

# THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY: JESUS' CLAIM TO BE KING

## LUKE 19:28–40

### *Introduction*

This was a dramatic picture. Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem began the last week of His life. It is what we call *Holy Week* or *Palm Sunday*. Jesus was unquestionably claiming to be King, but He was claiming to be a different kind of King, a King who was different from what men usually conceived. He was claiming to be the King of Peace, the King whose kingdom is not of this earth (Jn. 19:36).

- I. There was the constraint to go to Jerusalem: to suffer and die (v. 28).
- II. There was the deliberate claim to be King (vv. 29-35).
- III. There was the people's proclaiming Him to be King (vv. 36-38).
- IV. There was the insistent claim of Jesus: He was to be proclaimed King by the people (vv. 39-40).

### **I. *Luke 19:28 The Impending Death of Jesus Christ***

There was the constraint, the drive to suffer and die. Right after Jesus had finished sharing the parable of the pounds, He felt the driving constraint to move on toward Jerusalem. There the climax of His purpose was to take place. He was to suffer and die for man. Jesus was constrained, compelled with an iron determination, to complete His purpose. Jesus was driven to die for man. His whole spirit is pictured in the words, "Therefore have I set my face like flint" (Isa. 50:7. See *Ascension of Jesus Christ*, Lk. 9:51; Mk. 10:32.) Remember, Jerusalem was only about seventeen miles away. The final events were now to begin.

### LUKE 09: 51 THE ASCENSION OF JESUS CHRIST

*As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. **Luke 09:51***

The words *taken up* (*analempseos*) mean received. They refer to the ascension of Christ (see Acts 1:2, 11, 22; 1 Tim. 3:16). Salvation was to be secured by the ascension of Christ. How? The Ascended Lord means at least four things.

1. It means *the Risen Lord*. The ascension means that Christ arose from the dead. If He had remained in the grave, He would still be there in the form of dust. He could not have ascended. If He were to be "taken up," He had to be *raised up* — *quicken*ed — *made alive* — *taken up*. No one can be *taken up* without first being raised up. Therefore, to speak of the ascension is to mean that Christ is risen. Death is conquered; man can now be saved from death.

**1 Cor 15:12-24** *But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the first fruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.*

**Rom 4:23-25** *The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness — for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.*

2. It means *the Advocate or Representative Lord*. On earth Christ lived a perfect life; He was without sin (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:22; Jn. 8:46). He was “obedient to death, even death on a cross. Therefore God exalted Him” (Phil. 2:8-9). He is “seated at the right hand of God” (Col. 3:1). He is “Jesus Christ the Righteous One,” therefore, He is our “advocate with the Father,” the “One who speaks to the Father in our defence” (1 Jn. 2:1). He is able to represent us before God because He has lived upon earth and secured a perfect righteousness. He is the Ideal Man (Mt. 5:17-18), our advocate, the One who is qualified to plead our case before God and see to it that we are saved.

**Heb 7:25** *Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.*

3. It means *the Priestly or Intercessory Lord*. Every man suffers while on earth: suffers pain, trial, need, want, temptation, loss, illness and eventually death. We are incapable of even knowing how to pray as we ought in order to secure the help we need. But Christ knows and understands. He has been to earth and suffered just as we suffer. Therefore, He knows how to intercede for us and how to deliver us.

**Heb 4:14-16** *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.*

*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

**Heb 2:16-18** *For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

**Rom 8:33-34** *Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died — more than that, who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

4. It means *the exalted Lord*. Christ has ascended to be exalted, to rule and reign over the universe for God. There is a great day of judgment coming upon the world, a day when all men shall bow the knee and acknowledge that Jesus is Lord, the Son of the living God.

**Phil 2:9-11** *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**Eph 1:19-23** *And his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

**1 Cor 15:24-26** *Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. □*

## **II. Luke 19:29–35 Jesus Christ Claims to be the Messiah**

There was the deliberate claim to be King. Note four things. (See Mt. 21:2-5.)

1. Jesus planned a dramatic demonstration in detail. The whole scene was to centre around His riding into the city on a colt (See *Colt*, Lk. 19:30).

2. Jesus used the title “the Lord” in laying claim upon men and their property. “The Lord” (*o kurios*) is a strong expression; it is the same as saying Jehovah. Jesus was claiming the right to use the colt because He was “the Lord.” The owner was bound to have been a disciple who would allow “the Lord” to borrow his animals. A man of the world might not allow the claim of the Lord to affect him.

3. Jesus' instructions were followed carefully.

**Thought 1.** Note a crucial point. The task given to the two disciples to go and secure the colt may have seemed small, but no task is small in the proclamation of Jesus as King. Fetching the colt was extremely important if Christ were to be proclaimed as King before the people. The task was essential.

4. Jesus accepted the recognition of the disciples. The disciples knew exactly what Jesus was doing. They acknowledged His claim by three acts.

=> They obeyed His instructions explicitly.

=> They used their own garments as a saddle.

=> They sat Jesus upon the colt.

The point is this: Jesus accepted their homage and thereby claimed to be the Messiah.

### LUKE 19:29 BETHPHAGE

Bethphage means *House of Figs*. It was a suburb of Jerusalem, lying toward the Mount of Olives. Note that Jesus arrived in Bethphage by foot. This pictures the great humiliation to which the Son of God subjected Himself in order to come to earth and save man. While on earth, He had no means of traveling except by walking. □

### LUKE 19:29 BETHANY

It was a suburb of Jerusalem, about two miles east. The city was the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha. Jesus stayed with the family when ministering in and around Jerusalem. One must remember that Jesus apparently had no home of His own. His immediate family did not believe in His claims (Jn. 7:1-5, esp. 5). He Himself said, “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head” (Mt. 8:20). The only housing He had was the home of others such as Martha and Mary (Jn. 11:1f; see Lk. 11:1f; Lk. 10:38-42; Jn. 12:1f) □

### LUKE 19:30 COLT

In ancient days the colt or donkey was a noble animal. It was used as a beast of service to carry the burdens of men. More significantly, it was used by Kings and their emissaries when they entered a city in peace. They rode a colt to symbolize their

peaceful intentions (see the judges of Israel and the chieftains throughout the land. Judges 5:10; 10:4). This differed dramatically from a conquering King. When a King entered a city as a conqueror, he rode a stallion.

Jesus was dramatically demonstrating two things: first, He was unquestionably the promised King, the Saviour of the people; and second, He was not coming as the people expected. He was not coming as a conquering king or as a worldly potentate in pomp and ceremony, nor as the leader of an army to kill, injure, and maim.

Therefore, the people must change their concept of the Messiah, for He was coming as the Saviour of Peace. He was coming to save men not to destroy them. He was coming to show men that God is the God of love and reconciliation.

1. The colt was a symbol of peace. Jesus came to bring peace, as pointed out in the above discussion.
2. The colt symbolized service. It was a noble animal, an animal used in the service of men to carry their burdens. Jesus came upon the colt symbolizing that He came to serve men, to bear their burdens for them.
3. The colt symbolized sacredness, for it had never been ridden before (v. 2). Animals and things used for sacred or religious purposes had to be animals and things that had never been used before (Num. 10:2; Deu. 21:3; 1 Sam. 6:7). This detail points to the sacredness of the event. It pictured that Jesus was deliberately taking every precaution to proclaim that *He is the sacred hope*, the promised Messiah of the people. □

### III. *Luke 19:36–38 Misconceptions about the Messiah*

There was the people's proclaiming Him to be King. Three facts need to be noted in this point.

1. The people praised God for all the mighty works they had seen. There were teeming thousands lining the roadway, throwing their cloaks down ahead of Him. (See Mt. 21:8-9.) The people had just recently seen miracle after miracle including the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The whole atmosphere was electric with excitement and expectation. The people knew Jesus had the power to do anything: He could bring the Kingdom of God to earth.

*Acts 10:38* How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

*Job 42:2* I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted.

*Psa 115:3* Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.

2. They proclaimed Jesus to be “the King who comes in the name of the Lord.” They thought the hour had arrived. Jesus was going to usher in the Kingdom of God *now*.

The disciples and people with Him believed that the capital of God’s kingdom was to be set up in Jerusalem. They were very aware of how He had been talking about Jerusalem and setting His face like a flint for the city. They also thought that the kingdom should “appear at once.” They believed that as soon as they reached Jerusalem, Jesus was going to usher in the Kingdom of God, freeing Israel from Roman domination and establishing the rule of God over all the earth. In their minds the climax of human history and the beginning of God’s reign upon earth was at hand. They knew that with His power, He could do whatever was necessary to subdue the nations of the earth and bring God’s righteousness to earth.

Now note, all their thoughts were upon this earth: upon the temporal and the worldly, the physical and the material. They saw themselves in positions of leadership and honour, as the princes and counsellors of state (see Lk. 22:24-30; Mt. 20:20-28; Mk. 9:33-37). There is a problem with this concept: at most a person would enjoy an earthly kingdom for only a few short years of a life time. The disciples were just not thinking in terms of the spiritual world:

=> an eternal life which lives on forever.

=> an eternal world which actually exists.

=> an eternal world in another dimension of being.

=> an eternal world which is the real world.

=> an eternal world which is much more real than this physical world which fades away in its corruption.

These were their expectations: God was going...

- to free all the nations of the earth from Roman domination.
- to set up the throne of Jesus in Jerusalem from which the rule and reign of righteousness would be executed.
- to establish Israel as the leading nation of the earth.

**Luke 19:11** *While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.*

3. The people failed to see several things.
- a. They failed to see that Jesus was riding a colt, coming as the King of Peace.

**Luke 1:78-79** *Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun [Christ] will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.*

**John 14:27** *“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.” (see John 16:33)*

**Rom 14:17** *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

**Psa 29:11** *The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.*

- b. They failed to see that Jesus was riding the animal of burdens, coming as the King who wished to bear the burdens of men.

**Heb 2:17-18** *For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

**Heb 4:15-16** *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

- c. They failed to see that Jesus was riding the animal that symbolized sacredness, coming for the purpose of saving the people spiritually. (See *God's Blessings*, Eph. 1:3)
- d. They failed to see that Jesus was riding the animal that symbolized gentleness, coming as the King of gentleness.

**Mat 11:28-29** *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”*

**1 Pet 2:23-24** *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

#### **IV. Luke 19:39–40 Jesus Christ's Claim to be King**

There was the insistent claim of Jesus. He was to be proclaimed King by the people. The religious authorities were hostile. They had already given the word to hunt Jesus down and arrest Him (Jn. 11:57). Despite this threat, Jesus publicly and triumphantly entered Jerusalem. The great weight and importance of His mission, “to seek and save what was lost,” (Lk. 19:10) is clearly seen in such courageous behaviour. (See Mk. 11:1-11.)

**John 1:49** *Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.”*

**John 18:37** “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

Note the clear declaration to deity that Jesus made: “I tell you...If they [the praising crowds] keep quiet, the stones will cry out.” Nature did cry out when He hung upon the cross. The world and the disciples had forsaken Him, but the sun hid its face and the earth split asunder in a demonstration of the cry of nature (see Mt. 27:45, 51-52).

**Psa 69:34** *Let heaven and earth praise him, the seas and all that move in them.*

**Isa 44:23** *Sing for joy, O heavens, for the LORD has done this; shout aloud, O earth beneath. Burst into song, you mountains, you forests and all your trees, for the LORD has redeemed Jacob, he displays his glory in Israel.*

**Isa 49:13** *Shout for joy, O heavens; rejoice, O earth; burst into song, O mountains! For the LORD comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones.* ■

### EPHESIANS 01: 03 GOD'S BLESSINGS

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.*

**Ephesians 01:03**

God's blessings are spiritual and heavenly, not material blessings. Throughout history God has used two methods of blessings to deal with man. Before Christ, God dealt with man by blessing him with material blessings. He promised Abraham and Israel land, wealth, and fame. (See *Israel, God's Special People*, Jn. 4:22; Jews, the Seed of Abraham, Rom. 4:1-25. See Gen. 12:1f; 13:14-17; 15:1-7, 15-19; 22:16-18; 26:2-5, 24; 28:13-15; 31:13; 35:9-12.) But Israel misused and hoarded the material blessings. Instead of sharing its blessings with other nations, Israel isolated itself and claimed superiority and God-given rights over other nations of the earth. However, since Christ, God deals with man spiritually, blessing him with spiritual blessings.

Five things should be noted about this.

1. Spiritual blessings *are of the Spirit*. It is the Spirit that controls man and the circumstances that surround him. A man may feel bad; he may be down, depressed and oppressed; but if his spirit is strong, he arises and conquers his feelings. He controls and overcomes the oppressing circumstances, and he lives a victorious day. But if his spirit is weak, whether at work or at play, he often wallows around in self-pity, grumbling and griping and living a defeated day. And too often the days stretch into weeks and months until a person's life is down more than it is up —



all because the spirit is too weak to conquer. Thus, the major blessings of God are bound to be blessings that are spiritual — that enable a person to control his life.

2. Spiritual blessings are the very opposite of temporal blessings. They are the *blessings of the inner man*, the blessings of the immortal. But of all blessings, they are the most glorious and satisfying. They are the blessings that erase the loneliness, alienation and purposelessness of man. They are the blessings that give man an overabundance of life.
3. Spiritual blessings are vastly superior to material blessings. They are *permanent and perfect and eternal*, lasting forever. They are of the very same nature as God Himself. Spiritual blessings exist and can be experienced both upon earth (the physical dimension of being) and in heaven (the spiritual dimension of being).
4. Spiritual blessings are found only *in Christ*. Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God the Father. He is in heaven, surrounded by all the heavenly atmosphere and blessings. All heavenly blessings are His; He is Lord and Possessor of all blessings. Therefore, if a person is to experience the spiritual blessings, he must be *in Christ*. If a person is *in Christ*, then he sits *in heaven* with Christ. How is this possible? When a person *believes in Christ*, truly believes, God takes his faith and counts it as righteousness. God counts the person to be the same as Christ, righteous and acceptable. In God's mind *faith in Christ* makes a person just like Christ: holy and righteous and acceptable for heaven. Therefore, when a person believes in Christ, God's mind sees the person in Christ; God sees the person identified with Christ, seated in heaven. And being seated in heaven, the person can experience all the blessings of heaven. Simply stated, to be *in Christ* means to believe in God's Son so much that God becomes elated — elated so much that He counts the person to be just like Christ: acceptable and worthy to be blessed with all the blessings of heaven. (See *Justification, Gal. 2:15-16.*)
5. God dealt with man in material blessings first because man had to learn several things.
  - a. An earthly inheritance does not last. It is subject to being lost or stolen. We either watch our material possessions deteriorate or else we leave our material possessions behind for others.
  - b. An earthly nation and material inheritance cannot bring peace and security. Peace and security are of the spirit. Earthly nations and material things are of the earth, of a corruptible nature. Thus nations and material things do not solve the spiritual struggle that man senses within his own being. Neither can nations and material things erase the spiritual divisions between men and between man and God.

- c. Man has within his *inner being* a basic selfishness and greed. Man finds a tendency, an unregulated urge, that desires and seeks the material and hoards the corruptible to the neglect of the spiritual.
- d. Man must undergo a basic change of character to be freed of this urge, this tendency that causes so much bondage, disruption, and division within one's self and between men. Man must be *born again*, made into a *new creation*, created into a *new man* — spiritually, permanently, perfectly, eternally. And such a spiritual creation must be performed by Someone much greater than himself. Man must be recreated by the hand of God Himself. □