

Zechariah 3:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes—Mysterious symbolism debated by scholars. The eben (אֶבֶן, 'stone') laid before the high priest may be:

1. a foundation stone for the temple (connecting to 4:7-10)
2. the high priest's breastplate stone; or
3. most likely, a messianic symbol.

The 'seven eyes' (shiv'āh 'ēynayim, שִׁבְעָה עֵינַיִם) represent complete divine knowledge and providential oversight (Revelation 5:6 identifies them as 'the seven Spirits of God'). The stone simultaneously represents Christ (the foundation stone, Isaiah 28:16; 1 Peter 2:6) and God's omniscient watch over His redemptive purposes.

Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day—Mephattēach pittūchāh (מִפְתַּח פִּתּוּחָהּ, 'I will engrave its engraving') depicts God carving an inscription on the stone—perhaps like the 'HOLINESS TO THE LORD' plate (Exodus 28:36) or the law written on stone tablets, but here accomplished by God Himself. The promise **I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day** points to decisive atonement. Beyōm echād (בְּיוֹם אֶחָד, 'in one day') prophesies Christ's crucifixion—

the day when 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself' (2 Corinthians 5:19). On one Friday afternoon, the guilt of 'that land' (Israel) and the world was borne by the stone the builders rejected (Psalm 118:22; Acts 4:11).

Historical Context

The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) occurred yearly (Leviticus 16), but this prophecy promises permanent, once-for-all atonement 'in one day.' Hebrews 9:12, 26 declares that Christ 'by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.' The 'one day' of Zechariah 3:9 is the 'one sacrifice for sins forever' of Hebrews 10:12.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does the 'stone with seven eyes' combine Christ's role as foundation with God's omniscient governance?
2. Why is the 'one day' removal of iniquity so significant compared to annual sacrifices?
3. What does God 'engraving the stone' Himself (not human engraving) reveal about salvation's source?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	הִנֵּה	אֶבֶן	אֲשֶׁר	נָתַתִּי	לִפְנֵי	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
H3588	H2009	For behold the stone	H834	that I have laid	before	Joshua
		H68		H5414	H6440	H3091
עַל	אֶבֶן	אֶחָד:	שִׁבְעָה	עֵינֵי	יְהוָה	
H5921	For behold the stone	in one	shall be seven	eyes		H2005
	H68	H259	H7651	H5869		
מִפֶּתַח	פֶּתַח	נֹאם	יְהוָה	צָבָא	וְתֵי	
behold I will engrave	the graving	thereof saith	the LORD	of hosts		
H6605	H6603	H5002	H3068	H6635		
וּמִשְׁתֵּי	אֶת	עוֹן	הָאָרֶץ	הַיָּהוָה	בֵּי יוֹם	אֶחָד:
and I will remove	H853	the iniquity	of that land	H1931	day	in one
H4185		H5771	H776		H3117	H259

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 4:10 (References Lord): For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

Jeremiah 50:20 (Sin): In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

Isaiah 28:16 (References Lord): Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

Revelation 5:6 (Parallel theme): And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Psalms 118:22 (Parallel theme): The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.

Jeremiah 31:34 (Sin): And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Romans 9:33 (Parallel theme): As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Hebrews 7:27 (Sin): Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

2 Corinthians 1:22 (Parallel theme): Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

2 Timothy 2:19 (Sin): Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.