

“Your King is Coming” John 12:12–19 (3.28.21)

John 12:12–19 (NIV84) *The Triumphal Entry*

¹²The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. ¹³They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Blessed is the King of Israel!”

¹⁴Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written,

¹⁵ “Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion;

see, your king is coming,

seated on a donkey’s colt.”

¹⁶At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

¹⁷Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. ¹⁸Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him. ¹⁹So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

The word of God for the people of God.

Title: **“Your King is Coming”**

LET US PRAY.

INTRODUCTION:

How many times have we celebrated Holy Week? Most of us have heard and studied the scriptures surrounding Jesus’ last week on earth many many times. If you look at the Gospel of John you will see a very large portion is devoted to these events. I suggest to you that instead of calling it Holy Week, we might call it Mystery Week.

Many Bibles have a title over today’s scripture that says Triumphal Entry. Really? Where is the Triumph? There is a big parade, a large crowd; but, it seems to fizzle out. It reminds me of the finale at a 4th of July fireworks display. When all the noise and flash is over, you say, “Boy, that was cool.” Then you start the car and fight the traffic to get home.

Every year large crowds would gather in Jerusalem for the Passover celebration. In this particular year, there was heightened expectations. Jesus was becoming more and more famous as news of His miracles was spreading. These miracles climaxed with the unbelievable raising of Lazarus not many days before. Those that had witnessed this, were a crowd within the crowd. They were sharing the news and it spread like a California wildfire. Let’s see what Jesus will do next. The excitement continued to build. The people knew the scriptures. They knew the promises of a Messiah, a Messianic King. Jesus seemed to be making a clear statement. I am the Messiah. I am the King.

BODY:

At first his disciples did not understand all this. I tell you that no one did. And maybe even today, we still don’t understand all this. Jesus continued to teach the disciples that week, to eat with them, to sleep with them, to pray with them. The disciples in their human weakness continued senseless arguments about who would be the greatest amongst themselves. Like everyone else, they went about as normal, preparing for the Passover celebration.

Judas certainly did not understand what was going on. Probably, he had gotten very excited. Finally, Jesus is going to free us from Roman oppression. Then he quickly became disillusioned. While we will never know exactly what his motivations were, I agree with those that believe, Judas was trying to force Jesus’ hand. By Judas’ betrayal and Jesus’ arrest, conflict would accelerate a revolution.

The crowd that saw Lazarus raised didn't know what was happening. They didn't know that what they were celebrating caused the Jewish leaders to put Jesus and Lazarus under a death sentence. If they had known, maybe they would have encouraged Jesus to keep a low profile. Maybe Jesus should have slipped in under the cover of darkness.

The crowd of religious Pilgrims knew even less. Some came for the festivities. Some of them were just curiosity seekers. Wait till we get back home and tell what we saw. People everywhere waving palm branches. They were laying their cloaks on the road in front of Jesus. Everyone was singing Hosanna! "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"

The Pharisees didn't know what was happening either. "Look how the whole world has gone after him!" they said to each other. If only that were true. If only it were true today. They knew about the miracles. They knew about the raising of Lazarus. They could clearly see that Jesus was proclaiming to be the King of Israel. And yet, they still opposed Jesus.

The scriptures are silent about the Roman observers. How do I know there were Romans observers you wonder? You do not maintain control of a rebellious people without having your finger on the pulse of their capitol city. Passover brought the biggest crowds of the year and crowds could become volatile. It was the job of Pontius Pilate and the Roman soldiers to maintain order and control. They were professionals and experienced.

Yes, Jesus was in fact the King of Israel, the King of the Jews even though there were that opposed Him. Matthew 2:1-2 (NIV84) **2** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

When Jesus was first starting His ministry, John 1:49 (NIV84) Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."

John the Baptist preached "the kingdom of heaven is near." Jesus preached the same thing; it was a major theme of His message. Of course, a kingdom requires a king. This phrase, the "kingdom of heaven," is used thirty-two times in Matthew's Gospel and there are also references to the "kingdom of God" and the "kingdom of the Father."

In Matthew 12:28 (NIV84) Jesus declares, "But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."

Over and over again, Jesus is referred to as the Son of David. Prophecy foretold that the Messiah must come from the line of David. The LORD promised King David that He would establish David's house and put his son on the throne forever.

The Old Testament descriptions of the Davidic Messiah highlight several important features of this important descendant of David. The Messiah will: reign forever and ever; reign with righteousness and justice; rule over all the peoples of the earth; establish peace over all creation; be endowed with the Spirit of God; be the embodiment of Yahweh; destroy the wicked by his mere command; act as both King and Priest; mediate the new covenant; provide forgiveness of sins through his sacrificial death; and lead God's people on a new exodus.

At Jesus' crucifixion, His death, Pilate had a sign posted against the objections of the Jewish leaders.

John 19:19-21 (NIV84)

¹⁹ Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.

²⁰ Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. ²¹ The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

There were several obstacles preventing people from seeing Jesus for who He really was. For the One through Whom all things were created, being the King of Israel was too small of a position. They misunderstood the role of Israel in world history; therefore, they misunderstood the role of the Messiah. They were limiting God. They were interpreting what they saw happening through lenses of

nationalism and their identity as The Chosen People of Yahweh. They needed a wide-angle lens. They needed a panoramic view to see the big picture.

You have heard me say before that Jesus more frequently referred to Himself as the Son of Man than any other name. This powerfully points to Daniel 7:13–14 (NIV84)

¹³ “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a **son of man**, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. ¹⁴ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. The night of Jesus’ arrest, He is being interrogated by the illegal court. We read in Matthew 26:63–64 (NIV84)

⁶³ But Jesus remained silent.

The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.”

⁶⁴ “Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

Without taking extensive time to do an exposition of the Daniel scripture, we can see it involves a great more than being King of Israel: all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion. But there is another significant foreshadowing that Jesus includes in His quote. It is an allusion to His second coming. Jesus was born of the virgin, Mary. So, coming on the clouds is a future reference: you will see. This was a mystery not fully revealed and to this day it has not been realized.

This brings us to the king of the Daughter of Zion. While this quotes Zechariah 9:9, which the Jews knew well, there are layers of understanding. The Lexham Bible Dictionary explains:

Zion itself became the center for a theological tradition that changed shape over time. There are Zion “traditions” in the Old Testament that adapt to the changing circumstances of the people of Israel; as the Old Testament grew throughout history, so did Zion. The significance of Zion develops over time: it began as a Jebusite residence which David conquered. It became the Temple Mount, referred to Jerusalem more generally, and finally designated the people of Israel as a whole.

The biblical text also displays the notion of Zion as a typified, figural sphere where God and His people relate in an eschatological sense. The early church radically reoriented the location of worship away from Jerusalem and toward the person of Jesus. Zion is where God and His people dwell together. It is God’s kingdom come, the kingdom we pray for every time we recite the Lord’s Prayer.

Hear the psalmist in Psalm 2:

¹ Why do the nations conspire
and the peoples plot in vain?

² The kings of the earth take their stand
and the rulers gather together
against the Lord
and against his Anointed One.

³ “Let us break their chains,” they say,
“and throw off their fetters.”

⁴ The One enthroned in heaven laughs;
the Lord scoffs at them.

⁵ Then he rebukes them in his anger
and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,

⁶ “I have installed my King
on Zion, my holy hill.”

⁷ I will proclaim the decree of the Lord:

He said to me, "You are my Son;
today I have become your Father.

⁸ Ask of me,
and I will make the nations your inheritance,
the ends of the earth your possession.

⁹ You will rule them with an iron scepter;
you will dash them to pieces like pottery."

¹⁰ Therefore, you kings, be wise;
be warned, you rulers of the earth.

¹¹ Serve the Lord with fear
and rejoice with trembling.

¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry
and you be destroyed in your way,
for his wrath can flare up in a moment.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

I know that I have given you a lot of technical Biblical argument. And you are probably wondering so what? Does this have anything to do with me? Hopefully there are two takeaways for you. The first is an enhanced understanding of Pilate's interrogation of Jesus.

John 18:33–38 (NIV84)

³³ Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

³⁴ "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"

³⁵ "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?"

³⁶ Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

³⁷ "You are a king, then!" said Pilate.

Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

³⁸ "What is truth?" Pilate asked. With this he went out again to the Jews and said, "I find no basis for a charge against him.

The second takeaway is what should you do with this understanding? I want you to be on the side of truth. I want you to listen to Jesus. Is the kingdom of God within you? Has Jesus entered in? May your heart be Zion. Lay down a cloak of hospitality. Celebrate with the waving of palm branches. Sing out, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

CONCLUSION:

Near the close of our Bible we read in Revelation 19:16 (NIV84) On Jesus' robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords. Paul tells us Colossians 1:13 (NIV84) For [God] has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

1. All hail the power of Jesus' name!

Let angels prostrate fall;
bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown him Lord of all.

2. Ye chosen seed of Israel's race,
ye ransomed from the fall,
hail him who saves you by his grace,
and crown him Lord of all.

3. Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
the wormwood and the gall,
go spread your trophies at his feet,
and crown him Lord of all.

4. Let every kindred, every tribe
on this terrestrial ball,
to him all majesty ascribe,
and crown him Lord of all.

5. Crown him, ye martyrs of your God,
who from his altar call;
extol the Stem of Jesse's Rod,
and crown him Lord of all.

6. O that with yonder sacred throng
we at his feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song,
and crown him Lord of all.
We'll join the everlasting song,
and crown him Lord of all.

Long live the King!
Amen and amen. Let us pray.