

#330 Kingdom: Garments of the High Priest

Probably one of the most misunderstood aspects of the “priesthood ministry” is related to the garments of the priests. Since the “priesthood” has now changed we must also change our evaluation of the garments. The garments of the priests, who were after the order of Aaron, are just types and shadows of the “real garments” of the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Jesus, our High Priest, has now assumed His Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

Heb 7:11 Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there **for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek**, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? [12] **For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.**

Heb 7:17] For it is witnessed of Him, “THOU ART A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.”

Since this Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek is an eternal priesthood and is established according to the power of an indestructible Life, it should be obvious that the “garments” also must be of a different order and no longer natural garments made of cloth or fine linen. Still these “garments” are accurate types and shadows of the true garments, even if the “true garments” are of an entirely different “material.”

Exo 28:2] “And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, **for glory and for beauty.** [3] “And you shall speak to all the skillful persons whom I have endowed with the spirit of wisdom, that they **make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister as priest to Me.**

EX 28:40 “**And for Aaron’s sons you shall make tunics; you shall also make sashes for them, and you shall make caps for them, for glory and for beauty.** [41] “And you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him; and you shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve Me as priests. [42] “And you shall make for them linen breeches to cover their bare flesh; they shall reach from the loins even to the thighs. [43] “And they shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they enter the tent of meeting, or when they approach the altar to minister in the holy place, so that they do not incur guilt and die.

It would be difficult to over state the importance of these garments to the priesthood. They were a matter of life and death to those who came into the Holy Place to minister to the Lord. Therefore, it is essential that we also make the proper and accurate evaluation and application of these garments in their reality as they apply to us personally and to the priesthood corporately.

First we must establish that we are not referring to some outward clothing that is either acceptable or unacceptable to God. The garments refer to our spiritual clothing that makes us acceptable to God. These garments refer to our “righteousness before God.” This is precisely where the misunderstanding in too much of the church is found. There is a great confusion between our “good

works or our behavior” and our righteousness before God. Trying to approach God because we feel justified by our “good works or our good behavior” is unacceptable to God and is the cause of some “spiritual death” in the various assemblies.

When we listen to different types of ministries we discover several statements that are very dangerous for those who desire to minister to the Lord in the next restoration. These statements are glibly given as if they were gospel truth for all to accept. For example; God has clothed you with the robe of righteousness. We used to sing a song that had those words also. As you travel around you are clothed with righteousness and God doesn't see your sin. The implication is that we are clothed with righteousness similar to way Adam and Eve was clothed with the glory. We are “clothed” with a thing called righteousness which forms a garment for us to wear. As long as we have on this garment God doesn't see our sin. Most of us will agree that this sounds correct but it could get us into deep trouble in the next restoration.

There is no such “thing” as righteousness that we can obtain from Christ. This may seem like a small point but I can assure you that this is a matter of spiritual life or spiritual death. Christ does not GIVE us His Righteousness to wear around to hide our sin and iniquity.

Jer 33:16] `In those days Judah shall be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell in safety; and this is the name by which she shall be called: **the LORD is our righteousness.**'

1 Cor 1:30] But by His doing **you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,** [31] that, just as it is written, “LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD.”

Christ Jesus does NOT give these things to us. He becomes “to us” these things when we are IN HIM who IS these things. Christ Jesus IS our Righteousness. He does not give a “robe” of righteousness to wear around. God Puts us into Christ who becomes our wisdom from God, our righteousness, our sanctification and our redemption. He does not GIVE us these things. **He becomes these things.** Outside of Christ we have NONE of these things and are naked.

2 Cor 5:21] He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, **that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

2PE 1:1 Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, **by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:** [2] Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; [3] seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us **by His own glory and excellence.**

This Verse is very important and maybe the “Key” to what I think is necessary to establish us firmly in the next dimension of Holy Place Activity. This has to do with **the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:** First we should clearly understand that this is HIS righteousness and not ours. This IS the RIGHTEOUSNESS that qualifies Jesus Christ to be our God and Savior. If He had not obtained His Own Righteousness He could NOT be our Savior and we

would have no way to be saved. We are saved by His Righteousness. This “Righteousness” is solely FOR HIM and cannot be given to us. His “Righteousness” can NEVER be reckoned as our righteousness. His RIGHTEOUSNESS is what He obtained by His personal obedience of His Life before God while He was on earth. It just would not be “righteous” of God to impart that righteousness to us. This “Righteousness” belongs uniquely and exclusively to the Man, Christ Jesus.

We should be clear about our “Vine / branch union with Christ.” When does that take place? We cannot be in this union with Jesus in His birth or in His life on earth. We cannot even be in this union with Jesus in His death or in His burial. We must, then, only be in union with Him in His Resurrection.

John 12: 24] “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. The harvest of many grains are the result of His resurrection. Our union with Him then is in resurrection but NOT someday as is taught. Our union with Him is by His Resurrection Life in us. As wonderful as this is it is still not the righteousness that becomes our garments before God.

Before Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead He was righteousness before God. We can observe that Righteous Life from a distance and many do. We may read about it in scripture and many do. However, sharing in His righteousness is quite different than observing it.

Now, I believe this to be true but I am open for correction. God does NOT give us or impute to us Christ’s righteousness, nor does He impart it. Christ’s Righteousness is His exclusively. He cannot “share it with us” because it belongs exclusively to Him! He ALONE can be assigned this “RIGHTEOUSNESS.” His righteous acts are not assigned to us. If this IS true, then how will we ever be counted righteous and stand before a Holy God?

Jesus Christ, Himself, must become our righteousness. We must be “clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ.” Rom 13: 14] **But put on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. We may approach God when we are “in Christ” because Christ has become our righteousness. He IS our Garments of Beauty, our Garments of Glory and our Garments of Righteousness. Trying to locate some other garment in which we can approach God will certainly fail. Every other garment is filthy rags. Our “righteousness before God” is not a “thing” called righteousness but a Person who IS RIGHTEOUS. This is NOT the righteousness that has been attributed to Him, exclusively, but He, Himself, Who Is Righteous!

There seems to be a misconception that if we have faith that God attributes that to us as righteousness similar to what is spoken of Abraham. Outside of Christ Jesus we have NO righteousness even IF we believe something about Jesus. God’s solution to our “unrighteousness and sin” is to forgive us through the blood and then Put Us Into Christ who becomes our righteousness. Many have been told that “forgiveness of sins” makes us righteous before God. Even a casual reading of scripture should prove that wrong.

Our “works of righteousness” that are the result of God having declared us righteous in Christ

should not be considered as “our righteousness before God.” Our works of righteousness before men will never recommend us before God or make us safe in that holy place. Our ONLY righteousness before God is the fact that we are IN CHRIST who has been made our righteousness. Many still assume that God will give us a THING called salvation when we believe in Calvary. No! What God gives us is Christ who IS our Salvation. In Him we are saved but outside of Him there is NO salvation.

Therefore, we may conclude that forgiveness of sins is one thing but being clothed with Jesus Christ is another experience! Forgiveness of sin is always related to His blood. But being “IN HIM” is our righteousness before God.

Gal 3: 27] For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

[28] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Being found “in Christ” should not be considered as a small thing. He Is Our Garment to stand before God. He does not GIVE us a garment so we can stand before God. He IS our Garment and He IS our righteousness AND He is all the other things we need to fulfill God’s Eternal Purpose. Everything that God has to give us is “In Him, by Him, for Him, through Him, and to Him, are ALL things.

Is God then satisfied with our “salvation.” Yes! If our “salvation” IS Christ. If someone has promised us “salvation” by saying these words after me then this “salvation” may just be a another doctrine and not a real experience. Any person who is “saved” can only be “saved” in Christ Jesus. No one can stand before God EXCEPT in Christ Jesus! IN CHRIST JESUS we have access to the Father! To try to stand before God in some kind of theoretical righteousness is very dangerous. All other KINDS of righteousness are as filthy rags.

Forgiveness of Sins is one thing but the garments of the priests that stand before God is quite another. These garments are a very serious thing before God. Aaron was warned by Moses NOT to tear his garment when his sons died before God because Aaron would also die.

Lev 10: 6] Then Moses said to Aaron and to his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, “**Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, so that you may not die,** and that He may not become wrathful against all the congregation. But your kinsmen, the whole house of Israel, shall bewail the burning which the LORD has brought about. [7] “**You shall not even go out from the doorway of the tent of meeting, lest you die; for the LORD’S anointing oil is upon you.**”

Since our garment IS Christ and He IS our righteousness before God we must be careful how we evaluate ourselves before God. If we think because we have been chosen by God and called to some ministry, that alone qualifies us to stand before the Lord, minister to the Lord and burn Incense, we should reevaluate our righteousness. Is our righteousness our ministry OR Christ alone? A mistake here could be fatal to our spiritual life and acceptance before God.

Some think they are saved by grace through faith and righteousness has nothing to do with our

salvation. That is because they consider forgiveness of sins as their final salvation and not one small step into our salvation which IS Christ Jesus, exclusively! To be “saved” by an abstract faith in Calvary but a faith that leaves us outside of Christ is of the lowest order of salvation, IF it can even be considered as “salvation.” Our “Salvation” IS IN CHRIST JESUS WHO IS OUR SALVATION.

This may seem like an irrelevant difference to those content with natural light but to those who will make the transition, this is a matter of spiritual Life or spiritual death. The one thing we must be absolutely sure about in the Holy Place Life and Ministry to God is this; Who IS our Righteousness? Do we have ANY righteousness that can recommend us before God? Do righteous acts account as our righteousness before God? If our conduct is perfect and our ministry is successful and thousands are being saved, does that accumulate to our righteousness? This is one area we better get right. That is this; If we stand before God without being in the Garment of Christ, His Righteousness, we will die before God.

For the Messianic Jews to even consider rebuilding the Temple and restoring the priesthood with natural garments and certain furniture indicates gross ignorance of God’s righteousness and the garments that are ONLY Christ Jesus. Putting on skull caps and prayer shawls etc reflects an ignorance that surely is not “Messianic.”

To bring “some thing” as atonement for sin is not just error but an abomination before God. To offer an animal on a rebuilt altar in Jerusalem by a religious Jew would be a total rejection of Calvary and the sacrifice of the Son of God and be subject to the fire and wrath of God. In like manner we must not present any righteousness before God EXCEPT the righteousness which IS CHRIST.

Righteousness is not just negative in that it is set against sin but it is positive in regard to our standing before the presence of God as priests. We must be “righteous” in BOTH directions. That is toward sin on the one hand and toward God on the other hand. The Blood of Jesus, through our faith in His sacrifice, is toward sin. He then IS our righteousness toward God and we can come boldly to the Presence of God IN HIM. Our righteousness toward God is by faith in our being acceptable to God in Him. Those who are righteous live by faith in both directions.

Occasionally , we may have been walking uprightly and find nothing wrong with our conduct. In those times we can come boldly before the throne of grace because we feel there is nothing between us and God. In other times we have failed miserably and demonstrated an attitude that is not Christian. In those times we set a distance between us and God because our conduct has been bad. Our freedom to pray and speak with God has been seriously affected because we feel our conduct was wrong or less that it should be. We feel that our conduct is keeping us from God. I am guessing that each one of us can identify with this problem and have experienced it.

The main problem with the natural mind is that it identifies our righteousness with our conduct or attitude or words. When our righteousness before God is based upon what we do, we are wide open to condemnation. Of course our righteousness before men is based upon our character, attitudes and conduct because that is what men see. I am not debating this kind of righteousness.

My main concern for this next restoration is that we must get a clear revelation of how we can stand before God and ministry to Him. Without righteousness this is impossible and if we present to God “our righteousness” based upon what we have done or didn’t do this is again unacceptable and maybe dangerous.

Regardless of our conduct before men, we must ALWAYS stand before God “In Christ” and in “His Righteousness.” In other words; We must stand before God to minister to Him in our priestly Garments which IS CHRIST. The change to priestly garments takes place following water baptism and before the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. The order is not the thing but the experiences. The Holy Anointing Oil is poured on the bonnet and the garments but AFTER the bonnet is in place. Having our head covered declares openly that we are no longer the head and we no longer make the decisions. My opinion before God is covered and irrelevant. My good ideas are covered.

1 Cor 12:13] For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. [14] For the body is not one member, but many.

While this is still very controversial, we are baptized or immersed into the one body by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is then, according to this scripture, that we become “members” of the body.

In Revelation 1 we see Jesus in Priests garments walking among the Lampstands with His Head uncovered. Why? Because He is now the Head of His body. However, since He is the ONLY Head, all the members must have their heads covered. [bonnet in place]

The priests after the order of Aaron had to have (1) on the proper garments AND (2) the bonnet on their head, and (3) the anointing oil and (4) must be consecrated to enter the Holy Place or minister to the Lord OR minister to the people. We have covered #3 and # 4 in other studies.

While the priests, the sons of Aaron, had to have on their own garments and bonnets and anointing and their personal consecration we know that is just a type and shadow of the Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Now we are making application to our High Priest, Jesus Christ, and to His sons who are priests after the same order. The difference is that the “sons of our High Priest” are now members of His body. The corporate priesthood after the order of Melchizedek is (1) our High Priest and (2) His body which make up the Kingdom of Priests or those who are Kings and Priests unto God and our Father.

If we can “see” Christ and His body dwelling in the “High Priests Garments” we begin to get the picture. These are not just a set of outward garments but the garments are Christ Jesus, our righteousness. To approach the Glory of God’s Presence in any other garment would be very, very dangerous.

My theory (based upon scripture) is this; Christ Jesus does not “loan” us His righteousness so we can approach God. He does NOT give us a robe of righteousness to wear to make us acceptable

before God. We cannot presume that our good conduct or our good works can be accepted by God as sufficient righteousness to stand in that Holy Place. "Imputed Righteousness" is a term that needs to be carefully defined from scripture and not from how we think it should be!

My understanding is that we can ONLY approach God "in Christ", who IS our righteousness. If we are ever going to stand directly in front of the Ark of the Covenant, at the Altar of Incense and burn Incense, we must settle this question once and for all time.

This "gospel" of God loves you just like you are and if you are God's child He is calling you to sit on His lap to play and whosoever will, may come into the Holiest of All and abide in His presence, really doesn't address this great problem of His Righteousness and His Holiness and His Burning Glory. This "gospel" lacks credibility because it doesn't deal with the problem of God's Person. In the Holy Place OR the Most Holy Place "pastoral righteousness" or any "ministry righteousness" is just fantasy. We are either "priests" who have taken our place in the body of and within "garments" of the High Priest or we better stick to some Outer Court Ministry.

We may speak of "imputed righteousness" that is related to sin but we should see that (if it is true) it is of a different dimension. When we speak of the righteousness that is related to God's Person and His Presence we should see this is much more serious. Because most of the church has focused upon the "imputed righteousness" by faith in His blood and sacrifice, we may be ignorant of the seriousness of "the righteousness" required to stand in His Presence.

It seems clear that most song leaders can't discern the difference between worship and righteousness. It is assumed that God is so hungry for worship that He ignores righteousness. When we substitute "worship" for "Christ's righteousness" we have made a very serious mistake. Thank God, the worship leader only pretends to take us into that terrible place of the everlasting burnings and the unapproachable light.

One of the mysteries of God is that He solved both problems in our so great a salvation. He solved the problem of sin by the forgiveness through the blood. He solved the problem of righteousness by placing us into Christ Jesus, who then becomes our righteousness. A careful study of scripture indicates this is not automatic when our sins are forgiven at the Bronze Altar. There are five more experiences that prepare us to stand in His Presence. However, there is ONLY ONE righteousness by which we are qualified to stand in His Presence and that IS the Righteousness that IS Christ. There is ONLY ONE GARMENT by which we may approach God and that Garment is Christ Jesus. If we are "in that Garment" it means we are "in Christ" because Christ IS Our Garment and He IS our Righteousness. If We are "In Christ" it can only mean that we are His Body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.

The same anointing then that is upon Christ is upon His Body. My theory is this IS the inner anointing that teaches us all things, and is true and is Not a lie. Not only are we "immersed into Christ" but we are also "immersed in the Holy Spirit. However, our righteousness IS Christ!