

Lesson Four: The Fourth Night Vision

Joshua's Vindication, Zech.3:1-10

A New Concern: the Grace Question!! The question which lies at the heart of this next vision has to do with the worthiness of the people to be God's people. The nation had sinned against God and faced his wrath as he sent them into exile. Now God was restoring his covenant with them, but they had not morally changed. They were still dressed in the filthy clothing of sin. How could they hope to stand in God's good graces each day, a holy God facing a sinful people? While the topic focuses on the leader of the temple, in a wider sense it involves questions that have to do with the community and its relationship with God.

3:1 *Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him.*

1. This night vision pictures a huge spiritual meeting in heaven. Who are the three participants in this meeting?

3:2 *The Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?"*

2. What was Satan's purpose in attending this meeting?
3. How did God react to Satan's accusations?
4. Explain how Joshua, the high priest who stands before God representing the exiles, can be described spiritually as a "burning stick snatched from the fire."

3:3,4 *Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. ⁴ The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you."*

5. Spiritually speaking, what do the dirty cloths of the high priest represent and what do the rich clothes represent, both in the days of Zechariah and in our day?

3:5 *Then I said, "Put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the Lord stood by.*

6. Who is speaking with this verse and what does the "clean turban" indicate?.

The Third Oracle: Zech. 3:6-10

Introduction: *having assured Joshua and the exiles that God has cleansed his people from their sins, and they are acceptable to him, God now presents a third oracle explaining how God can bring this about.*

3:6,7 *The angel of the Lord gave this charge to Joshua: ⁷ “This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here.*

7. Having through grace reestablished his ancient covenant with the exiles, what are the spiritual requirements God expects going forward for his people and those who lead them?

3:8 *“Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch.*

8. The vision now points to the future fulfillment of God’s plan for all mankind. Who is God going to send to bring about this act of grace for all?

3:9 *See, the stone I have set in front of Joshua! There are seven eyes on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.*

9. Continuing to describe how God could establish grace for his sinful people, explain how God with the “stone” will “remove the sin ... in a single day.”

3:10 *“In that day each of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and fig tree,’ declares the Lord Almighty.”*

10. That “stone” brings about a complete change to the lives of God’s people. What invitation can God’s people steeped in grace now offer to the world around them?

Spiritual Application:

11. Explain the “grace principle” by which God is able to “reconcile the world unto himself.”