

Discussion Guide

Zechariah 3:1-5

Opening Prayer

Guided Prayer: Pray asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance in understanding and applying the truths discussed.

Recap

In Zechariah 3:1-5, the prophet is shown a vision of Joshua the high priest standing before the Lord, but he is clothed in filthy garments, symbolizing sin. Satan stands ready to accuse him, pointing out his unworthiness. However, instead of condemning Joshua, God rebukes Satan, removes Joshua's filthy garments, and clothes him in clean robes, signifying righteousness.

This passage is a powerful picture of salvation. Like Joshua, all people stand guilty before a holy God, and Satan, the accuser, seeks to condemn. But in Christ, God removes our sin and clothes us in righteousness. This passage reminds us that salvation is not about our own efforts but about God's grace, His electing love, and His power to justify sinners.

Understanding the Text

1. The Accusation: The Reality of Our Guilt (Zechariah 3:1-3)

- Who is Joshua, and what does he represent in this vision?
- What do Joshua's filthy garments symbolize? (See Isaiah 64:6)
- Why is Satan standing there, and what does his role as an accuser reveal about him? (See Revelation 12:10)
- How does this vision illustrate our natural condition before God? (See Romans 3:23)

2. The Rebuke: God's Defense Against Satan's Accusations (Zechariah 3:2)

- What does it mean that God Himself rebukes Satan rather than Joshua answering the accusations?
- Why does God emphasize His choice of Jerusalem in His rebuke? (See Ephesians 1:3-5)
- What does the phrase "*a brand plucked from the fire*" mean? How does this relate to Israel's history and to our own salvation? (See Ephesians 2:1-5)

3. The Cleansing: A Picture of Justification (Zechariah 3:3-4)

- Who removes Joshua's filthy garments, and why is this significant?
- What does this act symbolize in terms of salvation and forgiveness? (See Psalm 103:12, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- What is the difference between having our sin removed and being clothed in righteousness?

4. The Turban: Declaring Holiness (Zechariah 3:5)

- What was the purpose of the high priest's turban, and why is it significant that Joshua receives a clean one? (See Exodus 28:36-38)
- How does this part of the vision highlight not just forgiveness, but consecration and being set apart for God? (See 1 Peter 2:9)

- What does this teach us about how God views us after He saves us?

Practical Application

1. Resting in God's Justification

- Many people struggle with guilt over past sins. How does this passage show that God not only forgives, but also declares us righteous?
- When Satan accuses you (through guilt, shame, or reminders of past failures), how should you respond? (See Romans 8:33-34)
- How can we daily remind ourselves of the truth that we are clothed in Christ's righteousness?

2. Living as Those Set Apart

- Joshua's clean turban symbolized his role as a high priest, set apart for God. If we are also called "*a royal priesthood*" (1 Peter 2:9), how should that impact how we live?
- Are there areas in your life where you are still holding onto guilt or trying to "earn" God's favor? How does this passage call us to rest in Christ's finished work?
- What does it look like to live as one who has been made holy before God?

3. Sharing the Gospel of Cleansing

- This vision presents a beautiful picture of salvation. Who in your life needs to hear this message of cleansing and new life in Christ?
- How can this passage encourage us in evangelism, knowing that salvation is based on God's grace rather than human effort?
- How can we reflect the grace we've received by extending it to others?

God Has More to Say

Zechariah 3:1-5 presents a vision of **Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord**, being accused by Satan, but ultimately receiving **God's cleansing and new garments**, symbolizing forgiveness and restoration. The key themes include **Satan's accusations, God's justification, the removal of sin, and receiving righteousness from God**. Here are **related passages** that align with these themes:

1. Satan as the Accuser

1. **Job 1:6-12**
2. **Revelation 12:10**
3. **Luke 22:31-32**

2. God's Justification

4. **Romans 8:33-34**
5. **Isaiah 50:8-9**
6. **Psalms 103:10-12**

3. Removal of Sin & Cleansing

7. **Isaiah 6:5-7**
8. **Ezekiel 36:25-26**
9. **1 John 1:9**

4. Receiving Righteousness from God (New Garments)

10. **Isaiah 61:10**
11. **2 Corinthians 5:21**
12. **Revelation 7:14**
13. **Luke 15:22**