

**(Zech. 3:1)** - Zechariah's prophecy was God's Word to the people not to look to themselves for salvation, but look to Christ, the promised Messiah, Who would come and redeem the elect of God, both Jew and Gentile (*Zech. 13:1*). This is stated in visions that God gave to the prophet. One of these visions involves Joshua, the high priest, standing before the LORD being judged for his sins. This is a vision of the power of God in the salvation of sinners by His grace in the Lord Jesus Christ. In this vision, Joshua the high priest stands before the Angel of the LORD. As the high priest of Israel, Joshua is a type of Christ Who is the eternal high priest of SPIRITUAL Israel (*Heb. 2:17; 4:14-16; 7:26; 8:1*). The Angel of the LORD is Christ Himself as the Advocate of His people (*1 John 2:1-2*). Satan stands at His right hand to "resist" (accuse) Joshua. What is Satan's accusation against Joshua and, in essence, the people whom Joshua represents? It is that they are all sinners who deserve to be put to death and condemned.

**(Zech. 3:2)** - Joshua remains silent (*Rom. 3:19-20*), but he has an Advocate - Jesus Christ the Righteous. The LORD here is Jehovah (God our Savior). This is the God of the covenant of grace Who determined to save His people through Christ upon Whom all conditions of salvation were placed. And Christ raises two points of Gospel truth to rebuke Satan: (1) "*The LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee*" - This speaks of God's sovereign, electing grace wherein, before the foundation of the world, God chose a people to save in Christ (*Eph. 1:3-6; 2 Tim. 1:8-9*). (2) "*Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*" - This speaks of the great redemption Christ accomplished on the cross when He went under the fiery wrath of God and redeemed His people, Jew and Gentile, from their sins (*Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:18-21; Rev. 5:9*).

**(Zech. 3:3)** - "*Filthy garments*" is a metaphor for the sin of all people by nature as fallen in Adam and as born spiritually dead and depraved. "*Filthy*" is most disgusting - "excrement covered." Man's best before God is as a filthy garment (*Isa. 64:6; Luke 16:15; Php. 3:7-9*). Being "*CLOTHED*" with "*filthy garments*" is a metaphor, not just for the sins of God's people, but for their sins IMPUTED (charged) to Christ as their Surety. Remember, Joshua stands here as the representative of Israel. Before the world began, God chose His beloved Son to be the Representative and Surety of His chosen people, placing all responsibility for their salvation upon Him (*Isa. 9:6-7; 22:21-22*). Christ knew no sin in Himself, but He was "made sin for us that we would be made the righteousness of God IN HIM" (*2 Cor. 5:19-21*).

What a marvelous truth is taught here in this courtroom scene showing how salvation is first and foremost a legal matter. God must be just in all His dealings, including salvation, with sinful men. His holiness, righteousness, and justice must be honored. This is the heart of the Gospel - how God can be just and still justify the ungodly (*Job 9:2; 25:4-6; Rom. 4:1-8*). This is what the temple in Jerusalem was all about - Christ dying on the cross for the sins of His sheep imputed to Him, and His accomplishment of their redemption by His blood, the establishment of righteousness by which God has justified them all and from which He gives them spiritual life in the new birth.

**(Zech. 3:4)** - "*Take away the filthy garments from him*" - This describes the successful work of Christ as Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of God's elect. He paid their debt in full with the price of His blood! He satisfied God's justice and purged their sins away (*Heb. 1:3; 10:14*). "*Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee*" - This is God's work, not man's. This is not a potential cleansing (waiting on a response from the sinner) but actual cleansing - clearly the sovereign work of God. God will not and cannot charge their sins and iniquities to them because they were all charged to Christ Who purged them away by His obedience unto death (*Rom. 8:33-34*). "*I will clothe thee with change of raiment*" - In His obedience unto death,

Christ worked out a perfect righteousness which God has imputed to all of His people. They stand before Him forgiven of all their sins by the blood of Christ and declared righteous in His sight by Christ's righteousness imputed to them. This righteousness imputed to us is declared under the metaphor of wearing a garment (*Isa. 61:10-11; Matt. 22:11-12; Rev. 19:7-8*). This was, and is, a legal matter in the court of God's justice, and it cannot be reversed!

**(Zech. 3:5)** - Those who argue against imputed righteousness claiming that salvation is "more than a legal matter" have no valid argument. Salvation IS more than a legal matter, but our justification before God is totally a legal matter. Salvation does not stop with the legal issues. It also provides spiritual life for God's people whereby they believe in Christ, repent of dead works and idolatry, and persevere in faith unto glory. Christ's righteousness imputed to us is not only the ground of our justification; it is also the power from which the Holy Spirit gives us spiritual life, faith, repentance, and perseverance by the new birth (*John 12:32-33; 16:7-11; 17:1-4; Rom. 8:10; Gal. 3:26-29*).

The "fair mitre" is a pure turban or diadem, which was part of the high priest's garments. It had a gold plate inscribed with the phrase "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" (*Exodus 28:36-38*). This indicates how the Holy Spirit brings us to a saving knowledge of Christ as the Lord our Righteousness (*Rom. 1:16-17; 10:4-10*). "Clothed him with garments" refers to the priestly robes that picture the garments of Christ's righteousness imputed and all blessings of salvation (*Isa. 61:10*). The Gospel truth of being clothed by God in righteousness runs from *Genesis (Gen. 3:7,21)* to *Revelation (Rev. 7:13-14)*.

**(Zech. 3:6-7)** - The Angel of the LORD admonished Joshua to walk in God's ways and keep His requirements by looking to and following Christ (*Heb. 12:2*). This is all regulated by the Gospel promise and commands to walk having our hearts established with grace, knowing that we are safe and secure in Christ (*Rom. 8:1,33-34*). Joshua, as all believers, would then be able to discern God's family and continually come to the throne of grace boldly and freely through Christ (*Heb. 4:14-16; 10:19-22*).

**(Zech. 3:8)** - This shows how the high priests were types of Christ. "Men wondered at" means "men of type" or "of a sign." They all represented someone greater than themselves, and this was Christ - God's "Servant the Branch" (*Zech. 6:12; Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; 33:15*). It is an amazing act of God's providence and power that in spite of their captivity, He would not let this earthly priesthood die until Messiah would come. When Christ finished His work that priesthood was abolished forever (*Heb. 7:11ff.; 9:1ff.*).

**(Zech. 3:9)** - Messiah the Branch is also "the stone" set before Joshua (*Dan. 2:34-35*). Christ is the foundation and cornerstone, the Rock of the church (*1 Cor. 3:10-11; 1 Pet. 2:6-8*). "Seven eyes" is Christ as the all-seeing Foundation Stone. Like the high priests of old, the names of God's elect are engraved upon His shoulders (i.e. their salvation conditioned upon Him alone) and His breast (His heart as He loves them with a perfect love) (*Exod. 28:9-12,21*). "And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day" - This is the great day when Christ purged our sins away by His death on the cross as Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of His people (*Heb. 10:10-14*).

**(3:10)** - This was a symbolic reference to Israel under the peaceful and prosperous reign of Solomon (*1 Kings 4:20-25; Micah 4:4*). But this is mainly a prophecy of Christ and the rest, peace, and prosperity of the kingdom of God (Spiritual Israel) under His reign (*Matt. 11:28; Heb. 4:9-11*).