

Pentwater Bible Church

*Zechariah
Message 7
June 16, 2013*



Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Zechariah
Message Seven
The 4th Vision - Joshua the High Priest
June 16, 2013
Daniel E. Woodhead



Painting by Sharlene Lindskog-Osorio

THE SYMBOLIC ACT

Zechariah 3:1-5

¹ And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan standing at his right hand to be his adversary. ² And Jehovah said unto Satan, Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan; yea, Jehovah that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? ³ Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the angel. ⁴ And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take the filthy garments from off him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with rich apparel (ASV 1901)

INTRODUCTION

The previous visions in this book focused on the deliverance of Israel of their captivity and the oppression they had and will experience throughout the Times of the Gentiles. It then discussed their future prosperity and expansion in Judah (southern Israel) and Jerusalem so that they under more peaceful time would not need to protect their city from marauders by means of a wall around the city. God in His Shekinah Glory would be a ring of fire around the city to protect them. God's Holy Spirit now is promising an internal cleansing and purification of all Israel from sin. Many who believe that God has forgotten Israel engage in the concept of Replacement Theology. That is, it is taught that the Church has replaced the nation of Israel. A substantial number of Scripture passages assure us that this is not the case and any efforts to deny Israel their rightful place in the present age and the future is outright heresy. Heresy is simply defined as adding to, subtracting from or twisting the meaning of Scripture.

This fourth vision shows how the cleansing and purification will be carried out. The priestly office and all its related functions will be reinstated. This is the first division of the ten in this chapter. Here in verses 1-5, there is a symbolic demonstration for the need for and promise to cleanse the people of Israel from all their sins in a permanent manner. We will see in the subsequent five verses that this cleansing that is promised is from the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a prophetic foreshadowing of the future event when "*all Israel shall be saved*" (Romans 11 26).

Because of all Israel's sins and the fact that God brought the Babylonians and the Assyrians into their land to destroy it many have asked, "how can these things be?" It would seem to many that Israel had committed sins too grievous and moral defilement to excessive to ever again carry out the holy priestly activities in Jehovah's sanctuary and regain their status as His appointed minister to bless the nations (Ezekiel 8:8-12; 13-14; 15-16; 17-18 etc.). However this is not the case. God has spoken on numerous occasions to assure us that the Jews even though they have sinned greatly will always be the apple of God's eye and He will forgive them after He allows them to be persecuted (Leviticus 26:41-46; Jeremiah 31:31-34; 35-37 etc.).

THE HIGHEST OF COURT ROOM DRAMAS

This passage of Scripture let's us see into the heavenly Throne Room of Jehovah God the Father. This vision is much different from the first three visions as there is no interpreting angel here. The text starts out with Zechariah being shown the scene in Heaven. Scripture periodically gives us glimpses into the Heavenly judgmental activities of God as they occur (e.g. Revelation chapters 4 & 5).

The participants are Jehovah God who is the Judge, Joshua the high priest is the defendant, and the Angel of the Lord (Jesus the Messiah) is the defense council. The accuser (Satan) is the prosecutor. Because of the many years of Jewish rebellion against God, Satan the accuser deems him unfit for the office of High Priest. God then rebukes Satan the accuser. Joshua was the High Priest who returned with Zerubbabel at the head

of the first colony of 49,897 exiles from the Captivity some sixteen years before in 536 B.C. after Cyrus's decree (Ezra 1:1-4). He has been given a special name in the Hebrew language. Joshua is one of a family of theophoric names. They are personal names given to individuals that have a root of the name of God within them. The Hebrew has many such names. They are then modified with an additional prefix, suffix or verbal alterations to accommodate the personal preference of the person designating the name. Some examples are: Hebrew name Yeshua (עושי) Jesus, that is itself a short form of Yehoshua (עשוהי) Joshua. The name (הדוהי) Yehudah or Anglicized is Judah means thanks to the Lord. (נחזוהי) Yehohanan from Ezra 10:6) means thanks to the Lord. (תנוהי) Yehonathan (I Samuel 14:6) Jonathan again expresses thanks to the Lord. The most widely known of all theophoric names is (לארשי) Yisrael. It combines (לא) EL with the future tense of the verb (הרש) sarah – "contend" "fight". The Bible (Genesis 32:28) gives clearly explains the origin of this name, given by the Angel of the Lord to the patriarch Jacob *"And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for thou hast striven with God and with men, and hast prevailed"*

This name Joshua give us insight into the fact that he was chosen and would prevail in this court room drama with the opponents contending for the future of the nation Israel. Joshua, the high priest who Zechariah personally knew, appears in the prophet's vision in a state of ritual impurity. With this being the case he is being condemned for it by Satan. All this takes place in the very presence of Jehovah God the Father. In fact this is exactly what is happening. As Satan (adversary) accuses the Jews for being unfaithful and focusing on Joshua as the representative of the Jewish spiritual life Jehovah God says, *"Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan; yea, Jehovah that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"* In other words the Jews are just coming off the seventy years of banishment from their land and Joshua has been saved from extermination (*plucked out of the fire*) by the Babylonians for just a time as this. He will be an instrumental part of the restoration of the Temple.

God, the judge, takes a empathetic view the events unfolding in this truly Supreme Court drama. Jehovah views Joshua as a chosen vessel and demands that he be known as such and provided appropriate attire befitting the chosen High Priest. For He says, *"And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take the filthy garments from off him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with rich apparel."* This command while He recognizes the nature of the past and future sins of Israel represented by the High Priest's *the filthy garments*, God desiring a restoration of Israel after their punishment wants Joshua to have the appropriate high Priests outfit representing the spiritual cleansing of the nation Israel. Therefore He says, *"Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with rich apparel."*

THE HIGH PRIEST'S CLOTHING

Exodus 28:2

And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.

First we'll examine the garments that the high priest wore in common with the other priests:

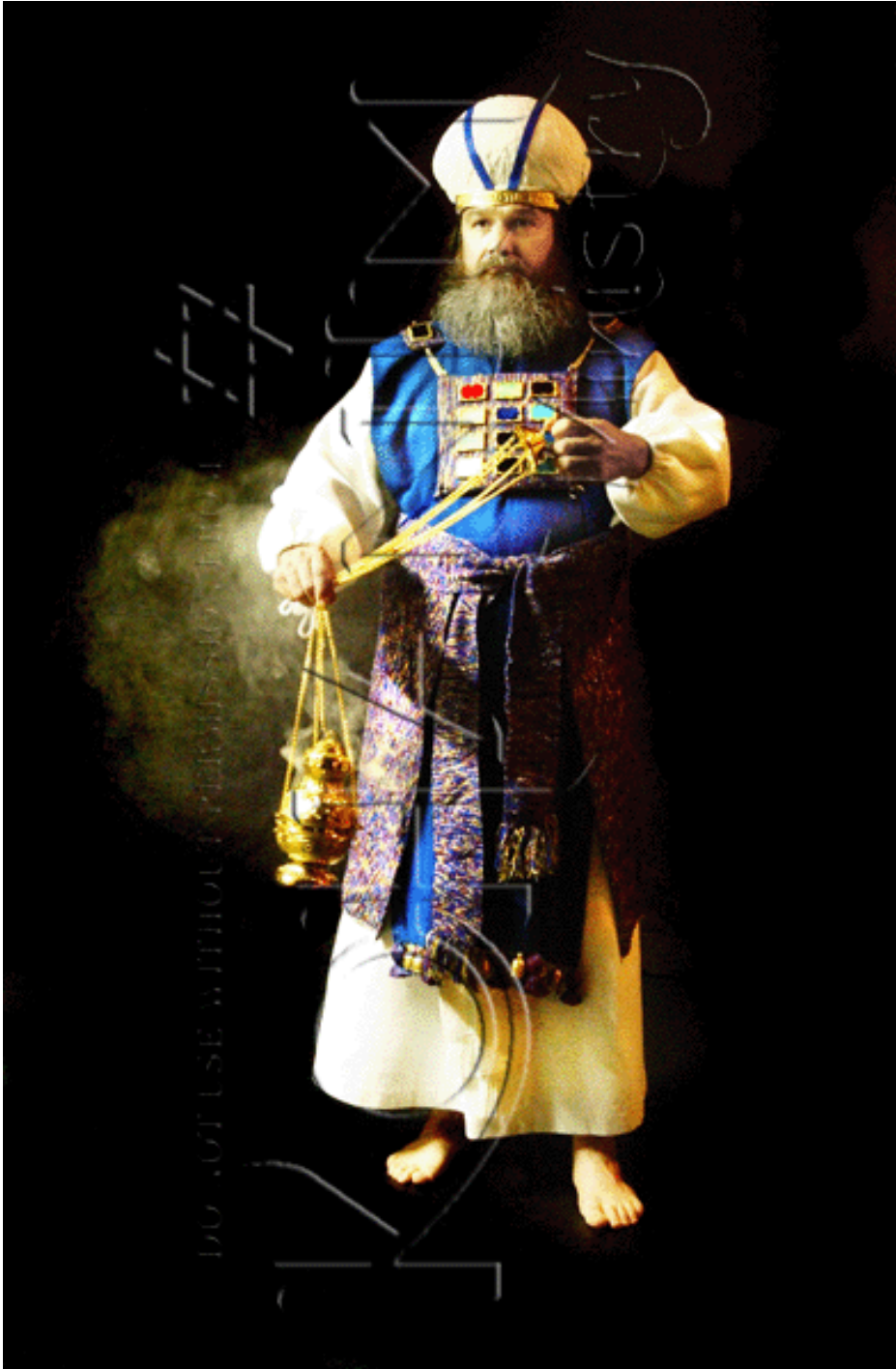


Photo from The Tabernacle Man.com

The High Priest in his robes

1. *Linen drawers.* These reached from the waist to the thigh (Exodus 28:42). Someone has said that these were to be worn as an evidence that the divine worship sanctioned no such sexual impurities as were associated with idolatrous worship, and that this is also the reason for the command in Exodus 20:26—“And do not go up to my altar on steps, lest your nakedness be exposed on it.”
2. *Tunic or shirt.* It was made of white linen, all one piece, had sleeves, and is believed to have reached to the ankles, and to have been of a checker pattern. (Exodus 28:39, 40; 29:5)
3. *Sash or girdle.* This was wound around the tunic between the waist and the shoulders. Josephus says it was four fingers broad, and “so loosely woven that you would think it were the skin of a serpent.” It was embroidered in colors. (Exodus 28:39)
4. *Turban or miter.* It was made of linen.

Now we'll examine the garments that were peculiar to the high priest:

1. *Robe.* This was woven of blue cloth, in one piece, with an opening by which it might be put on over the head. It was worn over the tunic, but whether it reached to the knees or to the ankles is uncertain. It was beautifully ornamented at the bottom with pomegranates in purple and scarlet. Little gold bells hung between these, and made a tinkling sound whenever the wearer moved. (Exodus 39:22–26). Jewish tradition teaches that the pomegranate is a symbol of righteousness because it is said to have 613 seeds, which corresponds with the 613 Laws of the Mosaic Covenant, or commandments, of the Torah. For this reason and others, it is customary to eat pomegranates on Rosh Hashanah. Moreover, the pomegranate represents fruitfulness, knowledge, learning, and wisdom.



2. *Epod.* The ordinary priest wore an epod (see 1 Samuel 22:18), but it was

different in material and style from that of the high priest. This was made of made “of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen” (Exodus 39:2). After that they “hammered out thin sheets of gold and cut strands to be worked into the blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen—the work of a skilled craftsman” (Exodus 39:3), who must have learned his skill while he was a slave in Egypt, for the art of weaving was well known to the ancient Egyptians. The epod was in two pieces, one for the back and one for the breast. The two pieces were joined by “shoulder pieces,” which were a continuation of the front part of the epod (Exodus 28:7; 39:4). On the shoulder pieces were two precious stones, each having the names of six of the tribes of Israel. These stones were placed in gold settings, which some think made clasps for fastening the shoulder pieces together. (Exodus 28:9–12) The two parts of the epod were fastened around the body by means of a waistband (girdle, KJV), which was really a portion of the front part of the epod (Exodus 28:8). The epod had no sleeves.



Photo From The Tabernacle man.com

3. *Breastplate*. This was made of the same material as the epod. It was half a cubit wide (9") and a cubit long (18"), but when doubled it became a half cubit square (9"), and formed a pouch or pocket. On the front of this were four rows of precious stones; three in each row, and on them were engraved the names of the twelve tribes. These stones were set in gold. The breastplate was fastened to the epod by golden chains. (Exodus 28:15–29) Connected with this breastplate

were the *Urim* and *Thummim*—Lights and Perfections—but precisely what these were no one knows. They were used as means of consulting the LORD in case of doubt (Numbers 27:21; 1 Samuel 28:6). How they were used is not known. Some think that the twelve stones were the Urim and Thummim, the stones themselves being the Urim, or Lights, and the names of the tribes engraved on them being the Thummim, or Perfections, because they represented the tribes in their tribal integrity. From the fact that the Urim and Thummim are said to be *in* the breastplate, others think that they were separate from the twelve stones and were put into the pocket behind them. Some believe them to have been three precious stones that were placed in this pouch of the breastplate to be used for casting lots to decided questions of doubts; and that on one of the stones was engraved *Yes*, on another *No*, the third being without inscription. The stone drawn out by the high priest would indicate the answer: affirmative, negative, or no answer to be given. This may be so, but there is no proof of it. Someone further suggested that the Urim and Thummim was a diamond, kept in the pocket of the breastplate, and having the ineffable name of the Deity inscribed on it. This one believed that this is the “white stone” referred to in Revelation 2:17. Again, there is no proof of this, and all such things are only speculations best left until the LORD clarifies it all in the ages to come.

Hebrew Name	King James	Septuagint	Color
1. Odem	Sardius	Sardius	Red
2. Pitdah	Topaz	Topaz	Topaz
3. Bareqeth	Carbuncle (Garnet)	Emerald	Green?
4. Nophek	Emerald	Anthrax (Garnet)	Red- black
5. Sappiyr	Sapphire	Sapphire	Blue
6. Yahalom	Diamond	Jasper	Many
7. Leshem	Ligure	Ligure	?
8. Shebuw	Agate	Agate	Many
9. Aclamah	Amethyst	Amethyst	Purple
10. Tarshish	Beryl	Chrysolite	Yellow
11. Shoham	Onyx	Beryl	White
12. Jashepheh	Jasper	Onyx	Many

Each Stone represents one Tribe of the Sons of Jacob

3 זבולון Zebulon	2 יששכר Issachar	1 יהודה Judah
6 גד Gad	5 נפתלי Naphtali	4 דן Dan
9 לוי Levi	8 שמעון Simeon	7 ראובן Reuben
12 בנימין Benjamin	11 יוסף Joseph	10 אשר Asher

4. *Diadem*. This was a plate of pure gold fastened around the miter or turban by a blue cord (lace, KJV), and having engraved on it the words: “HOLINESS TO THE LORD.” The NIV verses read: “Make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it as on a seal: HOLY TO THE LORD. Fasten a blue cord to it to attach it to the turban; it is to be on the front of the turban” (Exodus 28:36–37).¹

NEXT WEEK: JOSHUA THE HIGH PRIEST AND THE BRANCH WITH THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

Info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com Toll Free 877-706-2479

¹ Freeman, J. M., & Chadwick, H. J. (1998). *Manners & customs of the Bible* (139–142). North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos Publishers.