this a brand plucked out of the fire and what happens next is remarkable and he answered and speaking to those that stood before him saying take away the filthy garments from him and unto him he said behold

I have caused thy iniquity to pass from thee and I will clothe thee with change of raiment and I said let them set a fair mitre upon his head so they set a fair mitre upon his head and clothed him with garments and the angel of the Lord stood by this cannot be more there cannot be there cannot be more precious words there cannot be more precious actions there cannot be a more precious sight than what is unveiled for us here the filthy garments are taken away and he is robed with a change of garments and he is told I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee now obviously this does not give us a complete theology of redemption because there is no mention of blood nevertheless it does give us a picture of what happens in our justification the angel of the

Lord could say I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee because in the covenant of redemption that took place before the world was created Jesus had agreed to do this very thing taking his people's sins taking their filthy rags upon himself to what happens here is explained for us in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians chapter five for he he he he made him to be sin for us and you know sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him and exchange takes place our filthy rags imputed to him and his garment of righteousness imputed to us this is the reply of the Lord Jesus to Satan's accusations I am taking the filthy garments away and I'm going to give him a change of raiment I'm going to give him a change of garments the Lord Jesus takes out filthy rags they are imputed to him he takes them and he exchanges out filthy rags for a garment of righteousness which is imputed to us we have already referred to

[ 36 : 43 ] Martin Luther's dream when Satan read from the scroll all his many sins from his birth Luther's terrors grew until finally he jumped up and cried it is all true Satan and many more sins I have committed in my life which are known to God only but write this he says at the bottom of your list the blood of Jesus Christ God Son cleanses us from all sin Jesus said I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee but that was not enough our salvation does not end with our sins being forgiven we also need our righteousness to stand before God John Owen in his words on communion with God writes it is not enough to say that we are not guilty we must also be perfectly righteous the law must be fulfilled by perfect obedience if we would enter eternal life and this is found only in

Jesus his righteousness imputed to me so I am counted as having perfectly obeyed the law myself imputed righteousness what a garment woven by Jesus in his life in his death and resurrection Isaiah sang about this garment in chapter 61 he said I will gladly rejoice in the Lord my soul shall be joyful in my God for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation he has covered me with the robe of righteousness as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels what a picture we have sin removed and righteousness received sin removed and righteousness received now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and stood before the angel and he answered and spake unto those that stood before him and said take away the filthy garments from him and he said unto him behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee and thou shalt be clothed with change of raiment but then there was something else let them set a fair mitre upon his head so they set a fair mitre upon his head now what is the significance of this headpiece well to understand its significance we have to go back to

Exodus chapter 28 where we are given details regarding the dress of the high priest in Israel and there in verse 36 we read and I shall make a plate of pure gold and grave upon it like the engravings of a signet holiness to the Lord and I shall put it on a blue lace and that it may be upon the miter upon the forefront of the miter it shall be and it shall be upon Aaron's forehead that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts and it shall be always upon his forehead and that they may be accepted before the Lord you know as Christians we are priests unto God remember 1 Peter chapter 2 where he writes here as lively stones have built up a spiritual house and holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God by Jesus Christ in

Revelation chapter 1 we read unto whom that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and have made us kings and priests unto God and his father and you know God affixes this plate to us holiness to the Lord he affixes holiness to the Lord to his priests to indicate that we are called to lead a new life we're called to lead a holy life then we read and the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua saying thus saith the Lord of hosts if thou wilt walk in my ways and if thou wilt keep my charge then thou shalt also judge my house and shall also keep my coats and I will give thee places to walk among those that stand by we have we have often spoken of of that justification and sanctification that they cannot be separated and that is what we have here now justification is an act of



God's free grace wherein he pardoneth all our sins and accepted us as righteous in his sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone that is how the Christian life begins but how does the Christian life proceed well there we have it sanctification is the work of God's free grace whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die into sin and live into righteousness there can be no justification without sanctification Jesus I mean rather Joshua stood still in the matter of his justification it was an act done to him but he is active in regards to his sanctification and is striving against sin and contending for holiness for sanctification it's not an act it is a work we are all to stand still in the matter of our justification and it's all an act it is something that is done to us but we have to be active in regards to our sanctification because we have to be active in striving against sin and contending for righteousness for holiness sanctification is a work it is a work and we have to be active in striving against sin and contending for holiness we have to remember the mighty that is upon our forehead holiness to the

[ 43 : 05 ] Lord but this vision goes on hear now oh Joshua the high priest thou and thy fellows that are before thee for they had men wandered at for behold I will bring forth my servant a branch perhaps these words will be better in the students we have it in the ESV but it says hear now oh 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 they are men wanted that they are men who are a sign they are told that there were signs of something that was yet to come from God Joshua stood cleansed and called to obedience but all this was a sign that spoke of that which was beyond itself of something that was yet to come now we know that here we have a messianic promise and we see two titles used here my servant and the branch now my servant is the most frequently used title for the coming of

Jesus Christ behold I will bring forth my servant between Isaiah 41 and 53 it is used numerous times of Jesus Christ and then we have this other title the branch the branch here there are another four significant places where this title is given to Jesus Christ in Jeremiah chapter 23 we are told behold the days come saith the Lord that I will raise unto David a righteous branch and a king shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth in chapter 6 of this very prophecy of Zechariah we are told thus speaketh the Lord of hosts behold the man whose name is the branch and he shall grow about of his place and he shall build the temple of the Lord Isaiah chapter 4 there we read in that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious and chapter 11 of that very self same prophecy we read and there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of

Jesse and a branch shall grow out of his throats now another title that is given here to Jesus is before behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua upon one stone shall be seven eyes behold I will engrave the grieving thereof saith the Lord of those and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day well the stone must be the same stone that Isaiah spoke of in chapter 28 where he says behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone a tried stone a precious corner stone a sure foundation he that believe shall not make haste also in Psalm 118 we have these words the stone which the builders refused has become the head stone of the corner that stone is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ the stone has seven eyes in the book of Revelation chapter 5 the lamb on the throne which is a reference to the

Lord Jesus Christ is said and I beheld and in the midst of the throne and the four beasts and in the midst of the elders stood as lamb as it had been slain having seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God sent forth unto all the earth now the number seven the Bible is symbolic of completeness or perfection the seven spirits of God refers to the perfect and all seeing spirit coming upon Jesus at his baptism the Lord also says that he will engrave an inscription on the stone and we know that the names of the tribes of Israel were engraved on the onyx stones upon the shoulders of the high priests for we read that they were to put the two stones upon the shoulders of the aphod for stones of a memorial and to the children of

Israel before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial the high priest bare the names of the tribes of Israel before the Lord on the prophecy of Isaiah we have the Lord promising that he will always remember his covenant people can a woman forget her second child that she could not have compassion on the son of her womb yet they may forget yet will I not forget thee behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands thy walls are continually before me and then we have the chapter ending with two great blessings that will result in the sending his servant who is the branch and the stone he says and will remove and shall he call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree in the days of Zechariah both these blessings belong to the future but we are looking at them from a different era and we know that one of them has been completely fulfilled and the other still to be fulfilled just as the day of atonement in

[ 48 : 40 ] Israel was on a single day when Jesus died upon the cross of Golgotha on that day it could be said I will remove the iniquity of the land in one day but the other blessing one of rest and tranquility shall you call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree the prophet Michael speaks of a day when they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks nation shall not lift up a sword against nation neither shall they learn war anymore but they shall set every man under his vine and under his fig tree and none shall make them afraid for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken it this is obviously yet to be fulfilled and shall be on the return of our Lord Jesus Christ as to bear the sins of money and unto whom that lukewarm shall appear the second time without sin into salvation the day the words of

Isaiah chapter 11 will be fully realised the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid and the cow and the young lion and the fatling together and a little child shall lead them well dear friends time is gone but how do you stand before God today are you still clothed in your filthy rags or has your raiment been changed by Christ's righteousness been imputed to you does the blessings of rest and tranquillity that still awaits the child of God do they belong to you may the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray eternal and ever blessed Lord we come before thee and we acknowledge that by nature we are clothed with filthy rags that we stand guilty before thee that we sin in thought and word and in deed but blessed be thy name that thou art a gracious

God that thou art a God who is full of mercy that thou art a God who is full of grace and we give thanks for the provision that thou hast made for us through thy son that our filthy rags can be taken away and that we can be roamed with the righteousness that thy son has purchased for his people being imputed to us by faith so that we can be reconciled to our God that we can have a place of standing before thee and we give thee thanks for the great promise of that great blessing of rest and tranquillity that still awaits thy people oh Lord we pray that we may indeed today rejoice in thy salvation we pray that thou would continue with us during the day and now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the

Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen