

Title: **“BEHOLD, THY KING COMMETH!”**

Text: John 12:12-19

Subject: *The Savior's Triumphal Entry*

Date: Sunday Morning — April 4, 2010

Tape: John #80

Readings: *Zechariah 9:1-17*

Introduction:

“BEHOLD, THY KING COMMETH!” — That is my subject. Our text is John 12:12-19.

(John 12:12-19) “On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. 14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, 15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. 16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and *that* they had done these things unto him. 17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. 18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. 19 The Pharisees therefore said among

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themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing?
behold, the world is gone after him.”

This passage of Scripture, at first glance, appears to be out of sync with the rest of our Lord’s earthly life and ministry. It is unlike anything else recorded of him in the New Testament. It tells us of the only recorded event in the life of our Lord Jesus which he intentionally made public to the highest possible degree. **It is recorded four times in the New Testament.** Obviously, the scene before us is one which ought to be studied carefully and frequently. May God the Holy Spirit give us grace and wisdom to learn the things taught here, so that we may properly love, trust, serve and honor our great King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The narrative reads like the account of some royal conqueror returning to his own city. “*Much people,*” “*a great multitude*” swelled quickly to “*multitudes*” (Some estimated the crowd to be more than 300,000!), accompanying the Lord Jesus Christ in what is described as his “triumphal entry” into Jerusalem. Loud cries of praise and expressions of adulation rang through the air. “*All the city was moved.*” Everyone wanted to know, “*Who is this?*”

Everything in this passage seems to contradict the whole tenor of our Lord’s earthly life and ministry. It seems to be altogether unlike him who would not cry, nor strive, nor

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lift up his voice in the streets. He always withdrew from the crowd, hid from applause and urged those who were healed by his power to tell no one what he had done for them.

Yet, our Lord’s public, triumphal entry into Jerusalem at this time is just what we should expect to see. He knew well that the hour of his death, the hour of his glory, the hour of his manifestation was near. The time of his humiliation and earthly ministry was drawing to a close. The hour was rapidly approaching when he must finish the work, which he had come into this world to perform. His last great, climatic work was before him. There was nothing left for him to do except make atonement for and redeem his people by the sacrifice of himself upon the cursed tree. Having assumed our nature, and having fulfilled all other things written in the Book of God concerning him, the Lord Jesus must now finish his work; he must fulfil all righteousness by his sin-atonement death. Now, he must satisfy justice and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself.

The time had come at last when Christ was to die for his people. The time had come when the true Passover Lamb must be slain, when the true blood of atonement must be shed, when Messiah was to be “*cut off*” according to the prophecy of Daniel (Daniel 9:26), when the way into the

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holiest must be opened for needy sinners by the true High Priest.

Knowing all this, our Lord Jesus purposefully drew attention to himself. Knowing this, he placed himself prominently under the notice of the whole Jewish nation. It was only right that this thing not be “done in a corner” (Acts 26:26). If ever there was a transaction in our Lord’s earthly ministry which was public, it was the Sacrifice he offered upon the cross of Calvary. He died at the time of year when all the tribes were assembled at Jerusalem for the passover feast. **By divine, providential arrangement, according to the purpose of God in eternal predestination, our blessed Savior died within a week of his remarkable, public, triumphal entry into Jerusalem, by which he had caused the eyes of all Israel to be fixed upon him.** Within a week of this public, pronouncement of the multitudes who — *“Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord,”* this same multitude cried, — *“Crucify him! Crucify him! His blood be on us, and on our children!”*

Our Lord deemed it proper that every eye should be fixed upon him as he came to be offered up as the Lamb of God. He would have his great work of redemption known and advertised by everyone in Jerusalem. The sin

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atoning blood of the Son of God was about to be shed. And this great deed was not to be “*done in a corner*” (Acts 26:26). Therefore, he who had deliberately spent most of his life in secrecy, secluded from public view, he who would not allow his admirers to make him a king, now comes to announce himself King in the most public manner imaginable. **His death would be his entrance into his kingdom. Therefore, he made a royal procession through the streets of Jerusalem.** This royal procession was our Lord’s public declaration that he is indeed the Christ of God, and that he was about to enter into his kingdom.

Proposition: The Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Savior, God the Son, the second person of the blessed Trinity, is the King of Glory and the King of the Universe.¹

The Lord Jesus Christ is King over all things by virtue of his obedience to God as our Substitute (John 17:2; Romans 14:9; Ephesians 1:21-22; Philippians 2:9-11). Let us ever worship and obey him as our great King. Let us

¹ Our Lord Jesus Christ is, always was, and always shall be King over everybody and everything by virtue of the fact that he is God. The one true and living God is King everywhere. He always has his way and does his will. But in this text, we have a presentation of Christ as our Mediatorial King, which is a Kingship and dominion given to him as the God-man by the Triune Jehovah as the reward of his obedience unto death as our Mediator (Romans 14:9; John 17:2; Philippians 2:9-11).

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ever throw off our filthy garments of self-righteousness before him and worship him, saying, “Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!”

The word “Hosanna” is an exclamation of adoration and praise; but it is more than that. The word means “save me.” We worship and adore Christ as our Savior only when we bow to him as our King; and we bow to him as our king only when we worship and trust him as our Savior, laying everything at his feet, just as these multitudes “spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way” before the King.

VOLUNTARY SACRIFICE

The first thing that strikes me in this passage is the obvious fact that our Lord’s sacrifice of himself as our Substitute was a voluntary sacrifice. His sufferings were voluntary. His death was voluntary.

That which is written here displays as clearly as the noonday sun, as the Scriptures universally declare, that the Lord our God, our great Savior, holds a sovereign, mysterious influence over the minds and wills of all around men. Nothing else can account for the effect his entrance into Jerusalem had upon the multitudes who surrounded

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him. They were moved and carried forward by the secret constraining power of the sovereign Lord God to do his will, though they knew him not. At what other time did the common people in Israel act in defiance of the bulk of their religious leaders? But here, they are defiant, declaring Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah, the Christ, though the Chief Priests and the Pharisees had made it known that he was to be put to death (John 11:57).

Just as he made winds, and waves, and diseases, and devils obey his will, so he turned the minds of men according to his will; and he still does. But I want you to see that the Man Christ Jesus, our Savior, exercised this power that belongs to God alone while he walked upon this earth.

- The men of Nazareth could not hold him when he **“passing through the midst of them, went his way”** (Luke 4:30).
- The angry Jews of Jerusalem could not detain him when they would have laid violent hands on him in the Temple; but, **“Jesus going through the midst of them, passed by”** (John 8:59).
- Above all, the very soldiers who apprehended him in the garden, at first **“went backward and fell to the ground”** when he revealed himself as Jehovah, the **“I AM”** (John 18:6).

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In each of these things there can be but one explanation. The only possible explanation is the thing God taught Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4. — **“The heavens do rule!”** And he who walked on earth in human flesh was and is God on his throne in the highest heaven! Throughout our Savior’s earthly ministry, we see these mighty acts which displayed a mysterious **“hiding of his power”** (Habakkuk 3:4).

If he is God almighty, the omnipotent Jehovah, why didn’t he resist his enemies? Why didn’t he scatter the band of soldiers who came to arrest him, like chaff before the wind? There is but one answer. — **He was a willing Substitute!** His sacrifice was a willing, voluntary sacrifice. His death was the death of one who wanted to die in the stead of chosen sinners, loved by him with an everlasting love! He freely laid down his life in our room and stead that he might make atonement for our sins and redeem us from all iniquity! He had undertaken to give his own life as a ransom, that we might live forever, and he laid it down upon the cursed tree with all the desire of his holy heart. **As J. C. Ryle put it...**

“He did not bleed and suffer and die because he was vanquished by superior force, and could not help himself, but because he loved us and rejoiced to give himself for us as our Substitute. He did not die

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because he could not avoid death, but because he was willing with all his heart to make his soul an offering for sin.”

O my soul, forever rest upon this blessed Savior and Redeemer! Forever let us rest our hearts on this sweet revelation of grace. — Our Lord Jesus is a willing Savior, a voluntary Redeemer. It was his delight to do his Father’s will. It was his delight to make a way for poor, lost, guilty sinners to draw near to God in peace. He loved the work he undertook as our Surety in old eternity!

- He delights in mercy!
- He rejoices in forgiving!
- He is willing to save!
- He is willing to receive all who come to God by him!

He who was willing to suffer all the horrid, ignominious agony of the cursed death he endured in our stead, he who was willing to be made sin for us, he who was willing to be made a curse for us, is willing to save all who come to God by him!

PROPHECY FULFILLED

First, we see in our text that our Lord Jesus Christ was a voluntary Substitute. *Second*, our text stands before us as an undeniable assurance that this Book, the Holy Bible, is in truth the inspired, inerrant Word of God. In fact, in

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Matthew’s account (Matthew 21:4-5), the Holy Spirit specifically tells us that all this was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. — “**All this was done**,” not because our Lord Jesus was incapable of walking the distance to Jerusalem, but “**that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet**.” Then the Holy Spirit puts two Old Testament passages together (Isaiah 62:11; Zechariah 9:9).

(John 12:14-15) “And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, 15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass’s colt.”

(Matthew 21:4-5) “All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.”

(Isaiah 62:11) “Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward *is* with him, and his work before him.”

(Zechariah 9:9) “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation;

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lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.”

Yes, this Book Bible is, without question, the Word of God, fully and perfectly inspired and without error (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

(2 Timothy 3:16-17) “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

(2 Peter 1:20-21) “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Zechariah’s prophecy was made more than 550 years before this event; and it is here fulfilled in every detail. Once more, we see a clear example of the complete harmony of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

FAITH’S OBJECT

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Third, and this is very, very important, our text shows us that faith’s object is Christ himself. Do not misunderstand me. It is important what you believe. I make no apology for declaring that it is impossible for anyone to be saved believing a false gospel. The Scriptures are crystal clear in this regard (Galatians 1:6-8; 5:2-4; 1 John 5:1; 2:23-24; 4:2). — **If you do not believe that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, — If you do not believe that the Lord Jesus Christ actually accomplished all that the prophets said he would accomplish, — If you do not believe that the Lord Jesus brought in everlasting righteousness, put away sin and saved his people from their sins, obtaining eternal redemption for all God’s elect by the sacrifice of himself, you are not born of God.**

(Galatians 1:6-8) “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

(Galatians 5:2-4) “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. 3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised,

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that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

(1 John 5:1) “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.”

(1 John 2:23-24) “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: *(but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.* 24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.”

(1 John 4:2) “Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.”

There is no such thing as a saved, will-worshipping Arminian. If you believe that Christ is a failure, that he tries to save people who are ultimately lost forever in hell, because they would not let him have his way, or because they did something he could not overcome, or because they did not do something he left undone, you are yet without hope. The christ you trust is anti-christ. **But the object of**

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faith is not what you know about Christ. The object of saving faith is Christ himself (John 17:3).

(John 17:3) “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

Look at John 12:16. — **“These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.”** These disciples, including the Apostles, did not at this time understand the things our Lord taught them from the Scriptures about his death and resurrection.

“They saw Christ riding into Jerusalem on the ass, the people scattering the palm branches and their clothes before Him, crying, ‘*Hosanna to the King of Israel;*’ but to what purpose this was done and what prophecies were fulfilled they understood not; for, like the others, they thought of the Messiah as a Jewish ruler. But after Christ died and rose again, they began to remember his words concerning these things and why they were done, as Peter clearly preached at Pentecost (Acts 2:32-36).” — **Henry Mahan**

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John tells us that the disciples did not understand Zechariah’s prophecy and our Lord’s doctrine, until later. Sadly, there are many who know the Lord’s doctrine, and know it very precisely, but do not know the Lord. **Balaam** stands as a clear beacon of this fact. — And there are some true believers, men and women who trust Christ, whose understanding of his doctrine is not very clear. — **Apollos** was a man mighty in the Scriptures; but he knew only the teachings of John the Baptist, until Pricilla and Aquilla took him into their hearts and instructed him in the way of the Lord more perfectly (Acts 18:24-28). — Cornelius was a devout man, one who feared God. The Lord himself sent an angel to him, assuring him that his prayers and alms came up as a memorial to God. Yet, Cornelius did not even know that Christ had come. He knew only the Old Testament Scriptures until Peter came and preached the Gospel to him (Acts 10); but clearly he was a believer. — It is not what you believe that is saving, but who. Christ alone is the object of saving faith.

- Not Doctrine
- Not Feelings
- Not Experiences
- Not Knowledge

Illustration: *Happy Jack — “I am a poor sinner and nothing at all; but Jesus Christ is my all in all!”*

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(John 12:12-16) “On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, (13) Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. (14) And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, (15) Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass’s colt. (16) These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and *that* they had done these things unto him.”

Only after our Lord’s resurrection, ascension and exaltation, once he was enthroned as the King of Zion, did things begin to fall into place. Then the disciples began to understand what he had really meant by the things he did and said.

For those early disciples, the things they remembered must have been sort of like reading a good novel. As you read a novel, in the early chapters you wonder why this character was introduced, what that comment means, why the person did this or that, and why this thing or that happened. Then, when you get to the last chapter everything unfolds and falls into place. I suspect that is the way it was for the apostles after the resurrection. Lights went on everywhere.

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There must have been a hundred things, about which they said, “That is what the Master meant. This is what he was telling us. So that is what he was talking about when he said...”

- *“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up”* (John 2:19).
- *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit”* (John 12:24).
- *“The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner”* (Matthew 21:42).
- *“A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father”* (John 16:16).
- *“If David then call him Lord, how is he is son?”* (Matthew 22:45)

All of our Savior’s words and deeds shined with new and clear meaning in the light of his resurrection and exaltation. Not only that, once the Lord Jesus was enthroned as King and poured out upon them his Spirit, the Old Testament popped open. When our Lord Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an ass’s colt, John tells us the whole thing went over their heads. They did not have a clue what was happening at the time. But later Zechariah’s prophecy flamed with light, as they realized that they had witnessed

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its actual fulfillment on that day when they saw the Savior riding into Jerusalem.

How thankful we ought to be for the blessed gift of God the Holy Spirit, who alone can open to our dull hearts and minds the things of Christ (John 7:39; 14:26).

(John 7:39) “(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”

(John 14:26) “But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

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Fourth, let’s go back to Zechariah’s prophecy (Zechariah 9:9), and see the blessedness of this Gospel declaration. —

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(Zechariah 9:9) “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal

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of an ass.”

Zechariah 9:9 begins with a command to rejoice. — **“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!”** Zion is simply another name for Jerusalem. Zechariah repeats himself for emphasis. The phrases “*daughter of Zion*” and “*daughter of Jerusalem*” refer to the citizens of Zion and Jerusalem. **This command to rejoice is given to the church of God. It is God’s command to us.** He is telling us to draw our waters out of the Well of Salvation with joy. And he tells us why we should do so.

“Behold, thy King cometh.” — Zechariah is talking about the Lord Jesus Christ, Messiah the Prince, as Daniel called him (Daniel 9:25). **This is the sum of all the good news in the world.** — **“Behold, thy King cometh!”** Let this blessed fact swallow up every sorrow and cause songs of joy to burst from our hearts (Jeremiah 31:12).

(Jeremiah 31:12) “Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.”

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“Hosanna in the highest; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!”

Let every believer be sure to read the prophecy as the promise of God to you personally. — **“Behold, thy King cometh unto thee.”** — There is no king like our King. Christ Jesus, your Lord and your King comes to you, for your everlasting benefit.

The church, the city of God is here called to gladness and shoutings of joy. Babylon may mourn, but Zion must rejoice. Egypt may howl, but Jerusalem must shout. O children of God, **“rejoice and be exceeding glad.”** Be not of a heavy heart. **“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God;”** and all who are born of God are citizens of the joyous city, the city of the great King.

Jerusalem has a King. He is *“the great King,”* — *“King of kings and Lord of lords,”* — *“King of Israel,”* — *“King of nations,”* — *“the Prince of the kings of the earth.”* His name is Jesus of Nazareth. — He is *“the Word made flesh,”* — the God-man, *“Emmanuel, God with us.”* — *“Thy King.”* — It is written, in **Psalm 149:2,** *“Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King!”*

Nothing is said here of Zion being joyful in what their King had done for them. Those things, in their proper place, are

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truly sweet subjects of praise. But the subject of Zion’s praise is, first and foremost, the King, Christ Jesus himself. Let us never forget this apparently small, but most important, distinction. The Lord is gracious in his gifts, gracious in his love, gracious in his salvation. Everything he gives is from his mercy and to be acknowledged with praise and thanksgiving. But **it is Christ himself, not his gifts, that is the Object of our faith, hope, love and joy.** It is Christ himself I want and must have. In him I have all things and abound. Without him I am lost forever!

(Philippians 4:4-8) “Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice. (5) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand. (6) Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (7) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (8) Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.”

PRESENT TENSE

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Read the prophecy as it is written, in the present tense. — *“Behold, thy King cometh unto thee!”* — For four thousand years he was “the coming one.” For four thousand years the promise spoke of his coming. Now he has come. But, I like to read the Word of God with personal application. *“Behold, thy King cometh unto thee!”* (Song of Solomon 2:8; 3:6)

- In His Word.
- By His Spirit.
- In His House.
- In His Ordinances.
- In Saving Grace.
- In Reviving Mercy.
- In Restoring Goodness.
- In Great Faithfulness, Tender-mercy, and Lovingkindness!

(Song of Solomon 2:8) “The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.”

(Song of Solomon 3:6-7) “Who *is* this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant? 7 ¶ Behold his bed, which *is* Solomon’s; threescore valiant men *are* about it, of the valiant of

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Israel.”

O “thy King cometh unto thee;” and he bids you come to him (Matthew 11:28-30).

(Matthew 11:28-30) “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

“He is just, and having salvation.” — He is just that he might justify us by his righteousness and save us by his merit and his grace. He is the just God and a our Savior, just and the Justifier of all who trust him. He is our Savior because he is our Justifier, because he is the Just One. He has a righteous salvation for unrighteous men. It is salvation to the uttermost, because he is mighty to save and just to save! Jesus Christ the righteous came into the world to save sinners.

He comes to us “having salvation!” Oh, how I love those words — “*having salvation.*” Don’t you? He comes to our poor souls with salvation in his hand to execute. He had the salvation of our souls in his heart from eternity. It was trusted to his hands as our Surety before the worlds were

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made. The covenant of grace, in which salvation is the principal article, was made with him; and he, as the Surety of that covenant, undertook the work. In the fulness of time, being sent of the Father, he came into the world to save his people from their sins. Entering once into heaven with his own blood, he obtained eternal redemption for us. And now, *“thy King cometh unto thee — having salvation!”*

Zechariah continues to describe our King, telling us how he came to redeem us and how he comes to save us. — **“Lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.”** — Our great King was meek and lowly; even when he came to Jerusalem in triumph. He showed his meekness by the way he came. No troops of soldiers; no guards; no procession; no banners waving! No chariot, no war horse! He rides upon an ass, and alongside there is the colt, the foal of an ass, just as they were found, unprepared and unadorned. He is at once the most lofty and the most lowly of the sons of men. **None ever came from such a height, or went down to such a depth as he** (2 Corinthians 8:9).

O sinner, come and learn of this lowly one. He will give you rest. Give him your fullest confidence, in spite of all the evil, and the darkness, and the folly that is in you. Keep ever near his side. Look at him, love him, speak to him, trust him. Does he frown? Does he turn away? No, he bids

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us welcome; and the more we need him, the more welcome we are.

AN ALLEGORY

Fifth, I want us to view this entire picture allegorically. There is more to be learned from this prophecy than just its historic fulfillment by our Lord’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem. **There are spiritual things revealed here that tell us how it is that God our Savior saves his elect.** As the Holy Spirit tells us in Galatians 4 that the story of Sarah and Hagar is an allegory, this too is an allegory. It is a prophecy of a true, historical event; but it is more. It portrays God’s free, sovereign, saving grace in and by our Lord Jesus Christ.

We must never spiritualize Holy Scripture. I mean by that statement that we must never twist the Scriptures into whatever it is we want them to teach. To do so is to treat the Word of God with horrible irreverence. **Yet, when we read the Word of God, we are always to look for the spiritual meaning, the Gospel message, each particular passage is intended to convey.** This is, in my opinion, especially true when we read the Gospel narratives of our Lord’s life and ministry, knowing that every event in the earthly life of our Savior and every miracle performed by

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him is written in the Book of God to give us a picture, an object lesson about his great salvation.

When we read the Book of God in this way, it comes to life. When my grandson, Will, was just a couple of years old, he walked over to the office one Sunday morning and crawled up on my lap, while I was preparing to preach. Pointing to my opened Bible, he asked, **“Poppy, Is this where Jesus lives?”** I gave him a longer answer, but the fact is, the answer to his question is “Yes, the Lord Jesus lives right here in this blessed Book.”

Every word he spoke, every movement he made, every step he took was predetermined before the world began for the salvation of his elect and was designed by God’s eternal decree to show us something of God’s sovereign, electing, redeeming, saving, mercy, love and grace through Christ our Redeemer. Even the small details, those things that appear to be no more than records with information, show forth his great salvation.

I have said all that to say this. — **The Lord Jesus still comes “riding upon an ass” when he comes to save his own.** When we think of our Lord Jesus riding the wild ass’s colt through the streets of Jerusalem, we ought to see it as a picture of his sovereign, electing, fetching, irresistible, saving grace.

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The Apostle John, quoting the prophet Zechariah, shows us here that when Christ rode into Jerusalem, his triumphal entry was made in the way it was made to display the character of his kingdom and his work as our King. He came riding “an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass,” to show himself in the infinite humility of his grace as One who is “just and having salvation.” He comes to break the bow of war and “*speak peace unto the heathen,*” and to do so in universal dominion “*from sea to sea, even to the ends of the earth.*”

JOB 11:12

Now, turn to Job 11:12. **Here we will see who the wild ass’s colt is, upon whom the King of Glory rides through the streets of Jerusalem in triumphant grace.**

(Job 11:12) “For vain man would be wise, though man be born *like* a wild ass’s colt.”

The wild ass’s colt, an ass upon which no man ever before sat, the ass upon which our Savior rode through Jerusalem is in Scripture a picture of fallen man. You and I are all born by nature “*like a wild ass’s colt,*” foolish, senseless and stubborn, given to lust and debauchery and wild. **As the wild ass will not bear the yoke, so none will ever**

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bow to the yoke of Christ, except the Son of God break him. Man by nature is like **“a wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up wind at her pleasure”** (Jeremiah 2:24; Job 39:5).

In the movies we see old men and women riding donkeys, and get the idea that they are nice, gentle, sweet animals, the kind you would like to have for pets, if you just had the room. But that is never the case by nature. It is their nature to be mean. If you try to get one to ride you, to carry a load, to pull a cart until he is broken and tamed, he will buck and kick and bite. If all else fails, he will just sit down.

That’s pretty good picture of man. Made by God and made for his glory, all men ought to gladly give thanks to him, submit to his rule, worship him and give him his due. But...

- Just try to get one to worship God. — Watch him kick!
- Tell these sweet, religious wild asses the truth about man, about God, about Christ, about redemption and grace. — Watch them buck and bite!

But when the King of Grace mounts the wild ass, he is broken and gladly ridden.

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I wonder — Is there a wild ass’s colt here? I once read that one of the rarest mammals in world is the African Wild Ass. There are not more than a few hundred in the world. I am not really very interested in that. But I am interested in the people represented in our text by the wild ass’s colt. And I can tell you that they are very, very rare.

To understand these things aright,
This grand distinction should be known:
Though all are sinners in God’s sight,
There are but few so in their own.
To such as these our Lord was sent;
They’re only sinners who repent.

What comfort can a Savior bring
To those who never felt their woe?
A sinner is a sacred thing;
The Holy Ghost hath made him so.
New life from Him we must receive,
Before for sin we rightly grieve.

This faithful saying let us own,
Well worthy ‘tis to be believed,
That Christ into the world came down,
That sinners might by Him be saved.
Sinners are high in His esteem,
And sinners highly value Him.

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Once my soul was astray from the heavenly way,
And was wretched and vile as could be;
But my Savior above, gave me peace from above,
When He reached down His hand for me.

I was near to despair when He came to me there,
And He showed me that I could be free;
Then He lifted my feet, gave me gladness complete,
When He reached down His hand for me.

How my heart does rejoice when I hear His sweet voice
In the tempest to Him now I flee;
There to lean on His arm, where I'm safe from all harm.
Since He reached down His hand for me.

When my Savior reached down for me,
When He reached down His hand for me;
I was lost and undone without God or His Son,
When He reached down His hand for me.

Amen.