

JOY AND CELEBRATION Sunday School- March 30, 2014

Unifying Topic: TRIUMPHANT AND VICTORIOUS

Lesson Text

I. The King Is Coming (Zachariah 9:9)

II. The King Comes In Meekness (Matthew 21:1-7)

III. The King Comes To Save His People (Matthew 21:8-11)

The Main Thought: And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest. (Matthew 21:9 KJV)

Unifying Principle: People of every generation and from every country have traditional rituals for welcoming dignitaries or heads of state. What is the most fitting way to celebrate the arrival of an honored person? The crowds who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem spread out cloaks on the road as a special gesture to recognize him as Messiah.

Lesson Aim: To determine what motivates people to praise and honor Jesus.

Life aim: To find the most appropriate ways to praise and honor Jesus in the local church.

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 a colt the foal of an ass.

21:1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

21:2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.

21:3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

21:4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

21:5 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.

21:6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

21:7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.

21:8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.

21:9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

21:10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

21:11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

HISTORY:

After the Temple was completed, Zechariah gave several prophecies about Israel's future, which describes the first and second coming of Jesus Christ. Israel's King would come, but He would be rejected by His people. We start with the prophecy of our Lord's *"Triumphal Entry"* into Jerusalem on the first day of the final week of His earthly life; before He was crucified.

LESSON:

Zachariah 9:9 The King Is Coming

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 a colt the foal of an ass. Zechariah says to the daughter of Zion (Jerusalem) to rejoice greatly and the daughter of Jerusalem (Jerusalem) to shout! This is a symbol of liberation. Why? The King comes in the midst of His people! He came not how the people would think He was supposed to come on His stately horse with a royal entourage and battalion of troops. No, He came lowly, riding upon a colt the foal of an ass. ¹ *"Daughter"* infers that God is a loving father. He cherishes and loves His people, even while they reject Him. Despite the consistent rebellion of the *"daughter of Zion"* against her Father, He promises to restore her and present her with a Deliverer-King in the form of Jesus.

Zechariah had announced the prophecy of Alexander the Great first, whose arrival brought fear to the people, for God used Alexander to punish Israel's enemies. This granted the Jews freedom to worship. While Jesus would come with rejoicing and shouting, for He would come in all humility and peace to save His people. God's purpose in using

¹<http://www.gotquestions.org/daughter-of-Zion.html>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

Alexander the Great was to prepare the first coming of Jesus. This also showed the difference between their entrances. It shows God's purpose, and it shows that the coming King was not characterized by military power but spiritual surrender.

²The name "Alexander" or "Alexander the Great," referring to the Macedonian king, never appears in the Bible. However, the prophets Daniel and Zechariah wrote prophecies concerning Greece and Alexander's Macedonian Empire.

Matthew 21:1-7 The King Comes In Meekness

21:1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,— Jesus and His disciples were nearing Jerusalem. During this last week Jesus stayed on the outskirts of Jerusalem coming to the Mount of Olives nearing Bethphage. Bethphage's name means "House of figs." Jesus does something highly unusual. Though He has walked everywhere in His ministry, He chooses another mode of transportation in preparation of His "Triumphal Entry" which is called "Holy Week" - "Palm Sunday" – "Passion Week" for us. We recognize The Triumphal Entry as Palm Sunday and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ as Easter Sunday. He sends two of His disciples (Matthew and John) on ahead on a special mission.

21:2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. In the village (a small settlement not far from Bethany) the two disciples were given instructions: *"ye shall find a donkey tied, and a colt together in the village: loose them, and bring them unto me."* Every mission of the Lord; every task, no matter how small, is important. Going to fetch the animals was a small task, yet it was critically important in the proclamation of Christ as King! He did not own a donkey or colt so He sent out to find one in the place He knew was already prepared. He needed others to believe. Mark 11:2 says "...whereon never (a) man sat."

21:3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. He even prepared the script for them to say to those inquiring why. The place Jesus had the disciples borrow the ass and colt had to be believers. The disciples' answer would be: *"The Lord hath need of them."* This points to the fact that God knew exactly where the animals would be and He knew the owner would release them to Him, for they knew of the Lord. Whatever we're asking for or whatever we're searching for, it's already prepared and waiting for us. We need to believe!

21:4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,— Christ had a reason for making such detailed preparation to enter Jerusalem. He was deliberately fulfilling the prophecy of Zech.9:9. The prophecy said four things:

21:5 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.

1. *"Tell ye the daughter of Sion" (that is, Jerusalem):* Jerusalem was to be told, given a threefold warning. Why must she be warned? Because what she expected was not going to happen, not like she anticipated.
2. *"Behold, thy King cometh unto thee":* this was part of their expectation, but there was danger in their expectation; the danger of being so fervent in their own expectancy and ideas that they missed what really happened. "Thy King cometh", but He came somewhat differently than expected.
3. *"Thy King cometh...meek":* this was the second warning. The Messiah was coming in meekness, not as a reigning monarch. He was coming to win men's hearts and lives spiritually and eternally, not physically and materially.
4. *"Thy King cometh...sitting upon an ass, and a colt":* this was the third warning. The Messiah was coming not as a conqueror riding a white stallion, but as a King of peace riding a young colt. He was coming to save the world peacefully, to reconcile the world to the God of love and reconciliation, not to be the God of hate and retaliation and war. He was not going to kill men and overthrow their government (the Romans). He was coming to win men's hearts and lives through the glorious news (the Gospel) that God loves and reconciles.

² <http://www.gotquestions.org/Alexander-the-Great.html>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

21:6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,— The disciples accomplished what was commanded of them.

21:7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. He was unquestionably the promised King, the Savior of the people; not coming as the conquering king; not coming as the leader of an army to kill, injure, and, maim. The people had to change their concept. Here, the King of kings rides the colt! Jesus was dramatically demonstrating two things for the people, for it was much different than a conquering king would come and take over in power. He would certainly ride in on his stallion with an entourage and a battalion of troops.

1. He was coming as the Savior of Peace, the Savior of all men.
2. He was coming to show men that God is the God of love and reconciliation.
 - a. The "*colt*" riding beside the ass would symbolize peace. **Jesus came in peace.**
 - b. The "*colt*" symbolized service. It was a noble animal used in the service of men to carry their burdens. **Jesus came to serve men, to bear their burdens.**
 - c. The "*colt*" symbolized sacredness. A custom from the Old Testament (Deut. 21:3; 1 Sam.6:7), which specifies that animals to be used for certain religious rites must not have previously been ridden, burdened, or harnessed for labor. **Jesus was deliberately proclaiming that He is the sacred hope, the promised Messiah of the people.**

There was no saddle for Jesus to ride on. They cared about Him and His comfort, so they took their own outer garments and threw them across the animal. Jesus was now unmistakably claiming the deity, rights of a King. He was not washing feet now, portraying Himself as the servant. He was deliberately accepting His people's homage and reverence. He was doing it in the most humble practice of His day.

Matthew 21:8-11 The King Comes To Save His People

21:8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. Now many are spreading their garments on the ground for Christ's Triumphal Entry! The multitude had begun to gather since early morning, excitedly looking for Him who had raised Lazarus from the dead. They were proclaiming Jesus to be the Messiah, the Son of David who had come to deliver them from the bondage of Roman rule. Jesus deliberately received the homage of the people.

21:9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, — A multitude going before Jesus:

- There was the crowd of disciples already accompanying Him.
- There were those already in Jerusalem who rushed out searching for Him, citizens, and pilgrims on their way to the Passover Feast who had joined His caravan. Two million pilgrims or more gathered in Jerusalem every year for the Passover Feast. Thousands upon thousands were strict religionist, believing in the Jewish Messiah. And normally there is a feeling of excitement at this time of the year when crowds from the villages and farms of the nation walking to the city for the festival.
- There were residents of Bethany and Bethphage who had heard of His presence and the miracles. The news spread. This represented crowds both behind Christ and in front of Christ.

21:9b They began to cry "Hosanna to the son of David:— The city shook with the excitement of a possible Messiah in their midst! How do you lavishly praise the Almighty?

- They cried, saying, **Hosanna:** meaning "*save now, or save, we pray.*" It's right there in plain sight in the word "**Hosanna!**" – "**Lord, Save us now.**" Save us from what? Well, from Roman oppression, of course. It reminds me of Bartimaeus crying for Jesus to heal him. All the people were shouting Hosanna, they wouldn't be quiet, but they neither understood what they were saying, or that God had heard their prayer, and was answering it in His way. The shout "*Hosanna*" was also customarily used at the feast of the tabernacles and the other festivals. It was a shout of exaltation, equivalent to "*Salvation.*" As long as Jesus held this expectation for the people— the expectation of salvation from Roman oppression, then the crowds would receive Him with shouts

of jubilation. They are shouting now, but in a few days, they would be shouting a different refrain.

- They called Him "*Son of David*" acknowledging Jesus' Davidic Messiah title.

21:9c "...Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." Jesus didn't look much like a king that day. But that was the whole point. He's a King, but He's not like any earthly King. He came in the name of the Lord meaning blessed is He who is sent by God to save His people; blessed is He who is sent with the authority of God! They shouted "**Hosanna in the highest**" which means "*God save, we pray. Thou who are in the highest, save now through Him whom You have sent.*"

21:10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?—Apparently some in Jerusalem did not know Him because they were truly moved by all the commotion, and asked, Who is this?

- The Romans sensed that a popular uprising might be boiling.
- The Jewish Herodians (ruling party) feared being blamed and replaced by the Romans.
- The Pharisees were stirred to new depths of envy and malice.

And they did not want to contend with some new uprising or be replaced by this new excitement,

21:11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. The multitude began to tell everyone that this was Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. They just knew Him as a prophet coming out of Nazareth of Galilee, not the Messiah.

SUMMARY:

Zachariah prophesizes of the coming of the Messiah, addressing the whole nation under the representative names—daughter of Zion and daughter of Jerusalem to rejoice greatly, for the Messiah is able to effect the deliverance of His people. Why?— Because He is the one having salvation. And He is able to affect a righteous salvation because He is the righteous King. The King will come in a lowly and humble manner riding upon an ass and a colt which is an animal of peace. This is known as the Triumphant Entry (**Zech.9:9**).

³Jesus and the disciples were approaching Jerusalem from the east as they came up the road from Jericho. As they reached the town of Bethphage on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples ahead to find an ass and a colt the foal of an ass (**Matt.21:1-3**). If anyone was to inquire as to why, they were to say "*The Lord had need of them...*" All was done that the prophecy might be fulfilled. Jesus was fulfilling the prophecy recorded in Zechariah 9:9— "*... riding upon an ass and upon a colt the foal of an ass*" (**Matt.21:4-5**). The disciples got the animals and threw their garments on them (**Mat.21:5-7**).

By this time a crowd had gathered for they were in the city celebrating the Passover. They began to spread their coats and branches on the road (**Matt.21:8**). They were shouting "*Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest*" and the entire city of Jerusalem was stirred. Some were wondering who was this? "*And the crowd said this is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee*" (**Matt.21: 9-11**).

APPLICATION:

The end of the story is joy and we are included in the story if we have accepted Him as our Lord and Savior; if we have accepted Him to be ruler of our lives! Prophecy told in the Old Testament comes true in the New Testament. The proof is evidenced out. The Savior has come!

³ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/jesus-public-demonstration/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>