



# LOCKINGCASTLECHURCH

Life Group Notes – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2021

## Coming back to the heart: Forgiveness for all. Zechariah 3

*Please visit the LCC website to listen to the talk or read the transcript if available.*

### **Zechariah 3:1-10 – Clean garments for the high priest**

**3** 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. <sup>2</sup>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?'

<sup>3</sup> Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. <sup>4</sup>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 fine garments on you.'

<sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup>The angel of the LORD gave this charge to Joshua: <sup>7</sup>'This is what the LORD Almighty says: "If you will walk in obedience to me 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.

<sup>8</sup> "Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch. <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> "In that day each of you will invite your neighbour to sit under your vine and fig-tree," declares the LORD Almighty.'

*Note this is the NIV2011 version of the text. It would be helpful to compare it with other translations.*

### **Comment:**

In this fourth dream-vision Zechariah continues to roll out his bigger vision of the Kingdom of God to encourage the Jews who have returned from exile to keep going and keep rebuilding. We saw last week how Jerusalem was to be a city without walls because it would be a city for all nations with God himself as its security. This vision describes the High Priest Joshua being given fresh new clothes in place of the dirty ones he is wearing – a picture of forgiveness, not only for Joshua himself but for all the people. Satan is called 'the accuser' here, and this theme carries through to the New Testament where he is called 'the accuser of the Brethren' (Rev 12v10). But the Angel rebukes Satan and declares forgiveness instead. The name Joshua or Jeshua is the Hebrew version of the name Jesus, and in the same way our 'great high priest' Jesus took our sin and 'the graffiti on our hearts' upon himself on the cross. At the resurrection the soiled grave clothes were left behind, and instead there is forgiveness for all, symbolised by white robes for all (Revelation 7v9).

The vision concludes with 3 prophetic declarations from the Lord all relating to the Messiah: First God will bring his servant 'the Branch' – a descendant from the house of David, see Isaiah 11v1. Secondly a stone with 7 eyes will be set before him. The eyes represent the perfection of God's Holy Spirit (The Spirit of the Lord: wisdom; understanding; counsel; might; knowledge and of fear of the LORD – see Isaiah 11v2-3) and Revelation 5v6. Finally God promises to remove the sin of the land in a single day. On Good Friday this was achieved for everyone who believes it.

The last line sums up a single sentence vision of the peace, security and provision of Kingdom of God: "In that day each of you will invite your neighbour to sit under your vine and fig-tree". Instead of poverty there is plenty. Instead of rivalry, forgiveness, peace and hospitality.

### **Questions:**

- 1) In what ways does Satan still act as 'the accuser' in our lives?
- 2) Why do you think we live in such a culture of blame?
- 3) Why is it so difficult sometimes to forgive ourselves as well as others? How can we resist the temptation to dwell on the past?
- 4) In light of this passage what sort of church is the Lord wanting us to become over the next year?