

Zechariah & Luke: The Returning King

Lesson 5: The Omniscient King

Key Verse: *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. ~Zechariah 3.1*

Recipes with pictures drive your desire, enticing you to bake and experience firsthand the deliciousness causing you to salivate. So, too, do these pictures of God's work through the **Angel of the LORD**, the preincarnate Messiah. But **Satan** has a recipe with a picture too. While his picture also causes you to salivate, perhaps even driving a stronger desire, its taste is shame, regret, and eternal separation from God.

Praise be to You, O God, that there is NO condemnation for those who You have "plucked from the fire". Praise be to You, O God, for Your removal of my "filthy garments" so that You dress me in clean clothes, placing a crown of Your Glory upon my head. I am not worthy, O Lord. This week, help me learn the ways You want me to walk in, and how to be faithful and obedient to You, by Your Spirit.

Zechariah 3.1-4.14 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. **2** 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?" **3** Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments.

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 pure vestments." **5** 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.

6 And the angel of the LORD solemnly assured Joshua, **7** "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. **8** Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch.

9 For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes, I will engrave its inscription, declares the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day. **10** In that day, declares the LORD of hosts, every one of you will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and under his fig tree."

CH 4 And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep. **2** And he said to me, "What do you see?" I said, "I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. **3** And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left."

4 And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" **5** Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." **6** Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts. **7** Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'"

8 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **9** "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. **10** For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. "These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range through the whole earth."

11 Then I said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" **12** And a second time I answered and said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the

two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?” **13** He said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” **14** Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

Diamonds: Welcome to the High Court of Heaven! (3.1-3) The defendant in this trial is the high priest of Zechariah’s time, Joshua (Haggai 1.12– Note that this is not the same Joshua who led God’s people into the promised land chronicled in the book of Joshua). The judge is the preincarnate Christ (Christ before He left heaven and took human form on earth). The prosecution is none other than “the Accuser”, Satan himself.

1. How does the judge respond to the Accuser, Satan? How does he treat Satan?

The angel accompanying Zechariah acts like a bailiff of sorts, obeying the judge as He instructs him about what is to come next in His courtroom.

2. What instructions does the judge give the angel?
3. What did Joshua do that compelled the judge to change Joshua’s clothes? What does this teach you about God?

The ruling by the Angel of the LORD before Satan can make any accusations against Joshua is more than “not guilty”. “He is judicially declared immune from prosecution. This ruling is crucial because Joshua is, in fact, guilty as charged—or as he would have been charged had the Accuser been given the chance to do so. He is ‘clothed in excrement-soiled clothes’ (3.3) ...intrinsically defiling...ceremonially unclean...As high priest, it is his task to act as intermediary for the people on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16), removing their impurity.”¹ This means Joshua stands before God completely defiled by sin, a representative of the truth of the defilement of sin upon all of God’s people. Yet God responds in grace, replacing Joshua’s filthy clothes with “festival clothes”, including a crown of glory! Who could have guessed that Jesus inspired the ultimate fashion question: “Who are you wearing?!?”

4. What clothes are you wearing today? Your own excrement-soiled (sin) or Messiah’s party clothes (salvation)?
5. Because we already know what sin-stained clothing looks like, look up each of the following verses and discover what you wear when you are dressed from Messiah’s wardrobe:
 - a. Isaiah 61.10
 - b. Psalm 30.11-12
 - c. Luke 24.49
 - d. Romans 13.14
 - e. Galatians 3.27
 - f. Colossians 3.12-14
 - g. 1 Peter 5.5
6. Where do you need a wardrobe change? What are you struggling to put on? Consider making this a part of your SSP (Scripture-Soaked Prayer) at the end of this lesson.

¹ Duguid, pgs. 92-93

The next part of Zechariah's vision, 3.9-4.14, is difficult to interpret, especially since Zechariah asks for clarity too. No matter the meaning of the exact details, they all point to the same truth: Messiah is coming! By focusing on a few passages within this odd vision, we can have the same experience as looking at the picture of a delicious recipe: anticipation to experience it!

Zechariah 3.6-10 assures God's people of their future ability to experience freedom in God's presence. This is accomplished by The Branch (3.8), Messiah.

7. What picture does God paint in V 10? Get creative and explore inferred details about what it would be like for you to be in this picture. Where would you be, who would be with you? What emotions would this moment and setting bring for you?

The vision in Zechariah 4 continues to express the idea that God will be present with His people, restoring His presence through Zerubbabel's work on rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. Zerubbabel was the governor of Jerusalem. Despite political events threatening the small number of Israelites actively working to rebuild the temple (Ezra 5-6), God provides absolute assurance that the temple will be rebuilt.

8. According to Zechariah 4.6, how will the temple be rebuilt? Bonus points for exploring why you think God calls Himself LORD of Hosts in this message of assurance to Zerubbabel!

Zechariah 4.10 paints a picture of the present but also the future. In the current setting, God is promising His presence will return to His people through Zerubbabel's active remodeling of the temple. However, this is a symbolic presence to stir hope in God's future presence within His people. The timeline of completion is eternal, in that this construction project will not be completed until Christ returns.

9. Read God's message of hope and deliverance to His people in Zechariah 1-4. With words or by drawing, paint a picture of the future of God's people. It may be helpful to focus on the imagery in the key verses that point to the future completion of the remodel:
 - a. 1.16-17
 - b. 2.4-5, 10-11
 - c. 3.4-10
 - d. 4.7-10

From sitting in the galley of the High Court of Heaven, to walking through the Lord's active construction site, you have traveled much through this lesson! Like the picture included with a recipe, all of this is meant to excite you, driving a desire to want to join in and experience what the Lord is doing. Even more, like salivating when looking at the recipe picture, God's picture drives anticipation for what He will do and what is to come.

10. What was the most exciting experience of your travels through this lesson? What picture is causing you to salivate, or driving excitement for what is to come for God's people?

Deity: Angel of the LORD²~ (Zechariah 3.1) Also called a “Christophany”, this title identifies the “preincarnate Lord Jesus Christ”, or the appearance of Christ on earth prior to His birth. Were it the LORD/Yahweh Himself, it would be called a “theophany”.

This is an important distinction because it illuminates God’s promises of the Messiah who brings salvation to God’s people. This distinction also validates God as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (the Trinity).

The role of the Angel of the LORD in Zechariah 3 proves that He is indeed Jesus. Only Jesus can provide a legal defense before His Father, God. Only Jesus can deliver sin-stained people from Satan’s accusations. Only Jesus determines the sentencing of all people: eternal life with Him, or eternal death with Satan. Thus, this Angel of the LORD is our Savior, Jesus, appearing to us before He comes to earth to complete salvation.

Zechariah 3-4 provides vivid imagery, answering how God will be present with His people. Using temple imagery, the angel takes Zechariah on a tour of what is to come for God’s people. To better understand this tour, here are the agreed upon meanings of parts of the vision and temple tour:

- Seven eyes—God’s omniscience, or His watch over all His creation, perfectly orchestrating their salvation
- Lamps/Lampstand— “Out of the darkness of night, Zechariah beheld a blazing lampstand. Its image conveyed majesty, beauty, priceless value, all in the form of light shining in darkness”³
- “Two anointed ones”, “two sons of oil” and the two olive trees— though debated, most agree that in context these represent the offices of high priest and king. In this context, this likely indicates Joshua (high priest) and Zerubbabel (ruler of Jerusalem under a pagan government)
- Oil—the Holy Spirit being poured in God’s people to complete the temple work, but also to be poured into God’s people as God’s new temple, or His INdwelling presence to come.

11. Shew! What an exhausting tour full of key but overwhelming information! Take time to prayerfully consider all what you have seen, learned, and heard (in lecture). What stands out to you? What detail is driving anticipation for the future? What understanding has you worshipping God in a new way?

Doctrine: Satan (and demons)⁴~(Zechariah 3.1) Satan, which means “adversary” (Zechariah 3.1-2) and demons... are not mere myth or symbol but historical fact (Isaiah 14.12-14; 2 Peter 2.4; Revelation 12.7-8).

Satan is not a caricature, nor anything like the horned, triad-bearing comedic adversary with which we are most familiar. Rather, the biblical view of Satan informs us that Satan appears as an “angel of light”. Satan has the clever ability to manifest himself under the appearance of good. Satan is subtle, beguiling, and crafty. He speaks with eloquence; his appearance is stunning. The prince of darkness wears a cloak of light (2 Corinthians 11.14-15).

Although Satan is a terrible enemy, he is not omnipotent, as God is. He cannot do everything; in fact, he can only do what God will permit (Job 1.6-12; Matthew 4.1-11). He is not omnipresent; he cannot be everywhere, tempting everyone at once. He can only tempt one person at one time (1 Peter 5.8; Job 1.8, 2.3). Above all, he is not omniscient; he does not know the future except as God reveals it to us (and the demons) in Scripture.

Satan is loose, but limited, and he is a defeated foe (Luke 11.15-20; 22.31-32; 1 Peter 5.8-11; 1 John 4.4). Jesus has already triumphed over him at the cross. (John 16.11; 1 John 3.7-10; Revelation 12.10-11).

Demons are supernatural beings who are subservient to Satan. They, like Satan, were once angels. They joined

² MacArthur and Mayhue, pgs. 195-196, 719-722

³ Phillips, pg.88

⁴ Sproul, R.C., *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale Momentum, 1992) pgs. 143-146

Satan in his rebellion and were cast out of heaven with him. Demons recognize Christ as the Holy One of God (Mark 1.23-26; Luke 4.34; James 2.19). Though demons are real and powerful, there is no reason to believe that they can ever possess a Christian (1 Corinthians 6.19). We may be harassed, tempted, or accused by demons, but never controlled by them (Romans 8.31-39). Every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8.14-17; Ephesians 1.13-14). His presence guarantees liberty from demonic possession.

12. Why do you think God wants His people to know about Satan?

13. From this lesson, and from Lesson 4, what do you think is the most important thing God wants you to know about Satan and demons?

Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer: This lesson has been full of the knowledge of God. Is there a verse, or passage of scripture from this week that is still running through your mind? Use that to begin your SSP, trying to incorporate your answer to question 6. As always, obey God's leading in this section no matter our suggestions.

The personal prayer of Mikie Bellis, offered as an example: Almighty God! You are a Mighty Fortress. You are sovereign, reigning from on high. You are the everlasting King of kings and Lord of lords! Nothing and no one is beyond Your complete control. Your steadfast, covenantal love for your people...for me!...ensures the victory in every spiritual battle. In Christ, I am more than a conqueror! (Romans 8.37) Holy Spirit, when the battle is fierce, remind me that satan is a DEFEATED foe. You crushed Him when You died on the Cross to pay the penalty for all our sins and were then raised to life on the third day, defeating the enemy of death forever and ever. (John 16.11; 1 John 3.8) Amen! Your victory is my victory. (1 John 4.4) Hallelujah! No longer are You the PREincarnate Christ. You are the incarnate One, the God Who put on human flesh to save His people from their sin. Because You accomplished the work of saving me from my sin, I can put off the sin-stained clothes of my human flesh and put on the glory clothes of Your precious Spirit. O God! Clothe me with a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience to endure injustice and unpleasantness with good temper. Wrap me up in the garments of unselfish love which is the perfect bond of unity that seeks the best for others (Colossians 3.12-14). I struggle to put these on because I keep my focus on myself and my feelings rather than on You, Jesus, and how You love me so unconditionally that You died for me! Help me, Holy Spirit, to shift my gaze to my Beautiful Savior and to stay clothed with His beauty, walking according to His ways, in righteousness and truth, to the glory of Your Beautiful Name. This I pray in the name above all names, Jesus, Who is the Christ. Amen and Amen.

Lecture Outline:

Aim: God powerfully provides for those who stand with Him.

I. God Cleanses His People (Zechariah 3:1-10) **T1:** God alone provides what we desperately need.

- a. As you stand before God today, what are you wearing?
- b. When you look at your heart, whose voice do you hear?
- c. How might knowing that God has provided all you need give you peace and rest this coming week?

II. God Empowers His People (Zechariah 4:1-14) **T2:** Obedience allows us to see God's provision.

- a. Where are you despising the small things?
- b. Where is God calling you to serve Him?
- c. How might serving God in the power of His Spirit change the way you serve? How might it change the results of your service?