

## “The King Has Come”

John 12:12-33

**Introduction:** (Read John 12:9-19) – As I mentioned last week, it is clear that Jesus moved into danger in order to raise Lazarus from the dead because of the rising hostility of the Jewish leadership (cf. 11:7-16). He again entered into danger as He arrived in Bethany and the next day on to Jerusalem, where we are told in this text that Lazarus is added motivation for the Jews to kill Jesus (cf. also 12:17-19). *However – as I noted last week – Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead as a sign that He was sent by the Father/had come to become for us the resurrection and the life (cf. 11:25-26). What this effectively means is that when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead He declared that He would die on our behalf in order to conquer our death, with all that means (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:50-58).*

**Note:** There are several different players which make up the dynamic of the events taking place/being recorded in this narrative. There is of course the growing number of pilgrim worshippers who are gathering with a level of excitement because they have heard of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead – they want to see Jesus and the newly raised Lazarus and based on the events to follow they are anticipating that this Jesus is Messiah, the coming king. There is the group of chief priests and Pharisees whose hostility is growing and who are desperate to stop this Jesus from drawing the people away. They are plotting to kill Him and Lazarus also. Behind it all is God’s sovereign plan to redeem – a plan established before the foundations of the world – a plan which Jesus came to accomplish.

*As Jesus Entered Jerusalem He is Lauded as the Coming Messianic King by the Crowd That Lined the Way into the City* – 12:12-16 - John introduces this text with a note that the events about to be recounted took place on “the next day,” which was the day after Sabbath or the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week – Sunday/Palm Sunday. This is referred to as Jesus’ Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem.

It seems really clear from 11:55-56; 12:9 & 17-18 that a bunch of those lining the way in that moment were those who had heard the report that Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead and they anticipated that He would be in Jerusalem for the Passover.

**A.** 12:13-14 the crowd lining the road into Jerusalem acclaim Jesus as the promised Messiah.

1. 12:13 is taken from **Psalms 118:25-27** – Psalm 118 is the close of a group of psalms referred to as the Hallel (113-118) which is the Hebrew for praise. These were psalms of praise and thanksgiving. According to scholars they were originally sung each morning by temple choir during the Feast of Tabernacles.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Carson, “The Gospel According to John,” Pillar New Testament Commentary, 432; also Keener

2. Hosanna is the transliteration of the Hebrew verb “to save” which is found in 118:25.
3. “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD” is applied to Jesus as the promised Messiah, the Davidic King. “*The one who comes*” (C. Keener) has already functioned as a messianic title in John (cf. 1:15, 27; **3:31**; 6:14; **11:27**) and Jesus has made the point many times that He has come “in the name of the Lord (Father)” (cf. 5:43; 10:25; 12:45, 49).
4. “Blessed is the king of Israel” is not from Psalm 118 but it summarizes the meaning of the statements already made – they are receiving Him as the promised and coming King – Messiah. This is already part of John’s gospel (cf. 1:49) and would be part of it moving forward (cf. 18:33-37; 19:19-22).

**Note:** This is what the people are saying and what they believe about Him – filled with anticipation. The question is, is this how Jesus is presenting Himself. That question seems to be answered by how Jesus enters – riding on a donkey. This is picked up in the reference to Zechariah 9:9.

**B.** 12:14-15 – In this passage the fact that Jesus is being lauded as the coming King, Israel’s hope, is made explicit. The reference to Zechariah 9:9 makes that clear. Though John doesn’t include it, Jesus intentionally entered the city riding on a donkey’s colt (cf. Luke 19:28ff; also Matthew 21:1ff; Mark 11:1ff). There are two things I want to say about this.

1. The fact that Jesus intentionally came in on “a donkey’s colt” is significant – D.A. Carson wrote “...the ride on the donkey immediately after the acclamation of the crowd has the effect of damping down nationalist expectations. He does not enter Jerusalem on a war horse... which would have whipped the political aspirations of the vast crowd into insurrectionist frenzy, but he chooses to present himself as the king *who comes in peace*, ‘gentle and riding on as donkey.’”<sup>2</sup>

2. The quote from Zechariah 9:10-11 emphasizes that the King “...comes in peace” to bring peace to the nations and He will do so by the blood of His covenant – which includes bringing freedom to *the prisoners*. The themes of deliverance, liberty, life through His blood/death are thick in John (cf. 1:10-13, 29, 32-34; 3:3-5; 6:35-58; 8:31-34 etc.)

**Note:** 12:16 - His own disciples could not understand what was taking place until after Jesus was glorified – His cross, resurrection and exaltation. While at the same time His reputation was growing along with excitement and anticipation – as well as the resolve of the Jewish leadership to crucify Him.

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<sup>2</sup> Carson, 433 *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD*

***The Hour of Jesus' Glory was at Hand and He Had Entered Jerusalem to Face a Powerful Enemy in Battle and to Win an Ultimate Victory. It is by That Victory He Would Establish the Foundation for His Unending Reign over an Eternal Kingdom.***

**A. The hour of His greatest glory** would come at the end of the week when on that Friday He would be put to death on a cross. Though His disciples, the admiring crowd and even the leadership conspiring to kill Him were completely unaware of what was just ahead – what must take place – the events in which they would play a part – Jesus bore the weight of that hour - the hour for which He came (cf. 12:23-33). They did not understand that they were witnesses to and participants in the eternal plan of God, born of perfect love, to redeem and rescue and restore fallen humanity (cf. 12:16, 20-23, 30-33, 34, 37).

**B. Jesus came to make war with the enemy!** Though Jesus entered Bethlehem on a donkey to establish peace for all nations and to deliver the captive by the blood of His covenant - He had indeed ridden into Bethlehem to enter a great battle and to make war. It would be a battle that would fundamentally end (the) war – a battle like no other – which none among them understood. From this moment through the rest of the week with His disciples Jesus bore the weight of what was ahead without the understanding and support of His disciples – those closest to Him (cf. 12:23-28, 36; 13:21, 26-27, 31-38; 16:31-33).

1. Jesus came to face the enemy – Satan himself – in our place as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam. This is the somewhat veiled promise of Genesis 3:15 given in the midst of the curse.

2. John sets the foundation for our understanding the scope of this when He tells us who this Jesus really is in John 1:1-2, 14. This was necessary for His great work of love in redemption – that He become like us in order to face Satan on our behalf (cf. Hebrews 2:14-18).

3. John, in 1 John 3:7-8, declares that Jesus came for this very reason.

4. Jesus officially entered that battle as our 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam and the head of the new humanity. As He began His public ministry, He identified Himself with us in His baptism and then intentionally went to meet Satan in the wilderness, in His humanity, to face temptation from his hand (cf. Matt. 4:1-11). That battle was ongoing throughout His over 3 year ministry and is clear by Satan's part in these last hours leading to the cross – Jesus was not a victim but He intentionally moved (cf. 12:31; 13:18-27; 14:30-31; and Gethsemane).

**C. Jesus prevailed in the battle the cross by submitting to His own death at the hands of hate filled humanity in complicity with Satan.** Jesus entered Bethlehem so that, by the battle fought at the cross, He would achieve an ultimate, transforming and eternal victory – a victory

that would literally repair the very foundations of a fractured creation and make the way for fallen human beings to be reconciled to God.

1. In order to do that He would first have to defeat every single power – personal and impersonal, in heaven and on Earth – which is set against Him – on the terms set by man’s rebellion and His character. Jesus as the incarnate Son of God would submit to the hatred and malice of man in rebellion against Him and of Satan himself and in His dying would conquer them all (cf. John 12:31; Ephesians 1:3-14; **15-23**; Colossians 1:15-23; **2:8-15**; **Revelation 12:7-12**).

2. The victory was complete. It addressed every single thing that is wrong at its root – *including death itself*. It has a “now and not yet” nature to it (cf. **Romans 5:12-21**; **1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 50-58**; 2 Timothy 1:8-10).

**D.** Jesus was presenting Himself as the coming King and He did what He did in order to establish His reign in the hearts of human beings.

1. His enemies, His followers and even His disciples did not understand that Jesus’ Kingdom was not/is not “of this world” (cf. John 18:33-36; **19:12-15**; Matthew 20:21f; Acts 1:6f).

2. His is a reign of peace – a peace between God and man achieved by Jesus as He bore our sin, our curse and our death – defeated the reign of sin and death for us and offers liberty within our soul – the liberty of life in relationship with His Father as our Father. It is then that we may have peace with each other (cf. Romans 5:1-11; Ephesians 2:11-22).

3. He provides for us a sustaining hope (cf. John 11:25-26; 14:1f; Romans 8:28-39; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Peter 1:3-9; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 3:1-4; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Hebrews 7:25; 10:11-14 etc.)

We are left here to bear witness to the victory!!

**E.** We bear witness while we wait and even long for the day when He will return – this time on a great white horse as the conquering King to first put down all remaining rebellion and then to bring justice and finally and fully to establish His reign in the new heavens and the new earth (cf. Revelation 19:1-20:14; 21:1-7).