

The Procession of the King, Part 2

Luke 19:35-40

God robed his one and only son in human flesh, in human vesture. He wrapped the second person of the Trinity in swaddling cloths and laid him in a Manger. Why was that necessary? To glorify God in the highest? And on earth to bring peace to those with whom he's please. It was necessary. Glory, Peace, those are some weighty terms, and we will not be able to unpack the fullness of those terms here now at this moment. But just a couple things to say about this.

Glory and peace are two massive theological themes in scripture. And if we commit to some reflection on glory and peace, the glory of God, and peace or reconciliation between God and man, we reflect on that. They may seem like competing goals in the plan of redemption, but they do come together in Christ. The word glory, the Greek word *doxa*. It translates the Hebrew, which is *kavod*. *Kavod* means heavy, means weighty. That's what you should think about in terms of glory.

Don't get caught up in some false charismatic view of gloria's angel dust blowing out of the vents. Don't get caught up in that. Kind of like gloria is some human thing, some manufactured thing. Same way that we draw God into our presence and experience his glory. Because if the glory of God arrives, if it shows up in your midst, you know what happens? You fall down in your face like a dead man, Isaiah said, in Isaiah 6 seeing the glory of God. I'm undone. I am disintegrated. Glory is weight. Glory is not effervescent happiness and goosebumps. Glory is weight. Heavy power from God, the weight of holiness. And when the glory of God comes, when it visits, it can come in a terrifying form.

In fact, we see in Israel's history some memorable encounters with the weight of divine glory. I can't obviously take you through them all, but let's just illustrate by going back to Exodus 19. Just turn back to Exodus 19 very quickly and find your way to Exodus 19 and verse 16. The description there in Exodus 19 is of the manifestation of divine glory. Portraying the glory of God that comes in its weight and its heaviness. On to Mount Sinai. And this is the giving of the law. Just before the giving of the law, God visits them in his glory. What was it like for the people who saw it?

Well Exodus 19 verses 16, I can tell you they weren't dancing around with goosebumps. "On the morning of the third day, [it says], there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud in the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. And then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire, and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, the whole mountain trembled greatly." You've got this massive earthquake shaking the whole mountain. "As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder [and louder], Moses spoke and God answered him in thunder. [And] the Lord, [that's the divine name Yahweh], came down on Mount Sinai to the top of the mountain."

You think the people were giddy? No way. They're terrified. The text says that all the people in the camp trembled. The whole mountain joined them, trembling greatly it says. Go to the end of Exodus chapter 20 after God gave the 10 commandments. It says an Exodus 20 verse 18, "Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and

they trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, 'You speak to us, and we'll listen; but don't let God speak to us, lest we die.' Moses said to the people, 'Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin.' [But then] the people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was."

Two experiences here of the presence of God. The manifestation of the glory of God evokes fear in human beings. And there is the believing fear of reverence and awe, represented by the reaction of Moses. That's a believing fear. That's a fear of a believer, a fear of one who knows and loves and worships God.

Then there is also the unbelieving fear represented by the people. A fear of dread, of craven death. That's the response of the people. The people could rightly sense in their fallen state. In their fallen condition, they sense their own sinfulness. We know these same people, Exodus chapter 32. They're about to dance around a golden calf, committing sexual immorality with each other and partying. They want the giddy God. They want the God that they can dance around and have

goosebumps and warm friendships and relationships and parties and drink and immediate gratification and satisfaction.

They don't want this God. So, the people sense their condition before God. They feel the distance between their sinful selves and the Holy God. So, there is in them at this moment when they see the glory of God, the weight of God. They have an absence of peace. Isaiah 43:24, God says, "You have burdened me with your sins; you've wearied me with your iniquities." Few chapters later Isaiah 59:2, "Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear."

People like to encourage sometimes unbelievers to pray. We need to gather around the pole and pray. We need to have a day of prayer and I'm certainly all for encouraging people to reverence God, to turn to him, to call out for his help. As a nation we have departed from that so far and look where we are. But listen, when good, conservative, rural, hardworking, salt of the earth folks regard iniquity in their hearts, you know what?

God does not hear them. There's no such thing as good people. They're just bad people upon whom God shows mercy and grace and favor. God said through Jeremiah. Jeremiah 5:21 and following, he says, "Hear this, O foolish and senseless people, who have eyes, but see not, who have ears, but hear not. Do you not fear me? Declares the Lord. Do you not tremble before me?" Like, don't you know who you're dealing with? Do you not regard my glory? Do you not regard the weight of my being? Do you not feel the heaviness of who I am?

Actually, you just continue living your lives doing the same old thing, nothing ever changing, really. That's how you're going to respond to me, he continues through Jeremiah. "I placed the sand as the boundary for the sea, a perpetual barrier that it cannot pass; though the waves tossed, they cannot prevail; though they roar, they cannot pass over it."

Think about that imagery there. He places the sand, little, tiny grains that you can barely see with your naked eye, and they are the boundary for the powerful waves of the ocean. Why? Because God ordained it. He takes the little insignificant grains of sand. And he amasses them and makes them boundaries

for the entire oceans of the earth. And he says, I control the oceans, I control the tides. I keep the waters from covering the land, from covering you, where you live. Don't you fear me? Aren't you going to tremble before me? Aren't you gonna regard my glory, the weight of who I am?

He continues through Jeremiah, "But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and gone away. They don't say in their hearts, 'Let us fear the Lord our God, who gives the rain in its season, the autumn rain and the spring rain and keeps for us the weeks appointed for the harvest. [Oh, my people], your iniquities have turned these away, and your sins have kept good from you."

No peace between God and man. Because man's sin brings him into conflict with God's holiness, man's sin puts him at enmity with God. There can be no peace. There can be no reconciliation between God and man apart from God reconciling his justice. There must be a just punishment for sin. For every sin, for all sins, and the total removal of sin, there must be a propitiation of the wrath of God. What is that? A propitiation means a satisfaction of the wrath of God. He must be appeased, must be

propitiated. His wrath must be removed, taken away. And how does that come? But through death for sin. And that sin must also be expiated, not just propitiated, but expiated, removed, separated from us as far as the east is from the west.

How can that happen? That's what we read earlier in the antiphonal refrains of Psalm 118. Salvation by sacrifice. "Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the House of the Lord." Come on in. Why? Because the Lord is God. He made his light to shine upon us. So, bind the sacrifice with chords to the horns of the altar. Salvation by sacrifice. A peace that comes that can only come through the blood of an atoning sacrifice. All this pointing to. In the good providence of God, by what he ordained, by what he orchestrated, by what he's planned and brought to fruition.

In this procession from the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem, God manifest in Christ, the mediator of a new covenant, ratified by his blood. That's what Paul says in Colossians 1:19, "For in him [who's that? It's in Christ. In Jesus Christ] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell." The fullness of an

infinite God. That's an infinity of goodness, eternality, omnipotence, omniscience. His full power, his full glory, the fullness of God was pleased to dwell in him. That's the incarnation. And then to do what? Through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Again, salvation sacrifice of peace that comes and can only come through blood atonement. At this most basic level, peace is contrasted with war. War is the probably the ultimate outbreak, you could say, of enmity, hatred, hostility. War is the outbreak of it, and it's the opposite of peace. Peace, the opposite of war, is the ultimate expression not just of a cessation of conflict or hostility, but an expression of harmony.

So put those at opposite ends of the spectrum. You can put disintegration in war, destruction in war, contrast it with harmony and integration in peace. One author put it this way. And he's surveying the ancient classical Greek statements on the concept of peace. He says, "Peace is not only the elimination of war, but an organization of the future because it guarantees tranquility and wealth and an opportunity for all sorts of

happiness and prosperity that comes into the biblical concept of peace." God sent his Son and all the fullness of deity in human flesh to secure this kind of peace.

Again, not just the cessation of hostility, but to secure a harmony. To secure the right ordering of all things. Colossians 1:20, "to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."

So beloved, don't just think that because I'm saved, I'm good and I just coast my way to heaven. If you think that way, ask yourself: Am I really a Christian? Because Christians don't think like that. Christians want peace with God. That is not only the cessation of his hostility against me for my sin. I want that, obviously. But that's just this first step. That's just removing the obstacle.

What I really long for is reconciliation with God, a relationship with him. To know him, to follow him, that my life would be rightly ordered according to his will. That my priorities, my thinking, all my relationships, everything in my life, my business, my so called private world and public world.

Everything comes together reconciled to what he wants. That is peace. That is the right ordering of all things. That's what Christ came to do. In the cross God judge sin, the enemy of all peace, the cause of all disorder, the disruption of all harmony, the disintegration of all order, and all structure. "God sent his own son, [Romans 8:3] in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, and thus condemned the sin in the flesh."

So sins the problem. Sin is the source of all enmity, and while it remains undealt with while sin remains unjudged. There can be no peace, there can be no reconciliation. But with sin judged, it opens up an avenue for peace and as I said, not just the cessation of hostility, but an opportunity for harmony. For full reconciliation, for fully doing God's will. This is why Paul says continuing in Colossians 1 verse 21, you who were once alienated, hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, and as you were not at all at peace", but you were living contrary to his glory, you once alienated, hostile in mind, doing evil deeds. "He is now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death," in order that what?

In order that you may coast and live your best life now as you coast your way into heaven to walk the streets of gold with all your buddies and your friends, and you have a big party in heaven? No, that's not what Colossians 1 says. "In order to present you holy, blameless, and above reproach before him." In other words, to live in peace, to live in harmony, to live a reconciled life.

Now by the grace of God, Moses understood that he didn't understand that fully, but he understood that truly. And I would dare say he understood that better than many of us living today. We can see what he longed for more than anything else. God, show me your glory. God, I won't go ahead as the leader of this nation unless you go with me. I long for you. I long for a glimpse of your ways, your glory. Please show me who you are. Moses understood this. As I said, not fully, but he truly understood. Moses is drawn by the holiness of God.

He's compelled to come near. He's not repelled. He's not turned away. That's why he tried to encourage the people when they withdrew from God. Do not fear. Come on people, don't go away. Don't fear, don't run. He's evangelizing his people. God's

come to test you. So, the fear of him may be before you that you may not sin. Sins the problem people. Deal with your sin and come near to God. But the people stood far off. They're repelled by the glory of divine holiness. They held on to their sin, and that sin has proven manifold, manifestly in Exodus 32 and all through the record of the Old Testament.

Moses, though he drew near to the thick darkness. Not because the thick darkness was so appealing, that because the thick darkness is where God was. He's willing to go through with whatever he's got to go through. Though would cause his heart to tremble, his knees to buckle, his flesh to pull back and recoil. He's pressing forward because he wants to be where God is. He's compelled by glory. He seeks God's perfect peace. He trusts in his reconciliation. He trusts in his power.

So, you can go back to Luke 19 now with that in your mind. as the King makes his way down the road, riding the colt of a donkey down the Mount of Olives, down in the Kidron Valley, he comes in his incarnational glory. He comes to secure the peace in order to reconcile his people. And they had no idea. They all

shouted. Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven, glory in the highest.

As we said, they spoke better than they knew. But Jesus knew. He knew how the peace in heaven and the peace on earth would be accomplished. He knew how God would be glorified. He knew how the demand of the weight of God's holiness would be satisfied. He knew how divine justice would be satisfied, satiated. How the wisdom of God, the power of God would be put on display, would come at the expense of his dead body hanging on a cross. And you know what? He's eager. He's running to the cross. So, the king comes, number one in incomparable humility. Number two, he comes in incarnational glory. And thirdly, this is verses 39 to 40. We can't deal fully with this, but we'll try to get to some of it now and then next time.

But thirdly, number three, the king comes to us in irrepressible majesty. The king comes to us in irrepressible majesty. "Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples.'" Censure them, silence them, "He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones will cry out." It's a future tense verb there. They will cry

out. Not they would, but they will. The Pharisees rejection. We know this from the rest of the narrative. It's gonna spread like a virus among the people.

That's why Jesus laments over Jerusalem in versus 41 to 44. He knows what's coming. He knows the betrayal, the rest, the trials, the execution. He's under no delusion about the outcome. He knows what's coming. And it's not as though Jesus is some unwitting victim of circumstance that he's like this well-intentioned but wrong self-styled Messiah. It's not in spite of all his best efforts, he fails to accomplish his mission. No, he knows exactly what's coming. He comes to Jerusalem on this coronation procession in this manner, and it's all a part of the plan. He knows it's going to end in his death, and in fact he's counting on it. Why? Because he came to bring peace between heaven and earth.

He's provoking this. He's just waiting through this coronation procession for such as the Pharisees to come voicing their complaint. He's not taken by surprise. In fact, before Jesus determined to go to Jerusalem, it says and Luke 9:51, he told his disciples back in verse 22 of the same chapter, "The

Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders and the chief priests in the scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." Quite a prophecy, quite a prediction.

So, he's been eager to get to Jerusalem. Now with the city inside the temple just ahead, even though the people seem to be receiving Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus has met with a very sentiment that's going to kill him. The complaint of these Pharisees that works like a contagion working through all the crowd. He predicted this too, back in Luke 13:34, when he said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones, those who are sent to it! Oh, how often I would have gathered your children together as a hen gathers a brood under her wings, and you were not willing! Behold, your house is left to you forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

And we look at this verse here, Luke 19:38. And we say, aha, they've said it, Eureka. Blessed is he who comes, the name of the Lord. Sadly it's not this day, in spite of how he comes, presents himself to his people. Showing great humility, manifesting incarnate glory, revealing his true majesty in spite

of how these people seem to be receiving him, what is actually happening is what He has said about them all along. "These people are honoring me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Must have lips and hearts aligned so that what is spoken from the mouth is coming from the bowels of the heart.

That's not happening here, because in less than a week's time, these people are going to be not saying blessed as you comes in the name of the Lord, but crucify him, crucify him. His blood be on our heads and on the hearts of our children as well. Pharisees come and they're taking offense at this whole scene. They're envious of Jesus. The pilot knew that he could see through their complaints against him. They're trumping up charges against him. Even the Roman governor Pilate. It's not his first time around the block. He knew envy when he saw it.

The Pharisees are irritated with his influence. They feel nothing but contempt for him. They resent the way he's had, sway over the crowds. They resent the seeming affection of the people for him. This has to stop. What is it that's bugging him? Put simply, Jesus is accepting the praise of these people. They're

recognizing and knowledge him as the Messiah and the, the Pharisees are offended because not only are the people deluded, ignorant masses are going to say what ignorant masses say, but even worse, Jesus is not stopping them. He's letting this continue.

Can we have some modicum of propriety here, teacher? Get a hold of these people. What kind of disciples are these. They're at enmity with God. They can't see Jesus clearly because they are at enmity with God, and so they're at enmity with his chosen Messiah as well. So, they don't run around trying to silence the crowd. That would be a bad tactic on their part, trying to silence the crowd at this time, probably get him stoned. They're man fears, not God fears. They're man fears.

So, they go to Jesus. They have so little regard for him, they think they can command him. They think nothing of commanding him to rebuke his disciples. And they, they come with this kind of faux shock. Like, oh, oh teacher, look at this impertinence, look at this ignorance. Get a hold of this outrage. Absolutely blind. They discern nothing about him, nothing at all. In fact, rather than discerning very little,

even the crowds discerned little. Even the disciples didn't understand everything. They had to see him be fully glorified. All his predictions come true before they saw it fully.

But the Pharisees, it's not just that they don't understand. It's that they come to an opposite conclusion about him. They hate him. How could you hate him? He is glorious. He's majestic. He's coming in humility. The truth is, they don't see Jesus for who he is because they don't want to see him for who he is. They hate him and they're religious people. You know, the deepest hatred and the most violent outburst of persecution come from the most religious. We see it in Islamic terrorism. We saw it in the Apostle Paul as he tried to persecute Christians, throw him in jail, have him killed, stoned. We see in these Pharisees as they're about to crucify Jesus.

Make no mistake folks, as we head into a further, further times of trouble in our country, it's not going to be pretty for us. The violent, religious secularists. I know that sounds like a contradiction in terms, an oxymoron. But the secularists in our country are very religious, evangelistic. They've got a worldview and they demand that we line up. We bow before their

authority. It's coming. If they hated him, they'll hate us too. The greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world, eh?

These Pharisees religious, but they're worldly minded. They're unconverted men even though they are churchgoers. They're spiritually blind. They see meekness and humility in Jesus as weakness. They want power. They want glory for themselves. They want military might. They want to take back society. They want to overthrow the Romans. They want to elevate the Jews. They want to establish the Kingdom for themselves and set up morality and laws according to their system. So, in Jesus, they mistake his meekness for weakness and they have made up their minds. They despise his humility. They ignore his glory. They're blind to his majesty. Jesus is going to speak to them in a moment.

But for the time being, Jesus receives this praise. He receives it because it fits his station. It is what is due to him. And there are true disciples in the crowd who are speaking this praise and this worship from their hearts, from changed hearts. They're believers. There are other people, many people

in this crowd, who are just going along with the show. But if Paul tells us in Philippians 2, "One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father," and there will be some knees that bow voluntarily because they bow now.

There will be some knees then that are forced to bow. They will bow underneath the rod of iron, but they will confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of the Father. God has ordained praise for the Son and the God who can raise up children for Abraham from the very stones, as John the Baptist said in Luke 3:8. He can also extract praise from the stones. These stones, if the praises of humanity fall silent. If the praises of God's people fall silent, well you can evoke praise from the stones. Very interesting metaphor here. The stones will cry out.

Only four or five different ways that I've found the commentators explain that. But for now, we can just say this, that biblical poetry often portrays inanimate objects in creation that praise God. We heard that this morning in Psalm 96. Inanimate objects of creation, the trees and the mountains and all that, that give praise to God. "The heavens declare the

glory of God, [Psalm 19:1], the sky proclaims his handiwork." Isaiah 55:12, "the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees in the field shall clap their hands."

It's poetic imagery, isn't it? Often in the Bible we see that kind of poetic imagery. Stones, in particular. Stones in the Bible portray solidity, durability, we could say immutability. It's like the mountains that will always be there, The stones will always be there. There are other less durable substance in creation that pass away. But stones, they remain. They remain as witnesses.

Oftentimes Joshua, Joshua 24 sets up a stone and says this stone, he's not a pantheist or a panentheist. He just says this stone has heard this testimony, this is God. We will serve him. We'll follow him. "As for me, and my house, we'll serve the Lord." All the Israel says, yeah, we're going to do the same thing. Okay. I've set this stone up. The stone heard you. He's not saying the stone has ears. There's life in the stone. It's not a Disney cartoon. He doesn't believe that. He's just saying this stone is gonna outlive this generation and the next and the

next, and it's going to be here on through the ages as a perpetual testimony of what you said here on this day.

That's why the 10 Commandments were inscribed in stone. Perpetual testimony. When the crowd chanted in Psalm 118:26 "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." If you go back a few verses in Psalm 118, it says, "the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone." A couple days later from this event here, Jesus is going to quote that very verse. He's going to quote it to the chief priest, describes the elders who challenged his authority.

You can see that in next chapter, Luke 20 verse 17, no matter what they say. No matter what they do, the Pharisees, the religious leaders, though they crucify Jesus, though they try to silence him completely. God has made this one that they reject made him the cornerstone, which means his majesty is irrepressible. It is solid, it is durable, it is immutable. No silencing him. You know something else? Those who receive Jesus as the Messiah. As God's cornerstone, we're cut from the same stone, aren't we?

Therefore, we're made of the same durable stuff. This generation of Abraham's descendants according to the flesh, those who witnessed Jesus' procession but refused to receive their king, ultimately rejecting his glory, trying to suppress his majesty. Nevertheless, we find there are living stones. Those whom God raises up as an abiding witness to his glory, built into a holy temple in the Lord.

That's us, beloved, that's us. It's by no accident. It's by no coincidence that the disciple whom Jesus nicknamed "The Rock" after Jesus ascended into heaven. Peter did some reflecting on his own name, and he wrote, as it were, a theology of stone. For us living stones to read and rejoice in 1 Peter 2:4 through 8, he says, "As you come to him a living stone rejected by men, but in the sight of God chosen and precious. You yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture, behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone, chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."

So, the honor is for you who believe living stones, but for those who do not believe. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of a fence. Beloved you and me, we are those living stones. Though the generation who saw this procession, though they fall silent, though they submit to the censure of the Pharisees, you know what we're crying out.

We're singing in praise and gratitude and worship of Jesus Christ. This king who has come to us in incomparable humility, in incarnational glory and an irrepressible majesty. Paul says, we're being built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord and in him you are also being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. And there's so much more to see here.

Just going to have to cut it off at this moment and return the procession next time. But let me just ask, what about you? As you hear all this from Luke, his record, of Jesus procession into Jerusalem. What about you? Do you take the humility of

Christ for granted or are you compelled to worship him for his humility and his meekness? Through his humility and his meekness, you see your way through to the weight of his incarnational glory.

Do you see his glory? Do you see the peace that he is wrought for you in his own body on the cross? Do you bow before his kingly majesty? Does his holiness compel you to come, or keep you at a distance? I pray it's the former, not the latter, because to know him as he is, in his humility, his glory, his majesty, my friend that is living. That's what we were created to be and to do for all of eternity. Let's pray.

Our Father, we thank you once again for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for his majesty. That he comes as a king and yet he comes to us in a way that we can apprehend, comes in humility. He comes presenting himself in his first advent as the suffering servant, the one who did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. He came to win a people. Not by compelling them from the outside external pressure, but by winning them from the inside out, making them new creations by the spirit, causing them to be born

again to a living hope. Giving them a heart to believe and to understand. Giving them a new nature, a new spirit, one that longs to obey, longs to do your will.

We thank you, Father, for your perfect plan of redemption. We thank you for the great wisdom that it demonstrates. We know that a gospel like this can only be revealed from heaven, can never be made up like so many manmade religions that makes sense to them.

We thank you that you have been pleased to open our eyes to the truth, we asked that you would help us to walk in it, that we would not just see the peace between us and you that's won by Jesus Christ and his atoning victory on the cross. We'd not just see that peace is just, just a cessation of hostility with you, but that we would see it instead as a, a compelling force to live in harmony with you, to be reconciled to you fully. To enjoy the relationship with you in obedience, in truth, love and worship. We thank you for the time we've had this morning, and may it be used to glorify you in the name of Christ. To sanctify us by the Spirit. It's in Jesus name we pray. Amen.