

The King Is Coming

3-Year Bible Reading Plan

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Bible Text: 1 Chronicles 29:22-23, Matthew 21:1-14

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First Baptist family, again as we gather together this Palm Sunday, as you notice with the content of the lyrics of the songs that John led us in and the trio sang for us, today is Palm Sunday, today typically initiates the beginning of a very exciting week in the Christian faith, not just that which we believe but how we express it. This is Passion Week. This is the week where special services will gather and it culminates on Resurrection Sunday, what you and I know as Easter Sunday. Jokingly among pastors, we call it Super Bowl Sunday. Why? Because it's the reason that we meet every other week of the year.

1 Corinthians 15 says that if Jesus Christ is not risen from the dead, then our faith is in vain. Of all the weeks of the year, this is the most important to our faith, yet you and I realize that we're walking through or navigating what oftentimes we call uncharted waters, we're in the midst of a global pandemic and here in Alabama as many other states, we find ourselves sheltered in place or sheltered in our homes. We're being encouraged for the safety and the health of ourselves as well as others, to be very limited in our mobility and particularly in our gathering together. As we began to walk through this pandemic several weeks ago, here at First Baptist, Opelika, we began to wonder, we began to dream how could we still celebrate Easter but yet not gather in a traditional way. I mean, that is the most attended Sunday not just of our year but every church's year. So one of the things we came up with was the opportunity to have a drive-in church service. We partnered with 97.7 FM, the Kicker, and provide a 7, 9 and 11 AM service; 7 would be traditional, 9 would be contemporary, and 11 would be traditional as well where you had the privilege of coming to our campus and at least seeing with your eyes those who are leading you in worship, myself who will be preaching, and hear with your ears in your car the message and the songs.

Well, as you can imagine, things not just change week by week or day by day but oftentimes hour by hour, and in the last few days here in Alabama, we have been encouraged to shelter at home. We thought that these plans for Easter would have to be, once again, rearranged but I am grateful today to share with you that Governor Ivey made it very clear in her declaration that churches were still able to have a drive-in service under very important restrictions, that nobody roll down their windows or get out of their car. And so I want to encourage you next Sunday to join us for one of three Easter services. Now the times are going to be different than we're used to. For those of you that

are watching by way of television or by way of social media, we're still gonna be broadcasting, the only difference is instead of an empty room, I'm gonna be on top of a building. We're gonna be broadcasting at 7, 9 and 11. If you're in our area and you're gonna make it a point to be on our campus that day, allow me to share with you we're not gonna have parking attendants, we're not gonna have people there guiding you to where to go, it's gonna kinda be somewhat do as you are and come as you are, but can I implore you for the sake of yourself and others, please abide by the guidelines. Don't roll down your windows. Please stay in your car. Our buildings will not be open and so for whatever reason you deem fit that you need to get out of your car or to do something, we're gonna ask you to go do that somewhere else or preferably at your home. And so please, next week join us for a very special celebration of the resurrection. It's going to look very different than any other Easter service that I've been a part of and probably you as well, but again let me remind you the times will be different, 7, 9 and 11. You are welcome to come to drive on our campus or to drive around and listen on 97.7 FM, but for those of you who feel more comfortable in your home and particularly for those of you who are a long ways away, again, we will still be broadcasting our three services, it's just the times will be different, 7, 9 and 11.

Well, today is Palm Sunday. Today is the day that we celebrate the initiation of Passion Week, the initiation of Jesus Christ coming into Jerusalem and eventually offering himself, in particular his body and his blood on behalf of the sins of humanity, and so today we're gonna talk about what we know as Palm Sunday in maybe a little different light. I've entitled the message, "The Kings Is Coming," and this morning's gonna feel more like a Bible study than a sermon so hopefully you have a Bible, maybe it's out on the table, your family is gathered around, or maybe each and every one of you has your own copy, but let me encourage you if you have a Bible with you to turn to a series of passages. We're gonna begin in 2 Chronicles 36, we're gonna spend the majority of our time in the book of Matthew or the Gospel of Matthew 21, but there is gonna be a brief moment where we find ourselves in the book of Zechariah. Now that's just a few pages to the left of Matthew. We're gonna be in Zechariah 14 but that's just for a brief moment.

We're gonna begin in 2 Chronicles 36. Now this may be for those of you who are with us for the very first time, this may seem like a somewhat unusual passage to begin a Palm Sunday message but for those of you who are seasoned veterans, those of you that are long term members and attenders at First Baptist, you know and I want to invite those of you that are new with us and to us to join us in a journey of faith as we're walking through the Scriptures typically a chapter or two chapters a day. We find ourselves this week in what we know as the book of 2 Chronicles. Now we're about to transition this Passion Week into the Gospel of John. I'm sure it's gonna be much more familiar territory, but in 2 Chronicles we discover that the kingdom has been divided. It's gone from Saul to David to Solomon, now Rehoboam and Jeroboam and their respective descendants are reigning over the northern and the southern kingdoms. The northern kingdom we typically refer to as Israel, and the southern kingdom as Judah. For hundreds of years, the Lord has been warning them if they do not repent of their sin, if they do not turn to the Lord, they will face the consequences of captivity and exile. Two of the most critical dates not just in the Bible but all of history, in 722 BC the Assyrians took the

northern kingdom into captivity. You would have thought that the words of the prophets as well as the illustration of their kinsmen to the north would have gotten Judah's attention but it did not, and toward the end of 2 Chronicles we find the history of this last 150 years where leader after leader and king after king refused to abide.

Now I'll be honest with you, it's an interesting tale as most of these kings, most of them started off pretty good, they took down the high places, the idols and the abominable things, but toward the end of their lives and in particular at the end of their life, they found themselves in a place of idolatry and rebellion. By the time you get to 2 Chronicles, the very last chapter, not only Israel in the north but Judah in the south has been taken captive and today I want to turn to the last two verses of chapter 36. Now I'm gonna be very honest and transparent, what we're about to go to is actually the Bible reading for tomorrow so I'm gonna get a little ahead of the game but one of the things that you would have noticed this week is that king after king and leader after leader falls short of the glory of God. By the time we get to chapter 36 toward the end of 2 Chronicles, Babylon has come in, not only have they destroyed who we know as the Jewish people, they've taken the temple and they have razed it to the ground, and they have taken captive their most select individuals. Remember the story of Daniel and Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego, those famous men who were put in the king's court and they were trained up in, shall we say, the Babylonian way? That's what we see taking place in chapter 36 but the Babylonians, much like the Assyrians would come and go and there would be a man by the name of Cyrus who would lead the Persians, who would come into power. He would rule over the entire world and what we're about to read in the last two verses of 2 Chronicles is his declaration that the Jewish people, the Israelites can go back to their homeland, they can go back and rebuild their city and their temple, and what he says sets the stage prophetically for what you and I know as Palm Sunday. So once again, it doesn't matter what passage in the Bible you find yourself in, it is relevant to every situation not just in the "calendar of Christianity," but every single day of our lives.

So 2 Chronicles 36, beginning in verse 22. It says,

22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, 23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.

Now that's a very interesting declaration of the Persian king, the ruler of the world, that the Jewish people who were taken captive by his predecessors and who had been there for 70 years, that the Lord stirred up with him to build the Lord a house by his people, in his place, in what you and I know as Jerusalem.

In just a few moments, we're gonna go to the book of Matthew 21 and you remember what Jesus is going to say as he rides into that Temple Mount? He says, "You have made my house," the Lord's house. But before we get to Matthew 21 and the story of what we know as Palm Sunday, I want to lay a little groundwork here of what's happening in 2 Chronicles that will lead to a greater understanding not just of what Palm Sunday was some 2,000 years ago but also what it prophetically spoke of that is coming one day very soon.

The first thing that we need to study this morning is the providence of the passage. Now when we use the word "providence" particularly in Christian circles, to a lot of different people it has a lot of different meanings but essentially the word "providence" means that God is orchestrating in the background. You see here it says that God stirred up his spirit. Now if we were to back-up the passage, you would discover back in verse 21 that what was happening in the life of the Israelites was a fulfillment of the prophet Jeremiah. Now if you look at all the prophets, we typically classify them as those that prophesied before the exile, during the exile, or after the exile, but Jeremiah was most unique not just because he was the weeping prophet, not just because he's the one the Lord said not to marry but to stay single, but Jeremiah is the one prophet that spoke before they went into captivity as well as while they were in captivity. Now those that spoke during captivity were Ezekiel and Daniel primarily but Jeremiah was unique and in Jeremiah 25:12 he said that the Lord said that this captivity that they most assuredly would fall into, would last 70 years. Now here's where the providence comes in. Notice nowhere in those last two verses that Cyrus referred to Jeremiah. Notice that he never referred to the Scriptures and said, "Well, the clock has been ticking. It's been 70 years. It's time for you to go back home." That's not what he said. It says that the Spirit of God stirred him up.

Now we don't have access of the knowledge of how that actually took place but I want you to think about those critical characters that somehow, some way would have been influential in his life. Obviously there would have been Jeremiah. There would have been Daniel, this one who even though it was the Babylonian reign where he stood so strong in so many situations, obviously his reputation would have gone forth to many in the days ahead. You also have who we know as the prophet Ezekiel, one of the most unusual of the prophets but very well and outspoken and his message would have gone far and wide. But there's one individual who's not specifically mentioned in 2 Chronicles 36 that probably the Lord used to have the most influence. His name was Nehemiah and I believe that as he got up every day and he did that which he was commissioned to do, he had no idea the impact that God was doing in utilizing him in life.

You know, it's very similar to the story of Esther. If you're not familiar with the story of Esther, it's the only book in the Bible where the term or the word "God" is not used. It's that famous story where Esther which, by the way, was about the same time period as Cyrus and the Persians, where Esther fell under this understanding that there was a man by the name of Haman who wanted to destroy her and all of her people, there was a plot, there was a conspiracy. She had a wise uncle by the name of Mordecai who gave her not only great wisdom but encouraged her to stand strong. Remember that famous passage

that, "You were born for such a time as this"? The story of Esther parallels this story not just because of the time frame but because of the providence of God.

As I mentioned, in the book of Esther you never hear the name God or see the word "God," but when you get to the end of the story, you see very clearly, you know, we say hindsight is 20/20, you see very clearly that God was at work all of the time whether it was through Mordecai, Esther or Haman or whoever it was, and the same can be said about Cyrus. Each and every day he went and did what kings do, what leaders do, but Nehemiah, he was the cup-bearer. Now you and I know him biblically because he's the one who rebuilt the walls in Jerusalem. He is the one who orchestrated making sure that the town, the walls were rebuilt and eventually Ezra could commission what we know as the temple. Nehemiah each and every day tasted Cyrus' food. He drank of his beverages to make sure that it was safe. This would have been someone somewhat in his inner circle that he would have trusted and surely paid close attention to.

Well, the Bible says that one day Nehemiah came in and he looked discouraged of face. Now maybe Cyrus was concerned for his own health much like you and I are today as we go about in our necessary activities, we're overly concerned today if we see somebody with any disposition of sickness. He would have been as well. When he asked Nehemiah what the problem was, he said that he was grieved. He was grieved that his people were not in their homeland. He grieved that they could not worship in the temple, the place where the Holy of Holies resided. And Cyrus, as we just read, was moved by God to make an edict or a declaration that the Jewish people could go back home.

Why is that so important to the story? Because whether it's Esther and the deliverance of God's people, whether it's Nehemiah and ultimately going back to Jerusalem, or whether it's Jesus coming into the Temple Mount on the back of a donkey, what we see all throughout Scripture but in particular what we know as Palm Sunday, is the providence of God, that he was working things in the background, he was speaking into people's lives, he was orchestrating relationships and what you and I call circumstance, he calls providence.

We also discover that when Cyrus made this declaration as it kind of foreshadows Palm Sunday, that it was a time of provision. God was providing for his people miraculously. Now think about it, they had been taken captive, their most important structure, the temple, had been torn to the ground, it says that those that in great numbers lost their lives, and Babylon took their greatest men and educated in their own way. For 70 years even as it went to the Medes and the Persians, they saw themselves in exile but God provided for them not just during the 70 years but in allowing them to go back, and there's two things God provided for them here in 2 Chronicles that he provides each and every one of us every single day of our life.

Here's the first thing he provided: mercy. What is mercy? Mercy is not receiving or not getting that which you rightfully deserve. When you read through 1 & 2 Chronicles, what did the Israelites deserve? To never go back home. What did they deserve? To never have that temple rebuilt. They deserved not just to be in captivity for 70 years, but to be

dispersed for all of time. In fact, when you read the prophet Daniel, remember he's one of those exiled prophets, he says in chapter 9 that there's a time period coming where the Lord is going to pour out his wrath and his punishment to his people for 490 years. That's a long time, and yet here 70 years? It's a small amount of time compared to 490 and the very fact that God would allow them to go back home was an act of divine mercy.

It's also he provided them grace. What is grace? By definition it's receiving that which we cannot earn. There's nothing that we can do to somehow deserve the blessings or the favor of God. Is there anything during those 70 years in the prophet Daniel or Ezekiel or even Jeremiah that makes you think that they were worthy to go back home? We don't see any great revival movement. There's no spiritual awakening. We don't see the masses falling on their faces before God. In fact, what we see in the 70 years is they still struggled, they still had difficulty trusting God, walking and living in their faith. The very fact that not only would he allow them to go back after 70 years but allow them to rebuild the wall and to rebuild the temple, they didn't deserve it, that's why we call it grace.

You know, it's not just the story of the Israelites going back to Jerusalem, it's not just the foreshadowing of Palm Sunday, it's also our story as well. You know, the Bible says that the wages of sin is death. You know, it is by God's mercy that you are where you are this morning and I am where I am this morning. It is God's mercy that we have any life at all, and it is by God's grace that we have the privilege and the opportunity to be forgiven of our sins and to be saved. There are none of you, myself included, that deserve his grace, that deserve his salvation and deserve his forgiveness. So once again we see that thousands of years ago as the Israelites make or begin to make their journey back home, as they begin to build that famous wall and to build that famous building known as the temple, not only was it providence but it was provision. God was extending mercy, he was extending grace and you and I today, we kind of find ourselves somewhat in an exile position, not the same as the Israelites but we're sheltered at home and we're secluded, we don't have the mobility that we are used to, and maybe today is one of those days where we reflect on the mercy that God has shown and the grace that he has displayed in our lives.

Well, 2 Chronicles and going back to Jerusalem is a springboard to Palm Sunday. So hopefully you have a Bible in your hand, I want to encourage you to go to Matthew 21. This is that famous story just days before the crucifixion and ultimately the resurrection of Jesus Christ where he is going to walk into, well, not technically walk, ride into the Temple Mount of Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, and what I want you to see is that this is prophetic, that what we saw in 2 Chronicles prophesied what we know as Palm Sunday and Palm Sunday, though we'll look at it historically, is very prophetic of the events coming in the near future.

So beginning in verse 1 of Matthew 21. It says,

1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, 2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find a

donkey tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. 3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. 4 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 a donkey, and a colt the foal of a donkey. 6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, 7 And brought the donkey, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. 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. 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. 10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? 11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. 12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, 13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Now I mention that this is a prophetic passage, not just because 2 Chronicles 36 and Cyrus' decree foreshadows it but because Zechariah 9:9 declares exactly what we just read, that the Messiah whom we know as Jesus Christ, would come riding into that famous Temple Mount on the back of a donkey, lowly in stature.

There are four things that I want to address this morning of, shall we say, this prophetic element of the passage. We've talked about the providence of God, we've talked about the provision of God, now let's talk about the prophetic aspect. The first thing I want you to see is the picture that is given. Jesus, as Zechariah 9:9 says, is on the back of a donkey, the lowest and the lowliest of animals. Now notice what the crowd declared him, they declared him the king, they declared him as the descendant of David, they declared him as the one who rightfully should sit upon the throne. You and I would envision a much different animal being utilized, we'll get to that in just a moment.

But the picture of Palm Sunday is very different. In fact, it would be this same Jesus that in just a very short matter of time would gather his disciples in the Upper Room, we call it the Last Supper. What would he do? In John 13, he would get down on the ground and he would wash their feet. It's like Mark 10:44-45 says that Jesus came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. The picture that we have is that Jesus Christ is coming into that famous Temple Mount, he's going through that eastern gate, he's going to the temple as a servant, as one who gives and as one who provides. In just a few days, he's gonna find himself on Golgotha or what we often call Mount Calvary, they're gonna place a crown of thorns on his head, they're gonna put the nails in his hands and in his feet, and what is he gonna do? According to the Gospel of Luke, he's going to give up the ghost. He's going to give of himself. He's going to offer, he is going to serve humanity by exchanging his sinless blood for our sinful souls. It's an incredible

picture for us of him coming in on the back of a donkey, of what his desire is in each and every one of our lives.

The second thing I want you to notice is the passage that he takes. It says here that he comes into the Temple Mount, he is going through what we know as the eastern gate. Now if you were to take a bird's eye or a plane's eye view of what we know as Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, what you would discover is that the Mount of Olives is due east of that famous Temple Mount, and there is that famous eastern gate. Now if you go in contemporary days, there are other people who have, shall we say, desecrated that eastern gate but nonetheless, that was the place where Jesus Christ would have not just descended down the Mount of Olives but ascended up to that famous Temple Mount. If you were to look at it again from that bird's eye view, that eastern gate's not in the exact center of the wall, it's kind of to the northern side. Today the Temple Mount is composed of the famous Dome of the Rock, one of the most famous of Islamic shrines and mosques. The Bible says in the book of Revelation 11, one day there will be a temple that is erected on that famous site, but in Jesus' day somewhere on what we know as the Temple Mount was that famous building.

Notice it doesn't say that Jesus turned to the left or turned to the right, it says he went straightway. The passage that we see from that famous Mount of Olives, by the way it's the same place as he's gonna give his most famous message about what we know as the Second Coming, he descends, he ascends up to that famous Temple Mount, he goes directly into the temple and he expresses passion. Notice Jesus' actions and his words. He goes into this temple and he overturns the moneychangers, he overturns those that were selling and buying, and it wasn't that he was against "capitalism or commerce or such," it's the fact that this was the holiest of weeks for the Jewish people, this was Passover, and people would come from near and far and oftentimes they did not have the means to bring with them the proper sacrifice, and so there outside the gates, they would allow them the privilege to acquire whatever it is they needed for the Passover week. Here's the problem: they were guilty of what the Bible calls filthy lucre, exorbitant interest. They were taking advantage of the people of God who were simply trying to be right with God.

So what does Jesus do? He comes and he overturns the tables, he cracks the whip, but this isn't the only time Jesus did this, in fact, allow me to clear up what may be somewhat confusing in Scripture. In the Gospel of John 2, Jesus performs his very first miracle. He's at the wedding feast of Cana. He turns the water into wine and shortly thereafter, he goes into the temple and does the exact same thing. Many people have looked at these two passages and somehow tried to reconcile how does he overturn the tables at his first miracle and also right before his crucifixion? Well, the Gospel of John does an excellent job of showing us the chronology of Jesus' ministry by way of the Passover and the feasts, and all of them are mentioned chronologically and we can see the coming and the going of the ministry of Jesus Christ, and what do we see in John 2? That that turning over the tables happened before the first Passover in his ministry, and here in Matthew 21 it is at the final Passover. Over the course of 3 ½ years, there would have been four Passover celebrations.

But the most important part of the passion that I want to show for you this morning is this: in John 2 at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus makes the declaration, by the way, he's quoting from Isaiah 56:7, he says, "You have made my Father's house." Remember what Cyrus said back in 2 Chronicles, to build a house for the Lord? Jesus says, "You've built my Father's house, you've made it into a den of thieves." What does he say here in Matthew 21? "You've made my house." Do you see the difference? Why? Because it will be in just a matter of days where Jesus Christ is going to be crucified for the sins of humanity.

Remember, there's seven famous statements that happen from the cross, and after that seventh one when he gives up the ghost he says, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Remember what Matthew 27 says? It says that the veil, that which separated the Holy of Holies from everything else would be torn in two from top to bottom. The earth would quake. The passion that Jesus exhibited is the fact that he was riding in as a servant, he was going through that famous eastern gate, he was walking into what we know as the Temple Mount to declare that this was his house, this is where his blood would be placed on the mercy seat, and this is where he would offer redemption for all who would believe.

When you see that incredible passion in Jesus, we see the fulfillment of a promise, a promise that God gave humanity all the way back in the garden of Eden. Now I know that seems far removed from Palm Sunday but the garden of Eden has everything to do with what Jesus did by overturning the tables and what he said about it being his house. Adam and Eve ate of that famous forbidden fruit, and in doing so they found themselves naked and running from God, when as God began to discuss with them and, shall we say, reveal the consequences of their sin, in Genesis 3:15, he said that there would come from the woman a seed that would crush the serpent, we call it the very first Gospel. From the very moment that you and I as humanity fell into the trap of sin, God had a plan and that plan was to send a Messiah, one who would give of himself so that we could be saved and forgiven.

Now for the sake of time, I won't go through all the details but that plan would be preserved through Noah and his family. It would see it gain, shall we say, roots with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We would see more clarity through the person of David and the declaration of the throne. Even the genealogy of Matthew 1 lists all the who's of who's of the Old Testament. When Jesus Christ came in that Temple Mount on what we know as Palm Sunday and he declared it was his house, it was the final promise that this is what the Lord had been saying for thousands of years, finally we could be forgiven, finally we could be saved.

You know, when Cyrus declared in 2 Chronicles 36 that he was gonna build a house for the Lord, the building that he was referencing would be the very place that Jesus would walk into, overturn the tables and declare this was his house, because it would be his body and it would be his blood that he was about to shed for all of humanity's sins. But the prophetic, shall we say, picture doesn't end there. Today is the day on Palm Sunday where we typically celebrate and we remember and we look back at the initiation of

Passion Week, the crucifixion week, the resurrection week that we celebrate on Easter, but today I want to draw this message to a close by showing you the prophetic of Palm Sunday in regards to the days ahead.

You know, these are very uncertain days. As I mentioned earlier, we're going week by week, day by day, and oftentimes hour by hour. None of us knows what tomorrow will bring. Now we used to say that somewhat flippantly because we don't know, but today we really don't know what tomorrow will bring but can I share with you something that is absolutely certain? There is coming a day, one day in the future where Jesus Christ is going to return. In fact, as we approach this Passion Week, this Easter week, this resurrection week, did you know that for every verse in the Bible that talks about Jesus' birth, his life, his death, his resurrection, and even his ascension, there are at least eight verses that talk about his Second Coming. Now that's a phrase we utilize because we know the first coming was for the cross, the second coming is when he comes in his glory and Palm Sunday actually is a very prophetic picture of what we know as the Second Coming.

Now let's deal with the picture. Jesus comes in Palm Sunday on the back of a donkey, the lowliest of creatures, the one who will serve and give his life for many. How does he return at the Second Coming? It's a different animal, isn't it? In fact, you get Revelation 19, it says that Jesus Christ is riding on a white horse. That's the picture, you guessed it, of a king. That's royal. That's regal. In fact, as you read Revelation 19, it says that which is written on his thigh is "King of kings and Lord of lords." When Jesus went into Jerusalem the first time on Palm Sunday, he was declaring his means of saving us and forgiving us, when he comes back one day in the future riding that proverbial white horse, he is declaring that he is the King of kings, he is the Lord of lords, and he shall reign forevermore.

The second thing is the passage. By the way, for those of you who have been wondering were we ever gonna get to Zechariah 14, this would be the time. Back in your Old Testament just a few pages to the left of the Gospel of Matthew, I want you to hear what the prophet Zechariah says. Now remember back in chapter 9 he prophesied Palm Sunday by saying the Messiah would come on the back of a donkey, very lowly estate. But I want you to notice what it says here in chapter 14, verse 1. It says, "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh," by the way, that's a phrase for the Second Coming, "and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." Listen to verse 4, "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south." If you fast-forward to verse 9, it says, "And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one."

Do you notice the passage here? As Jesus came from the Mount of Olives unto the Temple Mount on what we know as Palm Sunday on the back of a donkey to declare his willingness to forgive and save us, here when Jesus Christ comes back on the white horse, what we call the Second Coming, when he descends on the Mount of Olives, he does so with such force and it is so impressive that the mountain tears and cleaves in two. We see the exact same passage there in verse 9 of chapter 14, it declared him the king. Where was the rightful throne of the king? You guessed it, right there not just in the Temple Mount but there in the temple. So Palm Sunday prophesies not only his willingness to save us but it shows us the Second Coming years in advance of how Jesus will come in the exact same passage, and you guessed it, with the same passion.

We read verses 2 and 3 on purpose there because that's a description of what you and I know as the battle of Armageddon. Jesus overturned the tables on Palm Sunday, he's going to overturn the nations at his Second Coming. The passion is so great that the Bible says that the blood at Armageddon will rise to the bridle of the horse and all nations will be subject unto him and he will declare himself King of kings and Lord of lords. It's an amazing display of passion where there he isn't going to give his life as a ransom as the first coming, he's coming to declare himself as King over all of the earth and over all of creation.

So where's the promise? What we know as Palm Sunday was the fulfillment of the promise that the Lord was going to save us, going to redeem us, and allow us to have that sin problem eradicated from our lives, but this is the promise of the Lord "taking over and taking charge." Over and over throughout the Scriptures but particularly in Revelation 20, it says there is coming a day where Jesus Christ in Jerusalem sits on his throne, the fulfillment of all that we've just discussed. It says there in chapter 20 that the devil will be bound in the bottomless pit for a thousand years, eventually to come back up and to be judged.

Did you know the Bible uses the word "regeneration" only twice in your New Testament, to make that which was dead alive again? In Titus 3:5 it speaks of us as individuals, that we were dead in our sins and by the Spirit of God we are regenerated, we are born again. But in Matthew 19 it says that when Jesus comes, he regenerates the earth. Isaiah, the great prophet, probably spoke it best in chapter 40, he said the hills will be made low, the valleys will be raised, the crooked will be made straight. When Jesus Christ descends at what we know his Second Coming, he's pictured riding on a horse, he descends on the Mount of Olives in a very unique and powerful way, he declares himself with great passion he is the Ruler over all of the earth, and it's the fulfillment of the promise that, yes, he would reign forever and ever. Palm Sunday is an incredible remembrance and display of Jesus coming on the back of a donkey for the sins of humanity, but it's also a prophetic picture of one day how he comes back in a very different manner to be the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

I want to close today's message by taking you to the very end of what we know as the Bible. Jesus has come, he has reigned, the devil has been bound. When you get to that final time in Scripture, it says that when he comes, that his army is behind him. That

passionate expression that we see at Armageddon when he descends on the Mount of Olives, when he stands in judgment at the end of chapter 20, those who have believed in him are behind him. We're standing with and behind him and those who are before him are those who are judged. Those who are before him are those who ultimately will be condemned. It's what the Bible calls the lake of fire. I know this is what we know as the resurrection week, the Easter week, this is Palm Sunday but can I ask you a very important and strategic question? Whether you're sitting in your kitchen, your living room, or driving down the road, can I ask you, and even though it's one day in the future but if that day were today, which side would you be on? Would you be on the side coming with Jesus or would you be on the side being condemned by Jesus?

You see, to be in the army of the Lord and to be behind him at his Second Coming, you have to understand what he was declaring at Palm Sunday. You don't get to ride with Jesus on the white horse if you don't believe in the Jesus who rode on the back of a donkey. In order to come with the Jesus of the crowns, then you have to understand the Jesus of the cross.

Now maybe you're that person today and maybe in all that is happening in the world around you, maybe it's really caused you to think of your own mortality. I mean, every single day we're getting a report of those infected and those who have recovered and, unfortunately, those who have passed, and it's very humbling when we realize that what's happening in the world isn't just about making our life inconvenient, it's about people are losing their lives and it causes us to think not just about how will I get about tomorrow and how will I work, and will the economy come back, it gets us to think about where am I headed when this is all over. Maybe today you're that individual, maybe you're gathered with your family, or maybe you're all alone, maybe you're even watching this not live but a recorded session later, and maybe you realized today that you've never believed on the Jesus of Palm Sunday, you've never believed on the Jesus as the means of taking your sins and forgiving you. Maybe today if you'll just allow me to speak proverbially, if this was that Second Coming day, you'd find yourself on the wrong side. Today you can be on the right side.

You know, the Bible says in Romans 10 whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. So wherever you are, whatever environment you find yourself in, you can call on the name of the Lord today. It's real simple. You don't have to memorize a script, you don't have to repeat a certain phrase in the exact manner, just to cry from your heart, technically I guess we could call it prayer, and maybe your conversation or prayer would go a little something like this. "God, today I realize I'm on the wrong side and it's all my fault. I'm the one who has rebelled. I'm the one who thought it was wisest to do what I wanted to do and not what you wanted me to do. God, I've done things I should have never done. I've said things I should have never said. I've thought things I should have never thought. God, I'm not blaming anybody but myself but today I believe that Jesus Christ is the only answer to my sin problem. God, I believe, I believe that he loved me so much that he was born on my behalf. And God, I believe that Jesus Christ loved me so much that he was willing to live a sinless perfect life on my behalf. And God, I believe as we look toward this Easter week, I believe that the mocking that he received, the words

he received, but more importantly the death that he endured, that he was taking my punishment for my sin. God, I believe that when he rose from the dead three days later, it's not just something we celebrate once a year at Easter, God, I believe that's how Jesus made it possible for my sins to be forgiven and my soul to be saved. God, today I don't have a lot of answers to a lot of issues in the world, but I do know that Jesus Christ is the only answer to my sin problem. So the best way I know how, I'm asking you to forgive me, I'm asking you to save me, I just want to turn my life over to you."

Maybe you're that person today who had that conversation with the Lord or maybe you've got questions, maybe you've got some things kind of mulling in your head and you need to talk to somebody. We gave you a phone number and an email, we'd love to hear from you. You know, the Bible says in Luke 15 if one person repents, that all of the heavens and all of the angels rejoice. To be honest, we just want to get in on the celebration. And so maybe you're that person today or maybe you need to talk to somebody or pray with somebody, please reach out to us. These are different days. We don't have the opportunity to stand and sing and have you come down and meet with one of our team members, today we're gonna have to do it by way of social distancing, so there's a phone number that's been given. You can reach out by a variety of social media, texting and emails. Let us know how we can minister to you, how we can pray with you, how we can pray for you, and if today is the day you had that conversation with God, allow us the privilege of celebrating with you.