

Zechariah 6:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest;

Analysis

Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest—Zechariah must use the Babylonian Jews' offering to fashion 'atārōt (אֲתָרֹת, 'crowns,' plural) from silver and gold, then crown Joshua (Yehōshūa', יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, 'Yahweh saves') son of Jehozadak (Yehōtsādāq, יְהוֹצָדָק, 'Yahweh is righteous'), the high priest. This is shocking: priests wore turbans, not crowns; kings wore crowns. The dual metals (silver and gold) may indicate composite crowns or two crowns, but the act symbolizes combining priestly and royal offices—forbidden in Israel's history.

When King Uzziah presumptuously usurped priestly functions, God struck him with leprosy (2 Chronicles 26:16-21). Saul's illicit sacrifice cost him his dynasty (1 Samuel 13:8-14). Priest and king were separate offices—until Messiah. Joshua the priest receiving royal crowns enacts prophecy: the coming Branch will unite both offices in one person. Psalm 110:4 prophesied this: 'Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek'—king and priest. Jesus alone fulfills this: greater than Aaron (priestly lineage), from Judah (royal tribe), crowned King of Kings yet our great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:1-28). The crowned Joshua is a living prophecy, a walking billboard announcing the Priest-King's coming.

Historical Context

Joshua (Jeshua) served as high priest during the post-exilic restoration (Ezra 2:2; 3:2; Haggai 1:1). His crowning was prophetic theater, not actual kingship—

Zerubbabel remained civil governor. The crowns weren't for Joshua to keep but to be memorialized in the temple (v. 14). The shocking image of a crowned priest burned into observers' minds, preparing them to recognize Messiah when He came claiming both offices. No other figure in Jewish history legitimately wore both crowns until Jesus.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Why was combining priestly and royal offices forbidden in Israel until Messiah?
2. How does Jesus perfectly unite the roles that Joshua's crowning only symbolized?
3. What does Christ's dual office as Priest-King provide that either office alone couldn't accomplish?

Interlinear Text

בר אָשָׁר וְשָׁמַת עַטֶּר וְתַעֲשֵׂת יְמִינָה בְּכֹסֶף וְלִקְרָב
Then take silver and gold and make crowns and set them upon the head

H3947

H3701

H2091

H6213

H5850

H7760

H7218

הַגָּדוֹלָה בְּכֶתֶן יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן יְהוֹצֵדֶךְ
the high priest of Josedech the son of Joshua

H3091

H1121

H3087

H3548

H1419

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 3:1 (Parallel theme): And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

Psalms 21:3 (Parallel theme): For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness: thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

Zechariah 3:5 (Parallel theme): And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by.

Song of Solomon 3:11: Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

Haggai 1:1 (Parallel theme): In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying,
