

The Spectacular King

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[0 : 00] The reading of God's Word. Father, we believe in your Holy Spirit.

We believe that you have given him to us to be with us forever. To guide us. To particularly guide us into your Word that we may understand.

To have our minds illuminated to understand what the Spirit is saying to us through the Word of God. And thank you that he guides us so wonderfully and mysteriously at times.

Guide your servant. Lord, as I open my mouth to proclaim the Word of the Lord, guide me, O Lord, of which you would have me say to your people because you are speaking.

When your book is opened, you are speaking. Give us ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church. Thank you for your mercy.

[1 : 25] Thank you for not being silent. Oh, how we need you. How our world needs you. Come, Lord Jesus.

Come, Lord Jesus. Come, Lord Jesus. Lord of lords. Come, Lord Jesus. Reveal your kingdom and your people.

Give us distinct lives that demonstrate a new reality that you are Lord and risen and reigning. People need hope. And we have found and discovered by your grace that hope is only found in you, our Creator and your Son.

May we walk and live as people of hope. Hope in Jesus. Speak your word now.

[2 : 37] Your people are listening. Your servant is listening. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. John chapter 12.

This is 12 through 19. The next day, the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel. And Jesus found the young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion.

Behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt. His disciples did not understand these things at first. But when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.

The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

[3 : 53] So the Pharisees said to one another, You see that you are gaining nothing. Look! The world has gone after him.

That is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Please be seated. Thank you for that marvelous music. Choir, praise team, thank you so much.

Thank you. Nisha said it earlier and Charlie prayed it as well.

Our world is in deep turmoil. So much pain. Jesus said there would be wars and rumors of wars. Well, we got it. Injustice. Poverty where there shouldn't be poverty.

[5 : 00] Where there's plenty of, but then there's so many who have not in different parts of the world. Even in our city, there is certainly different stages of poverty and pain.

And people are looking for hope. They're looking. They're wondering, where can we find this? They're grasping for hope, right?

In this, we are no different than former generations. Former centuries. We just got better technology.

The world has been like this since the fall. It's been this place of turmoil and pain and anguish and abuse and injustice and oppression.

The people of Israel were an occupied people in the time of Jesus. An occupied people. The Greeks and the Romans had had their way with them.

[6:09] Especially the Romans now. They were crying out just like their forefathers did in Egypt. They were crying out for help for a savior.

In some ways, maybe even today, they feel the same way. I don't quite know. Israel today is pretty secular. But what does God do?

when His people cried out for help, what did He do? He sent them a king.

He sent them a king. And when that king came, there was this sense of wonder and awe and hostility around him.

I want to recapture the wonder and the awe. I don't know about you. I want to recapture the wonder and the awe of this king.

[7:28] because that's what God did when His people cried out and needed help. He sent them a king. Wonder is to be filled with admiration, amazement, awe, marvel.

to be in awe of something is to have an overwhelming feeling of reverence and admiration. I suggest we need to recover that when we look at the king that God sent us.

And He sent that king in a time of great oppression and pain and suffering. Jews were being crucified.

Jesus was not the only one crucified. You know that, right? Jews were being crucified like gumdrops. Rebellions, false messiahs. They were just making an example of those men.

They were hurting people. And God sent them a king. God sent us a king.

[9:09] He's still king. But is your heart full of wonder and awe of this king?

Your human need for wonder and awe, but that is a human need to be to something bigger than yourself can only be satisfied in a true understanding of Jesus as your king.

And so I want to focus on that this morning. The wonder and awe of Jesus as our king in the midst of our pain, in the midst of our uncertainty, in the midst of wars and rumors of wars, in the midst of oppression, in the midst of uncertainty, in the midst of illness, in the midst of disappointment and depression, I want to point us back, if you don't mind, to the wonder of Jesus as our king.

hopefully it'll be clear why. And I don't know if this will be one or two parts, we'll see. Jesus, the Bible says this is the next day, right?

Verse 12, the next day. The next day after what? Well, the party. The party of the beautiful aroma where Mary stank up the joint with the aroma of her passion for Jesus the day after the party.

[11:00] Bethany, where they were, was only like two miles away from Jerusalem, wasn't way far. And they head into the city.

here, I just, I just call this the true king inspires wonder in the streets. It's in the streets. That's what's happening here.

They're a crowd. The crowd is gathering. There are actually two crowds here. The text shows us two crowds. There's one crowd that had been with Jesus and saw him raise Lazarus from the dead. That crowd's coming. But then there's another crowd that had heard about Jesus and they're coming out of Jerusalem to meet him. So you got two crowds and they're converging on Jesus as it were, ones with him actually.

This is what we call Palm Sunday. This is the Sunday before the Sunday. Right? It is the Sunday where he enters the city and the next Sunday he's rising from the dead.

[12:14] The last week. Holy week. It's no wonder that Christians began to worship on the Lord's Day as the Bible calls it.

The Lord's Day, the first day of the week. Sunday as opposed to the Jewish Sabbath. It's no wonder that transition took place. because these two Sundays are two of the most significant days in human history.

The coming of the king and the resurrection of the king. Wow. Jesus is choosing this time to come into the city as the final Passover lamb.

Dr. Boyce makes the point my pastor made the point that this was the time this Sunday was the time when the lambs to be sacrificed for Passover were being brought into the city and here comes Jesus as the ultimate lamb of God.

Paul refers to Christ this way. 1 Corinthians 5-7 for Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed. He is the Passover lamb. And you know what Passover is about just in case you don't remember just go back watch the Prince of Egypt movie or whatever that was.

[13 : 44] Remember the Jews were the final plague upon Egypt that God sent so that they would let his people go.

It was the death of the firstborn of everything. Firstborn of everything. And God said I will make a provision for my people my chosen my elect I will make a provision for you if you will take a lamb and sacrifice it and sprinkle its blood upon the doorpost of your house when the death angel comes down the street to strike the firstborn it will it will pass over your house when it sees that a sacrifice has been made.

The same is true today. You see the eternal death angel will pass over you now if the blood of Jesus is upon you if the great ultimate sacrifice of the ultimate Passover lamb if his blood's upon you the eternal death angel will pass over you too.

Do you know this king? Jesus had been hidden he had been hid he had been hiding somewhat his identity remember they are you they want to know are you the most only a few people really had insight into who he was he really was the messiah he really was their king but he didn't let them camp on that he wouldn't let them make him king he wouldn't let them do it he kind of hid it but now he is he's out of himself now on this day on Palm Sunday Jesus is declaring himself king king king of Israel and more king of the universe and I love the fact that there is wonder in all in the streets these folk are excited they see him as king they're excited this great miracle worker this great compassionate man who can feed multitudes who can raise the dead he's coming he's coming and they're all excited they're coming behind them they're coming in front of him they're saying this is it the king and there's wonder and awe and they're blown away sure they're looky-loos in the group just want to see what's going on but they had heard something they had heard things about Jesus have you heard things about Jesus are you excited now I'm going to get to this and hopefully this time maybe next week but they're confused it's true but stop for a minute and look at how excited they are about Jesus the king are you I don't I just wonder where is our wonder and awe we know more than they do where is our wonder and awe of Jesus where is our rejoicing in the streets when you came when you went to church today and your neighbors waved at you do you think they were excited do you think they saw you as excited about coming to church to worship the living

[17 : 49] Christ do people who know you see you as someone who is zealous for the Lord someone who is thrilled about Jesus and who he is do we look like that as Christians in this country or do we look angry protesting and signs and cussing and angry and you what do we look like I'm just wondering out loud here are you rejoicing as you come to worship are you rejoicing as you greet the day because Jesus is your king do you wave at your neighbors I'm on my way to worship hey why don't you come with me hey when's the last time you invited someone to worship these people were grabbing their neighbors and their friends come see

Jesus and they had it wrong a little bit and we say we know when's the last time you invited someone to church because you're excited about Jesus how do I come to worship do I come expectant do you feel the crowd it's electric they're expectant Jesus is here something is going to happen and again they were a little confused but we know we need to recover wonder in the streets but notice this scene when you see the true king it also brings wonder in the word what I mean by that well quotes from Zechariah John then reminds us and the disciples realized this later that when Jesus finds this young donkey it wasn't just because he needed a ride there was something going on here and so he finds a young donkey as is written and fear not daughter of Zion behold your king is coming sitting on a donkey's coat he's quoting from Zechariah 9 9 which goes like this rejoice or it could be fear not rejoice greatly oh daughter of Zion shout aloud oh daughter of Jerusalem behold your king is coming to you righteous and having salvation is he humble and mounted on a donkey on a coat the foal of a donkey that's the full quote

John's giving us a teaser hoping he's probably hoping we'd go back and read it that's the full quote and that time in Zechariah that was the time after the exile is over and they're brought back into Judah and they're rebuilding Jerusalem and the walls and the temple it was during that time and there's no king there's no king and God promises them a king a time where Israel is struggling what's left of them the remnant who has come back and they're struggling and they're trying to realize their identity as the people of God and the nations around them are picking and poking and you know trying to you know discourage them and maybe infiltrate them and God is saying to them fear not and again believe it or not that phrase can mean rejoice it's very fascinating in Hebrew but either way it's the idea

God is encouraging his people and in midst of your turmoil in the midst of your pain I'm sending reinforcements I'm sending help fear not rejoice shout aloud get excited he's saying because your king is coming behold he's righteous he has salvation he's righteous he's just he's good and he's coming to save he's coming to save his people he's coming on a donkey which back in those days in the days of Israel Solomon rode on a donkey and sometimes kings would ride on donkeys it was not super uncommon most of the time a charger big war horse would be it by the way Jesus will come on a war horse later Revelation chapter 19 he will be he will come on a war horse at the end but right now he comes on a donkey why because he's the prince of peace he comes to save what does his people need they need they need him to come to save them and he's coming he's coming but not on a war horse hold it Jesus we need you to come save us from oppression and you're showing up on a donkey understatement nonetheless I'm sure I'm that's Duke Kwan Pastor Duke Kwan PCA pastor in DC a friend of mine he says we don't think much of donkeys and mules these days after all a leader of a revolution rolls into a city in a tank or at least a war horse as the case may be but a true king approaches his people with nothing to prove riding a vehicle that's plodding reliable and built for comfort like a limousine illegitimate authority is often marked by braggadocio and ostentatious displays of strength legitimate authority however is understated and secure legitimate authority

[24 : 16] Jesus shows up to face the Roman machine that's the way they saw it he shows up on a donkey no wonder they wanted to kill him wrong answer he's making a public statement that he knows will lead to his death you see the Zechariah passage says he brings salvation but the salvation has to come through his death I don't know if any revolutionary who thinks he's going to win the war by dying they let other people die for them usually and they sometimes skip out of town if they can when the revolution is undone but you don't usually win the revolution by dying but that's exactly what Jesus is doing the word prophesied that he would bring salvation and other passages of scripture prophesied that Jesus would come and bring salvation through his death this prophecy was intended to be a contrast as it were between earthly warfare and heavenly warfare you see we think of we want to we think of

David Barron the prophecy was intended our friends to quote kingly and kingly triumph another kingdom of which the just king would be the prince of peace who was meek and lowly in his advent as coming who would seek peace to the heathen and who sway would yet extend to earth's utmost bounds earthly warfare blows you up heavenly warfare sets you free Jesus came to set free you see we're like the people of Israel we tend to give into fear when faced with problems too big for us to handle we want to blow it up problems can be internal our own failures our own spiritual failures our own illnesses and whatever we're going through internally to be external where things are being pressed upon you and pushed upon you where socially or vocationally in your family things are happening to you that you have no control over we tend to fear grabs us and when we give in to fear we take things into our own hands and sometimes we can do great harm because when people panic when fear sets in we do things we shouldn't do we even become confused about what we really need when fear sets in

Israel thought the greatest need was to get free of the Romans and they tried rebellion after rebellion after rebellion with false messiah after false messiah and finally the Romans got sick of them and AD 70 just wiped them out but there was a greater need the scriptures tell us that the wages of sin is death there's a greater need but they didn't see it they couldn't see it the disciples didn't see it they didn't really understand what was going on until you see verse 16 his disciples did not understand these things at first but when Jesus was glorified then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him there it is seeing the true king brings wonder in the disciples as our eyes are being opened it's possible to follow Jesus and not really understand what he's what he's really doing it's possible to follow Jesus and not see clearly what's happening remember last week

Mary did that wonderful gift of the ointment on his feet and wiping his feet with her hair she didn't understand all the details of that here we go again here but here they are following Jesus and they don't really understand what's happening God can be at work God is at work in your life to accomplish his purposes and you may not fully be aware of what he's doing all you know is trouble pain I'm uncomfortable I'm scared these are all real and human and it's easy to believe that God is not doing anything but he is child of God child of God he's at work Jesus had told him he was going to die he had told him several times

I'm going the son of man will be betrayed and given to the Gentiles and they were crucified he had told him and Peter at one point said oh Lord be that far from you no no no that'll never happen to you maybe he thought Jesus was just feeling down about the ministry you know he's having a moment you know leaders have that leaders have moments you know if you're a leader you have those moments when you go you know maybe maybe Peter thought he just needed a pep talk you know come on Jesus it'll be alright God's at work you know I don't know but I'm guessing that's probably true Jesus had to rebuke him and called him the devil woo it was like they couldn't handle the truth they wanted Jesus on their own terms him dying was not part of the plan and John is saying that here was Jesus death and resurrection that made everything clear to them see the good thing about this is we're on the other side you see so we should be clued in that that the way to glory is through the cross we should we should know that they didn't understand that but we but we got it right we we said

[31 : 14] Jesus when he was was until he was glorified that is until he died and rose again then it became clear as he taught them on the road to Emmaus remember in Luke 24 or on Acts chapter 1 he spent a whole month with them after his resurrection teaching them about the kingdom of God he made it clear it's clear to us though right that the world is a place of injustice and suffering and wars it's clear to us right but we have a king we have someone who is reigning over the nations over the world over the universe he's come and he's reigning right now the kingdom of God is here it's being revealed

Jesus as at work and here's a good thing about that the kingdom becomes visible through his people as you and I live Christ centered kingdom focused lives when we live lives that are distinct from the culture around us not because we just want to be different no but because we're following the king of glory the kingdom is being revealed it's yet it's still some more to come that's why we pray thy kingdom come there's still more the kingdom must be revealed more and more throughout the world and ultimately the king will come but listen the king has come the first time he came to us to help us in the midst of the crazy and this world is crazy y'all guy read a story recently where a guy stole somebody's car turned around and brought the car back to the people he stole it from because they left their baby in the car he gives them the child cusses them out for leaving their baby in the car then gets back in the car and steals it again

I'm not making that up that's crazy but that's the world we live in don't be surprised in this world Jesus says you will have tribulation but be of good comfort I've overcome it how did he overcome it he died and rose again and when we open the word of God we see him are you opening the word to see do you recognize are your eyes being open daily to the wonder of Jesus in the midst of whatever it is you're going through whatever it is you're concerned about if you're like me yeah you're concerned about what's happening in different parts of the world you're concerned about the persecuted church in China and different parts of the world I mean I mean I just mentioned China but come on whether the

Middle East or South America the church America is an anomaly even though that's slowly changing the church persecution is the norm for the Christian church and our brothers and sisters what are they asking for prayer talk to the king about us talk to the king and tell him we need him talk to the king to strengthen our faith talk to the king to grant us if it would please him religious freedom I've seen I've read some things where some Chinese pastors have said maybe we don't need religious freedom because it might hurt our witness I was like oh man and when the king comes and the king is being revealed in his people more and more because of what happened with him there will be hostility there will be hostility the more the kingdom comes in you the more the kingdom comes and is revealed the king reveals himself in this church in this people and with all faithful

Christians the more hostility will be realized I want to end here I love the fact that the religious leaders of that day are wondering about Jesus too they're in awe too but they're frustrated verse 19 they said to one another the Pharisees said to one another you see that you are gaining nothing look the world has gone after him oh would we say that today oh I would love to be going to say that today that the world has gone after Jesus but notice the forces of darkness are frustrated they wanted to arrest Jesus they told people tell us where he's at so we can come and arrest him and instead they had a party now they're having a parade I mean these guys are sitting over there they're tearing their beards out man they're like they're gnashing their teeth they can't believe this they here's the thing you can't stop the king of the universe you can't stop

[37 : 21] Jesus the whole world and it's later on they'll say the same thing about about the apostles in Acts 17 that these men who they've turned the world upside down and they've come to our city now in Acts 17 6-9 wouldn't it be beautiful if people started saying those folk at New City they've turned the whole world upside down with this Jesus kingdom stuff wouldn't it be marvelous and then there will be a fight and then the knives will come out because the forces of darkness cannot tolerate the reign of the king you up for it you up for that you want to be in that

I do I want to see this church in the middle of that because our people are living under the reign of the king of kings Jesus has come and he's come in your life as well he's come in you has he come in you has he come in your life have you met the king of kings this scene is a bit contradictory isn't it because Jesus is revealing himself as king of the Jews their messiah they're full of wonder and excitement as they should be but they have an expectation of him that he's not going to fulfill in the way they want as their king he came to set them free to save them from a greater tyranny than human injustice and that's bad by the way human injustice is wrong but there's a greater tyranny than human injustice their greatest problem was not the government but they thought it was nor any other social ill that was not their greatest problem their greatest problem was their sinful self-centeredness self-righteousness and self-love that caused them to rebel against God and make themselves the center of the universe that's your greatest problem

I don't have that problem of course yeah brother you know you know me see that's my brother he knows me he knows I'm joking Jesus came to deal with their greatest problem and that's our message brothers and sisters our message is not that Jesus wants to make Chattanooga a paradise our message is that Chattanooga people are broken inside and though they may not have any money they may be in jail they may be racist they may be whatever it doesn't matter the greatest problem is something has gone wrong in here that they think they're that important they're more important than God they've rebelled against God and that's why that's why Jesus on Palm Sunday if you look at I think

Luke 19 as he rode in towards the city you know what happened he wept he wept his he didn't just cry crocodile tears he wailed he wept over the city because he knew they were rejecting him as their true Messiah he mourned over Jerusalem and then later he's going to say behold your house is left to you desolate Israel you will not see me again until you say blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Jesus wept over Israel and he's weeping still I think over people who will not turn to him our message brothers and sisters is as much good as we should do as the kingdom comes in our lives that kingdom should touch other people we should be a people of justice like our king was just and righteous and good yes but we must point them to true true wholeness true wholeness is not found in writing better laws though good laws are necessary but true wholeness is not found in getting more money though it's nice to have extra money true wholeness is found in repenting of your sins and letting

God do a work in you where he's transforming you from the inside out forgiving you of your sins and day by day molding you into the image of his son as his presence washes over you as you see the king the king of glory and you wonder and full of wonder and awe as someone who could love you like that see that's what people need and that's our message that's our message the other stuff is gravy the good deeds after that good stuff amen gravy the message the meat the main course you need a king you gotta stop trying to be king in your own life you screwed it up because you thought you were king you thought you were the master of the universe you thought you were the master of your fate you thought you could fix it and handle it and get it all done you thought you need a king someone to rule and reign and defeat over you and defeat all your enemies you need a king that's our message you can't kill the hope of the gospel once the spirit of

[43 : 40] God ignites it in someone's heart that's transformative even when they don't have all that they might want to have but that's transformative Jesus was not going to fulfill their expectations you know what happened you know what happened a week later not less than a week later that same crowd said crucify him he did not fulfill their expectations because they had the wrong expectations if you have the wrong expectations about God you will be disappointed and deceived and you know what at some point you're going to say enough is enough you got to go Jesus but if you will if you would reach out to Jesus for what he offers you you will find life you will find peace but in this world Jesus said you will have tribulation but fear not you're king your king has overcome the world and he is reigning right now for you and I pray in you father this message is much different than what's on paper you

I pray Lord it was coherent you I believe you were leading me to say and I'll go another kind of another way somewhat oh Lord bless your word to your people may we see king Jesus may we be in wonder and awe of him for he is our spectacular king he is glorious and Lord we need to see him and we need to hear his voice we need to focus our hearts on him and pleasing him and walking with him and because Lord is so crazy around us we don't know what's going to happen with these wars and with our nation or will we be pulled into it we have internal struggles in our nation with people hurting for various reasons and politicians are busy fighting among themselves rather than doing what's best for the nation we have mercy we need you to reign among us president biden is i guess trying to do the best he can but we need you to reign we need you whoever follows president biden will be the same will have the same fate he struggled do the best they can maybe but they won't be enough none of these politicians are enough we need you we need you lord of lord king of kings we need you you need to reign in us so that lord the people around us see a better way they see a better life they see something more stable they see the kingdom of god being revealed in us because the king is among us lord will you show the world that in us will you do it forgive us lord for we're just like the world we're saying the same things we're doing the same things lord forgive us sometimes we're just angry oh forgive us cleanse us be our king come lord jesus come lord jesus amen if everyone would