

Palm Sunday—Matthew 21.1-17—Jesus is THE KING!

- I. Introduction
 - a. “When you hear the phrase red carpet, what comes to mind? For many people, the red carpet is synonymous with prestige, status, celebrity, ceremony, and a whole lot of pomp and circumstance. Hollywood’s big night, the Oscars, is a prime example.” (dictionary.com)
 - b. But what does it mean? The red carpet is meant to make a distinction between common people and those who are held up as dignitaries, high-ranking officials, presidents, kings and queens, royalty and in our day actors. The carpet is meant to show honor. It is to say that these kinds of people “can avoid having to walk on the ground the rest of us use.” (dictionary.com)
 - c. It’s intended meaning from the beginning was to make a distinction between what people believed to be gods and mortals. They were not worthy to walk on the ground so something like a soft carpet was laid in front of them to keep their feet separated from the earth. Are you worthy to walk on the red carpet?
 - d. We have a red-carpet scene on our story today. We must decide whether Jesus is King! Is he the One promised ages ago? Is he worthy? Is he the Son of God? Would you have thrown down your coat from him to walk on with this donkey colt?
- II. Main Point
 - a. In verse 10, they ask, “Who is this?” I believe that’s the main point of Palm Sunday. Jesus reveals that he is the King.
- III. Outline
 - a. Is this the Promised King of Psalm 2?
 - b. Four Answers:
 - i. Jesus Rides Into Zion on a Donkey (Zechariah 9:9)
 - ii. The Crowds Shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David” (Psalm 118)
 - iii. Jesus Cleanses the Temple (Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:9-11)
 - iv. The Infants and Nursing Babies Praise Him (Psalm 8)
 - c. Response: Is Jesus the King and is he your King?
- IV. Exposition
 - a. As we enter Jerusalem with Jesus and his disciples this morning through the Word of God, let’s seek to find out if this man is the promised King of Psalm 2 that we looked at last week.
 - i. We saw last week that the nations rage and peoples plot in vain against the LORD and against his Anointed.
 1. They want to throw off God’s good instruction that they call bonds and cords. They want to make a name for themselves and chart their own course.
 - a. In other words, they do not trust Him.
 - ii. We also talked about that Anointed One, the Messiah or Christ, was installed as the King on Zion.
 1. That means it had already been decided by the Lord who that would be.
 2. It means that no matter what we think or feel, this King will rule from sea to sea.
 3. His kingship not only has no borders, it has no end.
 4. We must decide to throw off his demands or kiss the King in glad submission.
 - iii. What are we looking for to know if Jesus is the King that rules all?
 1. Well, Jesus said this to the disciples after the resurrection: (Lk. 24:44) ⁴⁴ Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."
 2. Matthew is very keen on pointing out what Jesus fulfills to prove he is that promised King of Psalm 2 through many other key texts.

- b. Now let's look at 4 ways that reveal that Jesus is that promised Messiah of Psalm 2 and many other promises.
- i. The first answer to our question is Jesus declaring that he is the King that YHWH has installed by riding on a donkey.
 1. Jesus intentionally makes this known by sending two of his disciples to bring a donkey to him. Up until this point, he had kept this quiet. But as he enters Jerusalem, the time has come. This is the last week of his life and he will fulfill all that was promised of him.
 - a. You might be thinking—Jesus is just fabricating this. He's the one sending his disciples to fetch the donkey.
 - b. You may be right. But can he fabricate the response?
 - c. I think we need to understand this as Jesus obeying his Father perfectly and fulfilling all that was spoken of him.
 2. The hope and expectation of the coming Messiah was high. You might recall what Andrew, Peter's brother, says about Jesus in the Gospel of John:
 - a. (Jn. 1:40-41) ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ).
 - i. Though they were looking for the promised Messiah to come and they believed they had found him, they seem to expect another Egypt type experience where the Lord expelled the Romans from their land.
 - ii. However, dominion is not gained by might. It is not acquired by the size of one's army. No amount of muscle can undo what Adam lost in the garden.
 1. Only perfect obedience gains complete and eternal dominion.
 2. Jesus is the Son of God who has all-power but to take back what is rightfully his comes in a way that no one expects even though it's plainly obvious.
 3. So how is Jesus making known that he is in fact the promised Messiah by riding on a donkey colt?
 - a. Well, 500 years before it happened, the prophet Zechariah saw this vision:
 - i. (Zech. 9:9) ⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
 - ii. If you were to read Zechariah 9:1-9, you hear the Lord responding to the nations that have attempted to make a name for themselves again. The Lord will not allow it. Listen to what the Lord does to Tyre.
 1. (Zech. 9:3-4) ³ Tyre has built herself a rampart and heaped up silver like dust, and fine gold like the mud of the streets. ⁴ But behold, the Lord will strip her of her possessions and strike down her power on the sea, and she shall be devoured by fire.
 2. It's another Tower of Babel scene but the Lord puts a stop to it.
 3. He strips them because dominion cannot be had by might nor by money.
 - iii. Dominion can only come God's way and that's through his obedient King.

1. "At the center of Zechariah's vision of salvation for Israel was the coming of the King of Zion—the King who would rule the nations in peace and righteousness." (Sailhamer 434)
2. But where did this prophecy come from? Well, it was taken from Genesis 49.
 - a. "The King whom he foresaw riding on a donkey was that Lion of the tribe of Judah who would rule the nations and the people of God." (Sailhamer)
 - b. When Jacob blessed his sons before his death, he said this to Judah which is totally unexpected when you read what kind of wretched life he had lived: (Gen. 49:8-11) ⁸ "Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you. ⁹ Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him? ¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. ¹¹ Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes.
- iv. Bound up in these promises are the salvation of the nations too.
 1. Notice in (Zech. 9:10) ¹⁰ I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.
4. The rest of this scene in Matthew, rests on those promises from Zechariah and Genesis.
- ii. The next way we know that Jesus is the promised King and Savior of the nations is by the response of the crowds to Jesus' entrance into Zion on this donkey colt.
 1. How many of you know why today is called Palm Sunday? The reason it is called Palm Sunday comes from this response to Jesus entering Jerusalem on this donkey colt.
 2. They spread their cloaks on the donkey and on the road. Others spread palm branches on the road.
 - a. What are we to make of this? Well, it is a red carpet like response. But Jesus is no mere celebrity. This response is rooted in the coronation of a King!
 - i. Before anyone used a red carpet, this practice was done for the king in (2 Ki. 9:13) ¹³ Then in haste every man of them took his garment and put it under him on the bare steps, and they blew the trumpet and proclaimed, "Jehu is king."
 1. This was an act of honor and recognition.
 3. While rolling out the red carpet which was a clear declaration that Jesus is King, they also raise voices with shouts from Psalm 118 to declare this King's purpose and lineage.
 - a. Notice in (Matt. 21:9) ⁹ And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"
 - i. Hosanna means, "Save us, we pray, O Lord" in Psalm 118.

- ii. It later become used as a shout of praise to the Lord.
 - iii. Certainly, both are in view here.
 - iv. But they are declaring Jesus to be the King in response to his self-revelation.
 - 1. And as we keep saying, dominion comes through this King and this King is from the Davidic dynasty—the Son of David.
 - 2. This is so important, that Matthew begins this Gospel by stating this:
 - a. (Matt. 1:1) The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David.
4. So, the crowds are appealing for salvation! Hosanna...save us we pray, O Lord. Save us Son of David.
- a. All this flurry of messianic excitement. But how will he save them? Because they are shouting hosanna right now but when we get to Friday, they are screaming, “Crucify him!”
 - i. They didn’t know that those two statements went together.
 - ii. Indeed, Psalm 118 mentions them together and we and they missed it.
 - 1. (Ps. 118:22-25) ²² The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. ²³ This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. ²⁴ This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. ²⁵ Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success!
 - 2. Hosanna and rejection! Save us, we pray, O Lord and rejecting the Cornerstone.
 - a. That message will be clear on Friday.
 - b. This rejection theme is common among those God has used to save his people.
 - i. Is it not the story of Joseph being rejected by his brothers all over again?
 - ii. Is it not similar to the rejection Moses before he ran off to Moab?
 - iii. Even David was rejected by his own father when Samuel came to anoint him as King.
 - iv. The same is true of Jesus. He is so unimpressive that he is rejected too.
 - v. Yet, what makes Jesus impressive? Is it his muscle or his obedience?
 - 1. How many times do you hear throughout the Kings and Chronicles when the Lord addresses the new king like Solomon: (1 Ki. 11:38) ³⁸ And if you will listen to all that I command you, and will walk in my ways, and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you and will build you a sure house, as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you.
 - vi. If they are to have a King that will have dominion forever and save his people forever, he must be a righteous King.
 - 1. Indeed, one that became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.
- iii. The next way we know that Jesus is the promised King is when he cleanses the Temple there in verses 12-13.
- 1. This might not seem to be a very telling event. But I beg to differ.
 - 2. In particular, this too was promised of the coming King.

- a. He would be known for his zeal for God's house. This King will be jealous for God's glory!
 - i. (Ps. 69:9) ⁹ For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.
- b. And God's house is much bigger than just Israel. God's King will build the house full of foreigners and nations!
 - i. (1 Pet. 2:4-6) ⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."
 - ii. On this Palm Sunday, King Jesus has dominion without borders. The be fruitful and fill the earth blessing and command gives way to the great commission now.
 - 1. Because he has all authority in heaven and earth, go make disciples (children of the faith...born of the Spirit) of ALL NATIONS!
- iv. And finally, we ought to see the little children offering up praise in response to Jesus doing these wonderful things which reveals who Jesus really is.
 - 1. When Jesus heals the blind and the lame in the temple here are the two responses: (Matt. 21:15) ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant
 - a. The leaders of Israel are indignant instead of in awe. They try to silence those who see!
 - b. The psalmist promised this would happen. These little children see that the LORD's name is majestic in all the earth!
 - i. This is just how God works, is it not? (1 Cor. 1:27) ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise
- c. Response: Is Jesus the King? Is He your King?
 - i. Is this YOUR KING?
 - 1. Let's hear some in the crowd in v. 10—who is this?
 - a. Some answer, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."
 - b. Indeed, he's most certainly a prophet but he no mere prophet.
 - c. This confession is lacking. When Jesus asked Peter he said, "You are the Christ the Son of the Living God!"
 - ii. Who do you say that he is? This King will return some day, and he will not be riding a donkey which indicated that he was bringing peace. He brought peace through the blood of his cross. Yet, when he returns, he will be riding a warhorse.
 - 1. (Rev. 19:11-16) ¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. ¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. ¹⁵ From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a

rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶
On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.