

“The Priest In Dirty Clothes”

Zechariah 3:1-10

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Teaching Aim: To realize the story of Joshua the high priest (dressed in dirty clothes) is no ordinary story; it is a picture of our salvation and our preparation for future priesthood! To understand this chapter not only addresses the need for Joshua and the Jews to be cleansed from sin by God, but it points to our need as well today. To grasp the importance of the double imputation that takes place by grace through faith in Jesus Christ at our salvation!

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: Satan accuses Joshua the high priest of sin in the presence of the Angel of the LORD (Zech. 3:1-3)

1. What biblical character is the main focus of **verse 1**? What was the significance of his priestly position? Who brought an accusation against him? What is the meaning of the name “*Satan*”? (See Commentaries) Who appears to be serving as the presiding Judge in this scene from a heavenly courtroom?
2. Jesus proclaimed, “*Satan is a liar and the father of lies.*” (See **John 8:44**) How did Joshua respond to Satan’s truthful accusation against him (**vs. 1**)? Why do you think Satan decided to speak the truth here? Have you ever noticed how quick the enemy is quick to exploit your sins when you stumble and sin? Why do you think Satan attacks us in this way? How can we tell the difference between the condemnation of Satan and the conviction of the Holy Spirit? (See **1 Pet. 5:8-9**)
3. Who rebukes Satan in **verse 2**? Is there any significance to the LORD rebuking Satan twice? Why do you think Joshua the high priest remained silent while Satan made accusations against him? According to **Jude 9**, did the archangel Michael bring a slanderous accusation against Satan when he was disputing with him over the body of Moses? Should we bring slanderous accusations against Satan today? Why or why not?
4. According to **Jude 9** and **Zech. 3:2**, how did both Michael the archangel and the Angel of the LORD respond to the attacks from Satan? If Michael the archangel and the Angel of the LORD responded in this way, why do you think so many Christians do just the opposite today and rebuke Satan themselves? Is it foolish for a Christian to do this? Why or why not?

5. What two things can we learn about Jerusalem and the Jewish people from **verse 2b**? What did Zechariah mean when he said, *“Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?”* (See Commentaries) Why did the Jewish people have to suffer through 70 years of the Babylonian Captivity? Have you ever had to pay for the consequences of a sin that you’ve committed? Have you ever had to walk through the consequences because of a sin a family member or friend has committed? What did you learn from this experience?

6. What can we learn about the spiritual state of Joshua the high priest from **verse 3**? What was the significance of *“The Day of Atonement”* to the Jews? (See **Lev. 16:1-10**) Why was Joshua’s defilement such a big problem for the Jews? What was the penalty under Old Testament law for an unclean priest performing his duties improperly? (See **Exod. 28:39-43; 30:17-21; Lev. 10**)

Part II: God replaces Joshua’s dirty robe with a clean one and restores him to his priestly ministry (Zech. 3:4-7)

1. On the surface, it seemed like Satan had a slam dunk case on Joshua; one that should have brought the high priest the death penalty. How did God’s grace change everything (**vs. 4**)? What two transactions took place in **verse 4**? Who provided the needed changes, the LORD or Joshua? Why? (See **Eph. 2:8-10**)

2. In what way is **verse 4** a picture of our salvation today? (See **Isa. 61:10; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 4:22-24; Rev. 19:7-8**) What is the theological meaning of the word *“imputation?”* (Hint: Google it!) Why is it essential for every born-again Christian to go through a double imputation? What two imputations must take place in order for a person to be saved today?

3. What did Zechariah remind the LORD of in **verse 5**? Why do you think the LORD waited until Zechariah said something? Is there any symbolic significance to Joshua having a clean turban placed upon his head? Do you still struggle in your own mind with sinful thoughts? According to **Exod. 28:36** and **Exod. 39:30**, what was written on the high priest’s turban? How should statement this be a reflection of our own minds and thoughts today?

4. What does the Angel of the LORD warn Joshua about in **verses 6-7**? What is promised if Joshua is faithful to his calling? What is the implication if he is not? How do **verses 4-7** picture the restoration of Joshua's ministry? Why is it so important for us to be pure today as we serve the LORD? Is there a particular sin in your life that you struggle with? (See **1 John 1:9**) What are some steps you can take to overcome your struggle with this sin?

Part III: The prophesied coming of Jesus Christ and future millennium (Zech. 3:8-10)

1. What unusual promise is given to Joshua in **verse 8**? Who does this promise ultimately point towards? In what way was Joshua and his companions "*a wondrous sign*?" How did this sign relate to the Babylonian captivity? How does this sign also point toward future followers of Jesus Christ? (See **1 Pet. 2:9**)

2. What three titles are found for the Messiah in **verses 8 & 9**? How does the title, "*My Servant*" specifically relate to Jesus Christ? (See **Isa. 42:1-7**) What were the Jews looking for in their Messiah? What did they miss about this Servant? (See **Isa. 53**)

3. What special significance is there in the Messiah being portrayed as "*the Branch*" (**vs. 8**)? (See **Isa. 11:1-5; Jer. 23:5-6**) How does this Branch relate to Jesse and to his son King David? (See **2 Sam. 7:12-14a**) How does this Branch ultimately relate to Jesus?

4. What is the third title used for the Messiah (**vs. 9**)? What unusual feature does this stone have according to Zechariah? What is the significance of the "*seven eyes*?" How does this feature relate to the coming Messiah? (See Commentaries)

5. What are some of the ways that we see Christ portrayed as a stone in Scripture (**vs. 9**)? (See **Psa. 118:22-23; Matt. 21:42; Isa. 8:14; Rom. 9:32-33; 1 Pet. 2:7-8; Exod. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; Dan. 2:34-35**) What do you see as the significance of each metaphor?

6. The LORD prophesied in **verse 9b** that He would remove the iniquity of the land in “*one day*.” Do you think the LORD is referring to “*Good Friday*” or to “*the Day of the LORD*” at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ? Why?
7. What does the LORD indicate will happen “*in that day*” (**vs. 10**)? What specific age is **verse 10** symbolic of? In light of **verse 10**, what appears to be the correct answer to question #6 of Part III?
8. According to **Rom. 5:1**, what is the only way that a person will ever experience peace with God? Have you experienced this peace yet? If not, why not receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord in prayer right now?
9. What comforting truth do we learn from **Rom. 8:1**? What has impacted you the most about our study through **Zechariah chapter 3**?

MINER’S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- Satan (the father of lies) is quick to speak the truth when he knows that we are guilty of sin; it is Satan’s intent to injure and destroy God’s people any way he can.
- The dirty clothes of the high priest not only represented Joshua’s sins, but also the sins of God’s people. According to the imagery here, Joshua was covered in human excrement, he was defiled and completely unfit for priestly ministry; so are we before coming to Christ.
- Satan had what appeared to be a slam dunk case against Joshua; that is until God’s grace came into the picture.
- Only God can remove our sin covered clothes and replace them with the clean and holy robes of Jesus Christ.
- A double imputation is needed for our salvation: 1) Our sins are transferred to Christ on the cross and paid for in their entirety: past, present and future; and 2) The righteousness of Jesus Christ is transferred to our account; we are then covered by the righteousness of Christ and saved.
- During His first advent Jesus lived a sinless life and died as a substitute on the cross for our sins. At His second advent, Jesus will usher in an era of peace and tranquility for believers like we have never experienced before; this era will be known as the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

