Palm Sunday! The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem—palms waving, coats laid down upon his path, joy, praise, loud Hosannas, proclamation of scripture, fulfillment of prophecy! This glorying in Jesus echoes the song of the angels given to the shepherds at Christ’s birth. Documented in all four gospels, this joyous event is also accompanied by criticism, Luke tells us: “Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples!’” As we enter this Holy Week, we begin with “Hosanna!” but journey toward “Crucify Him,” and then celebrate again and forever with “HE IS RISEN!”

But let’s not be too quick to by-pass the week’s journey of Jesus to the cross. Let’s look at Jesus’ intention in these events and see how every step reveals Him as King, how every step speaks of His peace and of His love. His actions of this Holy Week scream, “I love you!” His message is peace and reconciliation—not of war or rebellion as some would have hoped. Paul writes in Ephesians 2:14, “14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility”; that is, Jesus Christ brings reconciliation between God and man. We will not and cannot have peace with God, with man, or within ourselves until Jesus becomes our peace. “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, Paul tells believers in Corinth (2 Corinthians 5:18).

Our lesson derived from the triumphal entry is the same for us as it was for those whose shouted Hosannas along Christ’s route two thousand years ago: Don’t mistake the King you want for the King you need! Those who rejoiced as Jesus passed by on the colt of a donkey *wanted* a king who would conquer their Roman oppressors politically and militarily. They *needed* a King who would bring peace and reconcile them to God. The needed a trusted Messiah, and that is who Jesus was and is. Church! One thing is for certain. God Keeps His word! We can count on Him and believe Him; He keeps His word. How do we know? We know because history and scripture are evidence. He kept and keeps His word precisely and perfectly. The triumphal entry is a prophetic picture. Palm Sunday reveals God’s detailed planning, recorded in scripture; right down to the colt of a donkey, this event and the events of the rest of Holy Week are divinely orchestrated. One example appears in Zechariah 9:9:

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.

Some scholars say that Jesus’ life, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection fulfilled at least three hundred messianic prophecies! The mathematical chances of someone’s fulfilling just eight (yes 8!) of those prophecies in scripture is one in ten to the seventeenth power (1 in 10 to the 17th!). This quantity of silver dollars would cover the state of Texas to a depth of three feet. WOW! Why is this information important? The Events of Palm Sunday, Calvary and the empty tomb verify and validate our trust in Jesus as King.

Of importance, then, is a proper view of King Jesus. Our view of Him as King affects every aspect and area of our lives. It affects how we live, how we deal with others—our relationships, how we think. Many along Jesus’ entry route shouted hosannas to Him with their lips but had no real commitment or even rejected Him in their hearts. Does your heart confirm who Jesus is? Listen, Church. Many celebrate Jesus for what He does but not for who He is. As His disciples, we should be full of adoration and praise for our King. Birds sing; flowers bloom; seas teem with beautiful life; mountains shout strength; the heavens offer their vast, wondrously lighted-infused glory. In response to the rebuke from the Pharisees to quiet his disciples, Christ says, “I tell you. . . if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out” (Luke 19:40). If creation was meant to praise Him, so should we. A clear and proper view of Christ and His Kingship changes everything. As we embrace this, our hearts should be strengthened to trust even more our great God, who wants to direct our paths. Our God and Father wants us to trust and obey Him and wants us to do His will. There is nothing this world can offer that compares to knowing Christ the King. There is nothing to compare to knowing Christ personally, consistently, constantly, and completely. Remember Zacheus? He climbed into a tree to get a full view of Christ as he passed by. Are you working to get a full view of Christ the King? Our lives need to hail Him as King and make available to Him all that we have. We need to trust Him with our ordinary, everyday lives and trust that in response He will do the extraordinary.

What is your view of Christ right now? The triumphal entry is our King coming to us and for us. As we enter Holy Week, I encourage each of you; I challenge you to mediate on all that Christ has done. Meditate on His suffering and on His mission of peace. Surrender yourself to the trustworthy King and His lordship. Be Honest with Him: “Dear God, I need your peace.” Cry out “Hosanna!” “Lord Save!” Respond to Him and His holiness. Worship Him. Don’t let anything get in the way of your view of the King. What do you need to lay down at the feet of the King? Pride? Self-reliance? Anxiety? Sin? Lay it down and praise Him for His faithfulness to take on your burden. Allow God to consecrate, purify, and sanctify as a matter of obedience. You can trust Him. He is a King who keeps His word. You can trust Him. He is in your situation and is more than capable. He intentionally laid down His life for you. He alone is our peace. Allow Him to orchestrate your life. Repent for trying to be your own King. Repent of pride and lack of faith as a place to start. How do you respond to the King?

Passages in support of this sermon:

Psalm 118:19-29

Open for me the gates of the righteous;

I will enter and give thanks to the Lord.

20 This is the gate of the Lord

through which the righteous may enter.

21 I will give you thanks, for you answered me;

you have become my salvation.

22 The stone the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone;

23 the Lord has done this,

and it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 The Lord has done it this very day;

let us rejoice today and be glad.

25 Lord, save us!

Lord, grant us success!

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

From the house of the Lord, we bless you.[a]

27 The Lord is God,

and he has made his light shine on us.

With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession

up[b] to the horns of the altar.

28 You are my God, and I will praise you;

you are my God, and I will exalt you.

29 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his love endures forever.

Luke 19:23-40

23 Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’

24 “Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’

25 “‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’

26 “He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 27 But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’”

28 After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 30 “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. 31 If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’”

32 Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?”

34 They replied, “The Lord needs it.”

35 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. 36 As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

37 When he came near the place where the road goes 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:

38 “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!”[a]

“Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

40 “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”