

**The 1689 Confession; Chapter 8, Paragraph's 4 & 8 – “Of Christ the Mediator”,
Message # 22– “The Presence Behind the Veil”, Presented in the Adult
Sunday School Class, by Pastor Paul Rendall on May 31st, 2020.**

Paragraph 4 – This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake, which that he might discharge he was made under the law, and did perfectly fulfil it, and underwent the punishment due to us, which we should have borne and suffered, being made sin and a curse for us; enduring most grievous sorrows in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body; was crucified, and died, and remained in the state of the dead, yet saw no corruption: on the third day he arose from the dead with the same body in which he suffered, with which he also ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father making intercession, and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world.

Paragraph 8 - To all those for whom Christ hath obtained eternal redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same, making intercession for them; uniting them to himself by his Spirit, revealing unto them, in and by his Word, the mystery of salvation, persuading them to believe and obey, governing their hearts by his Word and Spirit, and overcoming all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom, in such manner and ways as are most consonant to his wonderful and unsearchable dispensation; and all of free and absolute grace, without any condition foreseen in them to procure it.

Hebrews 6: 17-20 – “Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.” “This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

The hope that we have as an anchor for our soul is that we know that the Lord Jesus Christ, as our Savior and Lord, is making Intercession for us; not only so that our faith may not fail, but also that we will triumph through Him, in relation to our becoming holy men and women of God. In my last Sunday School presentation to you, I was telling you that your spiritual anchor as a Christian is your sure hope in what Christ has already done for you, by His death on the cross for your sins, and His resurrection from the dead which has given you spiritual life. He applies the merits of His death and resurrection to you through the working of the Holy Spirit in your heart. He did this first by raising you from your death in trespasses and sins. That was the beginning of your living your life to God. His intercession on your behalf continues on now, forever, day by day, in His being your Advocate with the Father. God, the Holy Spirit is now in the heart of every Christian to change and transform them into a person who can glorify God by the way that they live your life. But I have wanted you to see from these verses that we have been studying in Hebrews chapter 6, that you have an anchor which is both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil.

1st - Your hope in Christ allows you to enter the Presence behind the veil, it says here in verse 20, where Christ the forerunner is.

Christ entered heaven at His ascension, and He is in heaven now at God's right hand, in order for you to be able to make progress in holiness. The Lord Jesus Christ would want you to know, by faith, what is taking place, on a regular basis, behind the scenes, out of your sight, in heaven. In the Presence behind the veil, as one of the Persons of the Triune God, He is there and He is interceding for you. This is what we will take a look at this morning from the Scriptures. It is my prayer that your knowing what is presently taking place, behind the veil, behind the scenes in heaven, on a regular basis, will give you the sure hope, dear Christian, that all shall be accomplished concerning you, in relation to your being completely saved and delivered from the sense of condemnation and from the Devil's power. We find this vision best communicated in Zechariah 3, verses 1-10.

2. Christ clothes Joshua with garments of Salvation, as He does with all of His Elect people.

Zechariah 3: 1-10 – “Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.” “And the LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan!” “The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?” “Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.” “Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, “Take away the filthy garments from him.” “And to him He said, “See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.” “And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him.” “And the Angel of the LORD stood by.” “Then the Angel of the LORD admonished Joshua, saying, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My command, then you shall also judge My house, and likewise have charge of My courts; I will give you places to walk among these who stand here.’” “Hear, O Joshua, the high priest, you and your companions who sit before you, for they are a wondrous sign; for behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH.” “For behold, the stone That I have laid before Joshua: Upon the stone are seven eyes.” “Behold, I will engrave its inscription, says the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.” “In that day, says the LORD of hosts, ‘Everyone will invite his neighbor under his vine and under his fig tree.’”

Christ’s Intercession for His people is wonderfully pictured here, both to God’s ancient people the Jews and to the New Testament spiritual Israel, the Church, to which the Jews as a nation someday will belong. God has chosen Jerusalem, that is His people both Old Testament and New, and so because of the Intercession of Christ, He will rebuke Satan, when he comes to accuse any one of His elect people. This is what is being pictured for us here in visionary form, and Christ’s intercession here is meant to be a picture which is intended to bring you strong consolation, dear Christian; a picture of the reality of Christ’s faithfulness and His watchcare over you, even to give you help and aid against Satan, when you have failed Him in the worst way. If you know the Lord, you still desire to be cleansed of your sins and become more holy and have real purity of heart.

It is always important when we are studying the Scriptures to set the context of the verses that we are looking at. Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel, the governor, were the leaders of the people of Israel who were in every way interested in promoting the re-establishment of the nation of Israel’s worship in the rebuilding of the temple after the 70 years captivity. They would be successful in this, but not without opposition from various people in the land who didn’t have the interests of the Jews in their minds, but rather had personal reasons for why they thought that it would be good if the Jews did not see their nation reestablished.

Not only was there opposition from men, but also there was opposition spiritually from our adversary Satan. It says here in verse 1 – “Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.” Yes, even in Old Testament times, Satan was at work opposing the work of God and Christ in building the His Church. Satan has been the accuser of the brethren from the beginning of the world, and he will continue in that capacity until Christ comes back again.

But we need to understand that Joshua the high priest evidently had defiled himself somehow with iniquities that were great enough that Satan thought that he could oppose him and succeed in telling God why he was unworthy of his high priestly office, and thus try to bring the work of the building of the temple and the reestablishment of the true worship of God to a standstill. This was not going to happen, but the only reason that it would not happen was not because of Joshua’s ability to deal with his sins and to resolve to make up for his deficiencies in the way that he had ministered thus far in his service to God. Rather, it would be because of the Intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ that he would be forgiven of all of his sins, and be able to be brought to faithful and useful service to God. The same will be true of each and every Christian.

John Gill says, concerning Joshua's sin – “Who was one that came up out of the captivity, and was principally concerned in building the temple, and had many enemies to obstruct him in it; and who falling into sin, or his sons, in marrying strange wives, *Ezr_10:18*, which he might connive at, Satan was ready to catch it up, and accuse him before God; though rather Joshua is to be considered, not personally, but typically, representing the state and condition of the priesthood, in which office he was; and which was very low, mean, and abject, under the second temple; or the church of God, which the priests, especially the high priest, were representatives of: and indeed this vision may be accommodated to the case of any single believer, fallen into sin, and accused by Satan, and whose advocate Christ is....”

In verse 2 it says – “The Lord said to Satan – The Lord rebuke you Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?” The salvation of God's people, both Old Testament and New is based upon election; the Lord's choosing Jerusalem, meaning all of the elect Old Testament people of God. Indeed, we should not exclude the New Testament people of God, for Paul says in *Galatians 4: 26* – “But the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.” So when we hear of the Lord's choosing Jerusalem, it is not simply speaking here of the city of Jerusalem, then, but it is speaking of the Church, both Old Testament and New, for which Christ died, as it says in *Ephesians 5: 25-27* – “Husbands love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”

So, it was Christ's giving Himself for the Church at the cross, His giving Himself for all of those elect persons given to Him by the Father, before time began, that is the basis of who He intercedes for. Christ intercedes for them when they fall into sin, whether they are an Old Testament believer, or as a New Testament believer. We can apply these verses to all Christians who find that they may not have been faithful in the ministry to which the Lord has called them, and gifted them for. Here we find in verse 3, Joshua clothed with filthy garments and he is standing before the Angel of the Lord. Jehovah the Lord is the Angel of the Lord here. And He says to Satan – May the Lord rebuke you Satan. That is, may God the Father rebuke you Satan based upon what I will do during the time of My earthly ministry; when I come into the world in My Incarnation, and grow I grow up to perfectly do My Father's will on behalf of each and every one of God's elect people. They shall all be sanctified by My doing My Father's will perfectly, and by my laying down my life as a ransom for many; that is, all of God's elect people. He says – Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?

His being a brand plucked out of the fire means his being delivered safely out of the Babylonian Captivity, but even more, his being delivered from eternal judgment of the wrath of God and the fires of hell by faith in the promise of Christ. Satan was trying to bring Joshua into condemnation for his sins, but the Lord is saying to him – Do you not see that I have transferred him from your kingdom to mine Satan? And I delivered him by taking him out of these fires of eternal judgment into my kingdom of grace? May the Lord, my Father in heaven, rebuke you Satan for thinking that you will be able to bring him back under judgment for any of his sins. So, even though Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, representing the defilement of his sins to his person and to his works, the Angel tells those who stood before Him that they should take away the filthy garments from him. He says in this act – See I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.” This was Joshua's being justified and set apart to God's working in salvation. *Isaiah 61: 10* – “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness...” So the believer in Christ is clothed with Christ garments of salvation; the rich robes of righteousness in justification; and the kingly and priestly garments of adoption, and being bestowed upon them so that they are called God's saints for Jesus' sake.

