

## Scripture Lesson Text

**JER. 23:5** Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto Da'vid a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

**6** In his days Ju'dah shall be saved, and Is'ra-el shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

**ZECH. 6:9** And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

**10** Take of them of the captivity, even of Hel'da-i, of To-bi'jah, and of Je-da'iah, which are come from Bab'y-lon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Jo-si'ah the son of Zeph-a-ni'ah;

**11** Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Josh'u-a the son of Jos'e-dech, the high priest;

**12** And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD 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 the LORD: **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.

**14** And the crowns shall be to He'lem, and to To-bi'jah, and to Je-da'iah, and to Hen the son of Zeph-a-ni'ah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD.

**15** And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

**JOHN 19:1** Then Pi'late therefore took Je'sus, and scourged him.

**2** And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

**3** And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

**4** Pi'late therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

**5** Then came Je'sus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pi'late saith unto them, Behold the man!

### NOTES

# The Suffering of the King

Lesson: Jeremiah 23:5-6; Zechariah 6:9-15;  
John 19:1-5

Read: Jeremiah 23:5-6; Zechariah 6:9-15; John 19:1-5

**TIMES:** probably between 597 and 586 B.C.; 519 B.C.; A.D. 30

**PLACES:** Jerusalem; Jerusalem; Jerusalem

**GOLDEN TEXT** — "The soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands" (John 19:2-3).

## Lesson Exposition

### THE RIGHTEOUS BRANCH FORETOLD—Jer. 23:5-6

**His reign (Jer. 23:5-6a).** Jeremiah prophesied in Judah's last days before the Captivity, when corruption was rampant among prophets, priests, and kings. In this chapter he pronounced woe upon the "pastors" (shepherds) who had misused God's "flock" (vss. 1-2) of Judah. These were the unworthy kings of David's line who had led them astray.

Unlike the rulers of Jeremiah's day, this King will be "righteous" (Jer. 23:5), and His reign will reflect His nature. He will "reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." Also, unlike those kings who were mere puppets of foreign empires, He will be a true king, reigning and prospering. "In the earth" makes it clear that He will be an earthly monarch, not just the spiritual Lord of resurrected saints in heaven (cf. 3:17-18).

The earthly nature of His reign is confirmed by the next statement: "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely" (Jer. 23:6). In Jeremi-

ah's day, the kingdom of Israel had long been in captivity, and only Judah remained. But the coming Messiah will rule over a restored and reunified nation (cf. Jer. 33:14-16; Ezek. 37:15-19) and will usher in a time of security.

This security will be both temporal and spiritual. Israel will enjoy safety from former enemies and even the hazards of nature (cf. Isa. 11:6-9; Ezek. 34:25-28). In addition, they will be regenerated and will serve the Lord with pure hearts (cf. Isa. 59:20-21; Jer. 31:31-34; Rom. 11:26-27).

**His divine credentials (Jer. 23:6b).** The name by which Israel's King will be known is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." A name indicates a person's character, and He is here seen as both divine and righteous. "The Lord" is "Yahweh," the covenant name for Israel's God. That He also is the Righteous One goes without saying (Ezra 9:15; Dan. 9:7). He thus imparts righteousness to His rule (Isa. 11:4-5) and to His redeemed subjects (45:24-25). Jesus Christ embodies this role perfectly.



## THE KING-PRIEST FORESHADOWED—Zech. 6:9-15

**A symbolic act (Zech. 6:9-11).** The book of Zechariah begins with a series of eight visions that Zechariah saw in one night. These visions, intended to encourage the returned Jewish exiles in their reconstruction of the temple, portray aspects of Israel's future glory. Now the visions are concluded with a symbolic act that portrays the Messiah's role in bringing this glory.

The Lord instructed Zechariah to receive from three men "silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest" (Zech. 6:11). Some of the silver and gold intended for use in the temple was to be used instead to make "crowns." The plural denotes a composite, ornate crown consisting of multiple parts. It was to be placed on the head of the high priest, Joshua.

### A prophecy (Zech. 6:12-13).

Zechariah was to speak to Joshua as he crowned him, telling him the meaning of the act. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts," solemnly declares that the Almighty Lord will accomplish an act to fulfill the symbolism. "Behold the man" brings to mind the later words of Pilate, which we will yet consider (John 19:5).

This coming Branch would be the one to "build the temple of the Lord" (Zech. 6:12). This statement is repeated for emphasis in verse 13: "Even he shall build the temple of the Lord." He who grows up in these inauspicious conditions will complete this work. This does not refer to the temple then being built, for that would be completed by Zerubbabel (cf. 4:9). Rather, it is the millennial temple alluded to by Isaiah (Isa. 2:2-3; cf. Ezek. 40-43) that He will complete.

In addition, "he shall be a priest upon his throne" (Zech. 6:13). This was the symbolic meaning of the crowning of Joshua. Christ will finally bring together

the two offices. His priesthood, prefigured by that of Melchizedek, the king-priest (Gen. 14:18; Heb. 5:6; 6:20), has been validated through the offering of Himself, the perfect Sacrifice (Heb. 7:26-27). He will represent before God those whose sins He has washed away through His blood (vss. 24-25).

"The counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech. 6:13) refers to the two offices Christ will occupy—King and Priest. There will never be a conflict between them because they are unified in one Person. His rule can be peaceful and harmonious because its political and spiritual functions will always agree.

**A memorial (Zech. 6:14).** The composite crown made for this symbolic coronation would not remain Joshua's. It was to be a "memorial"—that is, a reminder—in the temple. It was, first, a reminder of the generosity of the three exiles from Babylon and their Judean host. Their names are repeated here, with variations.

**An encouragement (Zech. 6:15).** Zechariah prophesied further that "they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord." This prophecy was occasioned by the presence of the three from Babylon who had brought their treasure. They were symbolic of the many from foreign lands who in the millennium will contribute their treasure to offer their worship (cf. Isa. 60:1-10; Zech. 2:11; 8:22-23).

## THE PROMISED KING HUMILIATED—John 19:1-5

**The mockery (John 19:1-3).** What a contrast to the prophetic portrayals of Messiah's glory do we meet in the trials and death of Jesus! The promised King came, but "his own received him not" (1:11). Hated by those who should have welcomed Him, He was maliciously betrayed and subjected to a

series of unjust trials. The Jewish authorities could not inflict capital punishment, so they sent Him to Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea, on the pretense that He was a threat to Caesar.

After questioning Jesus, Pilate concluded that He was innocent (John 18:33-38). But, evading his responsibility to release Him, he sent Him to Herod Antipas (Luke 23:6-12), who gave the same verdict (vss. 13-15).

The worst criminals were scourged before they were crucified. The whip consisted of rawhide strips to which pieces of metal or bone were attached. Some men died from the scourging itself because it was so brutal. Jesus survived it but was then subjected to additional disgrace by the soldiers (John 19:2-3). Mocking His claim to be a king, they pressed a crown of thorns down on His head. They then clothed Him in a purple robe, a mark of royalty, and gave Him a reed for a scepter (Matt. 27:29).

**The confession (John 19:4).** After this, Pilate presented Jesus to the crowd with the incredible statement "I find no fault in him." If this was so, why had he had Him mistreated? He had probably hoped this lesser punishment would appease the mob, but his tactic failed utterly (cf. vs. 6). He succeeded only in compounding his own guilt in the worst miscarriage of justice the world has ever seen.

**The presentation (John 19:5).** Jesus was brought forth wearing the crown and the robe, the signs of His mock coronation. He also undoubtedly showed evidences of His beating as well. His face may well have been so disfigured as to make Him unrecognizable (cf. Isa. 52:13-14).

Pilate introduced Him with the words "Behold the man!" (John 19:5). What was the tone of his declaration? It would be tempting to see it as a further

mockery of the One who had declared Himself the King over these despised Jews. But more likely it reflected Pilate's inner struggle at this point. We know he was reluctant to execute a man who he knew was innocent and who had made unusual claims (cf. 18:36-37). And here He was, battered yet dignified. A mixture of commiseration and admiration probably permeated Pilate's declaration.

However he meant it, he was unwittingly repeating the words of Zechariah: "Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH" (Zech. 6:12). This One, mocked by common soldiers in a sham coronation, will someday rule in glory as "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15).

—Robert E. Wenger.

## QUESTIONS

1. How will the rule of the Righteous Branch differ from that of the kings of Jeremiah's day?
2. What kind of security will Messiah bring to Judah and Israel?
3. What was Zechariah to take from the exiles returning from Babylon?
4. What symbolic act was Zechariah to undertake?
5. What work will the coming Branch undertake?
6. What two offices will the Messiah combine in Himself?
7. What was to be done with the crown Zechariah made?
8. Why was Pilate, the Roman procurator, consulted in Jesus' trial?
9. How was Jesus treated by the Roman soldiers?
10. How would you evaluate the actions of Pontius Pilate?

—Robert E. Wenger.



## PRACTICAL POINTS

1. God's provision for His people through fulfilled prophecy continues today as He provides for our needs (Jer. 23:5-6).
2. A godly ruler is intent on pleasing God, not on acquiring personal power (Zech. 6:9-13).
3. Obeying God and His Word is natural when we seek to please Him (vs. 14-15).
4. Opposition to serving Christ often comes in subtle and unexpected ways (John 19:1-3).
5. Those who reject Christ's message cannot deny His perfect life (vs. 4).
6. Though He is pivotal in history, Christ is as near as a whispered prayer (vs. 5).

—Anne Adams.

## RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. What do God's promises to Israel mean for modern Christians? What does this mean for you personally?
2. Do Christians make better national leaders? What if non-Christians were more efficient and experienced? Should Christians support candidates just because they are Christians? Why or why not?
3. Do you think the soldiers were surprised when Jesus did not respond to their taunting? Have you ever been criticized or mocked for your faith? Can you share the event?
4. How do you usually imagine Christ—as a Suffering Saviour or as Resurrected Lord? Explain your answer, and discuss.

—Anne Adams.

## Golden Text Illuminated

**"The soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands" (John 19:2-3).**

Our golden text describes what took place as Pilate was still seeking a way to release Jesus and before he gave in to expedience and the veiled threat that a complaint against him would be brought to Caesar (John 19:12).

Pilate certainly did not see Jesus as a genuine king, and neither did the Romans under his command. After Jesus had been beaten, the soldiers "platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head." This was an obvious act of mockery. The bloodied body of a simple Jewish man gave no appearance of royalty. Indeed, the very thought of a Jew being king was laughable to the Romans.

The soldiers continued to mock Jesus, feigning obeisance to Him and saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" even as they struck Him with their hands. The irony, of course, is that the One they mocked was in fact King of kings and Lord of lords.

The actions of the soldiers were reprehensible but at least somewhat understandable in light of their ignorance. But how could the Jewish leaders, who knew Scripture so well, have been so wrong? We must remember that it is not just knowledge of Scripture that is needed but submission to it as well. Those who rejected Jesus did so because of their own pride. They would not humble themselves before God or His Word.

—Jarl K. Waggoner.

## LESSON 8

APRIL 20, 2014

### Scripture Lesson Text

**HOS. 6:1** Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.

**2 After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.**

**3** Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

**LUKE 24:1** Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

**2** And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

**3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.**

**4** And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

**5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the**

**earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?**

**6** He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Gal'i-lee,

**7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.**

**8** And they remembered his words,

**9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.**

**10** It was Ma'ry Mag-da-le'ne, and Jo-an'na, and Ma'ry the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

**11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.**

**12** Then arose Pe'ter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

### NOTES