

Articles and Sermons :: Jesus Ever Lives to Make Intercession for Us (Hebrews 7:25) by Zac Poonen

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In Zechariah chapter 3, we read that Joshua the high priest was standing before the Lord and Satan stood there to accuse him. Satan is always seeking to accuse and harm the leaders. He targets them and their wives and children. Don't be harsh in judging a leader, because he is a bigger target of Satan than you are. His wife and children are bigger targets of Satan than your wife and children. Satan stood there to accuse Joshua to the Lord. But the Lord replied saying, "I, the Lord, reject your accusations" (Zech. 3:2). We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Sometimes we are so taken up with the accuser that we forget all about our Advocate Who is praying for us.

There are two ministries going on in heaven right now. One is Satan's, accusing. He accused Job and Joshua. At the same time, there is another ministry going on in heaven. "Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us" (Heb.7:25). The two ministries are a ministry of accusation and a ministry of intercession. Those who are in fellowship with Satan will accuse other believers. Every time you gossip or speak evil against another believer, whether you know it or not, you are holding hands with Satan saying, "I agree with you, Satan. He is like that." And every time you pray for a brother who is weaker, you are holding hands with Jesus and saying, "Lord, I agree with You. We have to pray for that brother and deliver him from that problem." How many times have you held hands with Satan and how many times have you held hands with Jesus? You know. Let it be different in the coming days.

When Joshua was being accused, the Lord said, "I reject your accusations." This is what I say too when people come to me with accusations. When people come to me in my house and accuse a brother, I tell them, "Let me call that brother immediately and tell him what you have told me." Invariably the accuser says, "No. Please don't do that." I reply, "I must. I am faithful to all my brothers. If someone had told me something about you, I would have called you immediately and told you. So when you tell me something about somebody else, I must call him and tell him too." Do you know what the result of my approach has been? My house has been protected from being a place of gossip for a long, long time now. I would encourage you to do what I have done.

The Lord replied to Satan saying, "I reject your accusations. This man is a child of God. He is a burning stick that I snatched out of the fire." Since Joshua's garments were filthy, the angel said, "Take away his filthy clothes." This is a picture of Jesus our Advocate pleading for us saying, "Take away his filthy clothes. Put new clothes on him." And Joshua stood there clothed now in the righteousness of Christ. That is how we must see all of God's children - clothed in the righteousness of Christ. And now we come to the best part. Zechariah was so excited seeing all this that he joined the Lord in spirit and said, "Lord, this is wonderful. Now put a nice turban on his head as well." He joined Jesus in making his filthy brother glorious.

Do you want to share in this ministry of "making your brother glorious"?

What does this mean in practical terms? It means that when someone comes along and accuses a brother to me, I reply saying, "But you know he has some good qualities too." And I name some of them. All of a sudden, the accuser's mouth is shut. This is a wonderful ministry to have - even when we pray. John Hyde (known as 'Praying Hyde') was a great American missionary in North India in the early 20th century. He relates an incident where he was praying and began to tell the Lord about the weaknesses of a certain pastor. All of a sudden, he felt as if he was being choked. The Holy Spirit told him not to get into a ministry of accusation, but to intercede for that man. He learned that day not to accuse people even in prayer!

Don't join the devil in criticising God's people. Instead, pray for them. Whenever the Lord reminds you of a sincere servant of God, pray for him. He may be facing some Satanic attack at that very moment. Ask the Lord to protect his family and to bless his ministry.