

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Luke 19:28-48

Key Verse: 19:38

“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

In the last passage Jesus taught us the parable of the minas. Jesus was in the process of becoming King. After his death and resurrection, he would go to heaven and receive God’s appointment as King of kings and Lord of lords. From there, he will come again to the earth as Ruler and Judge. In the meantime, he charged his servants, “Put this money to work, until I come back.” We must put our lives, our natural talents, our spiritual gifts and everything we have to work to advance the kingdom of God and win souls for Christ. We must make a profit for God. Then he will reward us abundantly. Amen! May God help 100 Easter Conference messengers work hard to prepare until they receive one word of God in their hearts. May God send 800 attendants, especially our one-to-one student sheep. For this, we must all participate. Each of us has a gift or talent to use for the glory of God. May God help all of us to put our lives to work for the glory of God. May God help us to put America to work for the glory of God.

Today we want to study Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. It was the culmination of Jesus’ journey and shows us clearly the meaning of his coming into the world. Jesus is the promised Messiah. Jesus is God’s King. Jesus’ way of entering Jerusalem shows us the nature of his kingship. Jesus is indeed a wonderful King. May God help us to accept Jesus as King through this study.

First, the Lord needs it (28-34).

Look at verse 28. “After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.” Jesus was going up to Jerusalem to fulfill God’s will for world salvation through his death and resurrection. It would have been nice to receive some encouragement from his disciples, perhaps some prayer support or a word of understanding. But they were in their own dream worlds, oblivious to Jesus’ spiritual struggle. It is somewhat surprising that they could be so close to Jesus humanly but so far away from Jesus in spiritual understanding. They really needed to accept the Lordship of Christ.

Look at verses 29-31. “As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ‘Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it.’” Bethphage and Bethany were satellite cities about two miles away from Jerusalem. From the Mount of Olives, Jesus would begin his entry into the city as the promised Messiah. To prepare, he needed a donkey’s colt. He could have obtained one in many ways. But he used this opportunity to teach his disciples the Lordship of Christ.

Jesus told two of his disciples to go and find a colt that had never been ridden, untie it, and bring it to him. This colt belonged to someone else. From a human point of view it was like taking someone’s car without asking permission. The only justification for doing so was “The Lord needs it.” Jesus wanted to teach his disciples the Lordship of Christ. How did they respond? Look at verses 32-34. “Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, ‘Why are you untying the colt?’ They replied, ‘The Lord needs it.’” It seems that the owners nodded their heads silently to express their consent. When the disciples obeyed Jesus’ word, they experienced the Lordship of Christ.

Jesus wants us to believe the Lordship of Christ. Jesus is the Sovereign Ruler of each of our lives and of all people on earth and even of the animals and plants. John 1:3 says, “Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.” Jesus is the Creator God. Jesus’ command supersedes any other command. Jesus’ law is higher than any other law. Jesus’ disciples must live by this faith in practical experience. One shepherd who has been very fruitful in establishing house churches said, “Gospel workers must believe that people belong to Christ. With this faith we can be used by God to raise disciples for Christ. Without this faith we can do nothing.” This is the faith Jesus himself had in raising disciples. Jesus prayed in John 17:6, “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.” In America, individual human freedom is highly valued. Some people want to make it the fundamental premise of our human existence. If we take this premise to its logical conclusion it is ludicrous indeed. We must know that the

Lordship of Christ is the fundamental premise of our human existence. Jesus Christ is the Creator God and he is the Lord of all. Our lives belong to him. According to his absolute, sovereign will, the Lord is calling us, young Americans, to be trained as his disciples until we can be missionaries to the world. Therefore, we must submit our human freedom to Christ and obey him as of first importance.

Second, Jesus enters Jerusalem as King (35-40).

The disciples brought the colt to Jesus. Covering it with their cloaks, they put Jesus on it. Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey's colt. Why did Jesus enter Jerusalem in this way? It was to fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9,10. It says, "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. I 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." Jesus deliberately fulfilled this prophecy. Jesus entered Jerusalem as God's King. We can learn several things here about the nature of Christ's kingship.

In the first place, King Jesus is righteous. How many kings have been righteous? King David was one of the best rulers in Israel's history. But one spring, when he became lazy, he lost his shepherd's heart and pursued his own passion. Then he made a big mistake that damaged many lives. The best rulers among men are still sinners. This is why the framers of the U.S. Constitution established a system of checks and balances on the power of the ruling bodies. This is why church government should be entrusted to a board of elders rather than to one person. Even the best human beings are prone to corruption by their sinful nature. But King Jesus is different. King Jesus is righteous; King Jesus is sinless. When he was tempted in the desert by the devil, he overcame by the power of God's word. Jesus is not vulnerable to the evil of the sinful nature. His judgment is not clouded by selfish desires. King Jesus is holy and pure. King Jesus is full of spiritual wisdom. Therefore, his justice is flawless; his rule is perfect. Isaiah 11:3b-4 says, "He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth."

King Jesus also saves his people. Many rulers have wanted to do good, but had no power to do so. But King Jesus is really powerful; he is Almighty God. No evil can prevent his righteous rule. King Jesus has the power to liberate anyone from oppression. King Jesus uses his power to save his people. Ultimately he saves his people from their sins and from the devil and from the power of death. Mighty King Jesus is also gentle. Worldly kings use power to rule through intimidation. But Mighty King Jesus rules with gentleness. He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt. Worldly rulers enter capital cities with a display of power to intimidate their enemies and establish their leadership. But King Jesus came gently, so gently that ordinary people could approach him and make friends with him. Moreover, King Jesus is humble, humble enough to enter on a donkey's colt. He is humble enough to obey the will of God for world salvation by becoming the Lamb of God who shed his own blood for our sins. To human eyes, Jesus' humble obedience to God was a defeat. But through his obedience to God, Jesus crushed the head of Satan completely and won everlasting victory. And God did not leave Jesus in the grave. God raised Jesus from the dead. God made Jesus the King of kings and Lord of lords. This humble King Jesus rules with peace and love. This humble King Jesus gives us true victory and true rest for our souls. Let's accept Jesus into our hearts as King. Amen!

How did people receive Jesus? As Jesus rode along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When Jesus came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen. It was truly amazing to them that the one who had given sight to the blind, driven out evil spirits, released the oppressed, and been the friend of outcasts and "sinners," was in fact God's King. At last God's King had come to rule them with truth and love and healing in his wings. People welcomed him with great joy and gave praise to God. Look at verse 38. "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

However, some Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" They thought the people were going too far. They did not recognize Jesus as God's King. Jesus said to them, "I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out" (40). Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was the fulfillment of God's world salvation plan which had been carried out for thousands of years in a steady and systematic manner. Jesus' coming as God's King

demanded a response. If the disciples were quiet, the stones would cry out. Perhaps the stones had already practiced the “Hallelujah” chorus just to be ready.

Thus, the disciples’ shout of praise was true. Jesus is God’s King. Jesus’ coming brings peace in heaven and glory in the highest. Since the devil’s mischief had caused the Fall of man, there was distress in heaven and in the hearts of men. But now Jesus came as God’s King to destroy the devil. In this way, Jesus brings peace in heaven and in the hearts of men. Jesus also revealed God’s glory in the highest. In spite of all the evilness of fallen men, God did not destroy them. These days we feel pain over the tragedy of war in Iraq. But God has endured grievous pain in his heart every day since the fall of man. Martin Luther said that if he were God, he would destroy mankind three times a day. But God did not do so. Instead, God sent his one and only Son Jesus Christ to save men from their sins. God revealed his love and saving grace upon totally undeserving sinners. Only God could do this. Jesus’ entry is peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

Third, Jesus weeps over Jerusalem (41-44).

In a dramatic change of mood, Jesus expresses his emotion for Jerusalem. Look at verses 41-42. “As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, ‘If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.’” Jesus wanted the people of Jerusalem to welcome him as God’s King. Jesus wanted to give them real peace. But Jesus knew what was going to happen. Through the manipulation of the religious leaders, the people would reject him. It would lead to God’s severe punishment on the city. Jesus was most sorry about the spiritual blindness of the people. Look at verses 43-44. “The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”

Indeed this happened. In A.D. 70, a Roman army under General Titus besieged Jerusalem. Only the Christians, who had taken Jesus’ warning seriously, managed to escape. Embankments were built and the city surrounded and invaded. The devastation was horrible. More than one million people perished and another one hundred thousand were taken prisoner. All the buildings were destroyed until not one stone was left on another. According to Jesus’ words, this happened because the people of Jerusalem did not recognize the time of God’s coming to them. As we have studied, Jesus is God’s King. His coming is salvation to those who receive him. However, there is another side to Jesus’ kingship. Those who do not recognize him as God will perish.

Jesus was broken-hearted when he thought about the judgment that would fall upon Jerusalem. Even though these people would reject and crucify him, Jesus was sorry about their destruction. Jesus wept. The heart of Jesus flows with tears over those who reject his kingship. He is not willing that anyone should perish, but wants everyone to be saved. Still, the choice is for each person to make. Jesus gives each person the right to reject him as King, though the cost is so high.

Fourth, Jesus restores the temple as God’s house (45-48).

Upon entering Jerusalem, Jesus went to the temple. Jesus found the agents of the religious leaders selling sacrifice animals to pilgrims. They say that the price of an animal in the temple was four times the fair market value, like popcorn in a movie theater. Moreover, those who ran the temple business would accept only temple currency for their transactions. The exorbitant exchange rate offered another means of extraordinary profit. What was worse, this temple business fully occupied the court of the Gentiles, which God set apart for Gentiles who wanted to worship him. Jesus began driving out those who were doing this business. Then he said, “It is written, ‘My house will be a house of prayer’; but you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’”

Here we learn that God’s house is a house of prayer. Our center should be a place of prayer. We thank God for the young people who come to the center every night to pray. They call it “prayer bombing.” They pray that God will send missionaries from America to all nations. Not only our center, but our hearts as well must be full of a spirit of prayer, not just business.

Look at verses 47-48. “Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people

hung on his words.” Not only did Jesus restore prayer in God’s house, Jesus restored Bible study in God’s house. His Bible study was so life-giving and powerful that all the people hung on his words. To Jesus, this was the solution to the spiritual blindness of Jerusalem and all the tragedies that would come upon the city. Jesus carried out this Bible teaching ministry at the risk of his life.

In this passage we learn that Jesus is God’s King. When we accept him joyfully, Jesus rules with righteousness, gentleness and humbleness. But those who reject Jesus will suffer unbearably. Let’s read verse 38 one more time. “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”