

# “BLESSED IS THE KING...”

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!”**

Throughout Luke’s gospel, Jesus has primarily identified himself as the Son of Man. In Luke 19:10, he said, **“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”** However, beginning in the parable of the ten minas, Jesus revealed that he would be a king. Now he enters Jerusalem as King. From his entry until his death on the cross in Jerusalem was just one week. During that one week Jesus deliberately acted as King and taught them his Lordship. Why did Jesus wait until this time to reveal his Lordship? Most likely it was because people would misunderstand. Even his twelve disciples did not understand the nature of his Lordship. We also misunderstand Jesus’ Lordship or Kingship, but in a different way. We have an allergy to the word “king.” It conjures up images of abuse of power and oppression that cause us to recoil, and to avoid being ruled by a king, we are ready to shed our blood. This attitude hinders us in accepting Jesus as our King. But we need a king. In truth, everyone is ruled by a kind of king. The question is what kind of king do we have. Let’s consider Jesus’ kingship in today’s passage.

**First, “the Lord needs it” (28-34).** Jesus had been in Jericho, at Zacchaeus’ house, when he told the parable of the ten minas. In the parable, he taught us that he would be made King, and what we should do until he comes again. After that, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem (28). In Jerusalem, he would not receive a crown of glory and power, but a crown of thorns. He would be betrayed, tried and condemned, mocked, flogged and crucified. Then, why did he decide to go up to Jerusalem? It was to fulfill God’s salvation plan. Jesus never wavered based on the situation or the conditions of people or his own feelings. He was totally focused on fulfilling God’s will. Jesus never tried to escape or find an easier way. Jesus never shrank back; he resolutely went forward without hesitation. When Jesus was so clearly determined, everyone else just followed along after him.

The journey from Jericho to Jerusalem was about 18 miles, up and around and through the rolling hills on foot. Along the way, Jesus approached Bethphage and Bethany, at the hill called the Mount of Olives, which was

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about 1 ½ miles from Jerusalem. There Jesus prepared for his entry into Jerusalem. Jesus had entered Jerusalem several times in the past without drawing attention to himself. But this time, he entered deliberately to send a message. 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 ask you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it’”** (29-31). Entering Jerusalem on a donkey had deep symbolic meaning. When Solomon made such an entrance, it signified that he was being sanctioned as the new king by his father, King David (1Ki 1:33). It can be compared to riding the presidential limousine on Inauguration Day. The problem was that Jesus had no donkey, not to mention a limousine. But Jesus, who is God, knew where there was a donkey’s colt that had never been ridden. He also knew that when the disciples said, “The Lord needs it,” the owner would gladly allow him to use the colt.

What does **“the Lord needs it”** mean? By referring to himself as **“the Lord,”** Jesus is acknowledging that he is the owner and master of all things. Indeed, Jesus is the Creator God. John 1:3 says, **“Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.”** In fact, everything belongs to Jesus. So, he has the right to use anything as he wants. But Jesus did not demand the colt, enforcing his right as the Creator. Rather, he humbly conveyed his need to the owner, and gave him an opportunity to willingly offer the colt. Here we can learn that Jesus is the real owner of all things; we are just his stewards. This is true of our lives, our households, our time and energy, our money, our cars, and our children’s lives. We should be ready to offer whatever the Lord wants. Actually, to be used by the Lord is a great blessing and privilege. The Lord ennobles and glorifies everything he uses. This donkey’s colt and his owner are forever endearing because Jesus used them. Throughout history, many people became great in God simply because they were available when Jesus needed them. This includes Dr. Samuel Lee, Mother Barry and many of us. D.L. Moody was an uneducated, ordinary shoe salesman. But now he is highly regarded as a great man of God. It is simply because he was available when God needed him. He said, “If this world is going to be reached [with the gospel], I am convinced that it must be done by men and women of average talent.” This means that anyone can be used by God when they respond to the Lord’s need.

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Though it is such a blessing to be used by Jesus, we have a natural reaction that does not cooperate. Why? Because we want to be the Lord of our own life. We think, “This is my life, my time, my money, my child, my disciple—don’t touch!” We are confused that we are owners, not stewards, because we work hard to obtain something. **“You may say to yourself, ‘My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.’ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth....”** These are not my words, but words of God in Deuteronomy 8:17-18a. Let’s acknowledge Jesus as Lord and be ready to give him whatever he needs from us.

How did the disciples respond? They could have said, “What? Are you teaching us to steal? Don’t you know the commandments: You shall not steal...You shall not covet?” But they simply obeyed, because they fully trusted Jesus and acknowledged him as Lord. They went and found it just as Jesus had told them. They might have been very surprised at Jesus’ omniscience. They began to boldly untie the colt. Then the owner asked, **“What are you doing with my colt?”** The disciples thought they might be arrested and charged with grand larceny. But at that moment, they remembered Jesus’ words and replied, **“The Lord needs it.”** Miraculously, the owner’s expression changed. He bowed down and said, “Please, by all means, take my donkey. It is a great honor to me!”

**Second, the king who brings peace, glory and righteousness (35-48).** The disciples returned with the donkey, smiling from ear-to-ear. They threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. They embraced his Lordship from their hearts and took the initiative to make his way as King. Jesus sat on the colt according to God’s will. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. It was more meaningful than rolling out a red carpet. These were generally poor people who had just one cloak. But they didn’t mind offering it to Jesus. It expressed their homage to him as their king. When they came near the place where the road went 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: **“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”** (37-38) People were praising Jesus as king, based on Psalm 118:26. Jesus was more than a Galilean rabbi, or a miracle worker. He was the King, entering the royal city, going down the royal road. He came as God’s chosen king, bringing peace and glory. This

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was precisely God’s will for Jesus. However, it was very upsetting to the Pharisees. They demanded Jesus to rebuke his disciples (39). Jesus replied, **“If they keep quiet, the stones will cry out”** (40). Jesus meant that if human voices were silent, nature would shout his praises. It is because Jesus is worthy to receive all praise and glory and honor as the King sent by God. In this way Jesus entered Jerusalem gloriously as a king.

It is noteworthy that the whole crowd of disciples welcomed Jesus as King so enthusiastically. Why? It is because they had seen the miracles he had done. There were so many people whose lives Jesus had touched with his power and love. They saw a paralytic stand up, pick up his mat and walk. They saw a man covered with leprosy instantly healed by Jesus’ words. They saw demons driven out by Jesus’ power. They saw an only son who had died raised to life and given back to his mother. They saw Jesus feed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish. They saw Jesus’ forgiving love transform people’s lives. They saw Jesus’ compassionate heart, his great power, his divine wisdom, his everlasting love and tender mercy. When they remembered all the miracles Jesus had done, they were compelled to praise Jesus as King. Are you compelled to praise Jesus as your King? When we remember all the wonderful things Jesus has done in and through us, praises well up in our hearts and come out of our mouths.

Why, then, did such a great King enter Jerusalem riding on a donkey’s colt? It was mainly to fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah which authenticated him as the King sent by God. It says, **“Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”** Here we can learn what kind of king Jesus is.

First of all, Jesus is a humble king. Consider who Jesus is. Jesus is the Creator God. Paul says about him, **“For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him”** (Col 1:16). His power, glory and majesty are awesome. Can you imagine how great he is? No. We cannot. Our minds are too small. We can only praise Jesus, like Paul: **“God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be**

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**honor and might forever. Amen” (1Ti 6:15-16). This Jesus, who is in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage. Rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness (Php 2:6-7).** This Jesus humbled himself to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey’s colt. This act of humility was not a one-time event. It reflects who he truly is. From his birth, and being laid in a manger, throughout his life and ministry, and to his death on the cross, Jesus revealed this humility. Jesus is humble, humble enough to become the friend of tax collectors and all kinds of sinners. Humble Jesus welcomes all people! Jesus did not hire body guards or use security systems to keep the poor and marginalized away. Rather, he removed all barriers so that anyone could come to him freely. People hung around him, brushed up against him, and spoke freely to him about what was on their hearts. This humble Jesus is willing to come into anyone’s heart. What a great King! What a great Friend! Are you ready to say, **“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord”?**

Secondly, Jesus is the king of peace. In the Bible, donkeys are associated with agriculture and service, and represent peace, while horses are associated with war. It was common for conquering kings to enter the capital city on a powerful horse to display strength and intimidate their subjects. But Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey’s colt. Jesus came as the king of peace. People shouted, **“Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.”** Jesus plainly said that he came to bring peace (42). Everyone wants peace. The Roman Empire claimed to offer the peace of Rome, “Pax Romana.” But there was no real peace under Roman rule; it was merely the subjugation of the weak by the strong. People felt oppressed and abused in many ways. It is the same in our time. People live in this world full of anxiety and stress. They are lonely, fearful and vulnerable. There is no peace in their hearts. People try to look strong and impressive, but inside they are tormented by dark thoughts and the devil’s lies. Last Monday, a promising young woman at Northwestern University, a pre-med student who played on the basketball team, committed suicide by hanging herself. She had been considered a role model. It was shocking to her family and friends. We don’t know why she did it. But spiritually speaking, she needed peace. If she had real peace, she would not have done that. We often blame our inner strife and anxiety on our environment: financial trouble, problems at work, a hard load of school

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studies, or relationship conflicts. But if we have real peace in our hearts, we can handle all these issues.

The question is, how can we have such peace? Many people use drugs or alcohol to find peace. But it just makes things worse. Jesus said, **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid”** (Jn 14:27). Jesus is the prince of peace. Jesus himself is our peace (Eph 2:14). Jesus satisfied God’s righteousness at the cross to give us peace. Now we can have peace with God and peace among people. Only Jesus can give us true peace. This peace should rule our hearts. Colossians 3:15 says, **“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.”** If we have no peace, there is something wrong. Once, Mother Barry gave us a very good illustration about this. When a ballplayer makes a mistake, the referee blows his whistle and stops play. Then the player must examine and correct his behavior. After that, the game resumes. In the same way, when we lose peace in our hearts, it is time to examine our hearts and be corrected. Most of all, we need to accept Jesus, the King of peace. Then the peace of Christ rules our hearts once again. This peace guards our minds and hearts and enables us to handle all kinds of challenges, and to serve God joyfully.

Thirdly, Jesus is the king who brings salvation. Jesus’ purpose of entering Jerusalem as King was to suffer and die for our sins. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus gave us eternal salvation. Jesus has great power and authority; he uses it to give eternal life to us. Praise Jesus, our King, who gives us eternal salvation!

Finally, Jesus is the king who judges and restores. As Jesus approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it (41). Why? In terms of God’s redemptive history, the city of Jerusalem was very important. Isaiah saw the vision that the word of the Lord would go out from Jerusalem to the peoples of all nations (Isa 2:3). Jerusalem would be the Bible study center for God’s world salvation purpose. Especially, the temple, which was God’s dwelling place on earth, was in Jerusalem. Jesus, the Messiah, the Savior of the world, came to Jerusalem as King. But they rejected him. They did not realize how serious this was. By rejecting Jesus, they brought God’s wrath upon themselves. The consequences would be severe. They and their children

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would be dashed to the ground. The temple, and other buildings, would be utterly destroyed; not one stone would be left on another (44). This was fulfilled in A.D. 70 through a Roman invasion. Rejecting Jesus as King is not a small matter. It brings God’s righteous judgment. Jesus was not happy that this judgment came; he wept. Still, this judgment came.

What was the first thing Jesus did upon arriving in Jerusalem? He entered the temple courts and drove out those who were selling (45). The outer court—designated as the place for devout Gentiles to pray—had become a commercial center. This was done by the religious leaders who abused their positions to make money. Jesus taught them: **“It is written, ‘My house will be a house of prayer’ but you have made it a den of robbers”** (46). Every day he taught at the temple. The religious leaders did not repent at all. They were trying to kill Jesus (47). But Jesus’ teaching was so powerful that people hung on his words (48). Through cleansing the temple Jesus revealed himself as the righteous King who judges evil and restores God’s purpose.

Jesus is the humble King, the King of peace, and the King of salvation. Jesus is the King of kings. When King Jesus rules our hearts, we are full of joy and peace and life. When King Jesus rules our families, they are filled with peace and love. When King Jesus rules our community, conflicts disappear and we can love one another truly. May King Jesus rule over us and our nation so that we may have the peace of God and be a humble shepherd nation.