

ZECHARIAH ... and his comprehensive picture of the Gospel  
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(ZECHARIAH 3:1-8)

Zechariah looked into heaven, and the story of his vision is recorded in the third chapter of his prophetic writings. "And he shewed 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?" This is a wonderful picture of the inexhaustible riches of grace.

#### Joshua Cleansed

" Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those who 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." No sin could be permitted to remain in the presence of God ; thus cleansing was the first requirement of the sinner. The very stain of sin had to be removed before man could enjoy fellowship with God. Every Israelite was commanded to take an offering to the priest ; and it was a basic feature in Israel's theology that apart from sacrifice, pardon was unprocurable. John the Baptist indicated that these types were fulfilled in Christ ; that He would be the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. Thus God in Christ would be able to say to a vast host of people, " Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee."

#### Joshua Clothed

" And I will clothe thee with a change of raiment." The angel of the Lord stood by as the dilapidated clothing was removed from the willing priest ; he smiled as the new garments were accepted by the wondering man. He was gratified indeed when the once shabby Joshua stood resplendent and ready for his dignified office. A similar scene was witnessed in Eden when God removed the unsatisfactory clothing made by Eve, and provided new garments of salvation. Another illustration may be found in the Gospels, for when the people of Gadara came out to see what had transpired among the swineherds, " they found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind " (Luke 8: 35). Probably Christ had presented the garments to a man, who was now overjoyed and willing to accept them. To Joshua and many others the Lord says, " I will clothe thee with change of raiment."

#### Joshua Crowned

" 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." The mitre suggests priesthood -1 the mitre set on the head suggests a crown-a royal priesthood. We are reminded of the song of the redeemed in heaven: " And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy ... for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests "-a kingdom of priests (Rev. 5: 9, 10). Had Paul the same thought in mind when he wrote, "... God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ ... and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus " (Eph. 2: 4-6)?

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In union with a transcendent Lord, we are enthroned in  
heavenly places, where our ministry of intercession can be  
the exercise of a royal priesthood.

#### Joshua Commissioned

" 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 shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee  
places to walk among these that stand by. Hear now, O  
Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before  
thee . . . behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch."  
This was God's great commission given to His child. Until  
the Branch appeared, the faithful had to continue in holy  
office. This ministry would be a means of grace to Israel,  
and an example to fellow men. We are reminded of the  
commission given to us, "Occupy till I come." Zechariah's  
vision embodies the main features of God's salvation. All  
ministers should emulate this example. We must stand in  
the holy place before we stand in the pulpit, for only thus  
can we efficiently present the amazing wonder of our super-  
lative message.

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