

# Joshua and the Adversary

## Cosmic Controversy Series: Part 9

### Study Guide

– Pastor Michael Oxentenکو

## I. JOSHUA, THE HIGH PRIEST

### Daniel 9:11

*All Israel has transgressed thy law and turned aside, refusing to obey thy voice. And the curse and oath which are written in the law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him.*

### Zechariah 3:1, 3

*<sup>1</sup> Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. <sup>3</sup> Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments.*

### Joshua 5:13

*When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man stood before him with his drawn sword in his hand; and Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?”*

### Matthew 1:21

*“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”*

### Hebrews 4:8

*For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.*

### **A. Joshua, the High Priest Without a Prayer**

1. Joshua was a high priest without a temple – a minister without a church. He was like so many people of his day who had endured the long captivity in Babylon.

2. There was no mystery why Israel went into Babylonian captivity. Daniel said they had sinned (Daniel 9:11).
3. Joshua was the man who was supposed to pray for his people and confess sin. It was his job to take the incense and stand before God and pray away the problem, but he could not. He was a man who could not open the door that sin had shut.
4. In the context of Zechariah 3:1, Joshua the high priest was not as bold as the Joshua who conquered the promised land and approached the Angel of the LORD with a drawn sword in his hand (Joshua 5:13). Instead, this Joshua stood before the Angel of the LORD speechless. He was a priest who could not pray because he was keenly aware of his own sin and unworthiness before a holy God.
5. Joshua the high priest carried the name that Jesus would receive centuries later. The name Joshua is the Hebrew version of the name Jesus (Matthew 1:21; Hebrews 4:8, KJV).
6. Joshua who led Israel to the Promised Land was a link to the final Joshua, Jesus, who was to come and lead the Church and all the people of God to the true Promised Land. Joshua the high priest stands in history between the two great Joshuas.
7. Paradoxically, Joshua is the high priest who holds the future of a nation that must return to God and he is anything but HIGH – he is humbled and low.

---

Zechariah 3:1-2

*<sup>1</sup> Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. <sup>2</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?”*

Exodus 15:6

*Thy right hand, O LORD, glorious in power, thy right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.*

Isaiah 41:10

*Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.*

Isaiah 62:8-9

*<sup>8</sup> The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: “I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink your wine*

*for which you have labored;<sup>9</sup> but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather it shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary.”*

#### Numbers 22:22

*But God's anger was kindled because he went; and the angel of the LORD took his stand in the way as his adversary. Now he was riding on the ass, and his two servants were with him.*

#### Revelation 12:10

*And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.”*

### **B. Joshua and the Accuser**

1. In Zechariah 3:1, Joshua the high priest is standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan is standing at the right hand of the Angel of the LORD to accuse him.
2. The right hand is the hand of favor which defines identity. It is the hand that Joshua needs on his shoulder. Therefore, Satan was standing at the right hand of the Angel of the LORD to accuse Joshua (Exodus 15:6; Isaiah 41:10; 62:8-9).
3. The Hebrew word translated “accuse” is the verbal equivalent of the personal name, “Satan.” Satan was standing at the right hand of the angel of the LORD “to satan” (or accuse) Joshua.
4. So what is the root idea behind the verb “to satan” something which in this place is the word translated “to accuse”? The very first time this word occurs in the Bible, it is found in the fourth book of Moses in Numbers 22:22 describing the Angel of the LORD who met Balaam on the road to kill him.
5. The word translated “withstand” (meaning “stand in the way”) is the same verb in Zechariah 3:1 translated to “accuse.”
6. In Numbers 22:22, the Angel of the LORD is in the way and He is withstanding Balaam to prevent him from getting through. The word can be translated “to obstruct” or “to be a physical adversary” who engages an enemy. When you “satan” someone, you obstruct the way and you oppose them directly.
7. In Zechariah 3:1, only one person stands in the face of the Angel of the LORD in context and that person is Joshua who needs the LORD. The LORD does not allow Satan between Him and Joshua, who stands in the presence of the LORD.

8. So here is Satan in Zechariah 3:1 standing at the right hand of the Angel of the LORD to “obstruct” or “withstand” Joshua. The verb is a physical verb indicating violent force.
9. Satan is not just accusing with his mouth. He is moving toward Joshua with violent intentions to obstruct him, “to satanize him,” to withstand him, and to prevent Joshua from moving forward.
10. The accuser is Satan, the one who speaks against the brethren and acts against the brethren with violent force to keep them out of Heaven (Revelation 12:10).
11. In Zechariah 3:1, “Why is Satan standing still at the right hand of the angel of the LORD and not moving forward to withstand and obstruct Joshua?” There is only one reason why. The right hand of the Angel of the LORD holds Satan back:
  - It is the hand that holds the sword that stops him.
  - It is the hand that shuts him up so that he can speak no more.
  - It is the hand that grabs him by the throat and silences him so that he is unable to accuse the children of God.

## II. JESUS, OUR HEAVENLY HIGH PRIEST

**KEY NOTE: Jesus is the preexistent, non-created, eternal God, and Lord and King.**

### Zechariah 3:1-2

*<sup>1</sup> Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. <sup>2</sup> And the LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?”*

### 1 Timothy 2:5-6

*<sup>5</sup> For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time.*

### Luke 22:31-32

*<sup>31</sup> “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, <sup>32</sup> but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren.”*

## Hebrews 7:25

*Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.*

### **A. The Angel of the Lord**

1. The angel of the LORD is the LORD in the context of Zechariah 3. The Hebrew is the word for Jehovah or Yahweh (Zechariah 3:1-2).
2. The mighty God of the Exodus is the very God who speaks out as the angel of the LORD, and he is calling out to the LORD who hears Him (Zechariah 3:2).
3. Jesus alone stands in this position of favor before God, because Jesus is the LORD. Jesus is the LORD who calls upon the LORD when you are in trouble (1 Timothy 2:5-6).
4. When you are unable to speak for yourself and unable to pray effectual prayers, Jesus prays for you and calls on the name of the LORD (Luke 22:31-32).
5. Jesus is the mighty prayer Warrior in the heavenly sanctuary whom God always hears (Hebrews 7:25).
6. The Angel of the LORD performs three deliberate actions that restore and establish Joshua as the high priest (Zechariah 3:4). These three grace actions are as effectual for us today as they were for Joshua in the Old Testament:
  - (1) God's *grace removes* garments of sin.
  - (2) God's *grace clothes* with rich apparel.
  - (3) God's *grace provides* access to Himself.

---

## Zechariah 3:4

*And the angel said to those who were standing before him, "Remove the filthy garments from him." And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with rich apparel."*

## Romans 8:1

*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

## Hebrews 1:3

*He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

Matthew 9:16-17

<sup>16</sup> *No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.* <sup>17</sup> *Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.*

2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.*

**B. God's Grace Removes Garments of Sin**

1. Jesus removes our filthy garments of sin. The key word is **remove** (Zechariah 3:4).
2. When God forgives, He declares your sins are no longer counted against you in condemnation – they belong to you no more (Romans 8:1; Hebrews 1:3). And that is good news!
3. A person who has his clothes taken off is wholly naked. Likewise, the soul must be completely naked to be clothed. It must expose itself to God to be clothed (Matthew 9:16-17).
4. Confession and repentance are naked truths allowing God to remove the old and make anew (2 Corinthians 5:17).

---

Zechariah 3:4-5

<sup>4</sup> *...And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with rich apparel."* <sup>5</sup> *And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments; and the angel of the LORD was standing by.*

Colossians 1:12-14

<sup>12</sup> *Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.* <sup>13</sup> *He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,* <sup>14</sup> *in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

John 3:16

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

Isaiah 61:10

*I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

### Revelation 19:7-8

<sup>7</sup> “Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; <sup>8</sup> it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure” – for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

### Isaiah 1:18

“Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.”

## **C. God’s Grace Clothes With Rich Apparel**

1. In Christ, God clothes us with rich apparel and this rich apparel is the righteousness of Jesus Christ (Zechariah 3:5).
2. In the Gospel, Jesus’ past becomes our past. His life of victory is exchanged for our failures. His days of purpose and peace become ours by imputation. And His brilliant future is our future as long as we hold on to Him (Colossians 1:12-14).
3. *Devotional Thought*: “Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. ‘With His stripes we are healed.’” ~ *Desire of Ages*, p. 25
4. The Gospel is the astounding transaction that takes away our filthy life and gives us His perfect life as the basis of acceptance (John 3:16).
5. We are accepted because He is accepted, and there is nothing to be ashamed of in Christ Jesus. When a person receives the robe of His righteousness, that person is free from the past and free to worship God with joy (Isaiah 61: 10; Revelation 19:7-8).
6. The final generation that is ready for the coming of Christ will understand at the deepest level the truth of this righteousness by exchange – His righteousness for our rags (Revelation 19:8; Isaiah 1:18).

---

### Zechariah 3:6-7

<sup>6</sup> And the angel of the LORD enjoined Joshua, <sup>7</sup> “Thus says the LORD of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my charge, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here.”

### John 1:50-51

<sup>50</sup> Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these.” <sup>51</sup> And he said to him, “Truly, truly,

*I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”*

Ephsians 2:7-9

*<sup>7</sup> That in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God-- <sup>9</sup> not because of works, lest any man should boast.*

Hebrews 1:3

*He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

Exodus 30:10

*“Aaron shall make atonement upon its horns once a year; with the blood of the sin offering of atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your generations; it is most holy to the LORD.”*

Ephesians 2:8-9

*<sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God-- <sup>9</sup> not because of works, lest any man should boast.*

Galatians 2:20

*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*

Galatians 3:27

*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

Zechariah 3:4

*And the angel said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he said, “Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with rich apparel.”*

1 Corinthians 1:30-31

*<sup>30</sup> He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption; <sup>31</sup> therefore, as it is written, “Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord.”*

## **D. God’s Grace Provides Access to Himself**

1. God gives access to Himself. In Zechariah 3:7, The Lord promises, “I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here.” Those who were standing there were angels.

2. When God removes our filthy rags, He clothes us with the righteousness of His Son, Jesus Christ, and provides a life of meaning with direct access to Him (John 1:50-51).
3. The Gospel reconciles men and women to God and restores the right relationship that sin had broken. God says, “I will give you right of access” (Zechariah 3:7).
4. God has set us free to live for Him because of grace through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:7-9).
5. Hebrews 1:3 is a partial paraphrasing of Exodus 30:10, describing the sacrifice of the Day of Atonement which was the yearly sacrifice. It only happened once a year.
6. The Day of Atonement was symbolic of the final judgment at the end of time when Jesus comes before the Father in a pre-advent judgment in Heaven to confess His people by name and to receive the Kingdom.
7. The sacrifice for sins that secures our place in the judgment was already finished at the cross. Hebrews 1:3 says Jesus sat down at the Father’s right hand because He had finished his work.
8. So the Gospel is the good news that cannot be improved upon. Grace is not something we achieve. Grace is someone we receive (Ephesians 2:8-9).
9. You do not need a reformed life – you need a new life. Reformed lives are a mixture of the old and the new. In the Gospel, Jesus takes away the old and gives the new. Imputed to you. Transferred to you. A gift of grace reckoned to you as yours in Him (Galatians 2:20; 3:27). [See also: 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 17-20.]
10. Jesus has set us free by removing the garments of sin so that we can have new clothes. “Take them away,” says the Angel of the LORD (Zechariah 3:4).
11. Everything we need has been accomplished in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As our great High Priest, Jesus prays that we will receive what He has already done for us (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).