

God Remembered
Zechariah 6:9-15
Chapter 10
“The Crowning of The High Priest”

The Word of The LORD came to me: “Take an offering from the exiles, from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon, and go that same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah. Take silver and gold, make a crown, and place it on the head of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. You are to tell him: This is what The LORD of Armies says: Here is a man whose name is BRANCH; He will branch out from His place and build The LORD’S temple. Yes, he will bear royal splendor and will sit on His throne and rule. There will be a priest on His throne, and there will be peaceful counsel between them. The crown will reside in The LORD’S temple as a memorial to Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen son of Zephaniah. People who are far off will come and build The LORD’S temple, and you will know that The LORD of Armies has sent me to you. This will happen when you fully obey The LORD your God.” **Zechariah 6:9-15**

This portion of **Zechariah Chapter Six** is to say the least... glorious! It is a prophecy in the form of a symbolic gesture. We have already been introduced to the High Priest Joshua, back in **Chapter Three** as he was clothed in filthy garments and declared as holy. Then he was given a *mitre* (crown like turban) to wear. Here we see him crowned a second time with a king’s crown made of silver and gold. And while the first of these events was simply a vision, the second was an actual ceremony that God required His people, namely Zechariah and the deputation from among the exiles, from Babylon to carry out. When we look at the symbolic significance of this coronation of the high priest, we can see one of the most beautifully detailed images of Christ’s second coming in all of Scripture.

When Jesus (whose Name was Joshua) came the first time, he took the filthiness of our sin upon Himself and died upon a cross. It was on that day that our sinfulness was removed fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah:

—“And I will take away the iniquity of this land in a single day.” **Zechariah 3:9(b)**

You see, just as Joshua was crowned the first time in **Zechariah’s Third Chapter**, Jesus The Messiah was also crowned with a crown of thorns upon the day He made us His Bride, holy. He took our sins upon Himself so that we could be clothed in His righteousness. He is the glorious “*Branch*” from David’s line, who was, and is, and is to come. And He like Joshua will not only be crowned once, but twice. He was crowned as our High Priest, when He offered up the ultimate sacrifice for our sins, and He remains our High Priest today, as He ever lives to intercede before the throne of God on our behalf (**Hebrews 7:25**).

But just as Joshua was to be coronated a second time with a kingly crown, Our LORD Jesus will come again and will reign in power and glory as the King of kings and LORD of lords. He came first as The Lamb of God, but shall come again as The Lion of The Tribe of Judah. He is our Priest and King. So let us see all of the symbolism in Joshua’s coronation that describes its ultimate fulfillment in Christ.

It is important to note that this “*second coronation*” of Joshua occurs after all the visions concerning God’s judgment upon the world, culminating with the “*four chariot judgments*” that eradicate sin from around the globe, with the emphasis upon destroying the Babylonian spirit (**chapter 6:1-8**) that now pervades every aspect of this world. It is after these judgments that the High Priest was to be crowned as king. This of course is symbolic of Christ’s ultimate rule once the kingdoms of this earth have been eradicated as described in the book of **Revelation**.

It is also important to see that only a portion of Israel, namely the delegation of the Babylonian exiles; Heldai (whose name means “worldly”), Tobijah (meaning “The LORD is good”), Jedaiah (meaning “The LORD knows”), Josiah (“The LORD heals”), was included in the ceremony. It was these chosen men who were to provide the materials to fashion Joshua’s crown. While I am not willing to say this with absolute certainty, there is, for me, a significance in the names God has chosen in this passage. For The LORD knows that we are indeed sinful and worldly, but in His goodness, He has healed us and by the sacrifice of His Son. While I do not know whether our not this was intended by the names we are provided in this passage, as a pastor once told me: “It’ll preach!”

It is also worth mentioning that these men were chosen **out of** the nation of Israel, for not everyone was invited. God intends to keep His promises to Abraham, and therefore, a remnant of Israel will turn to Christ in the last days and find salvation. But many who have rejected Him, including those who crucified Him, will not be invited to participate in His ultimate coronation when He returns to rule.

The word that Zechariah uses for “crown” (*atarah* in the Hebrew) is actually in plural form and could be rendered “crowns”. Many have speculated that there were others who were to be crowned that day, but personally I believe that this is a reference to Christ, the Priest/King, who shall be crowned with many crowns upon His glorious return (**Revelation 19:12**).

It is also significant that in this passage it is Joshua being crowned, rather than Zerubbabel, for it is the later who was of the king’s lineage, and Joshua was only a priest. These two offices were always kept separate from one another. Kings could not be priests, and priests could not be kings. For insight into just how serious God was about this separation, one could look to King Uzziah, who was stricken with leprosy for entering into The LORD’S temple and offering incense as only the priest were allowed to do (**2 Chronicles 26:16-23**). But here we see the two offices reconciled into one. Yet another picture or symbol, if you will, of Christ’s coming as both priest and king. This is why Zechariah says:

Here is a man whose Name is BRANCH; He will branch out from His place and build The LORD’S temple. Yes, He will build The LORD’S temple; He will bear royal splendor and will sit on his throne and rule. There will be a priest on His throne, and there will be peaceful counsel between the two of them. Zechariah 6:12b-13

So, the high priest Joshua was crowned with a king’s crown, just as The LORD Jesus (also *Joshua*) will one day rule as our priest and king **“and the government will be on His shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6b)**. Zechariah goes on to say that **“the crown will reside in the LORD’S temple as a memorial...”**. Jesus will build His final temple in Jerusalem and will reign there for a thousand years (**Revelation 20**).

And here is the amazing part (as if it all were not truly amazing). People from every nation and tongue will come and worship Him in His splendid reign.

Then I saw thrones, and people seated on them who were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of The Word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and who had not accepted the mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. Revelation 20:4

So Christ the Priest/King will establish His throne in Jerusalem, and those who have placed their faith in Him, both Jews and Gentiles alike will share in His glory and worship in the temple that He Himself will build. Now contrast this glorious image with the words of Zechariah:

People who are far off will come and build The LORD’S temple, and you will know that The LORD of Armies has sent me to you. This will happen when you fully obey The LORD your God. Zechariah 6:15

In Zechariah's day, both Joshua and Zerubbabel were charged with rebuilding God's temple in Jerusalem. Joshua, the High Priest, was twice crowned; once as the priest who bore the sins of the people, and the second time as the priest/king to rule in Jerusalem. This is a glorious symbol of the first and second coming of Christ. His own people rejected Him, when He came to bear our sins. But many will turn to Him during the great tribulation, and He will come to be their LORD and King. As the Prophet Jeremiah has spoken of The Tribulation Period:

How awful that day will be! There will be no other like it! It will be a time of trouble for Jacob (Israel), but he will be saved out of it. On that day — this is the declaration of The LORD of Armies — I will break his yoke from your neck and tear off your chains, and strangers will never again enslave him. They will serve The LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. Jeremiah 30:7-9

So, just as God allowed a remnant portion of the Israelites to take their place among the coronation service of Joshua, He will also cause a remnant of the sons of Jacob to turn to Christ. And they will worship Him in His holy temple. But not them only, for as Zechariah has prophesied, "**people who are far off will come...**". For, thanks to the amazing grace of our God, salvation is not only for the Jews, but for those of us who were a *long way off* (meaning Gentiles). Christ has opened the gates of His Church to "*whosoever will*"(**Revelation 22:17**). This is the reality of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our Prophet, Priest, and King, Who will reign over His people... forever!

For now, Israel has rejected this offer of grace by refusing to acknowledge that Jesus is indeed the Messiah of Zechariah's prophecy; The Emmanuel, God with us of Isaiah. So they, to this day, have remained in their rebellion. But one day, as The Apostle Paul has declared;

I don't want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you will not be conceited: A partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, The Deliverer will come from Zion; He will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins. Romans 11:25-27

Now compare this to Zechariah's words:

...This will happen when you fully obey The LORD your God. Zechariah 6:15b

Joshua, the high priest in Zechariah's day, is a foreshadowing of all that God has done, and will do, in King Jesus. He came the first time to take our sins upon Himself and clothe us in His righteousness, and He will return to do away with sin and reign upon David's throne as King of kings and LORD of lords. And we can be assured that God will do all that He has promised to fulfill in Him, for... our God Remembers!