

4. What verse is the key to the understanding of this vision?
5. What are the two mountains?
6. In Bible times \_\_\_\_\_ divided Moriah and Zion.
7. What is the significance of the colors of the horses?
8. Why does Zechariah's vision call special attention to the north?
9. How are the war chariots similar to the wall of fire in the third vision?
10. In this vision is a recurrence of \_\_\_\_\_ .

## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE PROCLAMATION OF THE MESSIAH

#### ZECHARIAH 6:9-15

RV . . . And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Take of them of the captivity, even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah; and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, whither they are come from Babylon; yea, take of them silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and, he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of Jehovah. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of Jehovah; and ye shall know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of Jehovah your God.

LXX . . . And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Take the things of the captivity from the chief men, and from the useful men of it, and from them that have understood it; and thou shalt enter in that day into the house of Josias the son Sophonias that came out of Babylon. And thou shalt take silver and gold, and make crowns, and thou shalt put them upon the head of Jesus the son of Josedec the high priest; and thou shalt say to him, Thus saith the Lord Almighty: Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall spring up

from his stem, and build the house of the Lord. And he shall receive power, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and there shall be a priest on his right hand, and a peaceable counsel shall be between them both. And the crown shall be to them that wait patiently, and to the useful men of the captivity, and to them that have known it, and for the favour of the son of Sophonias, and for a psalm in the house of the Lord. And they that are far from them shall come and build in the house of the Lord, and ye shall know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you: and this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord your God.

### COMMENTS

Zechariah's first eight visions, as we have seen, have to do with removing the obstacles to the coming of the Messiah. The second and concluding section of the book, beginning with chapter nine, deals with His coming. The present passage describing the coronation of Joshua and the subsequent passages which teach about worship form a bridge between these two main divisions of the book.

There are some textual difficulties in the passage immediately before us. However, the scope and purpose of this book will not permit our dealing with them. We shall simply take the text as it presently stands and comment on it.

(Verses 9-11) Rather than a vision, Zechariah receives "the word of Jehovah" instructing him to take from three recent returnees from Babylon, Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah, who are residing with one Josiah, the gold and silver necessary to make crowns. The marginal reading here is "a crown" and is probably the preferred reading.

We do not know anything of these men beyond Zechariah's identification of them as having recently returned from the captivity. Possibly they were successful merchants, as many Jews had become in Babylon. If so, they may have volunteered the gift to mark their arrival in the holy land.

It has been suggested that the gold and silver were sent by Darius and that Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah were simply delivering it for the king. The former seems more likely in view of verse fourteen. There the name of Hen is added to the threesome mentioned in verse ten and the crown (or crowns) is to be left in the temple as a memorial to them.

(Verses 12-15) These verses, the first two of which are the message of Jehovah through Zechariah to Joshua the high priest, form

a very definite Messianic prophecy. In the coronation Joshua became *symbolically* the Messiah.

The term Branch was previously applied to Joshua in 3:8-9 during the prophet's third vision. (See comments) In 3:8, it is stated that Joshua in particular and the accompanying priests in general were together a *sign* or symbol of "*my servant The Branch.*"

*Isaiah 11:1-ff* establishes The Branch as a term referring to the Messiah as the promised Seed of David. *Isaiah 4:2-ff*, where the term is used with Messianic meaning for the first time by Isaiah, connects the Branch with the return of the remnant from the captivity.

*Jeremiah 23:5* predicts the coming of Branch in these words, "*Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper and execute Judgement and Justice in the earth.*" (KJV) A similar passage is found in *Jeremiah 33:15*.

The Branch is thus seen as a term long established as referring to the kingly Messiah. In the symbolism of Joshua's coronation, His kingly office is merged with that of high priest. *Zechariah 4:6-9* had alluded to this when the prophet saw the two olive trees pouring their oil simultaneously into the bowl at the base of the multiple menorah.

The menorah was the established symbol of Israel. Zechariah's multiple menorah was the seven branched lampstand multiplied by seven. The meaning is apparent: Israel perfected. Israel perfected is Messianic Israel. Her Spirit, symbolized by the oil in the menorah comes to her from the Messiah who is both priest and king.

In Zechariah, chapter nine, we shall find a detailed prophetic presentation of the Messianic king. For an expose of the high priestly function of the Messiah we have only to read the New Testament book of Hebrews. In *Hebrews 5:1-10* the writer establishes that Jesus fulfills the qualifications of this office. He must offer gifts and sacrifices for sins (v.1). He must have compassion on the ignorant and the wayward (v. 2). He must be called of God. (v. 4).

Jesus fulfilled these qualifications. He offered prayers and supplications (v. 7). He was called of God (v. 10). His priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood which was only a symbol of His (7:1-28). The high priestly office of the Christ manifests a new covenant, and the true tabernacle of which the former tabernacle was only a shadow (9:15-28). His high priestly sacrifice is final, as opposed to the symbolic sacrifices of the Law (10:1-10). This finality is established by the comparison of it to the oft-repeated sacrifices of the Levitical priest-

hood (10:11-14). The finality of His sacrifice establishes the new covenant as final in that it brings absolute remission of sin (10:15-18).

In verse twelve Jehovah says concerning Joshua as symbolic of the Branch what Pilate would one day say concerning the Branch Himself, "Behold the man." (cp. *John* 19:5) As Joshua now stood with the mitre of the high priest capped by the crown of the king, so Jesus would stand offering Himself as the high priestly sacrifice and crowned with a crown of thorns. And above the head of this high priest as He offered Himself in sacrifice for His people, Pilate would write, "Behold the King of the Jews."

Joshua's coronation could not be more than symbolic, since he could never be king, not being of David's lineage. The temple which Joshua would build, would be also symbolic of the true temple to be built by the Christ.

Actually Joshua did not build the second temple. It was built under the direction of Zerubbabel, who governed Judah by appointment of Darius. This is one of the textual problems of *Zechariah* 6:9:15. It has been suggested that the name Zerubbabel actually appeared in the original rather than Joshua. This seems unlikely since the term Branch applied here is previously applied to Joshua. (cp. *Zechariah* 3:8)

It seems more likely that the prophet here credits Joshua with building the temple in order to carry forward the symbolic merger of the two offices of king and priest. In fact Judah, at this time, had no king. The civil authority resided in Zerubbabel and that by Persian appointment.

(Verse 13) When the true Branch came, of whom Joshua was only a symbol, He would build the true temple, of which the present temple would only be a symbol. (cp. *Ephesians* 2:19-22 and *Hebrews* 8:1-2)

Further, The Branch shall bear the glory. The Hebrew *hod*, here rendered "glory," means literally "honor, beauty, majesty." *Hebrews* 1:3 will say He is the effulgence (or brightness) of God's glory. Certainly this could only be said symbolically of Joshua.

The prophet makes three additional assertions concerning The Branch. He shall sit and rule upon His throne, He shall be a priest upon His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them, *ie.* between His functions as King and priest.

Men have died, the Christ has been crucified, denominations have been formed and countless souls have been lost eternally over the seeming inability of men to agree as to what is meant by the Christ sitting on a throne and ruling.

Had Jesus been willing to yield to the pressures of first century Jewry and lead an armed revolt for the purpose of establishing Himself upon a materialistic throne to rule an earthly kingdom, those who forced His crucifixion would have been among His most ardent supporters. He refused this kind of throne. He asserted His kingdom was not of this world. Yet thousands of His followers today insist that when He returns, He will do precisely what He refused to do in the first century.

Those who do not accept this materialistic view of Christ's reign are called everything from liberal to spiritualizers. It is assumed that to take the Bible literally is to take it materialistically.

And so the argument over Christ's kingly rule goes on. Surely, whatever the truth is, it is not to be found in such vindictiveness!

Of one thing we may be certain in this verse. It could not be said of Joshua that he would sit and rule upon his throne. Historically this simply is not true. The statement applies to Him of whom Joshua was merely a "sign." (3:8)

Zechariah further informs us that He shall sit as a priest on His throne. Here is the ultimate statement of the merger of the kingly and priestly offices in the Christ. In no other way did a high priest ever sit upon a throne in Israel.

And lastly, the counsel of peace shall be between these two Messianic functions. The co-working of civil and spiritual authority are never in conflict with one another. The majesty of the King never overshadows the self-effacing self-sacrifice of the priest. Nor does the loving compassion ever over-rule the just judgements and ultimate authority of the King.

The Jews would have had Jesus as King to rule over them and subjugate the Gentiles, but they could not accept His priestly offering of Himself as the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of His people.

The modern American Protestant is willing for Him to be the merciful and compassionate self-effacing priest but is not willing to accept His Kingly authority.

(Verse 14) The crowns, following the symbolic coronation of Joshua were to be kept in the temple as a memorial to those who had provided the gold and silver from which they were made.

(Verse 15) Here, in conjunction with the symbolic merging of the King and high priest, is a very important statement of the nature of the Messianic Temple. It is to be built not just by the Jews but by "*those that are afar off.*" Here is a term pregnant indeed with Messianic meaning.

At the preaching of the Gospel on the first Pentecost, Peter assured his listeners that the promise was not alone to them, who were all Jews, but to "*all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Himself.*"

In *Ephesians 2:17* Paul informs us that Christ Jesus came and "*preached peace to them that were afar off,*" as well as "*to them that were nigh.*" This the apostle sees, as did Zechariah, as included in the building of the real temple for, "So then ye (Gentiles) are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone: in whom each several building, fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."

Please note, the ultimate temple, built by the King-priest and those who are afar off is a habitation for God in the Spirit.

Zechariah, chapter six, closes with another recurrence of the theme stated in *1:3*. All that has been here promised is conditional. The remnant must do what their fathers seldom had done, namely diligently obey the voice of Jehovah God.

### Chapter XXXV—Questions

#### The Proclamation of the Messiah

1. The eight visions deal with the removal of obstacles to Messiah's coming. The present "word of Jehovah" deals with \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Rather than a vision in *6:9-15*, Zechariah receives \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Who were the donors of the gold and silver for the crowns?
4. The gold and silver may have been a gift from \_\_\_\_\_.
5. In the coronation \_\_\_\_\_ became, symbolically, the Messiah.
6. Discuss "The Branch" in *9:12* in relationship to the same term in *3:8-9*.
7. Isaiah establishes "The Branch" as \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Jeremiah predicts The Branch in what terms?
9. Israel perfected is \_\_\_\_\_ Israel.
10. What does Joshua's coronation symbolize?
11. When the true Branch came He would build the true \_\_\_\_\_.
12. How will The Branch "bear the glory?"

13. What three additional assertions does Zechariah make concerning The Branch?
14. How could Jesus have won the allegiance of those who brought about His crucifixion?
15. Distinguish between taking the Bible "literally," and taking it "materialistically."
16. Show how the counsel of peace is between the kingly and priestly functions of the Messiah.
17. What was to be done with the two crowns following Joshua's coronation?
18. Discuss "Those that are afar off." (v. 15) in connection with *Acts 2:39* and *Ephesians 2:17*.
19. The ultimate temple built by our King-Priest is a habitation for God \_\_\_\_\_
20. What recurs another time in the close of this section?

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### TEACHING ABOUT WORSHIP

Chapter seven has been called "*A Call to Civic Duty.*" We cannot subscribe to this summary of the prophetic message contained in this chapter, but we mention it to underscore a truth which shines through both chapters seven and eight, namely that outward formal religious observances unrelated to present life are an affront to God. His promises are to those whose relationship to Him makes a real difference in their relationship to their fellowmen.

#### QUESTIONS ABOUT FASTING . . . Zechariah 7:1-3

RV . . . And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of Jehovah came unto Zechariah in the fourth day of the ninth month, even in Chisleu. Now they of Beth-el had sent Sharezer and Regem-melech, and their men, to entreat the favor of Jehovah, and to speak unto the priests of the house of Jehovah of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, Should I weep in the fifth month, separating myself, as I have done these many years?

LXX . . . And it came to pass in the fourth year of Darius the king, that the word of the Lord came to Zacharias on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Cheseleu. And Sarasar and Arbeseer the king and his men sent to Baethel, and that to propitiate the Lord, speaking to