

Your King is Coming to You

Sermon April 10, 2022 - Palm Sunday

Scripture Reading: Luke 19:28-40

Golden Verse: *Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. Zechariah 9:9*

This prophecy, from the book of Zechariah, was fulfilled almost word by word 500 years after it was first prophesied. Everything happened, down to the smallest detail, as God had shown to the prophet Zechariah centuries in advance. Five hundred years before Palm Sunday, it was prophesied that Jesus would enter Jerusalem on a donkey as a humble man whose dignity is simple and dignified. He would be surrounded with great joy and people would give them a royal reception.

There is a lot of misunderstanding, lots of false expectations, and a sad aftertaste in this Palm Sunday scene. However, the most important message was seen by everybody: that Christ was and is truly the Lord and King. Jesus entered this way in Jerusalem to make His kingdom known to everybody. Palm Sunday proclaims to me that Jesus Christ is King.

Palm Sunday's most challenging question is: how do you call Jesus the King? Are you able to confess in a humble and joyful way that Jesus is your Lord and your King? The second question is: why do you call Him your King? Calling Him your Lord and your King: what does it mean to you?

Let's recall what He said in His sermon of the Mountain: "*Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.*" (Matthew 7:21) Therefore, Christ is not the Lord of all who are calling Him King. If He is our King, then we have to testify that with our words, obedience and actions. The everlasting gospel of Palm Sunday is: "Behold, your king is coming."

Let us go before Him and see if we can accept Him as King. First of all, I would like to note that this statement says: Christ is King. We don't have to make Him King. HE IS THE KING!

- The apostle Peter said in his first Pentecostal speech; *“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”* (Acts 2:36)
- About Himself, Jesus said: *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.”* (Matthew 28:18b)
- Before He was crucified, in His prayer He prayed: *“Father, the hour has come, glorify your Son.”* (John 17:1b) He prayed this before He was arrested, before He was humiliated and tortured. When people were not able to see His glory since He was suffering and covered in blood, His royal glory shone through His suffering.

When all His royal glory seemed to be destroyed, He was praying for us, and through His prayer, His royal glory shone. All His suffering spoke against His kingdom, but still, He was the victorious King. All those who tortured and crucified Him were ordained to Him, the King, and they only carried out Christ’s eternally ordained plan of our salvation. His enemies, therefore, who nailed Him to the cross, were His servants who obeyed and fulfilled His royal will in carrying out His divine plan.

Everything in Jesus’ life talked about Him as a King, and about His kingdom. Every event, every success, every failure, every joy, and tragedy served His plans and carried out His will. Even when His enemies challenged Him, they unconsciously served Him and His will, so that through His words and actions His glory could shine through. *He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross. Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* (Philippians 2:8-11)

Many people acknowledge that God exists. They admit to knowing that Jesus Christ is God’s Son. Some even have pictures of Christ in their homes. Many wear a cross as a necklace. But how many of these people would feel conflicted if they were asked if Christ lives in their hearts and if Christ is their King?

The Lord of the world wants to be your Lord and Saviour! He, to whom all power in heaven and on earth has been given, wants to be King in your life and asks you

to let Him be in power. It is written that one day “*at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth*”.

I am wondering if your knees already bow before Him. Do you kneel before Him physically, or in a spiritual way, or will you bow before Him only when He will come to take you home? If I profess that He is my King, then I won't have any problem in my heart kneeling before Him. Or is it still a problem for you to kneel before Him?

Once Rabbi Stostokovsky, a very famous Talmud teacher at the Tel Aviv Jewish Seminary, traveled from Haifa to Jerusalem. Across from the rabbi sat a young man who read a Hebrew New Testament with great joy. The rabbi rebuked the young man for being a Jew and reading the New Testament. As you know, the conservative Jews do not accept Jesus Christ as Saviour, and they are still waiting for the promised Messiah. For this, the rabbi taught that it is disrespectful for faithful Jews to read the stories about Jesus. The young man decided to give the New Testament as a gift to the rabbi. On that evening, the rabbi locked himself in his room and read the four Gospels. At three o'clock in the morning, he fell to his knees and began to pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Later, in one of his studies, he said: “I have found more than 200 places in the New Testament to prove, without a single shadow of a doubt, that Jesus is indeed the Messiah!” From that moment in the rabbi's life, Jesus Christ became Lord and King. How did He become Lord and King for this rabbi? He surrendered to Him, went on his knees, and then he saw Christ in His fascinating glory.

Do you know the fascinating power of Christ that literally kneels you before Him? When we ask Him to forgive our sins, we know He has the power to forgive us. When Jesus as a Lord and King forgives us, He is giving us grace. What is the real meaning of grace? It means that the Lord will simply forgive all the debts that we owe. What a mighty Lord and King we have who can do this, to let go, to cancel so much debt, without harm.

Have you ever been able to accept Jesus as King? Were you able to receive Jesus with your whole heart, to forgive your sins?

Give your heart to Jesus, the King! If we bring our hearts to Him today on Palm Sunday, He will forgive us, and we can rejoice again for making us sinless.

Let us learn today another very important thing. It is NOT ENOUGH to confess with words that Christ Jesus is our Lord and King. If Christ is our Lord and King, we have to OBEY HIM. It is NOT enough to know Him, but we have to OBEY Him. As we obey Christ, He will show us His power and His glory.

How can we obey Him? When He calls *us* “*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest*” (Matthew 11:28) then we should come to Him as we are. When He says: “*Take heart, your sins are forgiven*” (Matthew 9:2), then we have to believe that our sins are fully forgiven and we have to forgive others, even our enemies. Obedience means going to where the Lord has just said, and we will experience that my King, to whom has been given all power in heaven and on earth, is already walking with me.

“*Rejoice ... your King comes to you, righteous and victorious.*” We all are the people of this humble King. We are saved through His blood and we have to be obedient to Him. Also, we look forward confidently to that glorious day when either He will return into His glory, or He will come to take us home into His glory, to heaven. There is only one thing we can say for sure: Christ Jesus is the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords, and we are His children. Let’s love and obey Him, as our Lord and our King. Amen