

Sermon Outline

THE YEAR OF OUR LORD, 2013-2014

THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD (LUKE 19:35-40)

I. Introduction

- A. Ever since our Lord Jesus was young, the mark of heavenly destiny was upon him.
- B. Luke 1:31-35: The angel Gabriel's words
 - 1. Our Lord's name was not given to him by his parents, but by God through the angel Gabriel.
 - a. The fact that neither Mary nor Joseph had any say in naming their son goes to show that from young, Jesus did not belong to his parents.
 - b. Rather, he belonged first and foremost to God.
 - c. The name that was given to Mary's son would be a name that would define him for the rest of his life. It is an auspicious name called *Jesus* or *Yeshua*, which means "The Lord Is Salvation."
- C. Luke 2: Simeon's prophecies
 - 1. When our Lord was brought to the temple for his dedication, Simeon disclosed to them that Jesus was going to be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel" (Lk 2:32).
 - 2. Simeon also gives Mary some dark and cryptic words: "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed" (Lk 2:34).
- D. As the Lord Jesus, now thirty-three years old, prepares to enter Jerusalem to shouts of joy, he also knows very well that this is the beginning of the end.
—This is going to be the last time that he would enter Jerusalem, because his great hour is upon him.

***Questions for reflection:** (1) Why is it significant that Jesus' name was given by God through the angel and not by his parents? (2) What did Simeon say about Jesus? What is the glorious reality concerning Jesus and what is the dark reality hovering over our Lord?

II. A Colt for the King (Luke 19:28-30)

- A. In Luke 19:28, the Lord is making his way toward Jerusalem. "And when he had said these things," the Scripture says, "he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem."
- B. As Jesus was approaching Bethphage and Bethany, which is a town located "at the mount that is called Olivet," he sent two of his disciples ahead of him.
- C. He gives them instructions to go into the village ahead of them where they will find "a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat." When the disciples find this colt, they are to untie it and bring it to Jesus. And he says, "If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'"
- D. Now, it is something of a mystery as to how Jesus knew of this particular colt.
 - 1. Jesus may have been speaking from supernatural knowledge.

2. Jesus may have even made prior arrangements with the owners. After all, this isn't the first time that he had come to Bethany.
- E. But either way, the matter of greater importance here is the fact that this is a colt on which no one had ever sat. And this has certain Old Testament echoes in it.
1. In various Old Testament passages, we are reminded that God always deserves our best; that we must not give God secondhand goods or goods that are defective.
 2. Thus, the fact that Jesus asks for the young colt on which no one had ever sat goes to show that Jesus knows who he is. He knows that he is the Son of God. And as the Son of God, Jesus has every right to require from us what is best.
- F. The lesson in this for us, should be quite clear as well: The Lord Jesus calls us to give him our best and our all.
1. It is the call to honor Jesus as Lord in every aspect of our lives.
 2. To honor Jesus as Lord is to make room for his word, his wisdom, and his preferences over every area of our lives.
 3. It means that we allow Jesus to rearrange our lives and our loves—and to place them in proper relationship to him.
 4. If we have put our faith in Jesus Christ, if we have received Jesus as Lord and Savior, then Jesus has come into our lives by his Holy Spirit and he has started this work in us.
- G. As Jesus works in us, we find him asking of us the use of our young colts, our best talents, our most favorite skills.
1. And sometimes, like the people who own the colt, we may find ourselves asking God or others: “Why are you untying it?”
 - Why are you taking my colt?
 - Why are you taking my skills?
 - Why do you require me to be so devoted to your purposes?
 - Why do you require me to put aside my ambitions and serve your Kingdom?
 2. The response that the apostles and the prophets give—indeed, the response that the Holy Spirit himself gives—is simply, “The Lord has need of it.” And that should be reason enough, should it not?
- H. But it is also important to know who this Lord is who asks of you your young colts.
1. Jesus is not a lord who reduces you to a tool of economic usefulness or dump you when you have outgrown your usefulness.
 2. Jesus is the life-giving Lord who knows you best and cares for you in every way—and he knows that you would be happiest when you are fully at one with him and with his purposes in the world.
- I. The disciples go into the village and find the colt just as Jesus had said (v 32).
- J. To the question of the owners, “Why are you untying the colt?” (v 32), they simply respond: “The Lord has need of it” (v 34).
- K. Having collected the colt, they bring it to Jesus. And “throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it” (v 35).

***Questions for reflection:** (1) What possible significance does the young colt have? (2) How is Jesus calling you to give him your best?

III. Final Approach (Luke 19:37)

- A. And so begins the final approach toward Jerusalem.

—As far as the disciples were concerned, this was the long-awaited event of all history—the return of the King of Israel, leading to the enthronement of YHWH over all the nations of the world.

- B. Verse 37 tells us what the crowds of disciples did as Jesus neared the great city of God: “As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen [.]”

***Questions for reflection:** (1) What significance did the triumphal entry have in the minds of the disciples? (2) What did the “whole multitude” of disciples do as Jesus made his way “down the Mount of Olives”?

IV. Messianic Overtones

A. Significant events.

1. The descent from the Mount of Olives
 - a. The fact that Jesus approached Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives may be significant, because according to Zechariah, the Mount of Olives is the place where the Messiah would make his approach.
 - b. Zechariah 14:4: “On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.”
 - c. The disciples may have had a passage like this in mind because we are told by Luke that they began praising God “As [Jesus] was drawing near—*already on the way down* the Mount of Olives...”
2. The use of the colt
 - a. The fact that Jesus chose a colt as his mode of transportation is also significant.
 - b. According to Zechariah 9:9, when Israel’s King returns, he would come riding upon a colt: “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.”
3. The hymn based on Psalm 118
 - a. As the disciples neared the city, they sing a hymn based on Psalm 118.
 - b. Psalm 118 was sung by pilgrims going to Jerusalem. It celebrated God’s victory over his enemies.

¹⁰ All nations surrounded me;

in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

¹¹ They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side;

in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

¹² They surrounded me like bees;

they went out like a fire among thorns;

in the name of the LORD I cut them off!

¹³ I was pushed hard, so that I was falling,

but the LORD helped me.

- c. In Psalm 118:26, you have the words,

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!
We bless you from the house of the LORD.*

- d. But on the lips of the disciples, those words were adapted to the following messianic formula: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” (v 38)

B. And so, as you can see, the whole event is filled with *messianic* overtones.

C. It is clear from all the symbolism surrounding the event that Jesus knew who he was and what he had come to do.

1. Our Lord was not some unknowing bystander who happened to be caught up in the situation.
2. Instead, as the rightful Messiah of Israel, Jesus knowingly ordered the entire event, because he knew that the weight of the ages is upon him.
—He was *it*, the future of Israel and the world.

***Questions for reflection:** (1) What was the significance of (a) the descent from the Mount of Olives, (b) the use of the young colt, and (c) the hymn based on Ps 118? (2) Jesus knowingly ordered the events surrounding his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. What does this tell us about his self-understanding?

V. Addressing the World Powers

A. It is also worth pointing out the *political* overtones of the triumphant entry.

B. Many people, including some Christians, are zealous to maintain a strong church-state separation.

C. It is wise and biblical to separate church from state because the two institutions have different functions:

1. The focus of the Church is on worship and Gospel ministry.
2. The focus of the State is on the administration of earthly justice.

D. Sometimes, however, the separation of Church and State is articulated in such a way that we get the impression that Christ himself has nothing to say to the world; or that his dominion is limited only to a religious community, i.e, the Church.

E. Yet, that was not how the disciples understood what Jesus had come to do.

—If Jesus is indeed the rightful King of Israel, the true Heir to the throne of David, then all the present rulers of Israel and of the world have been served notice. Like it or not, they must now reckon with Israel’s King.

F. But what about our Lord’s words to Pontius Pilate in John 18:36, saying that his kingdom is “not of this world”?

1. That verse has sometimes been taken to mean that Jesus’ rule is focused only on spiritual matters; and that religion should not intersect with politics or any other earthly realm outside the institutional church.
2. Yet, when Jesus says that his kingdom is not “of” this world, he was speaking about the *origin* of his kingdom, not (necessarily) its *scope*.

3. Because the origin of our Lord's rule is in God, the Church does not need to resort to human means to "put Jesus in power," so to speak.
—Christians do not have to resort to desperate means such as manipulation, political intrigue, or violence to help establish Jesus' kingdom on earth.
 4. Instead, God simply calls both the Church and the world to recognize...
 - a. that God has already exalted Jesus to his right hand!
 - b. that the day will come when the dominion of God and of Christ will be fully implemented in every corner of human existence.
 5. So, on the one hand, Christians are not to use violence to "force" their agenda on society; but on the other hand, Christians are called to live in such a way that testifies to the fact that Jesus is Lord.
 6. In time, this life of witness would naturally create new cultures, new ways of going about things, in the midst of the world.
 - a. Thus, we can expect to see distinctly Christian ways of doing family life; Christian ways of doing business; Christian ways of educating; Christian approaches of engaging with the humanities and sciences; and so on and so forth.
 - b. Because Jesus is Lord, believers should—to the extent that it is possible—seek to bring their areas of responsibility into alignment with the will of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures.
 7. Since the world is a complicated place and believers are still sinful, Christians can expect to make mistakes along the way.
 8. Yet, we have the assurance that it does not depend on us, but on Christ himself: "Then comes the end, when *he* [that is, Christ] delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For *he* must reign until *he* has put all his enemies under his feet" (1 Cor 15:24-25)
- G. Simply stated, Christ does desire his rule to be felt in every corner of society today. He does desire to address the powers of the world.

***Questions for reflection:** (1) Does King Jesus intend to address the world powers today? (2) How has Jn 18:36 been misinterpreted or misapplied by some Christians?

VI. Even the Stones Would Cry Out (Luke 19:39-40)

- A. The fear of upsetting both the Jewish and Roman establishments likely explains why the Pharisees reacted the way they did to Jesus' disciples: "Teacher, rebuke your disciples."
- B. The Pharisees represent those in every age who are afraid of the in-breaking of God's new order. They represent those in every era of history that are afraid of the repercussions of the Gospel event.
- C. But lest we be too quick to blame the Pharisees, we must also recognize that each one of us has something of this Pharisaical spirit in us. Frankly, we don't like the Lord Jesus to stir up too much trouble for us.
 1. We like things to be at a certain level of comfort and stability.
- D. But whenever we feel ourselves challenged by Jesus, the point we have to remember is that Jesus has come to set us free. That is his messianic vocation.
 1. Jesus intrudes not merely for the sake of intruding, but because God loves us too much to allow us to be enslaved forever, either to our own sins or to the powers of the world. So then...

- Will we allow our Lord Jesus to overturn our cherished values and priorities?
 - Will we allow the Lord Jesus to challenge, rebuke, and reform us when we have misplaced our values to such an extent that we end up hindering God’s work in us and through us?
2. When we find the King doing that to us, that’s a good sign. It’s a sign that the King of heaven has come to us. He has come to bring light. He has come to bring an end to the exile. He has come to free us so that we can fully live for the One who knows us and loves us.
- E. Jesus says to the Pharisees (and to every religious, cultural, political power that hinders his disciples from worshiping him): “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”
—The Kingdom of God is about to begin. There is no stopping it. We must either receive it with joy or be crushed by it.

***Questions for reflection:** (1) How did the Pharisees react to the rejoicing disciples? What did they want Jesus to do? And why did they react the way they did? (2) What kinds of people do the Pharisees represent? (3) Why and how does Jesus “intrude” into our lives? (4) How are we to respond when the King draws near to us with his claims over us? Where might Jesus be calling you to himself today?

VII. Receiving the King

Although the cursed death of the cross awaits him, our Lord’s triumphant entrance into Jerusalem is a foretaste of things to come. It is a foretaste of his exaltation to the right hand of God. It is a foretaste of his return in power and glory to conclude the present evil age. The triumphal entry is meant to be an auspicious event; a sign that the Lord YHWH has returned to his people in the form of the royal Son of David, Jesus Christ. God wants all people to receive Jesus with joy as the life of their souls. Will we joyfully receive this King that God has given to us? Will we give him our loyalty and affection? Will we put our trust in him to save us from our sins and show us how to live?

***Questions for reflection:** (1) What is the significance of the triumphal entry? What does it anticipate? (2) How should we respond to the gift of our Lord Jesus?

*Lord Jesus Christ,
you are the gift of God’s love to your people.
You are the Lord our God.
You are the King of peace.
You are the Lord of life.
Come into our lives and bring your life into our hearts.
Bring order to our disordered souls.
Bring freedom to our members that are yet enslaved to sin.
We receive you for our salvation.
We receive you as our Lord and God.
Lord, save us for yourself.
Amen.*