

## Restored: Robe, Ring and Royalty

*"<sup>21</sup> And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'<sup>22</sup> But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.' "* - Luke 15:18-20.

The father was so elated by his son's return that young man did not have time to complete his rehearsed prayer to his father. The father had already forgiven the son of his sins, and demonstrated his immense love for his son by clothing him in the best robe accentuated by a ring and sandals. The father had restored the son to his former position in the household. The significance of each item is noted.

### 1. Robe of Righteousness

The Bible shows the importance of a change of clothes. Lazarus' grave-clothes were removed from him signifying that he was no longer dead but alive. Likewise, the son's dirty garments were replaced by the best robe, symbolizing that he was no longer spiritually dead but alive in Christ. Second, it is symbolic of Christ's death for the sinner, the latter who after being saved and redeemed from the hands of the enemy was no longer clothed in sin, but in a robe of righteousness.

Zechariah 3:4 notes:

*He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, "Remove the filthy garments from him." Again he said to him, "See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes."*

Isaiah 61:10 also states:

*"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."*

Righteousness is one of the key characteristics of the child of God. Nelson's Bible Dictionary explains:

*'Righteousness (is) holy and upright living, in accordance with God's standard. As the prophet Isaiah said, "We are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Man cannot be righteous in the sight of God on his own merits. Therefore, man must have God's righteousness imputed, or transferred, to him. The cross of Jesus is a public demonstration of God's righteousness. God accounts or transfers the righteousness of Christ to those who trust in Him . We do not become righteous because of our inherent goodness; God sees us as righteous because of our identification by faith with His Son.'*

## 2. Ring of Authority

The ring symbolizes that the young man was not a servant in his father's household but one of his sons who had authority. Likewise, as a child of God we are no longer slaves or servants of sin but now stand in a position of power backed by heavenly authority. See how Joseph is treated in a similar fashion by Pharaoh when his status changed from prisoner to prince. Joseph is clothed with fine garments and given a signet ring of authority:

*"Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I now put you in charge of Egypt; Then Pharaoh took off his signet ring and put it on Joseph's finger. He had Joseph dressed in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck" -Genesis. 41:41-42.*

"This designated Joseph's position and status in the kingdom. Someone wearing the king's ring could exercise the king's authority."<sup>2</sup>Also, the young man, wearing one of the father's ring can exercise the father's authority in his household. As a child of God, we too are given heavenly authority to exercise here on earth:

*"Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you." - Luke 10:19.*

*"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."- Matthew 16:19.*

## 3. Sandals Signifying Social Status and More

I believe the young man was barefooted when he arrived home. The father instructed his servants to put sandals on his feet. In biblical times, walking barefooted had certain significance:

1. Walking barefoot symbolized the lack of social status;
2. Going without shoes was a common punishment or judgment;
3. Captives went barefoot and their footwear was often taken as a trophy.<sup>1</sup>

*'And the men which were expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them.' - 2 Chronicles 28:15*

The young man in the parable was forgiven, and he was no longer punished for his sin. By the wearing of his sandals his status had changed. He had moved from the status of sinner to saint. Through forgiveness from his father, he had been released as a prisoner of sin, and now lived as a prince of peace. His life was no longer one of chaos and confusion, but peace and prosperity.

There was no longer the need for the mourning of a lost son.

*"The Jewish custom of not wearing shoes was also taken as a show of remorse, penance or mourning (Book of Isaiah 20:2). In Talmudic times both the pall bearers and the mourners went barefoot. When David was in mourning he went barefooted." <sup>1</sup>*

*'And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and went as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot' - 2 Sam 15:30*

The father realized that the son who was thought to be dead was now alive. Therefore, there was no need for mourning as symbolized by his son being barefooted.

The young man was restored to his original position of 'sonship' and was clothed in royalty. This is what God wants to do with every sinner. Cleanse him from his sins and adorn him in a robe of righteousness, with the symbolic ring of authority, and the heavenly status of a heir to the most high King shod with the gospel of peace. Be blessed and Happy Republic Day!

*Heavenly Father,*

*"Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son (or daughter). Forgive me, O Lord, and let Your mercy and goodness prevail in my life. I thank You for Your Son Jesus who died for my sins. Today I am clothed with the robe of righteousness, and sealed with the ring of authority. My feet are shod with the gospel of peace, standing majestically as a heir of the Most High King. I am no longer a slave to sin, but a child of God, clothe in royalty. I thank You, O God for your loving kindness, grace and divine favour towards me. In Jesus' mighty name I pray with thanksgiving. Amen."*

### **Memory Verse:**

*"See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes."- Zechariah 3:4*

Notes:

1. All About Shoes. <http://allaboutshoes-toeslayer.blogspot.com/2010/11/sandals-biblical-profile.html>
2. Bible Sign and Symbols: Rings. <https://jesusway4you.com/2016/03/15/bible-signs-and-symbols-ring/>