

# Joshua clothed in filthy garments

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Preacher: Rev John Macsween

[ 0 : 00 ] I'll be enabled, continual thoughts on the words to be considered in the morning, which you will find in the book of the prophet, Zachariah.

Zachariah chapter 3. And we shall read from the beginning.

And he showed me Joshua the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuked thee, O Satan.

Even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuked thee. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

[ 1 : 17 ] Now Joshua was clothed with fancy garments and stood before the angel.

Joshua, the high priest of Israel, was the representative of the people in things spiritual.

But due to the circumstances that obtained in Israel at this time, we may consider him as representing them also in a civil or political capacity.

He is before the angel clothed in filthy garments, unable to defend himself, unable to give any reasonable explanation of his condition.

That is, he acknowledges his guilt.

[ 3 : 00 ] He has nothing to say. His mouth is dark because he is found guilty before God.

At this juncture, we meet of one who speaks for Joshua.

One who is brought before us under the name of the Lord. And he addresses himself first of all to the adversary.

He has something to say to Joshua, yes. But that has to wait. He addresses the adversary.

In those words, the Lord rebuke thee, O saint. He says, yes.

[ 4 : 11 ] But we ask the question, how could the Lord rebuke him? We are based on the law of God.

Well, that is the secret that is to be about to be, that is about to be made clear. How could God rebuke him?

How could God rebuke him? And remember, this is a great secret. And it is something for which we are entirely dependent on the spirit of the Lord to discover it to us personally.

This is the very good essence of the gospel. That the Lord can rebuke sin.

And encourage and acquit, or acquit and encourage the sinner who is self condemned.

[ 5 : 30 ] As well as condemned by the law of God. Now we said that the reason, and the only reason, why the Lord could rebuke Satan was the deadness.

But there is something over and above the law. There is something else. God's revelation is more extensive than the law.

His revelation is not exhausted by the law. There is something else. There is grace. There is grace. And it is on the grounds of this grace.

That the Lord rebukes it. And in this particular passage, God's gracious brought to our notice under the term, the choice of God.

The election of God. May the Lord rebukes it. But what Lord? The Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem.

[ 6 : 59 ] It is the Lord who hath chosen Jerusalem. That can't rebukes.

And if the matter is to be prosecuted further, it must be prosecuted not in relation to Joshua.

Because what he is and what he is not has now faded from the picture. Everything depends now on this. What God is.

It is the Lord who hath chosen Jerusalem. Has the Lord done right?

In this? Has he acted right justly? Well, Satan could not bring.

[ 7 : 57 ] An accusation of unrighteousness against God. Although men often do. He couldn't.

He was better acquainted with things than to do that. He could find no hope with God's choice.

With God's election. Thou stood and stood secure. And stood and moved up. Hence, we hear no more of Satan's accusations.

The ground is taken from under his feet. He accused.

this. TIN want the innocence and now the law purely and simply and solely.

[ 9 : 06 ] Part 2.

arms that the law demands can be floated or forgotten. No. And this is now the point we want to consider. First of all the difference there is between the natural and the sovereign attributes of God. Now by that we mean that there are certain things or there are certain exercises that God must have.

That is put beyond any doubt in God's word. We read for instance that God cannot lie.

Not only that he will not but God cannot lie. That would be a violation of his own being.

[ 10 : 33 ] And that cannot happen. He cannot lie. God in other words must be truthful. God in other words and God in other words cannot lie.

He is the God who cannot lie. That is a natural and essential attitude of God too.

Another one is justice. God will not will not only be just but God must be just. And that is precisely what the adversary knew so well.

He had to change him to know it. He was the living example of God's justice.

God's justice. For the angels who kept the angels who kept not their first estate were cast down into darkness.

[ 11 : 41 ] Preserved in chains for the judgment of the great day. the adversary knew well that God had to be just.

That he couldn't be anything else. That is a natural or an essential attitude of God. He must be that. He cannot be anything else. But when we come to mercy to God's gracious election we are on different goals entirely.

We cannot say that God must be merciful. We cannot say that mercy is an essential attribute of God.

no. We have to recognize the distinction between mercy and justice for instance.

[ 12 : 56 ] They are not to be classified together. They are both of God. They are both glorious, excellent.

but as to that exercise, they are not in the same class. No. God may be merciful or he may not. You remember how distinctly Jehovah himself put this before Moses when he declared unto him his glory.

What did God say to him? I am the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious. Showing mercy to thousands.

Showing mercy to thousands, not showing mercy to all. What does he say again in connection with Pharaoh?

[ 14 : 15 ] I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. He never says anywhere I will be just to whom I will be just.

No. God must be just. He cannot be anything else but just. But we cannot say that God must be merciful.

That is viewing things as they are in God absolutely. It is right to say that no wonder the gospel God must be merciful.

But that has the reference to Christ Jesus and the things that he has done. Which things need not have been done at all. But we are referring to mercy as a divine activity prior to manifestation of it. And in that respect we say that we cannot criticize necessity of God's mercy. We cannot say that God must be merciful.

[ 15 : 34 ] If you could say that then to be logically consistent and to be scripturally consistent which is more important you would have to hold to the doctrine of universal salvation.

And not only to the universal salvation of mankind you would have also to hold the salvation of the demons. If God will necessarily mercy but he isn't.

mercy is a sovereign attribute. God can or may or may not be merciful as he sees fit.

Now it is here that the advocate who pleads on behalf of Joshua silences the adversary.

Precisely here may the Lord rebuke thee the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem he hath chosen Jerusalem because that was his good pleasure and no other reason can be assigned to it.

[ 17 : 00 ] It is the divine choice of choosing according to his own free will.

Now the resurface is the adversary cannot continue with his argument. Why? Worse as he was with justice he knew nothing about mercy.

When this was brought into the case then his objections fell to the ground and so it ends to the present day and so it will be safe as long as sinners will be safe this is what satisfies the conscience and only this satisfies the conscience that is the conscience that has been disturbed by the spirit of God the conscience that has not been disturbed will be satisfied with anything yes however flimsy the reason it is not really disturbed but the conscience that has been touched by the finger of God will not be satisfied with anything in the creature with anything based on the law and it certainly will not be satisfied with the gospel used as law now I know I have said this to you time and time again but I am not so sure that I made myself perfectly clear and I certainly would like on this point to make myself perfectly clear not only that you would be able to understand what I mean but that you would be incapable of misunderstanding it using the gospel as a law now I have said that because I believe that is the most prevalent error in religious circles today the gospel is used not as gospel but as a law people approach the gospel as if it were another law they approach it in the spirit while

God says if you will believe then you will be saved we believe we have done this therefore we are saved that logical syllogism is erratic though it's quite so as a logical syllogism but what is at the base of this what is basically wrong with it well it is this that at least in many places the attitude towards the gospel the spirit that rules and regulate men in this type of argument is a legal spirit it is altogether legal there is nothing of gospel in it as if they had said we did our heart no

[ 21 : 22 ] God will do this no you could not state the law better than that that's the law pure and simple or nothing else but law it doesn't matter whether it operates on the propositions of the gospel or not it's law and nothing but law we did our heart we believed no God will do this now I don't know how how law would be stated better than that and it is stated in relation to the gospel only belief is taken instead of works and in the final analysis there is absolutely no difference in this particular type of spirit we are described we have done our duty now God will do his is that the gospel well if it is it is a different one from the one we know what is the gospel that God justifies the ungodly and justifies them not on the grounds of what they have done whether it is believing or anything else this is the gospel that God justifies the ungodly as ungodly that is he doesn't justify the man who says I have done or I have believed he doesn't justify that man at all he is not ungodly he has of me he has much but the man who is ungodly is the man who has his mouth and who comes in guilty before God and who can do nothing either in relation to the law or in relation to the gospel he is as helpless when confronted with the gospel as he is when he is confronted with the law because he is absolutely nothing because he is absolutely nothing now this is tools removed from the fatalism that rests in man's inability no we are not talking of that we are talking of a man who is very much in earnest and who is very active not the man who sits by and says well we can do nothing in any case the trouble with that man is that he doesn't believe that at all but the man who believes it cannot be oppressed he is troubled and he is troubled with us above all else but he cannot do anything his inability is his sin not his excuse and now in that predicament in that position and condition the Lord does something for him and that is the gospel the Lord does something for him not on the grounds of what land does that we say

would change the law would change the gospel into an all but the Lord does something for this man the Lord for his own's aid the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem in Jerusalem may he impute he speaks he breaks the silence he says let her be light we repeat that is the gospel and nothing else is nothing else is yes it is the Lord spoke for Joshua very quickly for himself and this is what he made known concerning him what God hath done for him what God hath done on his behalf the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem the sovereign attribute of God is brought into operation in Joshua's consciousness mercy mercy he understands mercy the man who says I believed and that for God we do his part doesn't know the first thing about mercy being about mercy not the first thing doesn't know anything at all about it but the man who would then not but who has virtuousness imputed to him that man understands something about mercy pure mercy on the part of God not condescending by nothing whatsoever on the part of the creature no it finds its being in God it finds the basis of its operation in God hence this man could be set free he couldn't be set free he couldn't be set free in any other way he needed mercy may the Lord repute thee O Satan the Lord that hath chosen may the Lord repute thee O Satan the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem may the Lord repute thee O Satan may the Lord repute thee O Satan the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem the

Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem and as Popeye be told in the morning

Joshua here is a type of a representative of Jerusalem now what can be said nothing but this what hath God wrote this is the doing of the Lord and wondrous in our eyes this is all his doing not partly his and partly Joshua's no that type of thing might do alright when the day is high but it will not stand the test of death and judgment as the other man said what have we not done who are the we myself and God he said myself and God yes well that is not the gospel of God's grace it is God's work for which he will have all the glory but now we say what about faith we are not giving his proper place to faith well maybe not in the conception of some but we would certainly like to give its biblical place to faith but what's that to look and see the salvation of the Lord that's faith it is not something that contributes to that salvation in any way whatsoever it is not something that may be laid down as a price for that salvation no that's the law that's law law law what does faith actually do?

it beholds it beholds what God has done it receives what God has done it receives God in the glory of his mercy in the glory of his mercy in the after-engine of his power this is what he did it doesn't contribute to some age no it was never meant to do that and furthermore it never draws attention to itself the faith that is the gift of God will never incline a man to say no I believe and I will rest on that no a man who rests on his faith rests on something that will let him down to an eternity of perdition what does Mr. Reston?

Christ and that is what the faith of his God's gift all Muslims he doesn't give a man to rest honestly it gives a man to rest he adds on Christ only for salvation well this is what happened in the case of Joshua mercy is brought into the pit and alongside of that Murphy there is not only hope there is that but there is strong consolation there is a blessed persuasion that the person may not only be saved in the case of Joshua that he may that he may not only be divested of his darkness but clothed with a change of way but then there is another thing here that we said of Joshua and with that we conclude he is compared to Abraham the boat of the by but there are various questions arising in connection with that which we can only mention the flesh what are you this?

[ 33 : 13 ] how was Joshua in this fight? and who blooded him? well the fire we take it the light of the cross and the fire and the fire and the fire well the fire we take it the light of the context was God's fatherly displeasure with his son when he sent them into the captivity in Babylon that was a fire indeed the fire of justice men in the case of many the fire of punishment the fire of the punishment but some of them were taken out of it but taken out of it as it were with difficulty not that there is anything difficult with God but we use the term difficulty as it is used in the second epistle of in the first epistle of in the first epistle of Peter where we read if the righteous be saved with difficulty whereas we have it if the righteous seriously be saved saved with difficulty if that is so where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

if the righteous will scarcely be saved and who plucked him out of the fire? the God of Israel the God whose prerogative it is to rebuke, save and on what grounds did he do this?

on the grounds of his own sovereign and divine choice the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem it was for life the God of Israel the God of Israel the God whose prerogative it is to rebuke, save and on what grounds did he do this?

on the grounds of his own sovereign and divine choice the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem it was for that reason that Joshua and those who were with him were plucked as brands from the fire that is the historical saying now what is the application?

while we take it that the application is obvious all salvation all salvation is to be traced to the election Christ himself is to be traced to this as set forth by the fire to be a propitiation through faith in his blood that hath salvation flows from the sovereign exercise of God's love towards sinners it is sovereign salvation that's what we mean by sovereign salvation it is to be traced to God holy and entirely exclude everything from the part of the Creator but sin everything but sin and that does not in the slightest degree interfere with man's responsibility and on the grounds of that responsibility the fact that he is saved with difficulty we repeat nothing is difficult for God but it is through much tribulation that the saints will enter into their everlasting quest not because God couldn't save them in any other way but because this is his appointed will the word the word this is a brand plucked out of the burden and the inferences this it is plucked out in such a way as that it will never go into that burning again you to the point of justification justification it is an accomplished fact it is an accomplished fact which will not be repeated and which cannot which cannot bear to be repeated in its very name he is taken out and doubt he will stay and consider from the point of view of sanctification we have here the Lord's continued care of his people despite their waywardness

despite their provocations he still deals with them as he sees fit bringing them often to deport bringing them to stand self accused and self condemned but bringing to lie to them in his time [ 38 : 49 ] Christ teaches as the one who is made unto them of God wisdom righteousness sanctification and redemption what think ye of Christ who is our Saviour our faith our works our servants what is it Christ in the glory of his person in the fullness of his glory and in his everlasting suitableness to the needs of a poor and perishing sinner as such the Lord said unto say may the Lord rebuke thee the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem have we heard the Lord's rebuke and let us remember this you can argue with sin from morning to night it will not make the slightest defect of us he knows all the rules of logic he knows how to bring an accusation and to make the most of it and to try to meet him on his own grounds is the height of falling ye you can never silence him who can silence him then?

holy God holy God holy God can silence him holy God holy God has silence him and this is the minute we repeat of the gospel when God speaks to the heart through the gospel he silences the sake his accusations fall to the ground and then there is that glorious liberty in some measure the glorious liberty the glorious liberty of the truth of God let us pray ah blessed one be merciful to us may thy word come to us in power demonstrating to us that it is indeed thy word and that thou art faithful to that word that it is a that it is a an infallible revelation of what thou hast done and still doest in the lives of thine own oh bless us we beseech us undertake on us take away all our sins our sins in speaking and our sins in hearing and accept of our personal of sin and through Christ in whom thou shalt have to praise  
Amen