



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Zechariah 6:9-15

“The Coronation of Joshua the High Priest.”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] The Scripture reading today, is found in the 6th chapter of the prophecy of Zechariah, and we're reading verses 9 through 15. Zechariah chapter 6, verses 9 through 15. The eight night visions which Zechariah the prophet was given have now concluded, and the prophet is introduced now, to a symbolic command which is given him by the Lord, which he carries out and which is designed to teach him some very significant things about a certain personage who is to come in the future. And the 9th verse begins,

“Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, “Take of them of the captivity, even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. (And by the way, the expression to “take them of the captivity” means to receive the gifts that they have brought. That is, to receive from them. They had come from Babylon with gifts.) Then take 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 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: 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.” 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 the LORD. (Now if you’re reading these verses carefully, you will notice that some of the names have been changed in the second occurrence. We will talk about that later on. Now, the 15th verse.) 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.”

May God bless this reading from his word. Let’s bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Our gracious God and heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the grace which Thou hast shown us through Jesus Christ our Lord. We thank Thee for the salvation, the redemption, and the forgiveness of sin, which have come to us through him. And we thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast revealed this to us from Thy word. We thank Thee that Thou didst find us; we did not seek Thee, but Thou didst find us, and Thou didst bring us to him. And so we want to praise Thee today for the grace which has reached down and which has brought us to Thyself. We thank Thee for the new life which Thou hast given.

And oh, Father, we pray that throughout the days of this week the new life which Thou hast given us may be seen through us, by others. We pray, Lord, that we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of him who has loved us so much. May this week be a definite advance in the things which concern Jesus Christ. And Lord, we pray for each one present, and we ask that the spiritual aims and aspirations, as well as the spiritual problems that may exist in our hearts, may find their solution in the Lord Jesus Christ. We would pray especially for some who are unable to be with us, and who are troubled with

physical inabilities, and we ask, Lord, that Thou would minister to them and restore them to health and strength.

We pray, too, for this church of believers of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we ask, oh God, that Thou would give direction and guidance in these days which are somewhat critical for us. We pray, Lord, that Thou shalt be the head of this church, not only in doctrine, but also in practice. And that we shall look not to men, but to Thee for the steps that lie before us. And we pray that the ministry which Thou hast given to us, if it please Thee, may expand and touch the lives of many in this part of Dallas, and even to the uttermost parts of the earth. We pray for the elders and ask Thy blessing upon them. Wilt Thou give them wisdom and guidance. And for the deacons, we pray oh God, for them. And for those who meet together here in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, every one of them. Oh Father, minister to us, and enable us, in the 20th century, to realize this personal relationship to Thee which is so significant and so necessary and so needful.

We pray, oh God, that we may have a word for the generation that is about us. Enable us to come out of our shells, and to reach the people who are living about us who do not know Jesus Christ, and who may perhaps be among those whom Thou hast chosen and elected unto salvation. We remember the words of our Lord Jesus, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring.”

And oh Father, we pray that Thou wilt lay upon the hearts of every one of us, this divine compulsion and sense of necessity to be a servant of Jesus Christ, and to reach our friends and our generation for him. May Thy blessing be upon this meeting. May the Lord Jesus be exalted in it. May he bear the glory in advance of the kingdom in the spiritual sense. For Jesus' sake we pray. Amen.

[Message] The subject for this morning, as we continue our series of studies in Zechariah in the light of current events, is “The Coronation of Joshua the High Priest.” From ancient times, from Thales to Freud, who was the last of the great classical

philosophers of history, even though we know him primarily in another way, men have been groping for an understanding of reality. Scholars speak about the search for a *weltanschauung*, which is a long German word that means, simply, a worldview. And in the 20th Century, many men are seriously concerned in finding just such a worldview that satisfies the heart of men. But 20th Century man has not yet found it. James Joyce, in his book *Ulysses*, said, “History is a nightmare from which I am trying to escape.” And I think this sense of despair is one of the most prominent features of the civilization in which we live in this Western world. One of the reasons that philosophers have not found the clue to history and to a worldview that really explains and satisfies the heart, is because they have omitted, in their studies, one of the most significant histories in all of the world. And that history, of course, is the history of Israel. The history of Israel is one of the most perplexing and one of the most significant, nevertheless, histories of any person or persons in this world.

Just recently, I’ve been reading Bruce Mazlish’s *The Riddle of History*. Professor Mazlish is at MIT. And when I was thinking about this, I thought, “Well now, I just wonder, really, what he has to say about the Jews.” He had discussed the philosophy of men such as Vico down to Freud, and I looked in the index of the book, and I looked for the word “Jew.” No word, “Jew,” in the index. I looked for the nation Israel, or the word “Israel.” No word, “Israel,” in the book. Now it so happens that I know that Professor Mazlish did mention the Jews. He referred to the fact that one of the philosophers that he had been studying had mentioned the fact that it was impossible really to understand the history of the Jews, and he had bypassed them as if they were an un-people. But I think this is significant, and it is also the kind of thing that we discover in the thought of the 20th century. They have omitted one of the most significant things in all of the progress of thought of men. Adolf Saphir, who was a great Jewish Christian, said, “The history of Israel is the history of a miracle, and the miracle of history.” And you know, those of you who have been sitting here through the summer, and I’ve made reference to this, how

many of our philosophers have expressed the fact that the history of Israel is a riddle which they cannot understand. A man who is known by scholars as *der Magas des Norden* or, “the sage of the north,” has said, “To me, the wonder of all wonders, and the most unmistakable proof of a divine providence and rule, a miracle greater than Noah’s ark or Lot’s wife or the burning bush, is the Jew.”

Now the reason that we have not been able to understand ourselves, and also understand ultimate reality in the 20th Century, is often times linked to the fact that we have neglected the history of the nation Israel. It is just like the Gulf Stream in the ocean. It is a stream of history that is separate and distinct, and no matter what we may do, it is still there, and ultimately, we shall have to contend with it. And I think that Zechariah, who has been painting pictures which he received from the Lord, gives us many significant clues to the understanding of the civilization in which we are living today. I do not think that we can open our newspapers and understand the headlines if we do not understand what God has to say about the nation Israel in the word of God. Now you remember that in these eight night visions which Zechariah was given, we were given facts that began with the time of Nebuchadnezzar, which take the history of humanity from that down to the time of the second coming of Jesus Christ. He has told us about the rise of gentile empire and world dominion. He has told us that ultimately, because God is God and has elected the nation Israel, he has chosen to give promises to Abraham which he is sure to fulfill, that all of history is subordinate to the purpose which God has in connection with the Jew.

Now, of course, we who are Christians know that this ultimately is connected with our Lord Jesus Christ. But we often forget that the reason that our Lord Jesus Christ is the center of things, from the standpoint of our history and the meaning of life, is because he is the center of Israel. And it is God who is working with the seed of Abraham, that seed who Jesus Christ is. Now we’ve been looking at these visions and we have seen, I say, that God has given us a picture from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, six hundred years

before the time of Christ, before the Jewish captivity, down to the time of the second advent, when he shall deliver over to the Son of Man, the kingdom of God, which the Lord Jesus shall exercise upon the earth. Now those eight visions were prefaced, you'll remember, in the first chapter by an appeal to repentance on the part of God. As if to say to them, “You shall never realize and experience all of these wonderful things that are to transpire, if you do not turn unto me.”

Down through the years, men have nationally failed to turn to God. The result is that they have, as nations, not come to know him. The gentile dominions that have existed from the time of Nebuchadnezzar are pictured in the word of God as wild beasts. As lions; as bears; as leopards; and then as a beast that is so wild and so ferocious and so fierce and so terrible, that Daniel the prophet could not even describe it. This is God's picture of human dominion. Now he has completed his story, and in this last section of the first part of the Book of Zechariah, the Prophet Zechariah is asked to do something symbolical. I mentioned, as we read the Scripture, that the 9th verse begins with the words, “And the word of the Lord came unto me.” Now, if you'll notice that in the preceding chapters the characteristic expression has been, “And I turned and lifted up my eyes and saw.” But now he says, “The word of God came unto me, saying, ‘the visions are over, and now I want, Zechariah, to ask you to indulge in a symbolic act which is designed to show you, in visual form, what I have in mind.’”

Now this is an acted prophecy. If I were teaching Christian education, and I'm not and do not want to, but if I were, I think I would refer to the word of God. And I would refer to some of the ways in which God instructed the prophets and their contemporaries, by means of illustrative acts and illustrative commands. It was not uncommon for God to say to the prophets, “Now the message that I have for the children of Israel is a message which I do not want you to speak, I want you to act out.” And if you've read Ezekiel at all, you know that the first part of that book is a collection of prophecies which were acted prophecies. In fact, God caused Ezekiel to be dumb. Not dumb in the head, but

dumb; that is, he could not speak. And when he could not speak he spoke to the prophet, and through that dumb prophet, he spoke to Israel. But Ezekiel had to act out his prophecy. And you'll remember the prophecy of the tile and the various prophecies which he acted out.

Perhaps the outstanding illustration in the Old Testament is the Prophet Hosea, who was told by God that he should marry Gomer, although Gomer would turn out to be a harlot. Because it was through this experience that God was able to teach Hosea the love of God and what he felt when Israel turned away from him. There is no way, really, for Hosea to enter into the experience of the love for someone which is unrequited, or which turns sour, except by marriage to Gomer. And so God permitted the Prophet Hosea to marry Gomer, who would turn out to be a harlot, in order that Israel might understand what it means to God to love them and have them turn aside.

Now Zechariah is a prophet too, who prophesies by prophetic symbolism. And so the word of the Lord came to Zechariah one day, and it happened to be a day when several men had come from Babylon with gifts. You remember that the children of Israel had been in captivity, and then Zerubbabel, who was the civil leader and Joshua the high priest, led a group of Israelites, about fifty thousand strong in all, back to the city of Jerusalem to reconstruct the temple. That's the background of the Book of Zechariah. After a delay, now they are constructing the temple, and Zechariah and Haggai, the prophets, are encouraging and exhorting and stirring up the people so that they would do their work.

Well now, some of the Jews stayed in Babylon. We need not ask whether it was right or wrong. The 6th chapter does not have anything to say about that. Some of them, in Babylon, apparently felt that they would like to participate in the work that was going on in Jerusalem, though they had not moved to the city of Jerusalem themselves. And these men (Heldai, Tobija, Jedaiah) came from Babylon at just about the time that Zechariah had finished his eight visions, or had seen his eighth vision. And so the Lord

spoke to Zechariah and he said, “Zechariah, I want you, today; I want you to go this very day, while these visions are still fresh in your mind; I want you to go over to the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah.” Now that was the Ramada Inn of that day, apparently, because that was where they were being entertained. Now some of you are smiling, as if that’s not in the Bible, but I refer you to the 8th verse and the 22nd chapter of the book of Hezekiah for support for my previous statement. [Laughter] Now, for those of you who are looking puzzled at me, well I’ll say a word of prayer for you.

Now they come to the house of Josiah, and there are the three men from Babylon, and they are being entertained. And Zechariah is told that he should take the gifts which these men have brought for the temple, the silver and gold, and he should make crowns. Now, I would assume, from the fact that the statement says that they should make crowns, and then there is no reference to the crowning of but one man, that this must have been a crown which was distinguished from ordinary crowns by the fact that it had lots of little crowns upon it. In other words, it was a diadem with many types of crowns. And so, Zechariah was to take the silver and gold, make the crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest, who also, apparently, was in that house. Now this, I say, was an acted prophetic symbolic command which Zechariah received. And so he went to the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, and there was Joshua the high priest. He took of the materials from the hand of the men who had come from Babylon, and the text does not tell us whether he constructed it that day and he did it on the spot, or when he did, but we just assume from what is said, since later on they are given some instructions regarding the crown, that in short order he constructed the crown and he placed it upon the head of Joshua the high priest. Now that was a symbolic act. It was something that was designed to teach the children of Israel some definite truth. As a matter of fact, it is something that sets forth the person and the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's stop for just a moment and say a word about the man upon whom the crown was placed. His name is Joshua. Now we are students of the Bible, are we not? And we know, of course, that the name Joshua is the Hebrew equivalent of the name Jesus. In other words, this man's name was Jesus. He was Jesus the high priest, to say his name in Greek, and translated into English. Or he was Joshua the high priest, the Hebrew name. Just as if we might call our Lord Jesus, his name was really Joshua. He was the one whose name was, “The Lord is salvation.” That was the name of our Lord Jesus; it was also the name of Joshua. It is evident that this man stands as a typical character. His name is the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. You remember the birth of Christ as it is described in the gospel of Matthew, and you'll remember that Mary is told that his name shall be called Jesus. And when he was born, Joseph called his name Jesus, because that was the name that was given. But then a word of explanation was added, “His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save (or he shall “Jesus;” if I may, without irreverence, put it this way. For you see, the word “to save” is the root of the word “Jesus” and the root of the word “Joshua.”) his people from their sins.” His name shall be called, “The Lord is salvation” or, his name shall be called, “The Lord is our salvation,” or “The Lord saves.”

You know, every day that Mary the mother of the Lord Jesus went out to the back porch to call that young child in to play, she yelled out down through the back yards of all of the people who lived in Nazareth, and later in Capernaum, she said, “It's lunch time, ‘The Lord is salvation,’” or “Come in, ‘The Lord is salvation,’” or “Come in, ‘Jehovah saves.’” That was his name. Every day, the people of that community heard the name, “The Lord saves,” “The Lord is salvation.” In other words, it was God's way of giving us a very definite picture of who he is.

Now the significance of his name, of course, is related to the spiritual ministry which he would perform. Men looked at him, and it may have crossed their minds that perhaps this is the one who shall deliver us from the Roman yoke. But that's not the

meaning of that term, primarily. You see, the real enemy of Israel in the day of our Lord was not the Romans. The real enemy of the people of God, and of our Lord, was sin, and that has always been the chief enemy. Of course, when our Lord Jesus conquers sin, he shall also have his kingdom upon the earth. But he is Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. And so, when Zechariah the Prophet places the crown upon Joshua, this is designed by prophetic symbolism to instruct the people of that day and all who, down through the years, read the word of God, that it is our Lord Jesus upon the crown is to be placed.

Now not only does he talk about Jesus, or Joshua, and who he is, but he also talks about the work that he shall perform. Some time ago, I read an interesting article that was written by a Jewish Christian. As a matter of fact, he's a Hebrew Christian preacher. And he spoke about conversations that he had had with Jews down through the years of his Christian ministry. And he said one of the greatest objections that the Jewish people have raised to the Messiahship of the Lord Jesus, is the objection that his name is never once mentioned in all of the Old Testament. He said very frequently he has had, as he has witnessed and told them of Christ, he has had them reply to him, “If Jesus were really the Messiah, his name would surely appear in our Scriptures. But you can search the Bible through, and you will not find any reference to the name of Jesus.” He said that used to trouble him quite a bit, and then he discovered that the term “to save” or “the salvation of God,” that is the name of Jesus. Now of course, they are of the same roots, and I don't want to get into any technicalities; I'm just saying what this man said.

He said one day he was sitting with a Jewish Christian friend, and another Hebrew who was not yet a Christian, and this same objection was given, “In the Old Testament there is no mention of the name of Jesus.” And he asked the Hebrew man to turn in the Hebrew Old Testament, which they had in the home, and read Isaiah 62 and verse 11. And so the man opened up the Hebrew Bible and he read in Isaiah chapter 62 and verse 11 these words: (and this is exactly the way he read it as he was translating from the

Hebrew text) “Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the earth, saying to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, thy Yeshua cometh. Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.’” And the Christian said the man, as he read “thy Yeshua cometh,” he suddenly reddened, and he said, “No, I don’t mean ‘thy Yeshua,’ I mean ‘thy salvation.’” He said, “You tricked me into this.” And the Christian said, “No, I didn’t trick you into that at all. That just happens to be the name of Jesus. He is God’s salvation.” And he said, “Don’t you notice here that in this text it says that he’s coming, and furthermore, that his reward is with him, and his work before him. And even if you do not accept my explanation of this, you will have to acknowledge that God has personified his salvation, and he has called him Yeshua, which is practically the same name as Jesus of the New Testament.” The man said, “I’m sure my Bible doesn’t read that way.” And he happened to have his Hebrew Bible with him, and he went over and took his own Hebrew Bible out and he looked at it, and then the Christian said the only thing he could do at that point was to say that Isaiah was not divinely inspired.

Now not only is Joshua a typical person, I say, but also his work is typical. Now at this point, beginning at the 12th verse, we have the description of the meaning of this act. It is placed upon Joshua the high priest, and then we read in the 12th verse, “And speak unto him, saying, ‘Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts.’” And wouldn’t you have loved to have been in the house of Josiah and heard this prophecy firsthand. “Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, ‘Behold the man whose name is The Branch.’” Now immediately, those in the home of Josiah the son of Zephaniah would have thought of the Branch of the great prophetic passages of the Bible. This is one of the great names of the Lord Jesus in the Old Testament. He is the Branch, and it’s very significant, and many have pointed this out, that the references to the Branch in the Old Testament, each one of them seems to present a particular aspect of the life of the Lord Jesus.

We know the four gospels of the New Testament present our Lord as the King (Matthew), the Servant (Mark), the Son of Man, or Man (Luke), and the Son of God

(John). It's rather striking, that of the prophecies that mention the term “servant” in the Old Testament, or Branch, and refer this Branch to the one who is to come, may be classified in just that way. In other words, they each seem to present a certain aspect of the character of Jesus Christ. For example, it is the Prophet Jeremiah who speaks about the fact that God is going to send a “Branch of righteousness,” and that this Branch of righteousness comes from David the King, and he's going to rule and reign in the earth. In other words, the branch pictures the Lord as the King of Israel. It's also interesting, as you turn back to the 3rd chapter and the 8th verse of this very prophecy, right at the end of it, we have already had one mention of the Branch. “For behold, I will bring forth my Servant, the Branch.” My Servant. Now that is his characteristic as the servant of Jehovah. Luke calls him, “the Man” and stresses the human character of the Lord Jesus throughout. And right here in Zechariah chapter 6 we read, “Behold the man whose name is the Branch.” And then in the Book of Isaiah, the 4th chapter and the 2nd verse mentions the branch who is the “Branch of Jehovah.” A branch right off of the tree, Jehovah. As if he partakes of the divine nature of God, as if, of course, he is the Son of God. And so “The Branch” is a wonderful title for the Messiah, presenting all of the facets of his character, as set forth in our four gospels. I doubt that that is an accident.

Now we read of the things that he is going to do, and we want to kind of look at them and sum them up. They are so great that, of course, the Bible expositor, when he looks at something like this, kind of throws up his hands and says, “How is it possible for me to explain the greatness of the work that the Son of God shall do? And also, how is it possible for me to explain just exactly what this means to me?” You know, when I look at the New Testament and see all of the tremendous blessings that God has for a Christian, it's absolutely startling, and it is the most frustrating thing in the world, as an expositor of the word of God, to attempt, Sunday after Sunday, to set forth in some kind of unique way, the greatness of the things that we have in Jesus Christ. I know exactly why occasionally, the prophets and psalmists of the Old Testament coin a word; I know

exactly why the Apostle Paul has a few words that know lexicographer has ever found, nor probably ever will find, because at times, it is just impossible to explain what is in the heart.

That’s kind of the way I felt yesterday afternoon, while that last pass was completed. I was at home by myself, I was looking at the TV, and when the pass connected, I leaped up and my hand hit the light. I’m so glad it didn’t break it, because my wife is out of town, and how would I have been able to explain that? [Laughter] It was fantastic, it was incredible, it was--well--unspeakable. It’s something you cannot describe. Now, I’m sure that an A&M boy could describe it, but his description would not be exactly like mine, and I have a great deal of pity and compassion for Mel Brown this morning, and for any other Aggies who are in the audience. They played a great game, but it was a fantastic, incredible finish. And I look at the word of God and I see these tremendous promises that are in the Bible, and it’s fantastic, it’s incredible, it’s something I cannot explain. Suppose that someone were to knock at your door tomorrow and say, “I want to introduce myself to you. I’m Mr. So-and-so Smith; I’m a lawyer. Is your name Johnson?” or “Is your name ____?” and you say yes. “Well I’m trying to locate a certain person, is it possible that your grandmother and grandfather were born in Scotland? And is it possible that your uncle, the brother of your mother, went to Australia?” And you said, “Well, yes, I think so. As a matter of fact I have the old family Bible here, and all of the facts are set forth in it.”

And you go over, of course, and you discover that’s exactly it. And then the lawyer says to you something like this, “Well this is the last link in my search. It so happens your uncle was a very wealthy man in Australia, and he had one son, who was his heir. But his son has died, and we’ve been tracing down the next of kin. We traced the story back to Scotland, and then we’ve come over to this country, and we’ve finally come to you. And I want you to know that you’ve received a very large inheritance.” And so you say, “Boy, I’m certainly glad to have that, I’ve been wanting to get a new

Plymouth.” He said, “Wait a minute, this is a very large inheritance.” “Well a Buick will do.” “Well I want you to know that your uncle had tremendous holdings in Australia, and in fact, on these holdings some oil has been discovered, and a great deal of natural gas. And he has tremendous ranches and also coal mines.” And you say, “A Lincoln Continental?” [Laughter] The man says, “Why son, I just want you to know that you are very, very wealthy. Now of course, this is in the courts, we cannot give you all of the money now, probably several years, but because of the fact that his holdings were very liquid, we are prepared, even at the present moment, to kind of give you a little down-payment on what you’re going to get.” And you say, “Fine, how much is it?” “Well, it’s eight million, seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, but we’ll get the rest to you as soon as possible.” [Laughter] And you say, “Eight million, seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and that’s only the beginning! What must the inheritance be?”

Now that’s exactly how I feel when I look at the word of God and attempt to explain some of these human things that are given through prophets. I look at this and it is incredible, it is unspeakable, it is indescribable, and yet this is only the beginning! I have the Holy Spirit of God as the earnest of the inheritance which is for me in heaven. And Israel has some tremendous promises, and the word of God says that I am an inheritor with Israel, of the promises of God. Now, some of you seminary students, you kind of smile because I said that the church inherits with Israel. Just study your word of God. There are many of the things that we inherit with Israel, many of them. As a matter of fact, I inherit them all because I’m in Christ. And being in Christ, I shall rule and reign with him and with them.

Now let me list some of these things that are set forth here. The first thing that is stated is that the Branch shall have a beginning and an existence in history. Everything that comes to us from God comes to us in history. It is in history that man fell. It is in history that redemption was accomplished. It is in history that redemption shall be completed. That’s why there must be a kingdom of God upon the earth, because it is in

history that God does his work. And when he's through with history, we will move on out into the eternal history, the ages to come. And the Lord Jesus is one who has a beginning in history. Of David's family, of the tribe of Judah, born in the little city of Bethlehem, grew up in Nazareth and Capernaum, lived his life upon the little land of Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and around about, and now is at the right hand of the Father. He grows up out of his place.

“The Branch shall build the temple of the LORD: even he (no one else) shall build the temple of the LORD.” Now this temple, of course, is the temple that God shall construct when the Lord Jesus comes back to the earth to establish his kingdom. It is not the temple that Jews may construct now. As you know, and as I've said to you, some of the Jews today are very much concerned about reconstructing the temple in the city of Jerusalem, because they now have that city within their control. The temple that shall be constructed there is not the temple of God, it is an apostate temple, a temple in which a man ultimately shall set himself there and be worshiped as God. It is a satanic counterfeit of the temple that is to come. I've mentioned to you the articles that have appeared recently in the *Washington Post*, and there is a great deal of discussion now, and controversy, even within Israel, over just exactly whether they should build a temple. Israel, of course, is faced with a great problem. If we build a temple, shall we also carry on the sacrificial system again? And yet the rabbis have taught Israel, for hundreds of years now, that it's not longer necessary to have the animal sacrifices. We carry on our services as if the temple were still in existence, though it's not. As if the old situations still prevail, though it does not. And this “as if” doctrine, for that is what it's called among the Jews, is a doctrine that has gripped Israel down through the centuries.

This temple that Messiah shall build is not that temple, it is the temple he constructs when he come back to the earth. And he shall construct that temple. The other temple shall be constructed too, but it shall be destroyed. I've a friend who was in Israel just about two years ago. He spoke with the chief rabbi, Chief Rabbi Nissim. Since

he was a Bible believing Christian he said to Rabbi Nissim, “I’d like to ask you a question. If you ever get the city of Jerusalem back in your control, will you build the temple again?” The rabbi waved his hand and said, “Ah! That’s the work of a prophet.” And it is the work of a prophet. It’s the work of the false prophet, however, and not the true prophet. Our Lord Jesus, who is the true prophet, shall construct the temple at a later date; that is the millennial temple. He shall build the temple of the LORD: even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory.” He shall have the royal glory that belongs to the Messiah who reigns upon the earth. I’d love to have time to talk about the glory of Jesus Christ, but I do not.

Furthermore we read, “And he shall be a priest upon his throne.” Now this is startling. Every Jew would have thought it very strange. In fact, I think that when Zechariah went to the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, and made the crown and put it upon the head of Joshua the high priest, if you had been a good Jew, you might have stood up right at that moment and said, “Wait a minute, I object to that. A priest cannot be a king. A priest comes from the tribe of Levi; kings come from the tribe of Judah. How is it possible to place a crown upon the head of a high priest? That’s wrong, Zechariah. I doubt that that’s really the prophecy that was given you by God.”

But yet, the text says, “He shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” The answer, of course, is that the king who comes, is a different kind of priest. The old Aaronic priesthood will be done away with. A new priest has come. He’s after the order of Melchizedek. He’s of a greater order. He has an endless life. He becomes the eternal priest, and as the eternal priest, he has added to himself the kingship, when he comes back to the earth. Today our Lord Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, at the right hand of God. We have access to the Father through him. The day is coming when there shall be added to his priestly glory, the kingship over the whole of the earth. And that’s the meaning of this expression, “And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” That is, there will be a king-priest. There

has never been, for a long, long time, but the time is coming, when there shall be one who will represent men to God and God to men, and furthermore, shall rule over men, and men shall give him the adoration and obedience of their hearts.

Not only that, we read in the 15th verse, “And they far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD.” Gentile conversion, and gentile cooperation. The gentiles are going to come and participate in the kingdom, but it’s the kingdom that the Son of God has over the nation Israel, and over the nations of the earth. There will be no anti-Semitism then, for men shall respond to worship the same person, our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only that, but in the 15th verse we read, “And ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.” The events of the future shall authenticate the messenger and men shall really believe that the Lord Jesus has come to carry out the work of God. It’s almost as if Zechariah has anticipated the unbelief of the last days here. The unbelief of this present day. The unbelief of the Jewish nation as a whole, which refuses to have this man to rule over them. And Zechariah, looking down through the corridors of time, has said that at that time “ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.” At that time, they shall recognize who he is.

Now it’s startling (and I’ve said this before, but some of you were not here this summer), it’s startling that there is a movement in many quarters in Israel today. I try to keep up with what’s going on in Israel from the intellectual standpoint, and so I take *Commentary Magazine* and read it, and I take some other things and I read them to try to discover what the Jews are thinking today. It’s very startling to see what some of them are thinking. It wasn’t very long ago that one of the outstanding Jewish intellectuals said that the time is come for the Jewish nation, like in the Dreyfus affair, to right the wrong that has been done to our brothers, the Nazarenes, down through the years. And he made allusion, of course, to one of the most outstanding cases of anti-Semitism in human history, in the case of Captain Dreyfus in France. And he likened their treatment of our Lord Jesus to the treatment that Dreyfus received from the Frenchmen of that day. An

amazing thing. The time is coming when they shall recognize that the Lord Jesus is the messenger of God.

Now the last thing that he says is that the Branch shall demand absolute obedience as a condition for blessing. That's why Israel does not have their promises today. They have not been obedient. The only thing that awaits the fulfillment of these great promises for Israel and for us, and for us, is the change of heart in the nation Israel. Now some of my friends like to look at this too theologically. I would like to get them in a good argument someday, in which I could give them a few lessons in what I think the New Testament has to say. It is very wrong to say, that the church must be completed before Israel can come to Christ. That's looking at it from the human standpoint. From the divine standpoint, the only thing that prevents Israel from receiving the man from heaven again, is their faith, their trust. Now we know, of course, as this is worked out historically, that God shall, it is true, call the church to himself. For it is not except by tribulation that Israel shall respond, and ultimately call upon him in faith. But the one controversy that God has with Israel is not the church. The one controversy that he has with the nation Israel today, is their attitude toward Jesus Christ. All you have to do is read Romans chapter 11. All you have to do is to read Acts chapter 3. That is the one thing. That means, by the way, that we should have a tremendous reason to go out and preach the gospel to Jews today; tremendous. That's the one controversy God has them. And by the way, it's the one controversy he has with you. Your attitude to Jesus Christ.

Now at the conclusion of this, since of course Joshua could not wear the crown, Zechariah was told to take that crown off of Joshua, and to put it in the temple. And then those names that were given, and you notice they were slightly different. They're just the same names for the same people, but different names for the same people. You know lots of people that have two names, don't you? Do you know that when I married my wife, I don't really know yet how many aunts she did have. There were eight or ten children in the family, and most of them were women. It took me six months to a year to

learn their names. And what made it so difficult, was the fact that each one had several names. One person's name was Rosa, but everybody called her Dee. However, somebody would call her Rosa every now and then, and quite a few people also called her Muggy. So she had three names. Then one sister's name was Lilian Pearl, and I don't blame her a bit for changing her name. She was called Yankee by everybody in the family. I never even knew what her name was, but I suspected she had another name, since she was a Southerner and called Yankee. And I asked; they said, “Her name is Lillian Pearl. She's called Yankee because she was born north of the Mason-Dixon line, the only one of the children, and so we call her Yankee.” Then my own mother-in-law, her name is Kitty. Everybody calls her Kitty, but her real name is Grace. That's her real name, but everybody called her Kitty.

Now you'll notice that these men have different names. It's simply that they have different names -- that's all. Now they were told to take this crown and put it in the temple, and it was to be kept there. And it was to be kept there as a memorial. In other words, every time they went in the temple and they saw the crown that Zechariah had placed on the head of Joshua, they were told, in effect, the gentiles are going to be blessed in the future, the nation Israel is going to have all of its promises, and there's going to come a man whose name is the Branch. And he's going to be the servant of God; and he's going to be the Branch of Jehovah; and he's going to fulfill the promises that God has given to men. It was a kind of memorial, and every time they went in, they remembered the promises. Have you put your trust in this man whose name is the Branch? He not only is the one who shall fulfill the promises to Israel, but he is the one who has died for you. And if you put your trust in him, you shall receive everlasting life and participate in these wonderful promises. May God give you grace to turn to him right at this moment, and trust him.

May we stand for the benediction.

“The Coronation of Joshua the High Priest” by S. Lewis Johnson
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[Prayer] Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Servant whose name is the Branch, the love of God the Father, who has given the Son, the presence and communion of the Holy Spirit, who applies the things of Christ to the hearts of men, be and abide with all who know him in sincerity, until that great day, when the heavens shall be rent and the Son of God shall come to establish his kingdom upon the earth. In this week, oh God, we pray that we may represent him in a way that will bring glory and honor to him, whose name is the Lord our Salvation. For Jesus' sake. Amen.