

Behold Your King
Behold, Your King!-73
Luke 19:28-44

We come to what is literally the last week in the life of Jesus Christ. It's interesting that the Gospels devote so much time in the stories of the last week of Jesus Christ. It's the most important part of His important life. It is in this week that Jesus Christ would be crucified on the Cross, and three days later He would rise from the dead. Then 40 days later He would ascend back to heaven, and is now seated "on the right hand of the power of God" (Luke 22:69) and is exalted. And we now await His return.

In this passage, we are reading about the first coming of Christ, when He presented Himself to the nation of Israel as their Messiah. It is called the triumphal entry. It is also recorded in Matthew 21, in Mark 11 and in John 12. Whenever all four Gospels record an event in the life of Jesus Christ, we know it is very important. You should read this event in each of the Gospels to get the full insight; each one carries a different emphasis.

This story has three, simple movements. The first section is the King's preparation, in verses 28-36. Jesus had been down by the area of Jericho, and was now going up to Jerusalem. And He will first go up to the mount of Olives and then on to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is above sea level and Jericho is below sea level. There is a 3,000 foot climb over 17 miles from Jericho to Jerusalem. The crowd following Jesus was going to Jerusalem for the Passover, a mandatory feast all male Jews must attend.

By this time, Jesus had already spoken the parable, in verses 11-27, about the minas or pounds, in which a master had left his servants with an amount of money over which the servants had to be good stewards, so at his return, he would receive interest. They were to be faithful stewards. That shows us there will be a period between the first coming and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The crowd following Jesus heard this parable and also saw the miracles Jesus had performed.

Verse 28, "When He..." that is, "Jesus" "...had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany..." which are on the eastern side of the Mount of Olives and east of Jerusalem. He spent a lot of time there, because Bethany was the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus where Jesus would stay. "...at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples..." which He doesn't name "...saying, 'Go into the village opposite you...' we don't know what village "...where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat."

That is significant. If you try to get on a donkey that no one has ever ridden, it'll bounce you right off. So Jesus is the master of creation. All the creatures know who He is. It's the people who didn't fully know who He was. This donkey would know who Jesus was and would submit to its master, Jesus. This describes Christ's perfect knowledge of and His control over creation.

Verse 30, “Loose it and bring it here. And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’” I like that statement. The Lord needs a donkey?! If He needs a donkey, there is hope for me. God can even use me.

Verse 32, “So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, ‘Why are you loosing the colt?’ And they said, ‘The Lord has need of him.’ Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road.”

Spreading their clothes before Him was a sign of submission. They couldn’t lay down and let the donkey step over them, so they laid their clothes in front of the donkey. It’s a picture of being underneath His feet. Jesus was the King, and they would prostrate themselves by laying their coats down before Him.

Luke doesn’t mention the palm branches, but we know they pulled down palm branches—that’s why we call it Palm Sunday—and they waved the branches. And from Psalm 118, they cried out, “Hosanna!” or “Save now!...Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Psalm 118:25-26).

The Lord’s actions of riding into Jerusalem on this little donkey was unmistakably a claim to be the Messiah King. He did something He had never done up to this point. Prior to this it had been, “My time has not yet come” (John 7:6). He even said “that they should tell no one” (Mark 7:36). He didn’t want the crowds to try to take Him and make Him King. But His entrance was an open declaration by Jesus that He was their King.

This was carefully planned. Bible students like to debate the issue of whether Jesus prearranged the donkey and had an arrangement with the owners that the donkey would be available and that His disciple would say, “The Lord has need of it,” and that would be the password or whether Jesus, in His omniscience—which I tend to believe—knew the donkey was there and knew that when they approached the owners, they would give permission for Him to use the donkey. Either way, running through this story is that Jesus is in control.

But if you knew you were going to be crucified in Jerusalem, would you go there? No; I’d go the other way! But Jesus “steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem” (Luke 9:51). He was going there to die. Even when He approached Jerusalem, He went into the garden of Gethsemane, which means “oil press.” He sweat, as it were, “great drops of blood,” and in agony He prayed prostrate to the Father. He said, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done” (Luke 22:42, 44).

So even though Jesus recoiled, as a holy, righteous man would, He didn’t want to take sin on at the Cross. But He willingly, voluntarily had come for this purpose, and nothing could hinder His purpose to go to Jerusalem to be crucified for the sin of the world. This was all plotted out and planned beforehand.

This can actually bring fear to your heart that God knows and sees all things (Hebrews 4:13), He has perfect knowledge, or it can bring comfort, knowing He is in control.

So this entrance was also a picture of His dignity and divinity and a picture of His humility. It conveys that Jesus is the Lord, the Messiah, and that He was humble when He came to Jerusalem.

When King David rode into Jerusalem, he rode on a donkey. King Solomon also rode a donkey. We sometimes get the idea that kings didn't ride donkeys, but in the Jewish nation, they did. It was a humble beast, but it was a divine picture of both His dignity, deity and humility.

Jesus was a new kind of king. Clarence McCartney said, "How strange a contrast to the triumphal entry of ancient warriors and conquerors into the cities, which they had taken. This time no wall broken down for entry. This time no garland hero standing in a war chariot driving down the lane of cheering subjects past smoking altars following the captive kings and princes in chains. Instead of that, a meek and lowly man riding upon a foal of a donkey."

What a beautiful picture! As they waved their palm branches, they laid their garments before Him and the multitudes sang, "Hosanna to the King!"

Remember that at Passover, Jerusalem would swell by at least two million people. They had seen the miracles which Jesus had done, and they were all celebrating, believing that this was the moment when He would actually overthrow the Roman government, set up His throne and reign as the Covenant-promised Messiah on David's throne in Jerusalem.

In verse 31, I like that statement about the donkey: "The Lord has need of it." Have you ever had to borrow things, and you feel kind of humbled by that? I'm not a tool guy; I don't have a lot of tools. So if I need a tool, I sometimes go to my neighbor and borrow a tool. He probably thinks, This poor pastor! They need to give him more money, so he can buy his own tools! No, that's not the problem. I just want to borrow his.

Jesus borrowed stuff. I thought, It's Biblical! He borrowed a donkey, so I can borrow a wrench. No big deal. Jesus borrowed a boat from which to preach on the sea of Galilee. He borrowed a coin. Jesus was asked, "Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" (Luke 20:22). He said, "Show me a denarius." He didn't have one, so He borrowed one. He borrowed an upper room to have the Passover meal with His disciples. And then He had to borrow a tomb to be buried in. Someone said, "No big deal; He just needed it for the weekend."

Jerry Vines said, "The paradox of His earthly life was that although He was rich, He became poor. He possessed nothing, yet was ruler of all things. Jesus Christ created "the cattle on a thousand hills" [Psalm 50:10], yet He needed a boat from which to preach the Gospel. Jesus Christ created the stars, flung them into place, yet needed somewhere to lay His head at night. He who created the rushing streams of every river cried, "I thirst" (John 19:28). He whose chariot was the clouds said, "I need a donkey on which to ride into Jerusalem." So He who was rich became poor for our sake.

I like Philippians 2:6-8 where Paul says that Jesus, “being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation...” that’s the gnosis passage “...taking the form of a bondservant...” which is His Incarnation, His humanity “...and coming in the likeness of men.” And He “became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” So Jesus humbled Himself in divine preparation.

The second section of this story is in verses 37-40, the King’s adoration. “Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives...” This means Jesus was at the top of Mount Olivet looking to the west and would ride down into the Kidron Valley and then up into the city of Jerusalem. “The whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying: ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!’” This was all prophesied in Psalm 118, a Messianic psalm. “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” It sounds like the day Jesus was born in Bethlehem when the angels celebrated His birth and said, “On earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

Verse 39, “And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, ‘Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.’” There always has to be a fly in the ointment! There’s always a killjoy at the party. They had a great time celebrating and praising the Lord, and these self-righteous, religious Pharisees tried to quiet the crowd. They were upset, because they didn’t want Jesus to be hailed the Messiah. “But He answered and said to them, ‘I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.’” That would have been the very first rock concert recorded in history. They would sing,

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me.

Let me hide myself in Thee.”

So this is a beautiful picture of what’s going on here: the adoration of the King.

Why did Jesus now allow this very public demonstration? Up to this point, it was, “My time has not yet come.” When He had revealed His true essence to Peter, James and John on the mount of transfiguration, He said, “Tell the vision to no one” (Matthew 17:9). Now He wanted to openly display His Messiahship.

Let me give you some reasons why. Number one, it forced the Jewish leaders to act. Matthew 26:4-5 says that they “plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him. But they said, ‘Not during the feast...” meaning “the feast of Passover” “...lest there be an uproar among the people.” They wanted to avoid arresting Jesus at Passover, because they didn’t want the people to go into an uproar. But God has a divine timetable; He will not be thwarted. What God has spoken cannot be broken.

This would be the day He would reveal Himself, but it would actually precipitate the Jewish authorities, who would lead the way in arresting Jesus. They would conspire with Judas. Jesus would be arrested, tried and crucified. Why? Because it was Passover, and Jesus was the fulfillment of Passover.

When the Israelites came out of bondage in Egypt, the last plague was that God would send an angel to destroy the firstborn of all the Egyptians. But at the homes of the Israelites, they were to take a lamb, without blemish or spot. That lamb was a picture of Jesus Christ. They slayed the lamb and put its blood on the door posts and lintel of their homes, so when the angel of death came through Egypt, it would pass over their homes where the blood had been applied. That pictured the Cross of Jesus Christ, who was our Passover Lamb. He died on the Cross for our sins, so that God's wrath might pass over us, because Jesus paid the price for us on the Cross.

So Jesus actually died at Passover. And Jerusalem would swell to over two million pilgrims at that time. Thousands of lambs would be slain. What a picture this is of Jesus, our Passover Lamb!

Number two, Jesus now displayed His Messiahship, because it fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. There are at least three passages in the Old Testament that prophesy this event. Zechariah 9:9 says, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey." This was the fulfillment of Zechariah the prophet speaking a couple hundred years before Jesus ever rode that donkey into Jerusalem.

One of the things that indicates that the Bible is the Word of God is fulfilled prophecy. God spoke, and it was fulfilled. And there still is prophecy to be fulfilled. But what God said, through the prophet Zechariah, was fulfilled at that time.

The people were also crying out, "Hosanna!" That is not a word of praise but of petition. "Hosanna!" means "Save now!" They saw the miracles of Bartimaeus being healed, and they had been on the eastern side of Bethany, which is where Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. He probably spent the night in the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. And Lazarus was probably in the crowd, so the people were pretty jazzed and excited. Lazarus, who was dead, is now alive! The tax collector, who was corrupt, is now saved! Blind Bartimaeus could now see!

All these miracles had been performed, so they said, "Our King is here! Let's go for it! Let's set up the kingdom, and overthrow the Roman government, destroy them and reign on the throne of David forever!" The people were ready to make it happen.

This was prophesied in Psalm 118:22-26. "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." This is Jesus' rejection. "This was the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now..." or "Hosanna." Set up the kingdom. "...I pray, O Lord; O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We have blessed you from the house of the Lord."

This psalm is what the people were quoting. This is a Hallel psalm, a psalm of praise, a psalm

of ascent as you came to Jerusalem at the Passover. It was the day the Messiah had come in fulfillment.

Number three, Jesus put on this public display, because He delights when we praise Him. Don't you think that brings joy to the heart of God when we praise Him? Saved lives result in singing lips.

I didn't say you had to be a good singer. You might "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands!" (Psalm 100:1-KJV). I like that verse. He didn't say to sing beautifully; He said to sing about the beauty of the Lord, even if your voice isn't quite that good.

So they were praising the Lord. Verse 37 says that they, "began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen." And so should we. Shouldn't we praise the Lord? When we gather on Sunday mornings, we should all be lifting our voices in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for all the wonderful works He has done in our lives. And verse 38 says, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" And we should be doing the same; we should be blessing the Lord, worshipping the Lord, thanking the Lord and giving Him glory.

Then verse 40 says that if we don't praise Him, "The stones would immediately cry out." The Bible says, "The whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now....Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:22-23). I like Psalm 96:11-12, which says, "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar..." that's my favorite "...and all its fullness; let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the Lord." Many times the Bible says that when the Lord returns, "All the trees of the field shall clap their hands" (Isaiah 55:12).

So His creatures didn't recognize who He was, but His creation did, as even the stones would cry out. But sadly for many in the crowd, their praises would wither before the palm branches that they were waving.

Now we move to the third movement, the King's lamentation, verses 41-44. This is where it all comes together in Luke's account. "Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, 'If you had known...' His heart was broken, and He saw what no one else could see—their rejection and as a result, the judgment that would come upon the Jewish nation "...even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes." Paul said in Romans 11:25, "Blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in." That would be the church age.

Verse 43, "For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation." This is a description of the destruction in 70 AD, when Titus and the

Romans came in and destroyed Jerusalem. Jesus came to save, but they were blind and did not understand.

Verse 41 says, "Now as He drew near..." to Jerusalem "...He saw the city and wept over it." Jesus could see what no one else could see. You say, "What did He see?!" Everyone else is praising the Lord, celebrating and waving palm branches and singing "Hosanna" or "Save now." It would be like crying at your birthday party while they're singing "Happy Birthday" to you!

There are two times in the New Testament when Jesus wept. In John 11:35, the shortest verse in the Bible, it says, "Jesus wept" at the grave of Lazarus. The Greek word for "wept" meant that His eyes moistened, they tear up and a tear ran down His cheek. He's not sobbing or lamenting out loud. The Son of God was in tears at the grave of Lazarus.

But in verse 41, the word "wept" is a different Greek word. Here the word means "to lament, to cry aloud, to wail, to sob convulsively." His chest was heaving, He was sobbing and His tears were freely flowing. It reminds me of Jeremiah, who was called "the weeping prophet." In the book of Lamentations, the prophet wept over the city and the people of Israel.

And we see in this the heart of God. What a contrast to Jonah! Jonah preached to the people of Nineveh, and then he went up on a mountain and looked down at the city, hoping God would rain down fire and destroy it. He cried because God didn't destroy Nineveh.

But Jesus cried because Jerusalem was going to be destroyed. They "did not know the time of [their] visitation." (Luke 19:44). This was a specific day prophesied when Jesus would ride into Jerusalem, but they failed to recognize the day. They didn't see the heart of God in the Person of Jesus Christ in His compassion and love.

What did Jesus see that made Him weep? First, He looked back and saw the prophecy. Verse 42 says, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day..." This day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey was prophesied in Daniel 9:24-27. It is the greatest, or one of the greatest prophecies in the Bible. The prophecy is called the 70 weeks or the seventy-sevens of Daniel, which equals 490 years. This 490 years start in 445 BC, Nehemiah 2:7-8, when King Artaxerxes gave the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.

God gave Daniel this prophecy, and it was perfectly fulfilled for the first 483 years until the first coming of Christ when He entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. And Daniel 9:26 says, "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself"; it was for the sins of the people. That's speaking of the Cross.

Then there is the church age, which has already been 2,000 years, and we don't know how long this age will be. After that, the church will be raptured and caught up to heaven. Then the last seven years of the 490 years of Daniel's prophecy, which will be the tribulation, will be completed when Jesus comes back in His Second Coming.

That's why we cannot calculate when the Second Coming will take place; we don't know how

long the church age will be. It's a parenthesis. This is the period when the king gave us a mina; we are to multiply and serve Him until He comes.

So there will be a Second Coming of Jesus Christ at the end of the tribulation. That will bring in the kingdom age, which will be the 1,000-year, millennial reign of Jesus Christ on the earth. That then will usher in the new heaven and the new earth and the eternal state.

Study Daniel 9. God perfectly predicted, to the very day, which was 173,880 days, that Messiah would come and would then be "cut off" or crucified, "not for Himself," but for the sins of the people. So this was predicted.

But there are still seven years left in this prophecy. It is the tribulation period, which will begin when the anti-Christ makes a covenant with the nation of Israel for seven years.

And it is so amazing that Israel has been born out of the past! The modern state of Israel is back in the land. What God has promised they will still get, yet they are now in the Promised Land, and God is going to use them to bring glory to Himself and to bring them back to faith in Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

So this is all part of the marvelous prophecy given by Daniel. And that's why Jesus emphasized "in this your day." If they had only known that this was the day! They should have studied the book of Daniel; then they would have known He was the Messiah. But they rejected Him.

You say, "Well, wasn't that all part of God's plan?" Yes. And that's amazing to me! By their rejection, the door flew open to the Gentiles and the church age. In Romans 11:17, Paul likens it to an olive tree. The Israelites were the olive tree, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that partook of the root, and the covenant promises made to them. We, like Gentiles, are like wild olive branches that have been grafted into that olive tree, or into that covenant. So we also are now partakers of that covenant.

But God is able to bring the Jews back again. He will work again in the last seven-year period with the nation of Israel. In Romans 9, God chose Israel; in Romans 10, Israel rejected Christ, and they were temporarily blinded; and in Romans 11, Israel will be restored, "So all Israel will be saved" (Romans 11:26).

Not only did Jesus' weeping over Jerusalem look back at the prophecy of Daniel, but second, He looked around and saw that they had forfeited their peace. He said, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace!" Jesus is the Prince of Peace, but they rejected Him. How would He bring peace? By dying on the Cross and bringing them into relationship with God; they would have peace with God. And they would have the peace of God through the blood of the Cross of Jesus Christ.

And third, Jesus looked ahead and saw their punishment. This is the closing of this episode, in verses 43-44. "For days will come upon you..." No wonder Jesus was weeping. It happened in 70 AD when the Romans invaded. "...when your enemies will build an embankment around

you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

Jesus was weeping over Jerusalem, because He saw the troops coming in 70 AD. They surrounded the city of Jerusalem, and 600,000 Jews were destroyed. The Jews were dispersed until May 14, 1948, when Israel was born into a nation again. That was all because they “did not know the time of [their] visitation.”

In Luke 19, when Jesus rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, He wept; in Revelation 19:12, when Jesus comes back in the Second Coming, “His eyes [will be] like a flame of fire.” In Luke 19, He came on a donkey; in Revelation 19:11, He will come on “a white horse.” In Luke 19, He came humbly; in Revelation 19:16, He will come as “King of kings and Lord of lords.” In Luke 19, He came to die for sin on the Cross; in Revelation 19:11, 17-21, He will come to judge for sin.

Now there is that day for you and me, that day of “visitation,” when we must open our hearts and believe in, trust in Jesus Christ and receive Him as our Lord and Savior. That is our day of “visitation.” Someone put it in a poem:

“The Son of God in tears,

The wondering angels see;

Be thou astonished, O my soul;

He shed those tears for thee.”