

YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU
Matthew 21:1-11

America went to war to insure there would be no monarchy...no kings...The United States does not have a king...The American Revolution was a rebellion against monarchy, and the Founding Fathers aimed to establish a government where power comes from the people, not from a king.

Still... there are organized protests across the country with the message “NO KINGS!”

Seventy years ago C.S. Lewis said something different...instead of thousands and thousands of people demanding NO KINGS...Lewis said that deep inside each of us is the need and desire for a king... that if we don't have one.... We will create one... with sports figures.... Celebrities... political figures... the pope...

It is similar to the “God-shaped hole” I’ve mentioned a few times...last week.

Lewis said something like “*there’s something at our very core that needs a king!*... some call it a “*memory trace*” ...the idea that we were created with something in our minds wanting a king.... that there is something about having a need to crown someone or something.... And what it really is.... **Is the deep deep need for King Jesus!...The only true King.**

This morning we are going to the first Palm Sunday...a coronation of such...the coronation of the one and true kingthe one that truly fills in that “memory trace” within us.... **The ultimate true king...**...important to note...

All four gospels tell of the this Palm Sunday coronation...it must be important...This morning I am going to pull from three of the four gospels... Matthew, Luke and John.... ... Even though we read Matthew’s account this morning... We will fill in the story from Luke and John...

Jesus... unlike any other monarch... will have two coronations... this one the gospels have reported has past.... But there is another in the future... interesting...the first coronation.... The one that is past **was the most humble of coronations** as we will see shortly.... but when Jesus returns... He will have another coronation that will be **the most glorious coronation ever!**

Isaiah 35 **The desert will rejoice, and flowers will bloom in the wastelands.2 The desert will sing and shout for joy;** the angels will sing...the heavens will open and He will come on a white horse...and His robe will be dripping with blood and on his robe and on His thigh will be written the words KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.... all will bow at His feet...
 --Revelation 19!!

But that is yet to come.... [the week after Easter!]

This morning I want to look at the story of His humble triumphal entry into Jerusalem... There is much to glean from this humble yet vital event...

Much of my life I never really thought much about Palm Sunday... I basically looked at it as a necessary event to get Jesus into Jerusalem so He could go to the cross... Not really an event you can build a sermon around...

Jesus had been doing miracles on His way to Jerusalem... excitement about this prophet/teacher/healer was intensifying all around... some thought "maybe this is the long awaited for Messiah..."

So Jesus enters Jerusalem riding a donkey and a party atmosphere breaks out... Palm branches waving... then the important things follow after... Passion weeks begins... the important events take place later in the week... the Upper room on Thursday, Gethsemane in the night... early Friday morning... the trials... the crucifixion... Resurrection on Sunday... **Palm Sunday gets Jesus into place.** And that is true...

But it is much more than that... Palm Sunday was a very intentional... highly planned out significant event... Jesus Himself was the designer... and the planner... this event that was prophesied hundreds of years before by the Old Testament prophets came about exactly the way that they said it would...

Palm Sunday brings us into a crises... ***A crises being a crucial or decisive point or situation, especially a difficult or unstable situation involving an impending change***.... it brings every person into this crises including all of us in this building right now.

Palm Sunday presents us with an essential question we must answer...

The reason Palm Sunday becomes a crises.... Is because I am not ending at verse 9 in Matthew's account.... but I will visit Luke's account which gives us further insight into that day..... Most messages for Palm Sunday end at Matthew 21 verse 9... it's a wonderful place to end because everyone is happy and singing... ***Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord... Peace in heaven... glory in the highest!***

That's wonderful!....but that is not where the story ends...

In fact... verse 10 in Matthew 21 says **when He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "WHO IS THIS?"**... *Who is this man Jesus?.... who comes in like a king?....* it is the ultimate question for the entirety of history... and for us this morning... how one answers that question directs all of life now... but greater than that... **determines one's eternity**....

Luke takes this further... he fills in something that happened between verses 9 and 10 in Matthew's account... a sober warning to specifically the Jews of Israel.... but that warning resonates to us this morning... and it beckons an answer to that question in Matthew... let's go through it...

Jesus had been down in Jericho.... Which is down at the Dead Sea... now get the picture in your head.... Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem... coming from Jericho which is below sea level... some 17 miles BELOW Jerusalem.... Jerusalem is straight up....in fact about a 4000 foot climb.

Now... while He was in Jericho... He was there for a couple days... He healed two blind men... and not only healed them but FORGIVE THEM OF THEIR SINS... and Luke tells us they became His disciples....He's at the apex of His ministry... word has travelled all over the region...

The end of Matthew 20 tells of the same incident... RIGHT BEFORE Jesus goes into Jerusalem for the last time... He heals these two blind men... but here's the really big deal... as Jesus is walking up the road... these two blind men **cried out "Lord have mercy on us, Son of David!"**

Translation—*Lord*... a term of honor.. *Have mercy on us*... ***Son of David***... the title of the long awaited for Messiah... Scripture says the Messiah will come from the offspring of David... HOW DOES JESUS RESPOND?... **What do you want me to do for you?**

Translation?—**Yes, I am the Messiah, Son of David...what do you want me to do for you?...** *Do you realize how big this is?* This is the first time Jesus publicly acknowledges being the Messiah!... I picture the disciples are all looking at each other... *Did He just say that?* They know this means crises.

Luke tells us also that while in Jericho He brought to salvation a tax collector named Zacchaeus... the most hated man in Jericho...before that.... When He was up in Bethany.... He raised Lazarus from the dead... that's amazing!.... So the crowds are getting larger... people are seeking after Jesus...they are following Him

And as Jesus begins to head toward Jerusalem... the people are jubilant... *Is this is Him?.... Is this the Messiah?... Is this the one who will bring glory back to Israel... and establish the kingdom promised to Israel in the Old Testament?*

Important to note... most were excited because they believed the Messiah would come and free them from Rome... they would all become prosperous... their lives would get better... that's why they're so very excited....

To them.... They hoped that Jesus would be their "**political Savior**"... that's the Jesus THEY wanted...***people like to invent the Jesus THEY want***... but of course..... **Jesus was NOT the political Savior but the spiritual Savior that can save people from their sins**....

Just a couple miles from Jerusalem is the village of Bethany... Jesus hung out much in Bethany... it was the home of Mary...Martha... Lazarus... it was His "hub"... where He often operated from... where He would go to relax and restore Himself...

Interesting *to me at least* is that the name "Bethany" means "**house of dates**"... and that little town mentioned only here in the New Testament.... "Bethpage" which is near Bethany translated

means “*House of figs*”..... and right above them is “*The Mount of Olives*”.... Put all that together and you’ve got the beginnings of a great charcuterie board!

Now... you can’t see Jerusalem from these little towns... Jerusalem is on the other side of the mount of olives... you have to go up and then over to get to Jerusalem... you don’t see the city until you peak the summit of the mount of olives...

Read Matthew 21:1

Something we might miss... is who the “**they**” is here...there is a huge crowd following Jesus now... when He arrives in Jerusalem... **they are coming with Him**... these are the ones in verse 9 who are singing **Hosana to the Son of David, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.**

They’re probably in Bethany... that’s where He usually stayed... and He is sending these two disciples to Bethpage...

Read Matthew 21:2

Immediately you will find a donkey... how did He know that would in fact be the case?... He hadn’t been there... none of His men had been there to report to Him... He just knew... and knew DETAILS!.....**this is a highly planned out, deliberate, event by Jesus Christ.**

Luke says He would find a colt... Mark says a colt... Matthew says a colt AND a donkey and *Jesus gets on the colt*....John says He got on a donkey!.... what is it?.....

It’s two animals... a donkey and her son a colt...it’s a colt donkey....a donkey colt...

Why two animals?... why the donkey and the colt...it could be that the colt would need his mother to lead him through the city... a new colt would be difficult to separate from his mother...

This is one little insignificant colt.... This little foal of a donkey...Luke tells us he’s never been ridden...**it was considered to be an honor to be the first to ride a colt**... The colt hadn’t been broken yet!..

And then He anticipates something else through His perfect knowledge... He anticipates that these disciples might (will!) be questioned by someone... perhaps the colt’s owner as to why they are taking the colt...

Read Matthew 21 verse 3

All this seems so insignificant really... but I think it should make each one of us pause and realize that nobody could know... or even guess that all these little details... a colt with his donkey... tied to a post... the inquisition of their owner... **could only be known by the omnipotent all knowing all powerful God...**

A lot has been made about Jesus on a donkey as being humble...implying riding a donkey makes one humble...I think so, but...

There is a precedent in the Old Testament for royalty to ride on donkeys ... today we would be shocked to see the President of the United States riding around on a donkey...maybe an elephant...since he's a republican!...

But Solomon rode a donkey on his coronation...His dad...King David often rode a mule... actually in Old Testament history... there is a precedence of a donkey being a royal mode of transportation....

What was humble was Jesus... not so much the donkey.

I said that Jesus is the designer of this triumphal entry... but something so very important...500 years earlier than Jesus riding the colt... the prophet Zechariah records in Zechariah 9:9

Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion.... *O daughter of Zion* was an expression referring to the Jewish people... **Shout in triumph, o daughter of Jerusalem...Behold your king is coming to you...He is just and endowed with salvation...humble...lowly...gentle and mounted on a....donkey...EVEN A COLT...THE FOAL OF A DONKEY**

Five hundred years BEFORE Jesus rides to His coronation on a colt....do you see how intricately this all has been planned?... the details published 500 years earlier!... Jesus knew the plan...He knew every detail of what He was to do and what was actually going to take place....

Read Matthew 21: 4-6...

500 years before Jesus mounted the colt... the prophet revealed that this Messiah would not come as a warrior to defeat the oppressive Romans.... Not as a conquering hero riding a white horse.... NOT THIS TIME.... THAT'S NEXT TIME... WHEN HE RETURNS IN THE FUTURE... HIS SECOND COMING...His second coronation.... He comes as a conqueror on a white horse.

This time... Jesus came as a Savior from our sins!.... do you see the importance of completed prophesy?... if prophets correctly told of the events that would happen 500 years later.... Those events actually happen.... Then we can have confidence in prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled.... Especially His second return!

How was Jesus received?... **Read Matthew 21:6-8**

He's not in Jerusalem yet... He's on the road to Jerusalem... there is this large crowd of followers.... some disciples of His... some recent followers... many caught up in the excitement of the possibility of this being the long awaited Messiah....what they did was amazing really...

They worshipped Him.....

One way to show someone that you are willing to submit to them would be to throw yourself at their feet... but if you did that while they were walking.... Or riding a colt... it might make

them stumble or fall off the donkey!.... so a sign of submission was throwing down their garments for them to walk upon.

That's what's going on here... a form of worship...*He's our hope... He will bring in the new kingdom!...all the promises of the past culminate in Him!*so they spread out their garments....Jesus is about ready to crest the summit of the Mount of Olives...

As the city comes into view... how magnificent that must have been... the entire multitude of people erupts into feverous pitch.... If you've been in church long.... And have sat through dozens of Palm Sunday messages....

This is where the preacher would say something like.... The entire city erupted *in praise* for king Jesus...thousands and thousands of people singing His praises.... and in just five days.... The same people yell out "crucify, crucify Him!... I would like to correct that a bit...

Matthew and the other gospels don't really say that...what does Matthew say?... verse 10 says...I've already mentioned it...**when He had entered Jerusalem... all the city was.... STIRRED....**

What had happened was the crises shows up...

Not everyone was singing **Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord...Hosanna in the highest...** Jerusalem is troubled... they are stirred up... not everybody is pro-Jesus... Similar to 33 or so years earlier when Matthew tells us that when the Magi showed up to see the infant Jesus..... remember the words Matthew uses to describe Jerusalem?..... **All Jerusalem was troubled...** well....they're troubled again over the same man,

Everything comes to a head...many were followers of Jesus... all the miracles they had witnessed.... All the lessons they were taught.... Lazarus being raised from the dead...the transformed lives.... Rotten Zacchaeus whose life is now so dramatically changed...

It's beginning to make sense!!! This is who we've been waiting for, for hundreds of years!

They lay their garments on the road before Him...The gospel of John adds... **they took branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him...**If it weren't for John we wouldn't have known they were *palm* branches.... Matthew just says branches...

Why *palm* branches?... during that intertestamental period.... Between the Old and New Testaments... within those 400 silent years was the Maccabean revolt... Israel... on their coins put a palm branch...a symbol representing their nationalistic desire to be delivered from the enemy.

Read Matthew 21:9

Hosanna meaning "**Save us!**".... Blessed is the king WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.... **Who comes in the authority of the Lord!**

Celebration of celebrations for some... everyone at least is stirred up...!...it's at its height!... for the moment...everything is good....all is going well...

Now... *this is where we should stop to keep things happy*...as humble as it is... it is still a joyous coronation.... And all the way home we could join in and sing “*Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord....*”

But Luke fills us in on something we can't miss.... the crises intensifies.

Read Luke 19 verse 39

Remember the Pharisees?... the very devout religious Jewish leaders.... “**REBUKE YOUR DISCIPLES!**”

Put a stop to this worship....they are raising you way too high....

“do you hear what these people are saying about you?... they are calling you king... but not just that... they are worshipping you! ... all this adoration... all this fuss... it is blasphemy!...

If you are asked who killed Jesus?...The most popular answer is the Jews....**tell them religion killed Jesus!**....the Pharisees represented religion... **man's effort to reach God**... (Tower of Babel?)...Jesus has been revealing.... Has been saying...*you can't get to God through your efforts.... It's through Me!.... I AM GOD!*.... to the Pharisees, this is blasphemy!

They are outraged at all this!.... the huge crowds... the significance of the palm branches... the laid down garments... even the colt!....**OUTRAGEOUS!**...out of control!...**REBUKE YOUR DISCIPLES.**

What Jesus says to them is huge.... A real turning point in everything from now on...

Read Luke 19:40

As people are praising Him... as people are elevating Him.... The Pharisees are telling Him to stop it!.... and He tells them.... *If I make these people become silent.... If I make them stop praising and worshipping me..... you may have silent people..... but see these stones on the ground?.... **THEY WILL BEGIN SHOUTING... THEY WILL BEGIN SINGING... THEY WILL BEGIN PRAISING!**.....*

Do you see how this Palm Sunday is not just an event to get Jesus to the cross?... It is a crises... it is a confrontation to all... Is Jesus the Messiah?... Son of David?... Son of God?... or is He just a man who stirred up the crowds... are you going to worship Him?... or deny Him?...there is great tension on this first Palm Sunday!...*Tell these people to shut up!... stop worshipping you!*

The fact is.... **The people did stop**.... By Monday...the very next day... you no longer hear them praising Jesus... You no longer hear them singing *Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord*... it is silent on Monday.... Tuesday,... you don't hear anything on

Wednesday.....the next time you hear the crowd... it is on Friday.... And they are saying something very....very different....

Crucify Him!.....Crucify Him!....Crucify Him!

“If these become silent.... These people who are praising Me.... Become silent... and they will!.... these stones will cry out!.... The people of Israel became silent.... And they still are to this day... as a nation.

The silence of Israel has not yet been broken!... That very day when the crowd became silent launched a silence that has lasted two thousand years..... and this day... they are still silent!... there is still a refusal for the nation of Israel to acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

When the crowd fell silent... the nation of Israel fell silent... and they are still silent....and Jesus said... when these people become quiet... the stones will cry out!.... future tense!... they WILL....

Read Luke 19 verse 41

That word “cried” isn’t referring to a few tears.... Literally Jesus was “sobbing”....Jesus looks out over Jerusalem and He is in agony..... He is heartbroken...you would think Jesus would be happy over all the attention He was just getting.... But He can see through it all.... He can see through the superficiality of all of it!

He wept in the face of their hypocrisy...as clear as He could see a colt tied up waiting for Him...He can see the outcome of the coming days.... The lashings.... The cross.... The cup... the spear in His side...

Now get this... this is so important.... **Read Verse 42**

What peace is He talking about?.... not political peace, peace with Rome..... not some social peace...**He’s talking about PEACE WITH GOD**.....**IF YOU HAD ONLY KNOWN!...IF YOU HAD ONLY KNOWN THE THINGS THAT MAKE FOR PEACE....**

What are those things?.....**REPENTANCE.... FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST...BELIEVING IN HIS MESSAGE!....** *If you had believed His message that from the very beginning was repentance and about His kingdom... how you enter into His kingdom through faith in Him... repentance from sin...*

He’s been preaching it all along!.... throughout the gospels..... over and over and over again... Jesus has been preaching the Good News!..... *had you only been listening!....* **THOSE ARE THE THINGS THAT MAKE FOR PEACE!**

But now... it is too late... why?.... because you've rejected me....and you will stay that way.... until you do repent.... Until you do turn around and believe in Me!..... so... Israel is still that way!.... The judgment Jesus is talking about is still in place.... ARE THEY GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE FOR A FUTURE SALVATION?.....YES!....

Will God preserve them as a people unto that salvation?....YES!.... but that hasn't happened yet....this is what Jesus tells them what will happen... their judgement:

Read verses 43-44a

“**The days will come upon you**”..... usually used as an expression of coming judgement...look at the coming judgement....five things:

1. ***Enemies will barricade you in***—you want to conquer a city.... You build a wall around them...they can't go out... no one can go in... they starve to death... seal off the city... no supplies.... No food.... Water....
2. ***The enemy surrounds you***—not just a wall... but bodies as well.... The army surrounds the wall... anyone who tries to escape will be killed.... Nothing is allowed to go into the city...
3. ***They will hem you in***—they will press in upon you...squeezing you!.... pressing you... your space gets smaller and smaller.... Think about all that... you haven't eaten in days.... No water... sanitation conditions are disgusting... and you are being pressed closer and closer together...
4. ***They will level you to the ground***—the city will be flattened...not just the buildings.... But also your children!....this is awful!

All this happened.... Exactly in 70 A.D.....40 years after Jesus said it would happen...the gospels are now closed... the Bible is silent on this... but you can read it from historians... Josephus in the first century...reports:

it was a five month siege...the Romans built a wooden wall around Jerusalem.... The Jews burned it down.... So they encircled the city with soldiers.... Just like Jesus said... and they enclosed on the people of Jerusalem... hemming them in... the Roman soldiers ended up slaughtering every living being in the city except for a few young strong men who they kept for gladiatorial games....

Jesus said not one stone will be left upon another!....there wasn't!... **THOSE ARE THE STONES THAT ARE CRYING OUT!....** yes.... All that is terrible!!!!..... but don't miss Jesus' final words.... He tells us **WHY** all this happened.... This is key.... This is what we need to hear this morning::

44b Because you did not recognize the time of your visitation!

The word for “visitation” is *episkope* it means literally ***the visit of the incarnate God for the purpose of salvation.***

Jesus is saying.... *This terrible judgement is going to fall on you because you saw salvation... you heard the message of salvation... you met the Savior... yet you ignored all of it!... you just went on with your daily life... more concerned about what you will eat.... What you will get... how well you will live.... Than recognizing the incarnate God who sought you out to reveal Himself to you!*

This isn't just Israel's history...it is the history of anyone who rejects the one and only Savior King Jesus Christ....Israel ultimately rejected Jesus Christ.... Rejection of Jesus Christ is catastrophic for ANYONE who rejects Him!

It is a tragedy that churches can be full of people who have never recognized the time of their visitation.... That time when Jesus presented Himself to you and invited you in...isn't that amazing?....

Matthew ends his account.... Which would then take place after Luke 19:44...

Read Matthew 21:10

Jesus enters the city.... It's all going crazy with excitement....this is almost humorous... all the city is stirred... then says....*who is this?*.... which is the question for the ages!... Who is Jesus to you?

- Are you one who recognized the time of His visitation?... He is Lord... He is Savior... He is God!... If that is you... this Palm Sunday... this passion week... the cross... the stone rolled away is all very good news. For judgement is not yours. And so is all eternity with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ....
- Maybe you don't really know—you are listening.... You are evaluating.... You might even be considering... that's great.... Jeremiah 29:13 **You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.** Pray this morning that God will fully reveal Himself to you on His "visitation"....
- It is possible that you have not responded to the day of your visitation but think you have... You THINK you are in Christ... You identify with Him... *sure He's God... sure I believe in Him... but I've got a lot going on in my life right now... I give Him an hour a week.... Let's don't get radical about all this!* ... You've never made a total commitment to Christ... never handing over your live to the one that can provide you with everything needed in life....

In reality you are like the ones putting down the palm branches and cloaks at His feet on Saturday but by Friday are yelling crucify!...there's hope for you... maybe this very day is your day of visitation!

- Don't be like those whose day of visitation came and went and they refused the offer.... I pray that isn't anyone in this room this morning!

What are you doing with God's gracious visitation in your life with the truth of the gospel?...How will you or do you answer Matthew's question of the people..... **Who is this man?**