

Title: **A PRIEST UPON HIS THRONE**
Text: Zechariah 6:13
Subject: *Christ the Priest-King*
Date: Sunday Morning — April 16, 2006
Tape # Zechariah #31
Reading: *Psalms 2 and 24*

Psalm 2

1. Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?
2. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying*,
3. Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.
4. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.
5. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.
6. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.
7. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.
8. Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.
9. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.
10. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
11. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
12. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

Psalm 24

1. The earth *is* the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.
2. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.
3. Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?
4. He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.
5. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
6. This *is* the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.
7. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.
8. Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.
9. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.
10. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory. Selah.

INTRODUCTION:

Before we read my text in Zechariah 6:13, let me remind you of its historic setting. On the day that three men came from Babylon to Jerusalem, Zechariah was given a specific word from God relating to them. These three men, Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, had remained in Babylon for many years after the captivity was over. The King of Babylon ordered the release of the Jews, many years earlier; but they chose to stay in the land of captivity. We are not told why; but it is probable that they stayed because they loved it there.

I do not know that; but I do know this. Though the Lord Jesus accomplished redemption for us at Calvary, you and I chose to remain in Babylon's darkness, loving darkness rather than light, until, in the day of his power, he graciously made us willing to come to him.

When these three men came to Jerusalem, they came bearing gifts of silver and gold. They brought their gifts to the Lord, gifts to be used in the building of the temple, for the glory of God. So they brought them to the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah.

It would have been natural for Josiah and the others at Jerusalem to be suspicious. I can almost hear their thoughts. "Are these men sincere? What are they up to? Why have they come now? Why are they bringing these gifts of silver and gold now? If they are sincere, why has it taken them so long to return?"

How sad! Yet, how common such suspicions are among us! I cannot tell you how often I have heard people raise such questions about someone who has just confessed Christ. We try to justify our suspicions in the name of prudence, saying that experience has taught us not to get too excited when someone "with a past" makes a profession of faith. But such suspicions are evil. They are never justified. Grace is immediately given in all its fulness to every sinner who trusts Christ. God's forgiveness is never given on probational conditions! And we are never to treat newborn babes in the kingdom of God with suspicion. The Spirit of God specifically tells us to receive the very weakest believer, "*but not to doubtful disputations*" (Rom. 14:1). All who wish to be numbered among us, all who wish to worship our God with us, are to be received by us with open arms.

So Zechariah was commanded of God to go to Josiah's house and receive the gifts of those three men. He was told to take the silver and gold they brought to the Lord, make two crowns, one of silver and one of gold, an "*set them upon the head of Joshua,*" Jesus, the high priest.

This was to be done as a prophetic act, portraying the fact that at God's appointed time another Man would appear, upon whose head many crowns would be placed. That Man is Christ Jesus, our Lord. That is exactly what Zechariah was commanded to say, when he set the crowns on Joshua's head. — "*Behold the Man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD*" (v. 12). Now, let's read our text.

(Zechariah 6:13) "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; 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."

This Man, whose name is "*The BRANCH,*" the Lord Jesus Christ, is everything in his Temple, the Church of God. In the Temple of God Christ is the Foundation Stone, and the Head Stone. He is The BRANCH and the Builder. — "*He shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory; and he shall be a priest upon his throne.*" With those words, Zechariah announced the very same thing that David declared in Psalm 110:4. — "*The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.*"

Proposition: As Melchizedek was both priest of the most high God and king of Salem, our Lord Jesus Christ is both our great High Priest and our sovereign King. He sits as "*a Priest upon his throne.*"

Like Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, God's elect come from afar, even from the four corners of the earth to him, for the building of his temple (v. 15). May God the Holy Spirit enable us to behold our blessed Savior this day, as he is in heaven, sitting and ruling as Priest and King upon his throne of grace, as I try to set him before you in this double character, which is his alone.

CHRIST OUR KING

First, our text declares that Christ is the King. — "*He shall sit and rule upon his throne.*" He is the King of Glory, the King of the universe, and the King of grace. He is not a king. Christ is the King. He is not going to be King. He is the King, the King who sits and rules upon his throne. What a suggestive statement that is. — "*He shall sit and rule upon his throne.*"

It suggests the picture of a king who rules with great ease. I have never seen a political figure of that kind in my life. Have you? All the Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Kings of nations in my life time aged quickly while in power. The stress of the job made old men of them in just a few years. I never read of any king in history who ruled with ease. But our blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ sits while he rules.

He sits upon a throne that knows no trouble, upon a throne that is never in jeopardy, though constantly assaulted. He sits and rules with confidence and ease, King of kings and Lord of lords! Once for all has he bled and died, but now he sits and rules in his glory never to be disturbed again. Sitting upon his throne by God's unalterable decree, he has all his enemies in derision, waiting in complete ease, until his enemies shall be made his footstool.

Sitting is the posture of one who has come to stay. It suggests the abiding dominion of Christ. He is King forever! — "*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever!*" Just in our brief lives, how many nations have we seen crumble! How many rulers have been toppled! Not this King! It is written, "*The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King forever!*" — "*The Lord is great in Zion, and he is high above all the people.*" — "*The Lord shall reign for ever and ever!*"

Now, watch this. — Our Lord Jesus is here described as a King sitting upon **his own throne**. It is "*his throne*" by right. His right to sovereignty is indisputable. The throne is his as God. But the Scripture here, and throughout this Book, tells us that the Man Christ Jesus earned the right to be the King by his accomplishments. He well deserves to be our King who is our Redeemer!

God the Father gave him the crown of universal dominion as the reward obedience unto death as our Substitute, having saved his people from their sins by the sacrifice of himself (Ps. 2:7-8; Isa. 53:10-12; John 17:4-5; Rom. 14:9; Phil. 2:5-11).

(Psalms 2:7-8) "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (8) Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession."

(Isaiah 53:10-12) "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (11) He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. (12) Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

(John 17:4-5) "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. (5) And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

(Romans 14:9) "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."

(Philippians 2:5-11) "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (9) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; (11) And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

He sits upon a throne, which he has won by conquest, when he vanquished the powers of darkness and led captivity captive. We rejoice to sing...

"Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all?"

There is no monarch so secure as he. He is really and truly King by divine right. He is King by descent, for he is the Son of God. Christ is King by his own intrinsic excellence, for there is none who can be compared to him. And he is King by his own might and majesty, for he holds his throne by his own power, and shall hold it until all his enemies shall be put under his feet.

CHRIST OUR PRIEST

But, our text emphasizes the fact that Christ is "*a Priest upon his throne.*" This is as important as it is blessed. — **He is first Priest and then King.** That is clearly revealed in the plain statements of Holy Scripture and in the typical, prophetic visions the Lord God gave his prophet Zechariah. Joshua (Jesus) the son of Josedech was already high priest. Here, in chapter 6, he was crowned with the crowns of silver and gold. So it is with our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He reigns as the King because he offered himself upon the altar of God as the sin-atonement Sacrifice as our Priest. He reigns because he died. For the suffering of death he is crowned with glory and honor. The saints in heaven sing, — "*Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.*"

As we saw him sitting upon his throne, ruling as the King, let us behold him sitting "a Priest upon his throne." Those words could never be spoken of any other king, or of any other priest (Heb. 10:11-14).

(Hebrews 10:11-14) "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (12) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

There, like a man, the Savior sits,
The God, how bright He shines!
And scatters infinite delights
On all the happy minds!

Our Savior sits in Glory because all his work is done. There is no merit to be performed by us to complete his righteousness, no sufferings to be endured to perfect his atonement. "*It is finished,*" he cried, as he gave up the ghost, and, blessed be his name forever, "*It is finished!*" He sits still forever, in quiet expectation, because his Father said to him, "*Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*"

A ROYAL PRIEST

Now, let's look at the two offices of our Redeemer combined, as they are presented in our text. As our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ is our King. He is a royal Priest.

- He was a priest when he honored the law by his obedience unto death.
- He was a priest when he took our sin to be his own, and bore it in his own body on the tree.
- He was a priest when he presented his one sacrifice for sin.

But let it never be forgotten that even then, he was a king. The sword of divine justice awoke against the Man who is Jehovah's fellow, and slew him. The law he vindicated was his own law. We broke it; but the King bore our penalty. We offended his law; but he magnified the law and made it honorable. We were cursed; but he bore his own curse for us! Thus he made expiation for sin.

We rejoice to trust him as our Priest. We never tire of gazing upon him as our sin-atoning High Priest, who was himself crucified for us. And we rejoice to bow before him, worshipping him and trusting him as the Lord our King. All who trust Christ as their Priest, also trust him as their King (Luke 14:25-33), voluntarily losing our lives to him.

"Salvation to God, who sits on the throne,
Let all cry aloud, and honor the Son;
The praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
Fall down on their faces and worship the Lamb."

At this moment, if with the eye of faith you can see the Lord Jesus in heaven, you see him **pleading for his you as your Priest**, making intercession for us by the will of God. That is what a priest does. He makes intercession. He undertakes and pleads the cause of his people. He says, "*For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest.*" But this Priest, the Lord Jesus, who has undertaken for us and pleads our cause is the mighty King of Glory. He is the Priest who sits upon his throne of grace with all the authority of the King! That means that everything about his priestly work is effectual.

- His Sacrifice!
- His Intercessions!
- His Blessing!

He does not merely wish us good, but he works us good. **There is omnipotent sovereignty at the back of the priestly benediction.** He speaks and declares us justified, accepted, preserved, and blessed, and makes his every word good. The benediction of this Priest is the benediction of Jesus Christ the King!

It is as a priest that the Lord Jesus sends out his gospel to all the ends of the earth. In that gospel he invites sinners to come to him for mercy, grace, salvation, and life everlasting. **But his invitation is the invitation of the King.** All who reject it are counted guilty of high treason. — "*He that believeth not shall be damned.*"

A PRIESTLY KING

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a royal, kingly Priest. And he is a priestly King. His throne, the throne on which this King sits is the mercy-seat, the throne of grace (Heb. 4:16). Blessed be his name, Christ is the King! That means that he has his way always, everywhere. He is the Master of the game, and he will prevail! The government of all things is on his shoulders. Yet, his sovereign, royal, kingly majesty is the sovereign, royal, kingly majesty of a tender, compassionate Priest, a Man touched with the feeling of our infirmities! His throne is the throne of grace; and his rule is the rule of mercy. — "*He delighteth in mercy!*"

- He reigns to save, to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him!
- He reigns to forgive!
- He reigns to bless!
- He reigns to restore!
- He reigns to comfort!

- He reigns to be gracious!
- When he goes out to make war, he makes war with the hearts of men, and prevails!

O blessed Lord Jesus, greater far than Joseph, the Shepherd and Stone of Israel, all our sheaves pay obeisance unto your sheaf and all your Father's children bow down before you. More glorious than Judah, you are he whom your brethren shall praise! Unto you shall the gathering of the people be! The chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely, that is Christ our royal Priest and priestly King!

“Jesus, the King of glory, reigns
On Zion's heavenly hill;
Looks like a lamb that has been slain,
And wears his priesthood still.”

THE COUNSEL OF PEACE

If you will look at Zechariah 6:13 again, you will see the result of our Savior's combined office, as our King and our Priest. The last line of the text reads, “*And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.*” The meaning of that statement, I acknowledge, I do not fully comprehend.

Perhaps it means the everlasting counsel of peace made between Jehovah the Father and Jehovah the Son shall be accomplished and fulfilled by the Man, whose name is The BRANCH, our Priest and King the Lord Jesus Christ. Whether that is what is taught here, I cannot say; but, thank God, it is taught throughout the Scriptures. That eternal counsel by which peace comes to us is ordered in all things and sure.

Certainly, these last words of our text, mean that it is by this Man, the Man who is our Priest and our King, and only by this man, that we obtain peace with God. He is our Peace.

- As our Priest he redeemed us.
- As our King he conquered us.
- Trusting him as our Priest and King, we find rest (Matt. 11:28-30).

(Matthew 11:28-30) “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

CROWN HIM

Now, let us do this day what Zechariah did in this chapter. Let us bring all our silver and gold, beat it into crowns, and seat the crowns upon the head of Jesus Christ, our Priest and our King.

(Zechariah 6:11) “Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set *them* upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest;”

- First, “*take silver and gold.*” — Bring the best you have, bring everything, bring your whole life to Christ.
- Then, “*make crowns,*” silver crowns of gratitude and golden crowns of consecration, silver crowns of praise and golden crowns of faith, silver crowns of surrender and golden crowns of love.
- Next, “*set them upon the head of Jesus.*”

Do you have an alabaster box of precious spikenard? Bring it and poured it out on the Savior's head. Do it just for him! I love a statement I read the other day by Spurgeon. He said, “The utmost waste is economy when it is done for him, and to sacrifice strength, soul, health, life, is to save it all, when it is

spent for him.” Where should it go, but to him? Where should my all go, but to him? For what should my life be consumed, but for him? Where should my soul be poured out, but for his honor?

- Then, in verse 14, we are told that the crowns “*shall be for a memorial in the temple of the LORD.*” — A memorial to every Heldai, the Lord leads through this world, out of captivity and into his house of grace. A memorial to every Tobijah, the object and beneficiary of his great goodness. — A memorial to every Jedaiah, known of God from everlasting, as the object of his everlasting love. — And a memorial to every Josiah, found of Jehovah and founded upon Jehovah! — A memorial to every Hen, the name by which Josiah is called in verse 14. Hen means “grace.” — A memorial in the temple of the Lord.

The crowns made that day from the silver and gold brought to the Lord by these three men were hung up in the temple of God for a memorial to them. That is amazing. Don't you think? The Lord God himself ordered that they be hung in his house for a memorial to those three men. Yes, it is amazing; but it is just what we should expect from Christ, our God, who is the Man, whose name is The BRANCH, who sits “*a Priest upon hi throne!*” It is he who said, “*Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.*” Our Savior thinks so highly of his people that in the bounty of his grace, he makes our feeble efforts to honor and crown him with our lives honored deeds!

He said to Cornelius, “*Thy prayers and thine alms have come up as a memorial of thee.*” Yes, our King-Priest shall have the crowns, and wear them, yet in that day when he judges the world he will honor his own, saying, “*Well done, thou good and faithful servant.*” **The Lord we serve will immortalize our service to him by uniting it with his service to God for us.** We shall rest from our labors, but our works shall follow us. The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. They shall shine forth as the sun when their Lord Jesus is revealed in his glory. And we shall then cast our crowns at his feet, as crowns unworthy to sit on his head, and shall be forever filled with the vision of him who is “*a Priest upon his throne.*”

Amen.