

What Will the King Find?

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[0:00] Well, good morning, everyone. Let me add my welcome to Graham's. As you've already heard, my name's Alistair. I have the privilege of being on staff here. And it would be helpful if you have your Bibles open in front of you at Luke chapter 19.

But before we dive into this passage and look at it together, let's have a word of prayer, shall we? Heavenly Father, we thank you for the privilege that we have of gathering this morning to hear from your word.

Father, we pray that you would touch us by your word, that we would be blessed, and that we would also be challenged. And we ask all of this, that we may glorify you in our lives. In Jesus' name. Amen.

So, just a show of hands, very quickly. How many of you have ever booked a holiday online before? There you go. So that's quite a lot of you. Now, I'm going to let you into a little bit of a secret. I'm not a great fan of technology.

So I find it really, really scary booking a holiday online. Because you can look on the website. You find this amazing deal. You see these absolutely breathtaking photos.

[1:07] You read reviews of how people love that hotel, that resort, that country, that beach, whatever it is. And you're so excited. Because you've been saving up for it all year round.

But the question that lingers in the back of my mind is, what will I find when I get there? What will I find when I get there? Will it be as nice as it's supposed to be? And so, when Sabine and I went on our honeymoon in 2013 in May, we went to a hotel in Graz in Austria.

We were there for two days. And my brother-in-law had said that it was an amazing hotel with a fantastic view. So we were really excited. So you can imagine how devastated we were when we pulled up to a construction site.

The hotel that we were staying for, staying at for two days, had a 360 degree building site around it. So it was not very nice. And there are huge reviews, there are many reviews online of people finding dirty rooms, bugs in the shower.

Of just not finding things the way they were supposed to be. Well, the big question that I want us to think about this morning is, what is the king going to find?

[2:21] What will the king find? So when Jesus arrives in Jerusalem, is he going to find a people who are devoted to him? A people who love him and who worship him in spirit and truth?

Or will he find a construction site? Will he find a people who make a whole load of noise, but on the inside, they are spiritually bare and empty?

What will the king find? Now, why do I say that this is the question we're going to think about this morning? Who is this king that we're talking about and where is he going to find something? Well, let's just have a quick recap of where we've been in Luke's gospel.

Maybe you remember at the beginning of Luke's gospel, Luke says that he has written an orderly account to Theophilus, a man, a friend of his, that he may have certainty about the things that he's been taught concerning Jesus Christ.

And throughout Luke's gospel, Luke has left us little signposts to help us navigate through this orderly account of the life of Jesus. So in Luke chapter 9, verse 51, it says, And he set his face to go to Jerusalem.

[3:31] And then in chapter 13, 22 and 17, 11, there is a phrase which says along the lines of, And Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

So the whole of Luke's gospel has been building up to the moment that we see on the page right in front of us. In Luke chapter 19, verse 28, the king arrives in Jerusalem.

Now this is the beginning of a new section in Luke's gospel and the orderly account of the life of Jesus. And it is from Luke chapter 19, verse 28 to 21, verse 30.

And the big question that we're going to be thinking about over the next few weeks is, Will God's people accept God's king? Will God's people accept God's king? Jesus is God's king who was sent by God to rule over God's people.

And we're going to spend a few weeks in this section. I want you to have that question in the back of your mind. But at the beginning of this new section, we see Jesus, God's king, the chosen one.

[4 : 35] So the question that we're going to ask is, what will the king find? There are three things that we'll see this morning. We'll see the king arrives. We'll see the king weeps and the king rebukes.

Will Jesus find a people who are expecting him? A people who are excited about his arrival and the arrival of God's kingdom? Or will he find a people who've turned their backs on him? Well, let's look at the passage and see what God has to teach us this morning.

So the first thing that we see is that the king arrives. Verses 28 to 40, the king arrives. So at this moment, Jesus is standing just outside Jerusalem.

He's just taught the crowds and disciples about the kingdom of God. And he turns to two of his disciples and says, go to the next village and you'll find a donkey. Bring it to me. And so they go and bring it to Jesus because the Lord needs it, as Jesus says.

Do you remember what you were doing on the 29th of April, 2011? Probably not. Maybe it's just a date I've picked out, but it's actually a pretty important date to the royal family.

[5 : 48] So maybe you were sitting at home glued to your television as you watched the wedding procession of Prince William and his wife-to-be, Kate. You probably remember scenes similar to this one.

Tons of people flocked to the streets to see the wedding, to see the procession as the prince and his bride made their way to the church, surrounded by big, beautiful horses, by people dressed in lovely and frankly a little bit strange outfits as well.

But they were being pulled in this really lovely decorated carriage. It was even declared a public holiday so that people could be there in London. Or if you couldn't be there in person, that you could at least watch it on television.

That's the kind of entrance we'd expect from royalty, isn't it? Even in Jesus' day, when the king returned to a city, there was a huge festival that took place which took absolutely days to prepare. The animals were fattened weeks in advance to prepare a huge feast. The streets were lined and jam-packed with people who were shouting encouragements and expressing their love for their king who's just returned.

[7 : 01] But Jesus doesn't make an entrance like that. Instead of coming in with all the attention on him, instead of being pulled by a huge horse and a lovely carriage, Jesus is going to enter Jerusalem on the back of a humble donkey.

Now this isn't an insignificant detail that Luke has just thrown in there to pique our interest. But this detail helps us see who Jesus is.

So let me read a verse from the Old Testament which is pointing forward to the promised king of God, the Messiah, the one who would save God's people. This verse is from the book of Zechariah, which was written pointing forward to the day that God would reconcile the world to himself.

It points to the day where God's kingdom would come and the arrival of his king. So let's read this verse together. Rejoice greatly, daughter Zion. Shout, daughter Jerusalem.

See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, a fowl of a donkey. Do you see the significance of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey?

[8 : 10] Jesus hasn't just randomly thought, oh yeah, that would be a good way to get into the city. Take the load off my feet. But Jesus has done this to point out his identity as God's king.

And the whole of the Old Testament points to Jesus being God's king, the Messiah of God's people. Look at the description of the king in this verse.

God's chosen king will be righteous and victorious, but he will also be humble. Now based on what we've already seen in Luke's gospel and based on what we'll see in these final chapters, this is a completely fitting description of Jesus, isn't it?

Jesus is the son of God. He never sinned. He was perfect. Never rebelled against God. And yet he died a criminal's death. Was it because he deserved it?

No. Was it because his enemies defeated him? Definitely not. In fact, the absolute opposite is true. At the cross of Jesus, we see his righteousness and his victory most clearly.

[9 : 22] Why? Because at the cross of Jesus, he defeated mankind's worst enemy, sin. The sin which cuts us off from God.

The wrongdoings of our lives, which make us deserving of God's wrath. All of that was poured on Jesus, but he was not defeated. He rose victorious from the grave three days later.

He defeated sin and death and made reconciliation with God possible for all those who call on his name. This is God's king.

This is the king who God had chosen to rule over his people. So think back to the question. What is this king going to find? As Jesus makes his way to Jerusalem, we see two responses.

We see faith and we see rejection. Look at what the disciples are doing in verses 37 and 38. The whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen.

[10 : 34] Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. Jesus' disciples are declaring who Jesus is and they are glorifying and praising God for the wonderful things that they have seen.

They might not have fully understood exactly what Jesus' kingdom would look like or exactly how Jesus is going to be God's king, but they believed that he was the Messiah and they joyfully worshipped God because of it.

The disciples had faith and that faith led them to joyfully worshipping God. So that's the faith of the disciples. But the other response is the Pharisees.

They reject God. See, they heard what the disciples were shouting and they turned to Jesus and said, Jesus, stop them. Rebuke them. Do you remember last week how Graham took us through a parable and we saw some servants who didn't want a king?

Well, this week we see it, but not in a parable. We see it in real life. The Pharisees are rejecting God's king. And the devastating news is that the Pharisees should have been the ones who were expecting Jesus.

[11 : 48] They should have been joining in the disciples as they shouted praise to God, not telling Jesus to stop them. See, the Pharisees should have been welcoming Jesus in.

They should have been joining in with the shouting. These people were the teachers of the law. They were the people who taught Israel about God. They taught the Old Testament. They could quote you.

They could quote to you tons of the Old Testament. They could speak to you for hours about God's promised king who would come. But as the king stands right in front of them, instead of cheering with joy, they snap at and they reject Jesus.

The people who should have been standing at the gates of Jerusalem to welcome Jesus in. The people who should have been hanging on his every single word.

Instead of welcoming him, they reject him. But Jesus says, if my disciples stop singing praises to God, then the stones will cry out.

[12 : 51] No amount of opposition will stop the declaration going forth that God's king has arrived. Now as we sit here this morning, over 2,000 years away from this event, the same declaration rings true.

God's king has arrived. The question that I want you to think about is how will we react to God's king? Will we believe in him and praise God joyfully?

Or will we reject him? Now a question that you may be thinking about is, well, why is Jesus deserving of joyful praise? Well, because he is God in the flesh.

He is the son of God. He is the solution to our biggest problem. In Genesis chapter 3, at the beginning of the Bible, we see Adam and Eve rebel against God.

They reject God's rule. They say, we don't want your care. But a promise is made amidst all the chaos that one day God would send a man to save the people of this world.

[13 : 58] And this person will defeat sin and Satan and will reconcile the world to himself. The whole of the Old Testament fleshes out what that promise looks like and it finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

The one who is humbly walking towards the cross even though he is righteous and blameless. Jesus is going to the cross so that our sins can be dealt with.

So that we can be called the children of God. Jesus will take all of our sinfulness so that he can give us his righteousness. That is why Jesus is deserving of joyful praise this morning.

Will you accept this king? Will you think about him or will you reject him? Now this is not a decision to make lightly because it has eternal significance and because it matters so much to Jesus.

And we see that in verses 41 to 44 because the king arrives but the king weeps. Verses 41 to 44.

So let me ask you a little bit of a personal question this morning.

[15:12] What makes you cry? Think about that for a second. What makes you cry? Now for those of you who know me well and there's quite a few of you here this morning you will know that I'm not the most emotional person in the world.

And so tears are not something that happen in my life every single day. But like everyone else in the world I do cry. But I think there are two kinds of tears, aren't there?

There are the good kind where we cry because of joy because we're happy and then there are the bad kind. We cry because we're hurt. So the last time I recall crying tears of joy was at my wedding in 2013.

As I watched my wife Sabina come down the aisle I had a wee choke and you did that thing and you're like, no I'm not crying, I'm not crying. That's exactly what happened. But I was crying tears of joy.

There's nothing to be ashamed of. But maybe you're not like me. Maybe you cry at a good movie scene. Maybe you cry at the end of a nice book that you've been reading. But sadly the truth is that most of the tears that happen in our world are tears of pain.

[16:19] We cry when we lose loved ones or when we get hurt ourselves. But have you ever wondered what makes God cry? Or have you ever wondered if God cries at all?

Well in verses 41 to 43 we see that God does cry and we will find out what makes Him cry. As Jesus looks over the city of Jerusalem He weeps. Jesus is weeping because of their disobedience. So what does the king find as he arrives in Jerusalem? Well he finds a disobedient people who have turned their hearts away from God. Jesus is weeping over the constant constant disobedience that the nation of Israel have demonstrated against God.

All you have to do is skim through the Old Testament and you see time and time again how God's chosen people reject God's law and reject the people that God sends to them to call them back to Him.

Jesus weeps because these are the people who are set apart by God. And instead of obeying Him and living in peace like He wanted them to they reject God and they are also going to reject God's chosen king.

[17:33] Jesus weeps because He loves these people. Imagine the tears of a father if he if his child spits in his face turns his back and as he walks away he shouts Dad I want nothing to do with you anymore.

I don't want your rules I don't want your good plan for my life I don't want your protection or your care I want to live my life my way. Wouldn't that bring any parent to tears?

Well that's what we see happening in these verses before us. Jesus is overlooking the city which should have welcomed Him in but instead it's turned its back it's back to Him and He weeps because He loves these people and He doesn't want the judgment to befall them.

They want nothing to do with Him. In verse 42 Jesus makes a reference to peace. Jesus says that if only they knew where they could find true peace but it is hidden from their eyes.

Jesus is speaking about the peace that people have when they are in a right relationship with God. See if God's chosen people had lived according to His law if they had accepted God's King then they would have enjoyed peace with God but instead they rebelled and rejected Jesus.

[18:56] And so now Jesus speaks judgment speaks of the judgment that will come on them in verses 43 to 44. Their enemies will destroy the city not one stone will be left in its place.

This is the seriousness of their disobedience that's been going on for generations. And it's all because verse 44 they did not recognize the time of God's coming to them.

As Jesus is saying this He's overlooking the city that should have been celebrating as the disciples did. And as God is knocking on the gate of Jerusalem He knows that He will be rejected.

When the king comes to town you'd expect him to be met with rejoicing and celebration wouldn't you? But instead this chosen king in a short time will not be met with a feast He will not be met with royal robes but He will be met with a cross.

He will not be met with crowds singing praises and love but He'll be met with a crowd who are shouting crucify Him. Jesus isn't crying because He needs attention.

[20 : 11] God isn't weeping because He needs Jerusalem to praise Him but God weeps because of the judgment that will befall them because of their disobedience and because God loves them.

They've rejected the one person who could bring them peace. The one person who truly cares for them and it brings tears to God's eyes. Jesus weeps because of disobedience.

Do we weep when the world rejects God? In a church I used to attend years ago we sang a song and one of the lines said this Break my heart for what breaks yours.

is that our prayer? Does our heart break and do we weep for the same things that grieve God?

Do we cry over the lost souls in this world who are dying without a knowledge of their need for Jesus? There are so many people out there who have no idea about the good news of Jesus.

[21 : 15] They don't understand that Jesus' mission was to come and seek and save the lost. And how will they find out the truth about Jesus if no one tells them?

We should take the world's rejection of God's King seriously. We should tell people of their need to hear about Jesus because he is the only one who can bring the peace that the whole world is groaning for.

Peace with God. Do we love people enough to tell them about Jesus? Do we care enough for those around us to throw our fears and our concerns and our worries of feeling uncomfortable and do we just tell them their need of Jesus our Savior?

Let's ask God to give us a burden for the lost people of this world who do not know Jesus. How will you react this morning to God's King?

Do you have faith and joyful praise of the disciples or are you rejecting Jesus and living in disobedience to God? Your answer to that question really is not insignificant.

[22 : 29] It affects the way you live now and it will affect eternity. Everything that happens from now to the end of time. Those who are at peace with God have been promised to live in peace with God for eternity to have constant communion with God in the place that we call heaven but those who reject God Jesus says that God will reject them too and they will be under his just judgment forever.

So if you've never thought about this this morning if you've never heard about this this morning please take time to think about it. ask the person who may be brought you to church this morning or come and speak to anyone you've seen up front.

We would not want you to leave this building thinking that your response to God's king is irrelevant because it is not. It is of the utmost importance. So we've seen the king arrive.

We've seen King Jesus weep and now in verses 45 to 48 we see the king rebukes. Jesus arrives in Jerusalem and he goes to the temple.

Now what would you expect to find in a temple? You'd expect to see people who are devoted to praying and to worshipping God, wouldn't you? A place where people are devoted but instead Jesus finds that the temple has been turned into a market store.

[23 : 58] If people were to obey the Old Testament laws then they needed to travel to the temple and offer sacrifices. to God. But as you can imagine travelling with livestock and other animals wasn't the easiest thing not even today.

And so in Jesus' day people set up shop and they would sell animals that people could buy so they could bring their sacrifices which is actually a pretty good thing, pretty helpful thing to do.

However, the problem that Jesus is addressing here is that there seem to be people who in cooperation with the priests are selling animals in the courts of the temple.

More specifically in the place where non-Jews are supposed to worship, the place where they're supposed to pray. And not only that but they're selling animals at an inflated price so that they can make money.

They were corrupt and they were stopping people from worshipping God. These sales people were prohibiting people from their worship.

[25 : 02] They were making money off of people's worship and they weren't even thinking twice about it. They were trying to make money but in the process they were stopping people from coming to God.

They put their financial gain above the spiritual need of people. And so Jesus drives them out. And in verse 46 Jesus quotes from the book of Isaiah.

Now you don't have to turn there but if we were to look back at that passage we would see that God is speaking to the people of Israel the leaders of Israel and he is saying that the temple is supposed to be a beacon of light.

It is supposed to be the place where people can hear about God and the salvation that he offers. Let me read Isaiah 56 verse 7 the verse that Jesus quotes. For my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.

Do you see the problem? The temple was supposed to be a house of prayer where all peoples from all over the world could come and hear about God and praise him. But now if anyone was to come to the temple instead of being able to pray in peace and quiet, instead of being able to pray and pour out their hearts before God, they would find market stalls.

[26 : 22] Instead of being able to listen to the priests and teachers of the law to understand the Old Testament to hear the marvelous works of the almighty creator God, they would find money lenders arguing for more and more interest.

Instead of the temple being a welcoming place to foreigners, it has become a den of robbers. And so Jesus drives them out. But in verses 45 and 48, if you look down, you'll see the authority of God's king.

In verse 45, Jesus drives out people and nobody stops him. He cleanses the temple and it's almost as if the people raise their hands, bow their heads and walk out because they know that what they're doing is wrong.

They have been rebuked. And in verse 48, we see Jesus staying and teaching people in the temple and it says that they hung on his words.

Now we don't know what Jesus was teaching the people as he spoke to them, but he must have been speaking directly into their lives and their situations, telling them exactly what they needed because of how they listened.

[27 : 39] Jesus spoke with an authority that was not the norm. He spoke with authority because of who he is. This is the king of God through whom and for whom the whole world was created.

He has no beginning. He has no end. And he's teaching people if only they knew who he truly was. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders of the people didn't like what Jesus was teaching and they wanted to kill him.

Now based on what we've seen already in Luke's gospel, we've seen Jesus teaching about the kingdom of God. He's been teaching people about their need to repent and turn to God and their need to follow him urgently.

The kingdom of God is at hand. But some people didn't like this teaching. The religious leaders in Jesus' day had become so focused on being good enough for God, so focused on looking the part and saying the right things, looking good in the eyes of the people, that they had actually replaced God by their religious living.

God's God's God. The king has now arrived and he's disrupting their way of living and calling people back to a true sense of God and a true sense of worship. And they see all of this and they decide that they're going to kill Jesus.

[29 : 06] So as we draw to a close this morning, think back to that question. What will the king find? Well, the king has found a people who praise him and declare him as king and lord, but he has also found a people who have turned their backs on him.

As he looked over the city, over a people that he loved, instead of finding a spiritually vibrant community whose desire was to praise and worship God with everything in their lives, he finds a rotten people who in their disobedience have rejected God and will come under judgment.

King Jesus walks into the temple which was supposed to be a place of prayer, but it is a den of robbers. The people's hearts have been turned away from God. And you see the love of a father who weeps over his children who have walked away and the discipline of a loving father who corrects them because of their disobedient actions.

God's love of a God. So I don't think the king found what he should have found. It shouldn't have been this way. But let me ask us a more urgent question this morning.

If this king, if Jesus were to look into our hearts this morning, what would he find? Would he find a person who praises and worships God in spirit and truth?

[30 : 35] would he find a pure heart whose desire is to see the good news of Jesus go out from this place and to touch the whole world, to reach the lost souls of this world?

Or would Jesus find a heart which has gone cold? A person who goes through all the motions of a religious lifestyle, but a heart which shows no real love for God?

Whatever your answer to that question is this morning, I would encourage you to keep your eyes on Jesus. Maybe you're looking to him for the first time, or maybe you're returning to him.

In a moment we're going to end our service by singing these words about Jesus. This is our God, the servant king. He calls us now to follow him, to bring our lives as a daily offering of worship to the servant king.

As we sing these words, I want you to think about them. Jesus is the servant king who left his place of glory in heaven to come down and live in a fallen, corrupt, sinful world, to save a fallen and corrupt and sinful people by dying on a cross in our place.

[31 : 53] Consider this king who calls us to follow him. What will the king find in our hearts this morning? Let's pray together. Just before we sing our song, let's just have a moment of silence.

Consider this king and consider our hearts before him. loving God in heavenly father, we thank you that you are a God who cares, that you are a God who forgives and that you are a God who loves. Father, forgive us for the times that we have rejected you. Forgive us for the times when we rebel against you. help us be a people who welcome you in every part of our lives with joyful praise because you are the only one who is worthy of our praise.

Our prayer this morning is that as you look into our hearts, that you would find a people who are welcoming you in and not a people who are rejecting you. Amen.

Amen. Amen.