

The King Prepares His Procession, Part 1

Luke 19:28-30

We are steadily making our way through Luke's Gospel and today we find ourselves in Luke 19:28 as we enter into the final week of Jesus', well we could say his pre resurrection life, his pre glorified life, his final week before the cross. So just one more week left in Luke's Gospel, but it'll take us a little longer than a week to go through it. That's one way of looking at it. Another way we could look at it is there are a hundred and sixty eight hours in a week, and it may just take a hundred and sixty eight hours of preaching to get through this final week of Jesus' life. I won't do it all today. Trust, trust me.

The heading in many of our bibles says the triumphal entry. The triumphal entry. And it is a triumphal entry. But the heading may seem on the surface, as we read into the details of this triumphal entry and what follows, it may seem to be something of a misnomer. As Luke takes us through the final week

of Jesus' life on earth, Luke 19:28 through the end of chapter 23, chapter 23, verse 56.

As he takes us through the final week of Jesus life on earth, things seem to go from bad to worse for Jesus. Section actually ends with him dying on a cross and his body being buried in a tomb. So it, it may seem, apparently, on the surface it may seem to be another unmitigated disaster. The sad tale of yet another failed Messiah, a tale with which the Jews were quite familiar. Made them cynical, made them distrusting.

But as we keep on reading, and we read through the final chapter, we read about the greatest triumph ever recorded. Jesus rises from the dead, conquers the grave, leaves the tomb, he ascends into heaven. So what seems to start in a tragedy as an unmitigated disaster ends in an unparalleled triumph and glory. That is what is ahead for us as we study Luke's Gospel.

The text before us today is transitional in nature. We could say historically, it's transitioning from the journey section into the passion section. So we are moving from the

journey section that ends in this passage. Jesus is at his journey's end, which ends in Jerusalem. He's facing his final week in the passion.

It's also a transitional text because theologically speaking and redemptively speaking, we see that Jesus is going to move from talking about redemption to accomplishing redemption. He is going to do what he set out to do, and that is to die for the sins of his people. So these historical or theological or redemptive transitions, they're actually represented in the text itself in that first verse that we're going to look at in verse 28, Luke chapter 19, where Luke tells us, "And when he had said these things, he went on ahead going up to Jerusalem." When he said these things, what things?

Well, the parable that he just told in Jericho. The parable about a nobleman who traveled to a distant land to receive a Kingdom and then returned. When he goes this nobleman, when he goes, he leaves behind citizens who hate him, refuse to accept him as king, but that doesn't stop him from going to receive the Kingdom anyway. He's intent on his mission to go receive the Kingdom that he has been given and then return.

And So what we're about to see is that parable that we've already been through see that parable acted out in real life. Jesus goes to the royal city of Jerusalem. He goes to present himself there to his people as their incoming king. He is going essentially to a royal coronation. And what we're going to see today are his preparations for that coronation procession to proceed on the route to Jerusalem, to the Holy City.

So with that in mind, let's begin by reading the text and we'll read from verse 28 to verse 44. "And when he had said these things, he went on ahead going up to Jerusalem. And when he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples saying, 'Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you why are you untying it, you shall say this.' 'The Lord has need of it.'

"So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. And as they were untying the colt, its owner said

to them, 'Why are you untying the colt?' And they said 'The Lord has need of it,' and they brought it to Jesus. Throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road.

“[And he] as he was drawing near, already on the way down to the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, 'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven and glory in the highest.' Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher rebuke your disciples.' He answered, 'I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.'

“When he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it. Saying, 'Would that you, even you had known on this day the things that make for peace, but now they're hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon

another in you because you did not know the time of your visitation.'"

Starts with great anticipation and hope, praise, joy. Ends in sorrow and weeping and warning. Procession takes place on a Sunday. It's what we now call Palm Sunday. This procession is attended by thousands of people, maybe tens of thousands, because the city of Jerusalem was swollen with tens to hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who had come to celebrate the Passover. Thousands of people there, tens of thousands, lining the road to see him, and most of whom are rejoicing and praising God and celebrating that Jesus is coming as the incoming king, that he is their Messiah.

But as we just read, there are some of the leading citizens, the Pharisees. They represent the power and the wealth. And the interests of the political and religious establishment in Jerusalem. They oppose the king, and it's in the same vein of what we saw in the parable. "We do not want this man to reign over us."

So the Pharisees, they are a harbinger of foreboding, a sign of the dark days that lie just ahead. Jesus, for his part, he knows all things. He knows how superficial the support of the crowd really is. He knows how uninformed and how superficial and shallow their, their praise of him is because they don't really understand him or know him. He also understands how their praise and any support will break away and give way because the Pharisees are so influential.

Because their pressure and their influence is so powerful. And so the crowd will go in just a week's time from cheering to jeering. From calling for his coronation as king to calling for his execution as the worst of criminals. So the Sunday begins with Messianic anticipation. It starts with excited celebration and praise as the king travels along the procession route into Jerusalem for his coronation.

This is the opportunity that he is presenting for the people to see their king, to rejoice in him, and to give thanks to God for him and for God's grace to them. It's a Messianic secret actually, that Jesus is the king, that he's the Messiah. He's been keeping this secret all through his ministry, all the

way through Galilee and Perea and Judea. He's been cloaking the, who he really is. In fact, it's only known to his closest disciples and he, by the way, has silenced them when they want to speak about it. He has sworn them to secrecy. He's told them, "Don't say anything about it."

He does not want any premature unplanned coronation, which would be a false coronation. Bad timing. Not, not the divine timetable. So the secret of his Messiahship, his true royal identity, his Davidic lineage. His right to Israel's throne, his intent to go and receive the Kingdom that his Father has given to him. That secret is revealed here on this day, on this day of procession.

As the king is exposed for who he truly is, we see at the same time that his exposure and his exaltation revealing him as the king of Israel, revealing him to be the Messiah that he is at the same time the opposition is also exposed. The heart of the opposition is revealed as well, and with murderous intent. This is why Jesus breaks down in tears at the end of the day. He's weeping over the fate of Jerusalem. He knows the consequences of Israel rejecting its king.

He knows what's going to happen to the city, what's going to happen to its people. Horrible carnage and destruction that's going to take place in just a short time, and it breaks his heart. Joy of his procession is then eclipsed by the sorrow of coming judgment as Israel rejects its Messiah. Now, as we enter into this final section of Luke's Gospel, we're going to start with a bit of a broad approach to introduce this and then we're going to narrow down the focus.

Number one the king is regal, the king is regal and you're saying "those are synonyms." Yes, I know, but regal rhymes with my other points. So, the king is regal. Jesus is regal. He is the king. He's kingly. He is royal. We see that he is the nobleman of the parable. He's the nobleman of a, of the parable, lived out in real life. He has noble character. He has the right of nobility. He has the lineage of nobility. He is regal. He has the right and the character to be Israel's king.

And that's really what this procession is all about, that he might be introduced to his people so that they might see the one who comes in order to be their new king, and he presents himself to them. That's what the procession's all about. He's

not hidden from view from the people. He's not shielded behind tinted or bulletproof glass. He comes to them, as it were, in the open. He comes to them riding on a donkey's colt.

Down low, where they can see him, where they can touch him, see him, hear him, observe him, reach out and touch him if they want to talk to him. That's how this procession goes, unlike many other processions we've seen of royals coming into the throne. By God's providence, we've had a recent example of this kind of thing. A coronation procession that happened just yesterday across the pond over in jolly old England.

Last year, it was September 8th, 2022 that the sovereign of England, then sovereign of England, Queen Elizabeth II, she passed away at the age of 96. She was queen, as we know for a remarkably long time, 70 years reigning, throne of England. And the day that she died, that Elizabeth died, her oldest son Charles became king. So yesterday, May 6th 2023, was the coronation ceremony for King Charles.

He was crowned king of England, king of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom, though it's diminished in its glory, it's still a very significant commonwealth of more than fifty countries around the world. The coronation procession started yesterday at the royal residence, Buckingham Palace. Charles and Camilla rode in what's called the Diamond Jubilee State Coach, pulled by six horses. Modern carriage the Diamond Jubilee State Coach is a modern carriage with hydraulic suspension. It's got heating and air conditioning, modern comfort, but in royal style. I'm sure it's bulletproof as well.

But the carriage itself is lined with significance from England's history. There's wood in there from the Tower of London, wood from Westminster Abbey, from Saint Paul's Cathedral. There's wood from the Merry Rose, which is the flagship of Henry VIII. There's wood from the Mayflower, which has significance to our country. There's a crown mounted on the top of that carriage that's carved from the wood of the HMS Victory, which is the flagship of Lord Nelson, famous naval commander.

Door handles on that carriage are decorated with 24 diamonds and 130 sapphires. There are handmade lamps from Edinburgh Crystal. I've got none of that stuff in my house. I don't know about you. So this Diamond Jubilee State Coach, it proceeded down the mall along Saint James Park toward Trafalgar Square. Procession turned down Whitehall and Parliament Street onto Parliament Square, Broad Sanctuary ended at the great West door of Westminster Abbey just before the start of the coronation ceremony at 11:00 AM local time.

Coronation itself lasted about two hours. Has five stages, starting with what's called the recognition. Where King Charles is presented to the people by the Archbishop of Canterbury and many other dignitaries who were there. The people welcomed the new king, responding with shouts of "God save King Charles." Next comes the oath. The oath. Actually, it's two oaths, administered again by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who oversees the whole procedure.

The Coronation Oath and the Accession Declaration Oath. Both the Coronation oaths, so much of the ceremony I found fascinating because they're all taken from Scripture. It was

actually quite sad for me to witness such a profusely biblical ceremony. So saturated in Scripture and Theology, proclaiming even in the ceremony the Gospel all the way through and the lordship of Jesus Christ over the earth.

Sad to see that, hear that and know that the attendees and the Archbishop of Canterbury himself and the new king, all of them, are apostates who have rejected Christ, rejected God, rejected His Word. Anyway, in the third stage, called the Anointing, King Charles entered the Coronation Theater in Westminster Abbey. He sat on Saint Edward's chair, very old throne. The whole area at that time in the Anointing is screened off from public view where he strips out of his royal garments and he is there to be anointed. It's the most sacred part of the service.

As Charles is anointed with special coronation oil, and the oil is made from olives that are harvested from groves on Mount Olivet itself consecrated, in a special ceremony at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Fourth part of the ceremony, the Investiture, literally the crowning moment, when Charles is crowned king of England, he's presented with royal regalia,

royal spurs, a jeweled sword, golden arm bands, armlets worn by kings. There's the Robe Royale. There's corn, a coronation ring given to him, a sovereign's orb put into his hand. He's presented with the Sovereign's Scepter with Cross. Representing power and justice, he's presented with the Sovereign Scepter with Dove that represents his spiritual role to rule and mercy.

All of these regalia, each element, each item has a story, has a meaning to it. It's invested with meaning and significance. Everything is symbolic, by the way mounted in the Sovereign Scepter with Cross is the largest diamond. And it's cut from the largest diamond ever found in the world called the Cullinan Diamond.

This one is called the Great Star of Africa, cut out of that Cullinan Diamond and it is 530.4 carats, now that's big. I can't even afford the .4 half of the .4. The Archbishop placed Saint Edward's crown on the head of King Charles, the solid gold crown. Set with 444 Gems, rubies, amethyst, sapphires, garnet topazes, tourmaline gems, the crown weighs five pounds. That's heavy on the head. So it's something of a mercy, it's the only

time he'll ever wear it, at this coronation, right, upon the crowning.

At the very moments of the crowning, the bells of Westminster Abbey rang for two minutes, trumpet sounded, guns fired rounds in salute. All across the United Kingdom there was a sixty two round salute fired at the Tower of London just down the road. And in eleven other places across the UK, places like Edinburgh, Cardiff, Belfast, all the deployed Navy ships, Royal Navy ships, there were twenty one round salutes that were fired all across the Empire. And that leads to, finally, the enthronement where King Charles, wearing the royal crown, takes his seat on the throne.

The Archbishop of Canterbury who conducted the ceremony. He then comes and takes a knee and bows before the king and pays homage to him with an oath of homage. That's followed by the king's son, William, Prince of Wales, who pays homage to his father, again taking an oath of homage and in, kind of a touching scene, he leaned over and placed a kiss on his father's cheek.

Next, in a short ritual, Camilla was crowned with Mary's crown, and then the king and queen retired from their thrones. They entered Saint Edward's Chapel, which is an area behind the high altar. They removed their crowns and then they returned, coming back to partake of communion. After that, they retired again to Saint Edward's Chapel, and then prepared themselves for the return procession.

By the way, after Charles removes the Saint Edward's crown, it's replaced with what's called the Imperial State Crown. It's a lighter crown, doesn't weigh as much, but it is mounted, in that crown is mounted the second largest of the Cullinan diamonds. It's called the Second Star of Africa, and that weighs just 317.4 carats. That's the crown that he puts on before the return procession to go back home to Buckingham Palace.

The king and queen returned home, this time in the Gold State coach, which is a two hundred and sixty year old carriage made of giltwood that is gold leaf over wood. It weighs 4 tons and so this one is pulled by eight horses. The whole procession is accompanied by military guard, the Army, the Navy. Powerful, powerful display of strength and wealth. They're in their dress

uniforms, marching in step and keeping time to the drums and the bands marching back to Buckingham Palace.

And the day ends back at Buckingham Palace with a parade out in the gardens of Buckingham Palace. And then there's a fly over by the Red Arrows, which is a Royal Air Force aerobatic team that flies over the palace. Actually, the scene is reminiscent of seventy years earlier, where the image of the royal family on the balcony, there's a black and white photo that you can find online, taken seventy years earlier on June 2nd of 1953 when Elizabeth II was crowned. And there you can see the four-year-old Prince Charles who is standing on that same balcony and pointing up at the airplanes at the coronation of his mother, Queen Elizabeth.

Estimated cost of this coronation of King Charles III, around £100 million, which is down actually. It's a savings. It's only about 125 million U.S. dollars. So as I estimated, that's a two hour coronation, so that's more than million dollars per minute. If we stretch that out, maybe. If we want to see the bright side of this, include the travel to and from the

coronation, we got it down to about half a million dollars per minute.

How different the coronation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's no less regal. He is no less a royal, no less a king than the king of England. But in this procession and in this coronation, there's no ostentatious display of human wealth and human power.

There's no need to dress up his regality. Because his nobility is on display. Any dressing up, any ostentation, would just distract from who he truly is. He comes to be observed, to be seen, to be studied and to be admired by all who will closely look at him and see who he really is.

Instead of riding in imperial coaches worth millions of dollars, pulled by strong, powerful horses flanked by soldiers, Jesus rides on the colt of a donkey, flanked by his disciples and peasant crowd. He's on a borrowed donkey, no less, doesn't even own that. And yet it is God himself who said, announcing through his prophet, Zechariah 9:9, "Behold, your king comes to you righteous, and having salvation is he, humble, mounted on a

donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." Here's what you look for. Here is the true king, a sure footed donkey carrying a most valuable rider. He bears the priceless gift of divine righteousness and eternal salvation.

Instead of being presented to the people. With all the support and the affirmation of the political and religious leaders of Jerusalem, Jesus is rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, Luke 9:22. He is unceremoniously handed over to the gentiles, Luke 18:32 to 33, so that he would be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon and flogged and killed. Can you imagine if even just a modicum of that kind of treatment came to King Charles yesterday? The outrage, the deaths that it would ensue?

And yet God has said Psalm 118 verse 22, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone." This is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes. Jesus came for the purpose of seeking and saving the lost. So it's his plan all along to be handed over, to be rejected, to die for his people, so that he would give his life as a ransom for many.

This is his plan. This is what he has ordered. This is what he pursues. This is what he's in charge of. This is what he fulfills. Instead of taking his oaths before men, Jesus made his oath before God and to God, saying to him as it was recorded in Hebrews 10:5-7, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me. Burnt offerings and sin offerings you've taken no pleasure. And then I said, 'Behold, I've come to do your will, oh God, as is written of me in the scroll of the book.'" Which he finally did. John 17:4, "I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do."

Instead of a private anointing using a special coronation oil harvested from the olives and the Mount of Olives blessed in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the anointing he received before his coronation was for his burial applied to a dying dead body. The worship of love, the sacrificial gift of a woman, Mary of Bethany. And yet Jesus said "She has done a beautiful thing to me," Mark 14-6, Jesus says, "Truly, I say to you, wherever the Gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

You know what, he's right. I just told it again here, now. Instead of investitures of men, royal regalia with all of their significance, instead of being crowned with a golden jewel encrusted crown, Jesus is actually stripped down to nothing before a battalion of Roman soldiers, Matthew 27:28. He's robed in a scarlet robe. They twisted a crown of thorns to mock him and scorn him, pressed it on his head, put a reed in his right hand and kneeled mockingly before him saying, "Hail, king of the Jews." This is what we think of the Jews. This is what we think of your people. You're nothing to us. You're a mockery.

Yet God said, "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased." He was for a little while made lower than the angels. But now he is crowned with glory and honor, Hebrews 2:9. He is highly exalted. He has now been bestowed with a name that is above all names, Philippians 2:10, "so that that the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven, on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

That's who he is, instead of the ringing of bells and the resounding trumpets, deafening on the day, instead of the many

gun salutes showing power and force and might to announce the new king, God himself rocked the world on that day from the Temple. When the curtain of the Temple is torn in two from top to bottom, Matthew 27:51, the earth shook, the rocks were split.

The centurion who stood there witnessing things, he saw the earthquake and he witnessed what took place. He knew he was filled with awe and he formerly an enemy, formerly a mocker and a scoffer, he looks and says, "Truly this was the Son of God."

Instead of an enthronement on King Edward's chair, a seven hundred year old throne, part of a thousand year old ceremony on the Cosmati pavement in Westminster Abbey, that is a twelve hundred plus year old church, instead of that, after making purification for sins, Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High. He took his seat at the right hand of the Ancient of Days on an everlasting, eternal throne. Again, very different kind of a coronation. But make no mistake, the Lord is regal, he is king, and any dressing up of the fact, any dressing up of the matter, only distracts from his true glory.

And everything in the procession, everything in the chapter that we're going through right now, everything is imbued with significance, every detail, and he has planned it all. No need for pageantry. No need for pomp and circumstance. No need to be dressed up with ostentatious displays of human wealth, earthly power. His coronation procession, it does what it's designed to do. To draw attention to truth, to meaning, to significance of a divinely ordained regality for all who have eyes to see and ears to hear.