

Palm Sunday - "See, your king comes to you"

See service sheet online at www.knbc.org

Welcome

Opening Scripture	Ps 145:1-3
Hymn:	MP 366 Jesus is King, and I will extol Him
Bible Reading:	Ps 145
Prayer:	Adoration and praise,
Notices	
Main reading:	Matthew 21:1-17, (see also Exodus 12:1-13,17)
Hymn:	MP 242 Hosanna, MP 547 Open your eyes
Sermon	"See your king comes to you"
Hymn	MP 85 Come and see

Close -----

Listen to today's sermon by clicking on the link at www.knbc.org.

The audio file is [21_03_28.mp3](#).

Welcome and pray - 545 Open our eyes Lord

■ I wonder if you watch the news so often it just washes over you, or you read through the papers and it means nothing.

Is that also true of the Bible? you read it – but it means nothing to you?

The Bible is a record of events, key events, the key event in fact, - it affects you – it affects all of us - and therefore it should mean something.

Like the news you might feel you just can't see it clearly and therefore it doesn't seem relevant, whether it's Bristol, Hong Kong, China, or wherever.

✚ So with Christianity, many simply say: "not relevant" many can't see it.

As Christians we can see it - and we long to look further into these things.

We long to see more of what we know to be true. – And him who we know to be true. Today we are all invited to look "See, x2 **your king comes to you**".

All the four Gospel writers take notice of Christ's *riding in triumph into Jerusalem*. Here is a procession, a public event, before the gathered crowds and open for all to see. So let us all here, "come and see, come and behold".

■ If Amy Cole from the BBC was outside and as you left asked – "What do you see in Jesus?" there would also here be a number of different views.

Have you ever been in a crowd? Did you go intentionally? Or where you just walking past, you stop, wonder what is going and squeeze through to the front to see what everyone is looking at?

Maybe there's been an 'incident' and you don't want to get involved? - you scurry away. Or maybe you're a spectator at a sporting event trying to get a good view. Or maybe there is a very important person coming past that you must see, and push forward like determined Zacchaeus who climbed a tree.

Jesus had just left Jericho where a large crowd was following him (matt 20:29). Mixed together were many different kinds of people. Let's look at 6 of them

1. The crowd was made up of Jews

8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, down in front of him while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Why? They were full of expectation, anticipation, they thought "finally, now, at last our hopes are to be realized". 9 The crowds that went ahead of him - and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!"

The crowd shout praise, they believe Jesus to be the One promised, the true Messiah, the Christ, the powerful King coming to help them.

The Jews had a national heritage, God was their God, they were His people and His writings were their writings. This greatly affected the national psyche. They had had a troubled history, their powerful neighbours had oppressed them cruelly; the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Medes and Persians then the Greeks. Wild and violent days had continued; now they were little better off under the Roman yoke.

That is how many lives are, one problem after another, just when you think you are in the clear something else happens. You live in hope that the next leader will bring relief - you put your trust in people – but they let you down. Now many in the crowd see Jesus as the answer. God had promised it – when would it all be fulfilled? – Now, now the time had come.

Jesus' public arrival into Jerusalem was the fulfilment of prophecy. 400 years earlier Zechariah spoke of it, before that Jacob had said "The sceptre

will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his." Ge 49:10

At last, all those years of misery will soon be over. That had produced real excitement, their thoughts heightened because it was the Passover festival, a time when they remembered God's rescuing them from slavery in Egypt.

2. The crowd was also made up of Jesus' disciples His followers.

When Matt says 21:5 "**Say to the Daughter of Zion, See....** God's people are addressed, it is we who are to behold, to see, to gaze upon the wonderful and public arrival of our Saviour, after all these years of waiting and expecting - here he comes, our saviour king. It is Isaiah who said: **The LORD has made proclamation to the ends of the earth: "Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your Saviour comes! See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.'**" Isa 62:11 *what a sweet sound to our ears!* "See, your king comes to you", What can you see? A saviour? Those around were keen to see their nation set free. There is something more important. As a Christian we want personally to be set free, - not from the oppressor with the sword - but from the accuser of our souls before God. Free from being a slave to my own wants and free to love God and to live well.

The Passover was on the fourteenth day of the month, and this was the tenth; on which day the law appointed that the lamb to be sacrificed should be 'taken up' Ex 12:3 **"Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. 6 Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight."**

So on that day the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed and its blood shed. It was first to be publicly showed, put on display. This **'take care of him'** is considered to mean people were to look at him, to ponder, to wonder. So as Christians saved by Christ we stand in awe, our hearts are full of gratitude for the One from God who came to die for me. Here is Christ Jesus, the lamb of God, who gave himself to save me from death, - eternal death.

As that lamb was publically displayed, - So is Jesus as he rides into Jerusalem. Look at him, ponder, wonder – for many it's the last chance.

Here is our Champion, the one who came to conquer our great enemy of guilt, my failure to keep God's commandments and its consequence death.

Zechariah says: **"Rejoice greatly, x2 yes we do! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation,** *Zec 9:9 Thank you father for sending Him*

Ever seen a Royal procession? Everything has to be done just right. With this one there is something not quite right! 5 **"See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."**

Jesus is not high up on some 16 hand Arabian charger, no his feet are shuffling along the ground on a donkey's colt. This is a different King to what you would normally see. A different king - of a different kingdom.

Many in the crowd were thinking he would be like other kings, only stronger. Many today think he will help me with my problems. No he is a King who came to serve, to be a door into another very different kingdom. Those who follow him are called to forsake self and serve this wonderful King. Those who follow Christ don't run from trouble – even head into trouble, and go anywhere the Lord calls.

xx is going to North Korea Why go there? That's to worst place.

- The 2021 Open Doors World Watch List says: Being discovered as a Christian is a death sentence in North Korea. You will be taken to a labour camp as a political criminal, if you aren't killed instantly. Few believers survive. And everyone in your family will share the same punishment. Secret police carry out raids to identify Christians, and children are encouraged to tell their teachers about any sign of faith in their parents' home. A Christian is never safe.
- Open Doors estimates that tens of thousands of North Korean Christians are in prisons or labour camps for their faith.
- If you are discovered to be a Christian, you will be arrested interrogated and imprisoned. Most Christians are sent to the worst political prison camps — from which inmates will never be released. Prisoners are considered 'enemies of the state' and beyond the protection of the law. If not secretly executed, they endure lives of unending physical and psychological torture, hunger and labour. They may even be used for chemical tests.
- "I saw moving, shapeless forms, nobody survives," recalls one Christian of her time in a Kwan-li so. "It took me a moment to realise these were people. Some were bent over. Others missed an arm or a leg. I looked at my own arms and legs. thin like matches. In the camp, I worked 12 hours a day, sometimes more. Every day is just one long nightmare

Why not stay at home xx and be comfortable? No Christ has put a fire in his heart and he cannot rest until He is doing what his Lord has called him to –

whatever the cost. Here is real freedom - to serve the Lord of Glory. “xx why are you doing it?” - “Because my eyes are opened, I can see Jesus”

3. There are those coming out of Jerusalem

John speaks of another crowd, they are already in the city for the feast, it's a **great crowd**, they hear Jesus is coming and come out to greet him. Jo 12:12

Why do we speak of Palm Sunday? Why palms? John in his account says this crowd came with palm branches. And where did they get them from? Probably stored from the feast of Tabernacles ^{Lev. 23:40} that had taken place sometime before.

The palm had a deep symbolic meaning, it was the signal sign of success, it was the time honoured mark of the conqueror. When the Maccabees had entered Jerusalem in triumph years before, the people had gone out to meet them with palms in their hands. So now it was with palms that the populace crowded out to meet Jesus, the palms held out in anticipation of his glorious conquests.

4. There's the crowd that had seen Lazarus raised from the dead

The mood is upbeat. John speaks of another crowd who had seen Lazarus raised from the dead. They could see clearly who Jesus was and many had put their faith in Christ. Now they continued to speak of Christ.

5. There are the Pharisees (and the temple worship)

After Lazarus was raised to life the Pharisees were 'indignant' they saw Jesus as a competitor. Mark says 'they feared him' - and tried to kill him.

These religious Pharisees didn't want to change, “just leave things as they are”. “Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the benches of those selling doves. "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers'.” Mt 21:12-13

✚ Religious people appear to be different – but they destroy true worship by making the church like the world - because they are like the world.

Jesus walks away, that's it for this temple, it's dismissed, he is not coming as a priest to reinforce the old way. Judaism is about to end, in less than a week the curtain in the temple will be torn open and the way to God made possible for all through the cross. Christ's death on the cross is the only way Do you look at Jesus and see 'church'? Do you seek association with a 'church', church group, or the taking of communion, or to be here every Sunday as your source of strength and your means of pleasing God? That is

to be like a Pharisee, a hypocrite. When people asked “what should we do to please God” Jesus replied that they should believe in Him.

The Temple in Jerusalem was a symbol only. The reality is in Christ. When the temple had finished its role God took it away and put a mosque on the temple mount to stop people trying build another one and return to temple worship again. Don't build a temple even in your heart, look to Christ alone.

He is coming to bring in a new way, the new temple is his body. Even his accusers had something of this when they reported: "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another, not made by man.'" Mr 14:58 - the temple he had spoken of was his body. Joh 2:21

When Jesus spoke to the woman at the well he said: **a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth.**" The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he." John 4:23-26

Suddenly she could see clearly. And she left her life of sin to follow him.

6. Then there are those remaining in Jerusalem

Those in the city are stirred and ask “who is this” they couldn't see clearly, they failed to recognize who Jesus was. “**As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, Jesus wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognise the time of God's coming to you.**" Luke 19:41-44

That is a very sobering passage. Jesus warns of approaching judgment, but they're not moved, they don't see there's anything they should do. Some people are unmoved, unresponsive, even when warned of Judgment - it doesn't get through, it just bounces off. They didn't recognise God's coming to them - and it wasn't long before their city was destroyed.

Pride had caused a hard heart, as unmovable monster that ship Evergreen seems to be. And like the ship blocks the way. Pride - There's too much of me in the way to allow God to be God.

Ezekiel spoke of God's judgment on Jerusalem: "A ruin! A ruin! I will make it a ruin! – but he also promised a spiritual restoration - **It will not be restored until he comes to whom it rightfully belongs; to him I will give it.**" Eze 21:27

7. to sum up - what do you see?

"See, your king comes to you" How is your vision? (clean glasses)

My mother has excelled eyesight - when it comes to Jesus - she cannot see. A crowd contains a mix of people. A bit like our gathering here today. In the crowd some are keen, some just wondering what to make of it, while some keep their distance. Some are religious and have no desire to change, Christ will find no room in their hearts, - you won't find true worship on their lips. A number here have accepted Christ as your king. Yet Christ is still king over those who don't want him to be. To that person I say you have put yourself on the throne as King – although you don't see it like that, that is what is happening. He will allow you to do this, you can do it all your life – but the day will come when you will have to acknowledge that He is King and not you, He is Lord and not you. [How are your knees?](#)

✚ One day you will bow the knee before JC and declare that he is Lord

A baby in a manger could be missed – Jesus's procession towards the cross must not be missed. This is the last chance. If you miss this you will not stand when he returns as judge to call you to account. When that time comes it will be too late. Give attention to you sin and guilt now before the Day of wrath comes - the God of justice comes.

Look to Jesus, what a loving Saviour who suffered so much at the hands of men. As they looked to Jesus on a Donkey, soon says Zec 12:10 "**They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.**" Joh 19:37

Will you look on the one they pierced and mourn? Will you mourn for your sin that caused Christ to go to the cross and suffer so terribly.

Do you see him suffering? Do you see him being beaten, do you see him wincing as the nails go in, and suffering greatly before his death. Do you hear him shout "it is finished". The women saw him buried – and they were to first to see him alive again. Do you see him alive and raised up at the father's right hand? It was all for me - the poor sinner, Christ says: look to Me! look to Me!" "Look to me, and be saved, Isaiah 45:22

✚ Anyone can look what qualifications do you need?

4a

✚ But don't look anywhere and everywhere, or any person look to Jesus

- 547 Open your eyes, see the glory of the King; lift up your voice, and his praises sing! I love you, Lord. I will proclaim, Alleluia! I bless your name.

The 16 year old Charles Spurgeon said the preacher looked at him "you will always be miserable—miserable in life and miserable in death—if you don't obey my text; but if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved." Then lifting up his hands, he shouted, "look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothing to do but look and live!"

Spurgeon says: I saw at once the way of salvation. when I heard that word, "Look!" Oh! I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away. There and then the cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that moment I saw the sun; and I could have risen that instant, and sung with the most enthusiastic of them, of the precious blood of Christ, and the simple faith which looks alone to Him. "Trust Christ, and you shall be saved."

He goes on "that happy day when I found the Saviour, and learned to cling to His dear feet, was a day never to be forgotten by me I listened to the Word of God and that precious text led me to the cross of Christ. I can testify that the joy of that day was utterly indescribable. I could have leaped, I could have danced; there was no expression, however fanatical, which would have been out of keeping with the joy of that hour. I thought I could have sprung from the seat in which I sat, and have called out . . . "I am forgiven! I am forgiven! A monument of grace! A sinner saved by blood!"

My spirit saw its chains broken to pieces, I felt that I was an emancipated soul, an heir of heaven, a forgiven one, accepted in Jesus Christ, plucked out of the miry clay and out of the horrible pit, with my feet set upon a rock and my way set

when I was back again at home, what a change had taken place in me! Simply by looking to Jesus I had been delivered from despair, and I was brought into such a joyous state of mind that, when they saw me at home, they said to me, "Something wonderful has happened to you,* " and I was eager to tell them all about it. Oh! there was joy in the household that day,

- If Amy Cole – or anyone else asked you now "what do you see in Jesus" what would you say? Could you say the same as Spurgeon. ... "Something wonderful has happened to me!"

Or could you say like the blind man "*I was blind - but now I can see*"

END

4b