

Garments of Grace Clothing Imagery in the Bible Lesson 8 2Q 2011

Garments of Splendor

SABBATH

Read memory text, Isaiah 61:10 – thoughts?

If you lived in Isaiah’s day what might this message have meant to you?

- Did the people in the OT put on a different garment of salvation than we put on?
- Did the people in the OT put the garment on differently?
- What is the garment of salvation?
- How do we put on the garment of salvation?

Let’s turn to Zechariah chapter 3:

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.

Who are the characters in this plot?

- Who does Joshua represent?
- Who is the angel of the Lord?
 - Read Exodus 3:1-6:

Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² There **the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush**. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. ³ So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.”

⁴ When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, **God called to him from within the bush**, “Moses! Moses!”

And Moses said, "Here I am."

⁵ "Do not come any closer," **God said**. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." ⁶ Then he said, "**I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.**" At this, Moses hid his face, because **he was afraid to look at God**.

- And Satan is obviously himself

² 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?"

Who is speaking to Satan? The Lord, also known as the angel of the Lord. And which member of the Godhead is this? Jesus!

What is happening here? Why is the Lord rebuking Satan?

³ Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. ⁴ 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 rich garments on you."

⁵ 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.

⁶ The angel of the LORD gave this charge to Joshua: ⁷ "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'If you will walk in my ways 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.'

⁸ " 'Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch.

What does this mean?

In what is Joshua originally dressed? Who is accusing? Why is the devil accusing? How did Joshua get dressed in such filthy clothes? Did Joshua choose to wear such clothing? Did Joshua dress himself in such clothing? Was Joshua born with such clothing?

Who is defending Joshua? From whom is Christ defending him? Have you ever heard Jesus pleads to the Father for us?

What is taken away from Joshua when the filthy clothes are removed? Sin – what is God removing from us? Our sin –from where is sin removed? Is it removed from record books of heaven or from our hearts and minds, from our characters?

Where do the new clothes originate? What do they represent? How does Joshua get them? What does it mean for us?

It says they are symbolic of things to come – what might this mean? What things to come? Could it be the antitypical day of atonement when hearts and minds are restored into unity with God and rebelliousness, iniquity, and sin is removed from the heart and the law of God is written on the heart?

What does it mean a branch plucked from the fire? Does this text relate

- Jesus said in John 14:12, “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”
- Could this imply something about our experience?

If you were dying with cancer and a physician healed you would you be able to brag about yourself? But do you become a powerful witness for the one who healed you? What do they see in your home? Do they see the power of God, the power of love, the power of truth healing transforming and recreating you to be like Jesus?

Did Jesus reveal what perfect character looks like and that a human can live perfectly in harmony with God’s law of love? Did Jesus in His life demonstrate how God’s love, methods and

principles entering into a heart/mind damaged and ravaged by sin can heal, transform and renew that being back into perfection? Do we get that privilege?

EZE 36:22 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, `This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. ²³ I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when **I show myself holy through you before their eyes.**

EZE 36:24 " `For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. ²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; **I will cleanse you from all your impurities** and from all your idols. ²⁶ **I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.** ²⁷ **And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.**

"...The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple...behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver." Mal 3:1-3

"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, `Know the Lord,' because they will

all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.” Heb 8:10-11

SUNDAY

Read second paragraph, “Perhaps the scariest...” thoughts?

Read Isaiah 1:11-18:

- 1 “The multitude of your sacrifices—
 what are they to me?” says the LORD.
 “I have more than enough of burnt offerings,
 of rams and the fat of fattened animals;
 I have no pleasure
 in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.
- 12 When you come to appear before me,
 who has asked this of you,
 this trampling of my courts?
- 13 Stop bringing meaningless offerings!
 Your incense is detestable to me.
 New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—
 I cannot bear your evil assemblies.
- 14 Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts
 my soul hates.
 They have become a burden to me;
 I am weary of bearing them.
- 15 When you spread out your hands in prayer,
 I will hide my eyes from you;
 even if you offer many prayers,
 I will not listen.
 Your hands are full of blood;
- 16 wash and make yourselves clean.
 Take your evil deeds
 out of my sight!

What are the children of Israel doing? Who told them to pray, come to Temple, offer sacrifices, observe Sabbath? Why is God berating them?

Could it be that they failed to understand – verse 13, stop bringing “meaningless” sacrifices.

Then in verses 17, 18:

Stop doing wrong,
 17 learn to do right!
 Seek justice,
 encourage the oppressed.
 Defend the cause of the fatherless,
 plead the case of the widow.

18 “Come now, let us reason together,”
 says the LORD.
 “Though your sins are like scarlet,
 they shall be as white as snow;
 though they are red as crimson,
 they shall be like wool.

What is the point? We must press past simple symbolic representations, understandings, teachings, activities, observances and understand God, His methods, kingdom, principles, and what is happening in the Great Controversy over His character!

God wants an intelligent people who freely agree with Him!

Are we in danger of doing the same thing today of simply going through the motions of religion and not understanding God, His methods and principles etc.?

MONDAY

The lesson asks us to contemplate Isaiah 6:

6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two

they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

⁵ “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

What was Isaiah seeing? Do you think he was seeing the literal reality of heaven or a symbolic representation of heaven? Does God wear a robe that has a train so long it fills the entire temple?

Did Isaiah’s tongue get touched with a live coal? What was this symbolic of?

What does it mean your guilt is taken away your sin is atoned for? From where was the guilt taken? Was it legal guilt or was it the experience of guilt and shame that sin brings to the sinner – the conscious guilt which separates us from God?

How does a coal from the altar take away guilt and atone for sin? I thought it must be blood? What does this mean?

The Temple imagery has multiple applications – one is to Christ, “tear down this temple and in three days I will raise it up.”

Christ said, “unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no part with me.”

Could this represent the application, via the work of the Holy Spirit of Christ's character into the heart and mind of Isaiah? Could it represent the "burning" out of sinfulness and writing in of righteousness into the heart of the believer?

The lesson says his sin was "purged", but from where? From where does God purge sin?

Isaiah had denounced the sin of others; but now he sees himself exposed to the same condemnation he had pronounced upon them. **He had been satisfied with a cold, lifeless ceremony in his worship of God.** He had not known this until the vision was given him of the Lord. How little now appeared his wisdom and talents as he looked upon the sacredness and majesty of the sanctuary. How unworthy he was! how unfitted for sacred service! . . . {CC 234.2}

The vision given to Isaiah represents the condition of God's people in the last days. They are privileged to see by faith the work that is going forward in the heavenly sanctuary. "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." As they look by faith into the holy of holies, and see the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, they perceive that they are a people of unclean lips,--a people whose lips have often spoken vanity, and whose talents have not been sanctified and employed to the glory of God. Well may they despair as they contrast their own weakness and unworthiness with the purity and loveliness of the glorious character of Christ. But if they, like Isaiah, will receive the impression the Lord designs shall be made upon the heart, if they will humble their souls before God, there is hope for them. The bow of promise is above the throne, and **the work done for Isaiah will be performed in them.** God will respond to the petitions coming from the contrite heart. {CC 234.3}

We want the living coal from off the altar placed upon our lips. We want to hear the word spoken, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." {CC 234.4}

The live coal is symbolical of purification. If it touches the lips, no impure word will fall from them. {CC 234.5}

Who wants this live coal? Which means what? We want our hearts and minds purified to speak only the truth about God!

TUESDAY

The lesson asks us to consider Isaiah 51:6-8:

- 6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
 look at the earth beneath;
 the heavens will vanish like smoke,
 the earth will wear out like a garment
 and its inhabitants die like flies.
 But my salvation will last forever,
 my righteousness will never fail.
- 7 “Hear me, you who know what is right,
 **you people who have my law in your hearts:
 Do not fear the reproach of men
 or be terrified by their insults.**
- 8 For the moth will eat them up like a garment;
 the worm will devour them like wool.
 But my righteousness will last forever,
 my salvation through all generations.”

Thoughts? Who is it that hears God? Those with His law in their hearts, and what did God say we are not to fear? The reproach of men, nor their insults or attacks. Does this have application today?

What does it mean to have the law written in the heart? Does it mean we hold to a certain set of doctrines or worship on a certain day?

What does it look like to have the law written on the heart? Would it look like Jesus?

So, in the church if the law is written on the heart, how do we treat those who disagree with us on a point of theology? In our class how are we treating those who disagree with us?

I know I need more grace. I have been tempted to anger and frustration. How should we treat those who oppose this message?

Would those who have God's law written on their heart go behind the scenes and spread rumors or attack reputation? Should we fear those who do this?

What is the Christlike response?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, "It's always..." thoughts?

Do some people worship a God who is severe and brings punishments upon people? Does it make a difference in whom we become?

This week Kathy Kiley sent me an article from the Los Angeles Times which reported on a recent research article that found there were no differences in cheating in college exams between those who believe in God and those who don't. What was surprising is that those who believed in a compassionate God were more likely to cheat than those who believe in a "angry, punitive God."

The article suggested that believing in an angry punitive God may make nicer people- thoughts about that?

<http://www.urbanchristiannews.com/ucn/2011/04/cheating-and-god-study-ties-willingness-to-cheat-viewpoint-on-what-god-is-like.html>

What is the problem? The underlying theology of both groups is that the problem with sin is God gets offended, it breaks God's rules, and He is the great judge who determines our sentences. They see sin as a legal problem. Therefore, a compassionate God doesn't

enforce consequences but puts them on Jesus and it doesn't matter what we do.

Those who believe in an angry punitive God, believe God will punish us if we keep doing bad after we know about Jesus. Thus they want to avoid punishment and don't cheat.

Is the problem with sin that God is required to punish? Or is the problem with sin that sin damages and destroys the sinner? Sin is lawlessness, choosing to operate outside the protocols God built life to operate upon.

Does the view of God taught in the class lead you to be more or less likely to cheat? Why?

THURSDAY

The lesson asks us to read Isaiah 61 and discuss

What do you hear in this passage?

What is the Lord's vengeance? What is being described?

What is the everlasting covenant? What is the garment of salvation?

Does this have any application to us today?

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 1 and 2