

Sermonette # 1: Come and See: The Promise of a the Messiah; the King

Zechariah 9:9, 10. Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

There are a lot of people who make a lot of predictions about a lot of a different things. Some of them are funny and we laugh at them. Others are more serious about things in the world.

People can get wrapped up in these predictions. They can get their hopes up because maybe they really want this to happen.

The thing about predictions is that if it doesn't happen when you get your hopes up, you can be let down you have a lot of frustration. An example of this is the fans of the Chicago Cubs. For 107 years, the Cubs did not win a World Series. Some of those years were bad years, but some were years where everybody predicted they would win it all. They had the pitching, hitting and defense, but it didn't happen. 107 years of hopes and the dreams of the fans that didn't happen.

107 years is a lot of years of frustration. But it is nothing compared to 500 years of frustration. The prophecy of Zechariah that a great Messiah would come was made 500 years before Jesus actually came. It was one in a long list of prophecies that promised that God would send his Messiah, his King, to save his people.

This was an important prophecy for the people. It meant a lot. This prophecy, like many others, was as much about the future as it was the past. First, these prophecies pointed to a king in the line of David, the greatest king ever. This king would be the one who would rise from the stump of Jesse in the mold of the great David.

Even that little detail of riding in on a donkey was one that pointed to the great kings. Unlike other nations who had no significance with donkeys, Israel did. David had a donkey that he would ride through the streets. When David announced that Solomon was to be crowned the next king he placed Solomon on that same donkey and had them ride through the through the city.

This simple detail of a donkey ride was important because it meant a lot. It meant the king was here. It was a chance for the people to see the new king and to celebrate the new king. It also said something to the people. The king does not ride through the streets on a war horse armed and ready for battle, promising war. Instead of this display of power, he rides on a donkey bringing peace to his people and his nation.

This prophecy of a King, a Messiah, who would come riding on a donkey in the same way as those kings came was a prophecy of something great. The people looked for this king to come, they waited for this king to come. They wanted the peace that would come. They wanted a king who would bring the battle with the Romans to a close. They wanted the chariots and the centurions gone. Every time they thought that this Messiah King was there, their hopes were dashed.

But this wasn't that type of prediction and this was not that type of king.

Although the people were looking for a Messiah and King who would save them, they were not looking for a Messiah ,a Savior from sin. Yet, this was the promise that God gave to his people. He would give them a King who would win the battle over sin. This king would bring God's peace to the world and this peace would be for all people. This was the king that God promised and this was the king that came riding into Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday.

Sermonette #2: Come and See: He Rides with a Purpose

If you could be one super hero, who would it be? This question has been debated for years and years by some of the deepest thinkers. Well... maybe not the deepest thinkers. But it is an interesting question to think about.

If you were that super hero, how would you use your super powers? What would you do? This is an equally challenging question. The answer to both might be the same. We would find some way to use that super power, find some way to show our friends and family just how super we are. We'd use them to do great things and to get fame and fortune for ourselves. We would use those super powers to make all of our dreams come true.

But that's all it really is isn't it? It is just a dream. None of us will be blessed with super powers, not many of us will even have an American Idol or X Factor moment where we are suddenly famous. Most of us will live our quiet lives without much fanfare and celebration.

We are ordinary people, but what about somebody who was extraordinary? What about someone who had power. What about Jesus who had the power of God himself? What would Jesus do with his power?

If Jesus would have wanted to, he could have come and been superman. He could have had fame and fortune, he could have had all the headlines. He could have been a god on earth.

But that was not what Jesus came to do. Instead of showing us how powerful he was, he did the opposite. He did not make full use of his heavenly power and glory and became a human being. He didn't just look like a human being, he was a human being. He was subject to all the same laws of nature that we are. He aged, he got sick, he scraped his knee. He had emotions of sadness and joy. God, who created those laws of nature, made himself obedient to the same laws of nature that we are obedient to. He was even obedient to death.

Our Savior rode into Jerusalem with a purpose, but it wasn't to be superman, to be praised like a king, or to be crowned as a king of Jerusalem, or king of the Middle East, or king of the world. Jesus rode into Jerusalem with a purpose to suffer and to die for us.

Jesus purpose was not to be the king that the people wanted, his purpose was to be the king that the people needed. He would win a victory for the people, but it wasn't a victory they even know they needed. This King was going to die for his people so that his people would live and he willingly rode into Jerusalem with a purpose: to suffer and die to take away our sin.

Philippians 2:5-11.

⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! ⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Sermonette #3: Come and See: The King Rides Into Battle

Las Vegas is seen as the fight capital of the world. When the negotiations for TV rights and pay checks goes down, one of the things that is usually not an issue is where the fight will be held. It's going to be in Las Vegas.

We see the glitz and the glamour leading up to the fight. There are interviews and run-downs on each camp. When fight night comes, the march into the ring is almost as much of a production as the fight itself.

There is loud music, there are fireworks, there are entourages that surround the fighter. They clear the way and yell and scream to get the crowd pumped up and to show that they are in their fighter's corner. The fighter comes out with the look in his eye, with a hood partially covering his face, he stalks down the aisle ready for the fight.

We have probably seen at least one fight or one clip of this pre-fight ceremony. How does that entrance compare with Jesus' entrance? Jesus was getting ready for the biggest battle of his life. His march into Jerusalem is much like a fighter going into the ring.

The excitement grows as Jesus prepares his disciples. He has told them that he **MUST** go to Jerusalem for battle. He has told them what will happen. He must be turned over to the chief priest, he must suffer and he must die in there. But Jesus still told his disciples to get them ready, for the battle ahead.

The morning of the entrance, Jesus sends his disciples into town to find the colt and everything happens as Jesus says and now they know that this is the time when something is going to happen.

Jesus' entourage starts small, with his 12 disciples and maybe some extra followers, but it grows as the word of mouth spreads that Jesus is coming, riding on a donkey, just like Zechariah said.

There are no fireworks or TV cameras, but there is still a lot of fanfare. The people line the streets with their own cloaks and place palm branches on the ground and wave them as they walk by. Their voices are louder than any music we have ever heard. Hosanna!!

You can imagine the disciples having to clear the way for the donkey as the people crowd around. There is Jesus on the back of the donkey, he has that look in his eye. Every step of that donkey brings him one step closer to the biggest fight he will ever fight.

What we often forget about a fight is that it can be a very lonely place for the fighter. No matter how many people are in the arena, no matter how many entourage they have, it is the fighter who has to get into the ring and fight.

That is what Jesus did. Even as he is entering into Jerusalem with shouts and cheers, he realizes that this will be a battle that he will have to fight by himself. He will be all alone to fight alone. No one else can help him, no one else can ease the pain that he will endure on our behalf. Yet, he continued on.

He knew that the battle he would fight would be difficult. He knew that the devil would throw everything he could against him. The devil would try his best. The devil will cause men to mock him, beat him, lie about him. The devil will even cause his closest friends to run away.

Even though Jesus would fight that battle alone, he knew he was not fighting it for himself. He was fighting it for us. He knew he must battle against the devil to fulfill all those promises that God had promised about a Savior from sin who would crush the devil's power.

This was what Zechariah prophesied about, not a King who would defeat Judah's enemies, but a Messiah who would defeat sin, death and the devil. This is what Paul was talking about when he said that Jesus had to be obedient to death. So that he could pay the price for our sins. He did this so that we now have hope in the one who went to battle for us. So that we have hope in the one who battled and won. Now we have reason to praise our Savior for all he has done for us. Now everyone who believes is praising the name of Jesus. Not at a King like David, but as the Messiah and the Savior that he is. Hosanna, Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

The Gospel for Palm Sunday: Mark 11:1-10

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ² saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.' "

⁴They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵some people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. ⁷When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”¹⁰ “Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest!”