June 11th – Behold the Man

"Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, 'Behold the Man!'"
(John 19:5)

The word "behold" is a transliteration of an old English word *bihaldan* – "bi" means "thoroughly" and "haldan" means "to hold." In other words, to behold something is to fix your attention on it for the purpose of thorough examination. In his attempts to appease the Jewish leaders, Pilate commanded that Jesus be scourged. Following the severe beating, Pilate instructed the crowds to behold Jesus – not so they could worship Him, but so they could see how thoroughly He was beaten.

It would do you and I some good to behold Jesus right now. Look at the crown of thorns thrust down onto His head. The thorns are about 1-2 inches long, and as they dig down into His scalp and forehead the blood flows into His eyes. Look at the bare spots in His beard where the hair was plucked from His face. See the bruises on his cheeks where He was beaten with a rod and with soldiers' fists. Look at the purple robe they placed on Jesus in an attempt to mock Him as a fallen King.

Look at little closer and see deep lacerations all over His body – the result of the chords of a whip driving into His skin time and again, then ripping away the flesh as they were pulled out. Behold the man Jesus! Stop and fix your gaze on Christ! This is what Jesus was willing to go through to secure your pardon and mine. Let's make a commitment to behold Jesus like this much more often. In beholding the broken and battered Jesus, we will never forget all that He endured for us.