

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church

Sermon by Rev. A. E. Schultz

Palm Sunday, April 1, 2012

Zechariah 9:9-10



Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)

The Coming of Zion's King

⁹ Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout in triumph, Daughter Jerusalem! Look, your King is coming to you; He is righteous and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. ¹⁰ I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem. The bow of war will be removed, and He will proclaim peace to the nations. His dominion will extend from sea to sea, from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

I think it's safe to say there is in this country a fascination with things royal – things pertaining to the Queen of England. And so I was surprised to read they discovered a slice of Queen Elizabeth's wedding cake last year in a filing cabinet. The piece was wrapped in cellophane, and placed in a box, with the words; "Buckingham Palace 20th November 1947." And a greeting card which read: "With the best wishes of Their Royal Highnesses The Princess Elizabeth and The Duke of Edinburgh." The cake was given to one of the guards at the Westminster Abbey wedding. Charity worker Anna Fiddimore found it in a drawer of a cabinet while she was sorting out the archives for the hospice's 25th anniversary. "It was old and had a strange color. It's not much to look at and I certainly didn't consider having a bite to see what it tasted like," said Anna. The Queen's cake was made by the same royal baker who made the chocolate biscuit cake for Prince William and Kate Middleton. The cake was sold to antique dealer Gordon Watson, who said "I can't quite believe it but I love that piece of cake. I really do. I think it's an amazing piece of history." Things royal! This Palm Sunday you must have known you would hear about Jesus – our Humble King – riding into Jerusalem to die to redeem us: Today we are reminded:

Jesus Is My King!

- 1. He comes in humility**
- 2. He comes in peace**

The part of God's Word we are concentrating on – is from the scroll of the prophet Zechariah. What does that mean for us? Haggai and Zechariah preached God's Word at the same time. This was the time when God's people returned from 70 years of captivity in Babylon. Imagine walking practically 1,000 miles to a place that had known decades of neglect! Imagine homes and fields – vineyards and orchards that knew 70 years of neglect. Where would you start? Some said – the first thing you need to do is rebuild your house – a home – a place safe for your family to sleep and eat and find sanctuary from storms and wild animals. Some said – the first thing we need to do is rebuild the Temple! We need to rebuild our Heavenly Father's House of Prayer – that we might worship and give glory to the one who

brought his people home. We need to worship – to thank and praise the one who promised to send his Son – to be pierced for our transgressions – to be crushed for our iniquities – the one to be wounded – so we would be healed! Some said this was most important of all – to build God’s House – before a roof over my head! If you had been there – *what would you have done?*

The name Zechariah means – *Jehovah remembers* – or *the one remembered by Jehovah*. The LORD never forgets you and me! The prophets call God’s people to repentance. **This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Turn from your evil ways and your evil practices.’ But they would not listen or pay attention to me, declares the LORD. Where are your forefathers now? And the prophets, do they live forever? But did not my words and my decrees, which I command my servants the prophets, overtake your forefathers?’** **“Then they repented and said, ‘The LORD Almighty has done to us what our ways and practices deserve, just as he determined to do.’”**

The scroll of the prophet Zechariah is unique in its powerful pictures of law and gospel – sin and grace. Take for example – the picture of the woman in a basket. Look up and see-it is a measuring basket. This is the iniquity of the people throughout the land. Iniquity. What is the word picture for this word for sin – iniquity? It’s a failure to measure up. It’s falling short! It’s not what it’s supposed to be! Something essential is lacking – missing! ⁷ **Then the cover of lead was raised, and there in the basket sat a woman!** ⁸ **He said, “This is wickedness,” and he pushed her back into the basket and pushed the lead cover down over its mouth.** ⁹ **Then I looked up – and there before me were two women, with the wind in their wings! They had wings like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between heaven and earth.** ¹⁰ **“Where are they taking the basket?” I asked the angel who was speaking to me.** ¹¹ **He replied, “To the country of Babylonia to build a house for it. When it is ready, the basket will be set there in its place.”** The LORD – not evil – the LORD is in control. He puts the lid on evil. That’s important to remember when it sometimes seems like evil is overpowering and over-coming good. The LORD – the Great I AM – is always in charge. When we are tempted to think everything is going badly – remember God’s Word – Romans chapter 8. **And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”** Romans 8:28. Remember what the LORD said through the Prophet Jeremiah--¹¹ **“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.** ¹² **Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.** ¹³ **You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.** Jeremiah 29:11-13

In the 8th month – the month of Cheshvan during the 2nd year of the reign of King Darius – the King of the Persians – Zechariah began to preach God’s Word – to the people in Judah and the city of Jerusalem! ⁹ **Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout in triumph, Daughter Jerusalem! Look, your King is coming to you... Rejoice greatly?** You don’t see a lot of rejoicing lately, do you? Do you rejoice when your taxes are figured out? Do you rejoice when it’s Friday afternoon – and you are done with work for the week? Do you rejoice at baptisms and confirmations and graduations and weddings? Do you rejoice when you mow the lawn or grill out or when you watch the Brewers or the Packers? Do you have a bucket list – a leap list – the leap of faith to accomplish something you always wanted to do? We have reason to rejoice this Holy Week – when we remember that everything Jesus did this week to buy us back – Jesus did

so I could go to heaven where we will rejoice forever. It's hard to imagine how wonderful that will really be!

Look, your King is coming to you... We in the United States of America – are not big on having earthly kings. Over 200 years ago – we had a King – King George – and so? When we in the Colonies decided that living under this earthly King was intolerable – we threw his tea into Boston Harbor. People that we call patriots – wrote the Declaration of Independence. Do you know the Declaration of Independence – how it begins? It says, **“When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.**

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it... That's earthly government – government with taxes – with armies to protect us from enemies – foreign and domestic – government with roads and bridges – with enumerated powers for the Federal Government and certain powers reserved for the states! When Zechariah wrote, **“Look, your King is coming to you** – he was not talking about taxes and infrastructure and armies to protect us from enemies with armies and navies and air forces. Zechariah was promising a King who would rule in our hearts and in our homes and in our souls! Pastor Gartner talked about that last Wednesday – when Pontius Pilate – the Roman Governor said to Jesus, **“You are a King, then!”** He reminded us that Jesus is not a King like Caesar! Jesus is a King whose Kingdom will last forever!

The bow of war will be removed, and He will proclaim peace to the nations. Peace! There are all kinds of bumper stickers – especially in Madison that say people want peace! There is no doubt war is a terrible thing! Back in the day we used to watch M*A*S*H. Colonel Blake once famously said, **“In officer training they told us Rule #1. In war young men die. Rule #2. Is doctors can't change rule #1.”** In war people die – soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen and those who guard the coast. You don't always get to decide if you are going to war. Enemies attack and invade. The literally pillage and plunder – since the Egyptians and Assyrians and Babylonians and Medes and Persians and Greeks and Romans and the Vandals and Visigoths and the Unholy Roman Empire – Napoleon and Hitler and Stalin – enemies attack. This ought not to surprise us. Near the end of his earthly ministry Jesus disciples asked Him about signs of the end of the world. Jesus said, **“Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ’, and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines (like Darfur in Sudan) and earthquakes in various places (like Clintonville). All these are the beginning of birth pains...** Matthew chapter 24. The peace Jesus brings is far greater than an end to fighting in Iraq or Afghanistan or Pakistan or anywhere in Africa. Jesus gives us peace with our Heavenly Father – by taking away all our sins. Jesus gives us peace of conscience – peace from guilt and regret and remorse. Again – remember what Jesus said on the

way to Gethsemane. Jesus said, **“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”** John 14:27
Peace from sin forgiven drives out fear!

His dominion will extend from sea to sea, from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth. Jesus’ authority extends all over the world – from the Euphrates River to the Amazon River – at places where it is more than a mile wide – to the Mississippi River – past La Crosse – all the way down to New Orleans – from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean – to the penguins down at the frozen polar ice cap to the animals in Anwar Preserve. Do you have dominion? What are you the boss of? Every year I am reminded that I am not the boss of my lawn. There are different kinds of grass – growing in places you don’t want it. There are weeds that kind of look like flowers. There are all kinds of trees at the edge of the retention pond. Maybe we will grow some vegetables this year – I’m not sure. Nancy emptied my closet and sorted literally hundreds of books and papers and office supplies and articles and clippings and pictures. Do you have a kitchen drawer – with spare keys and twisties and little screw drivers and that crank thing for the garbage disposal and the plugs to charge your phone – and some coins from around the world – and sometimes it gets stuck – so you have to push stuff down to get the drawer open – then get what you want and push it shut again? Do you have lots of tools in your garage? I would really like to get that stuff you spray on the floor of the garage – so it’s sealed! Do you have all the stuff in your attic and crawl space and all your seasonal stuff organized and in those plastic bins with labels? Do you have dominion over your puppies – or do they empty wastebaskets and shred Kleenex if you are away from home too long! Do you have authority over your health? If you are supposed to avoid concentrated sweets do you? Jesus has dominion – power and authority over everything. That’s why you don’t need to worry. You don’t need to worry about anyone or any thing! Everything is safe in Jesus’ nail marked hands. That’s why he’s the King – my King! Amen.

To God alone all glory!

Pastor Anthony E. Schultz