



MONDAY 09 MAY 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 3:1-6

Plug In...

In the Old Testament, Satan is named only three times (prologue of Job; 1 Chronicles 21:1; and here in Zechariah). Each time Satan is named it is in the context of tempting a person or accusing a person of sin; even accusing God of not acting righteously. Here, Satan seems to point out to God that Joshua is unfit to be High Priest. Should we read Leviticus 22:3 it would seem on this matter Satan is telling the truth. But, the LORD responds with a key fact that Satan has conveniently forgotten in his prosecution: the LORD has *chosen* Jerusalem (and by implication it's High Priest). Deliberately telling only half the picture is lying (John 8:44).

Chew It Over...

It is true many Christians close to us let us down with their mistakes and sin. There will be many places to easily put the boot in. It is common to bag the failings of our church too. While avoiding pretending sin is not horrible sin, we need to evaluate if we have conveniently forgotten that fact that a fellow flawed brother or sister in Christ is *chosen*. This can be an inconvenient truth if our heart goal is to clock someone into the docks. Review where your heart might be at with regards to this. Can you pinpoint where you have recently engaged in tactics amongst Christians where the goal was to kick someone's character out from beneath them.

Prayer Suggestion

Repent before God for the moments where we've been aligned with Satan's strategy. Ask the Lord to remind you that this fellow person is chosen in Christ. Ask the Lord to give you a heart that gets excited like Zechariah does (v.6) at the truth the gospel brings; that someone can be re-clothed in glory.



The Lakes

TUESDAY 10 MAY 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 3:1-3 & John 8:30-38

Plug In...

Listen to the intensity of the LORD's rebuke of Satan. Twice Satan is told "The LORD rebuke you". In this court room scene, God is telling Satan to stand down. Again, Satan's prosecutorial case falls to bits as the LORD submits exhibit-A: a burning stick snatched from the fire. Concomitant to the evidence that Joshua is filthy is the evidence that God has snatched this person from their former state. Insofar that the High Priest represents the remnant of Israel, Israel has been snatched from their former state.

Chew It Over...

We reflected yesterday that we can easily tell a one-sided story about fellow Christians and our church. One-sided when we join Satan in pointing out to people or those around them the flaws; their sins. Just as damaging is self-speak where we constantly focus on the accusations we have against ourselves. Is there guilt and shame in your life where you've begun to believe that God couldn't love you, or feel you're too filthy to go on? Come back and understand the gospel lesson given in Zechariah – Joshua was so filthy he could do nothing to save himself but God snatched him from the fire. Should you believe that you are too filthy for God to snatch you too, then you've failed to grasp the enormity of Jesus' work on the cross! Don't fall for Satan's half-truth LIES. God has *chosen* you.

Prayer Suggestion

Rejoice and offer praise to the Lord Jesus as you rediscover again the enormity of the gospel. Ask God to remind you of this whenever you are overcome by shame and guilt. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring you before someone that needs to discover this relief too.



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WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 3:3-7 & Ephesians 4:17-32

Plug In...

The Old Testament reflects a common ancient symbolism embedded in the idea of new clothing – new clothing indicates a change in status. You may recall Joseph receiving a coloured coat from his father, therefore being marked as extra special. Kings and priests are given beautiful clothes to mark out their roles (which is picked up here in Zechariah 3). Even the first humans after they sin, are found naked and clothed by God (Genesis 3:21). God clothes Adam & Eve after the curses, remarkably giving them a change in status [this is the first glimmers of the resurrection concept in the Bible]. Joshua as High Priest has been plucked from the fire and re-clothed – He along with the people of Israel he represents have experienced a resurrection from exile. Now Joshua (and the Jews) must respond to God's act of grace and walk in his ways (v.7).

Chew It Over...

This clothing imagery is used by Paul to describe the resurrection life that has started for us as we are now clothed in Christ. Look at the new wardrobe given to us in Ephesians 4:17-32. Get dressed into that gear today!

Prayer Suggestion

We must ask God for the Spirit's power to enable us to walk and keep walking in these new clothes. Pray for the continued renewing of our minds (Eph. 4:23).



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THURSDAY 12 MAY 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 3:6-7 & Ephesians 4:1-16

Plug In...

The key to understanding this whole scene is found in chapter 3:4. "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put fine garments on you". There is nothing Joshua could have done to fix up his state; there was nothing Israel could do to fix up their state. God's grace and mercy is what causes Him to do something. Notice God is the one that takes away Joshua/Israel's sin. He does this not just so Joshua can feel good but so He is fit and able to serve God (v.7).

Chew It Over...

Have you grasped that you were saved to serve God? The Bible does use the imagery of getting out of jail or freedom to explain release from sin, but it uses the same imagery to say we are now captured for the Lord; slaves and servants of Christ. Allow the passage of Zechariah 3 with Joshua's release and transformation to capture for you the privilege it is now to serve God. Of course if you're on a church roster that counts as serving, but get more clarity that on how your heart is captured by thinking through ways you can serve God that cannot be put orientated around a church roster. Inject that area today with servant-hearted clothing.

Prayer Suggestion

Ask that the Lord will make clear the definite gifts he has given to you in grace. Pray that you will use those to serve him and his people. Ask that he may open our eyes each day to how we can be building others up into maturity in Christ.



The Lakes

FRIDAY 13 MAY 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah 3:8-10 & Isaiah 11

Plug In...

We've just witnessed the vision of Joshua reinstated as High Priest. The big problem the Jews had coming back from exile was that they had no temple nor a high priest clean enough to intercede for them. The vision shows God giving the Jews a high priest and priesthood – He has cleansed them. We learn that this reinstatement of the priesthood is a sign of the future servant called 'the Branch'.

A brief background to The Branch. Ever since the Fall, God has promised a royal seed that will save people. God has called on people to trust Him in that promised deliverer. In 2 Samuel 7, God promises that this royal deliverer will be from the line of David. Throughout Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel a 'branch' is taken up as a metaphor for King David's line being cut down like a tree, but then new growth shoots forth (a fresh branch or shoot) and the promises of a saviour from the line of David continue.

Here, God first moves to reinstall the temple and priesthood. That act of returning and restoring is a sign that what was once cut down will be re-grown. People in Zechariah's day would have reignited hopes that following soon is the promise of a Davidic king (branch) who will save them and the world.

Chew It Over...

This promise to believe in helpfully shows us that the whole message of the Bible is one of faith. With the fact of our sin, we are called to trust in the God who says He will save. God gives us all these helps along the way to bolster our faith. As Christians we see the Davidic ruler Jesus. The evidence is reliable and verifiable that Jesus was cut down and then shot up again – Jesus died and rose again. With all that has taken place in past, recorded in the Old Testament, God has given to us to bolster our faith, to keep us persevering as we wait for what is still to follow. We look forward to the new heaven and the new earth; the resurrection of our bodies.

Prayer Suggestion

Pray that we may keep our eyes on Jesus. Ask the Lord to help our community at The Lakes in not growing weary nor losing heart. Pray we might see the signs throughout the past that remind us God is a God of promise and does fulfil each and every one of His words to us.



The Lakes

WEEKEND 14-15 MAY 2016

SERIES: ZECHARIAH

Read: Zechariah chapters 9-12

Plug In...

Continue this weekend to take opportunity to read more broadly Zechariah. While there are many details in this book, by reading in a way that aims for the big picture (the flow, the overall impression) greatly helps us grasp the message. Many break the entire book into two major sections (chaps. 1-8, then chaps. 9-12). After reading, see if you can summarise in a sentence the main point of chapters 9-12.

Prayer Suggestion

Thank God for His word to us. Thank Him for the ready access He has given us. Thank Him for the opportunities each day provided where we can listen to and talk to the God of the universe.