

# The Time of God's Coming to You - Luke 19:28-44

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[ 0 : 00 ] From past experience, do all the adjustments of the podium before you start. So I'm just going to move slightly over. I feel there's too much of a bias towards this side.

People over here need here too. Just tilt this. Actually, I should have said while we were beginning, if you could turn, please, in your Bibles to Luke chapter 19.

Luke chapter 19. As Jonathan intimated, we've been going through the gospel of Luke over an extended period.

So we've done about 14 in our series on surprising salvation. And we've taken a break for a little while, but are coming back to it now. So beginning again this series into Luke.

And so Luke chapter 19. And it is a familiar story for many. But let's read together. We're going to read from verse 28 down to verse 44 of Luke chapter 19.

[ 1 : 07 ] After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethpage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to him, Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden.

Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, why are you untying it? Say, the Lord needs it. Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them.

As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, Why are you untying the colt? They replied, the Lord needs it. They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt, and put Jesus on it.

As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen.

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 Jesus, Teacher, rebuke your disciples.

[ 2 : 21 ] I tell you, he replied, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out. But as he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace, but now 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 recognize the time of God's coming to you. Let's pray.

Our Father, we thank you that as we read these words, yes, they're the words of Luke, but supremely they are the words of God himself through the Holy Spirit.

And we thank you that as we open the Bible, it's not us that sits in judgment over it, but it really sifts us and helps us to know who we are and who God is and how we should respond.

[ 3 : 36 ] So, Father, I ask that your Spirit will help us this morning to understand what it is that you would say to us and that we would rightly respond in Jesus' name.

Amen. This morning as we resume our series in the Gospel of Luke, we're walking alongside Jesus as he finally reaches Jerusalem.

And we're going to walk beside him through Judean villages and we're going to walk among the crowds as he reaches the end of his ministry. After three years, Jesus is moving forwards, forwards towards his own death.

It's always a good time to ask this question, but it's especially good now. Who is Jesus? Who is Jesus?

Is he a good man? Is he more than that? Is he a social revolutionary establishing his way of life? Or is he truly God's king bringing about God's kingdom?

[ 4 : 50 ] Jesus is certainly a man who is on the move. The road to Jerusalem began ten chapters ago in Luke chapter 9 where Jesus sets his face towards Jerusalem and he's resolute.

That's where he's going to. And as he's moving from Galilee, which is kind of in the north of the country, and he's making his way down to Jerusalem over ten chapters, he's going from place to place.

And if you flick through the chapters, you see that Jesus is teaching, often in parables, on the nature of the kingdom of God.

The kingdom that he is bringing about. And he is giving his disciples and his followers and the people a vision of what the kingdom looks like and what membership of the kingdom is, what it means to belong to God's kingdom.

And he's talking about kingdom ethics. What do we mean by ethics? Well, we mean simply this. What is right and what is wrong? What is good and what is bad within God's kingdom?

[ 5 : 57 ] And he's talking about kingdom priorities. What is it that you should be doing in God's kingdom? What is it that matters? What is most important? And Jesus is saying through all of this, and these are the familiar stories, that it's the repentant tax collector who stands at the back and beats his chest humbly and says, woe is me a sinner that is justified by God, not the arrogant Pharisee.

It's about the return of lost things. It's like finding the lost coin or finding your lost sheep. Or ultimately, it's about finding lost sons and daughters and heaven rejoicing that people are coming into God's kingdom.

It's stories like the Samaritan who comes across the beaten up Jew and yet reaches somehow across that divide, that racial and ethnic and cultural divide.

And he's the one that's the good neighbor towards that poor Jewish man that's been beaten up. That's what being a good neighbor in the kingdom of God looks like. And it's not easy.

It's not easy to be a member. It's not easy to be a disciple. And Jesus knows this and he spells it out for people that come to him. And people want to follow Jesus. And he says, come follow me.

[ 7 : 20 ] But the foxes, they have holes and the birds that are flying in the sky, they have nests. But the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.

You want to follow me? Well, you have to hate your family. And Jesus used those words. You have to hate your family. You have to hate your own life. You have to lose yourself to be my disciple. In fact, you have to pick up your cross to follow me. Jesus knows about his kingdom. And he knows that it's a kingdom of repentant sinners and outcasts.

And the kingdom at this point is, it's no bigger than a mustard seed. The upside down nature of the kingdom, it continues as he leads his followers towards Jerusalem to witness his death.

And it's easy for us because we know the whole story. But for those disciples to be following Jesus as king to his death was an impossibility that they just could not grasp.

[ 8 : 29 ] Many times during his journey, Jesus tells them of his death. The most recent one is chapter 18 and verse 31. If you want to look back at those verses, chapter 18, page 105.2.

Jesus takes the 12 aside and he tells them, we are going up to Jerusalem and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled.

He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him. This is very specific. They will mock him, insult him, and spit on him. They will flog him and kill him. On the third day, he will rise again.

And the disciples who are following Jesus, their king, did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them and they did not know and they did not know what he was talking about.

You see, in the disciples' world, messianic kings go to Jerusalem to receive a crown, not to be nailed to a cross.

[ 9 : 37 ] We join Jesus for the last few miles of his journey in chapter 19. Jerusalem, the city of kings, has come into view.

Verse 28. And we're approaching Jerusalem. So we've come down through Galilee. We've come down kind of the eastern side of the Jordan River and we've crossed over. We've come through Jericho just a little bit beforehand where we met Zacchaeus, again, an unlikely convert to Jesus' kingdom, this hated tax collector.

And as we're approaching from the east, we're just a few miles from Jerusalem. And we've the town of Bethany. And that's the hometown of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, the town we're maybe familiar with.

But it's flooded because we're joining up with thousands upon thousands of pilgrims that are also heading towards the city for the biggest festival of the year, the big event, the time when lambs in their tens and even hundreds of thousands, by some estimates 200,000 lambs are sacrificed during Passover as a reminder of God's deliverance from judgment during the Exodus.

We have men, we have women, we have children, we have babies, we've married, we've single, we've animals. Everyone is simply on the move heading to Jerusalem. And some will have been planning this all year and others are the ones being dragged along.

[11:06] Come on, it's the family tradition, don't disgrace me, you have to come to Jerusalem. But everyone is on the move. And so we come to verse 29. Jesus approaches Bethpage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives.

And he sends two of his disciples saying to them, go to the village ahead of you and as you enter it you will find a coal tie there which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you why are you untying it, say the Lord needs it.

Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, why are you untying the colt? They replied, the Lord needs it.

They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. And as he went along people spread their cloaks on the road. By one person's estimate Jesus travels at least 3,000 miles during his three year ministry.

So about, you know, it's a fair distance. Over that whole time not once do we read in any of the gospels a mention of a donkey or a colt or a horse or any other kind of animal or any other kind of transport for Jesus.

[12:19] Not once. Maybe you're not curious but I'm curious. Why coming to the end of his ministry and his life with Jerusalem in sight we're only talking now a matter of miles.

Why is Jesus looking for a colt? Why is he looking for an animal? Why this newfound insistence by Jesus on requisitioning things for his use?

Well I think in some way Jesus is revealing his kingly authority. You too. You too. Go fetch me an animal for my use.

If anyone asks you it's for the Lord. That's all you need to say. It's for the Lord. You shouldn't have any problems. Well see these are the actions and the commands of someone who's in authority isn't it?

Someone who can make demands. It's a king. It's someone who's in charge. Who then is this Jesus? The question we started with.

[13:21] Well a king that give orders. A king who can tell people what to do. I know that you don't like to be told what to do.

Because I don't like to be told what to do. And that's quite common for people everywhere. All the time. But it should be our comfort to know that Jesus gives orders.

Jesus says children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. That's a comfort. It's a comforting command as any parent here will assure you that it's a comforting command to know that this is what Jesus asks of children.

Especially at well today it would have been at about quarter past four but usually quarter to eleven when your child is flailing around on the ground crying demanding expecting wanting to be the attention because child number two across the room looked at them the wrong way.

it's a comfort then isn't it to know that Jesus says children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right.

[14:33] It's a comfort to know that Jesus gives good commands in his kingdom so that we can live well. But there are uncomfortable commands.

And yet even from the uncomfortable commands we too should take comfort. Jesus says that everyone who looks at a woman or indeed a man with lustful intent has already committed adultery with them in their heart.

Jesus the king says stop searching for porn on your computer. Jesus the king expects us to tell others to do likewise.

it's sometimes an uncomfortable comfort to know that Jesus the king can give orders. Now if Jesus were just the king who gives orders from his throne we might begin to feel at least defensive if not resentful even if those orders were for our good and for our protection and we instinctively know don't we that each command that Jesus gives is that isn't it it's for our good and protection we know that it's something we kick against but we know it and we may simply feel like a ruled and suppressed people if it was just the king from the throne giving those orders.

So we need this afternoon to know another truth. It's not just a king that gives orders. We need to know that Jesus is a king that chooses to ride a donkey.

[16:21] Now why is that significant? Well it's quite an irony really isn't it? Jesus three years no mode of transport apart from walking as far as we know. He begins to exercise some of his kingly authority as he's coming to Jerusalem.

Back straight chest out tummy in calling for provisions and yet the most he can stretch to is to ask for a donkey for the last few miles of a three year journey.

Even the fact that the colt is dutifully found it's untied it's fetched it's brought all exactly how Jesus said it would be. I think we're still wondering if these are truly the actions of a king who is all powerful and a king that's in control because let's be honest a colt isn't the most kingly form of transportation.

Low to the ground not a huge amount of power or speed. In fact it's an animal you might get at a fairground that you'd put a child on and take him around a few times isn't it? But this king, King Jesus is not following the world script for how kings behave and how kingdoms are formed.

Where the world would come riding on a war horse Jesus turns to the script of the Old Testament and he follows the words of his father and Jonathan read the verses for us before but I think it's worth turning to again.

[17:49] Zechariah chapter nine. It's on page 955. Zechariah looking forward to Jesus coming says the following Rejoice greatly daughter Zion daughter of Zion and Zion is a hill within Jerusalem 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 the foal of a donkey I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war horses from Jerusalem and the battle bow will be broken he this king will proclaim peace to the nations his rule will extend from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth the arrival of God's kingdom on earth is the most monumental event in all of our history all of human history we can conceive or think back of the greatest coronations of the greatest kings we can think of the greatest military victories and the parades that happened after those military victories that this world has offered and none of them are more momentous and impacting than the coming of Jesus and the establishment of his kingdom on earth it is simply the greatest coming the greatest event the greatest coronation the greatest victory in all of history yet this kingdom that's going to ultimately crush all other kingdoms it came quietly in the backwater town of Bethlehem and was welcomed by lowly shepherds on that starry night as they went to a manger it's a kingdom that 30 years later is marching to the slow plod of a colt over a dusty few miles you see we need this king a king who perfectly follows the script of his heavenly father not a king that's coming to establish a kingdom for himself or on his own basis or for his own glory we need a ruler yes who by his own authority can call out each of the stars to come out and to fill the heavens he can call them by name he has that authority and power but we need that same person who coming up to his crucifixion in submission says father not my will but yours be done and

Zechariah saw the king that we need all those years beforehand by the spirit and he wrote with the prophetic eye that we we need a king yes one that will bring peace but one who is humble and mounted on a donkey most expectant jews couldn't couldn't understand this idea of a humble king coming like this and if we were there we wouldn't understand this we have hindsight but let's be honest we wouldn't have understood this or expected this if we look back earlier in Luke chapter 19 and verse 11 while we were listening to this this is Jesus bringing Zacchaeus to faith Jesus went on to tell them a parable and we're not going to go into the parable it's very instructive by the way but this is the key thing because he was near

Jerusalem and the people thought the kingdom of God was going to come or to appear all at once so Jesus is working to a time scale that sees the kingdom coming in seed form that's the time scale and the priorities of Jesus that the kingdom is coming now in seed form and it's only going to be revealed in stages you see I don't know if you've thought about this if Jesus and his kingdom was revealed all at once and Jesus came conquering his enemies like the disciples expected him to do

then none of us or none of them would have had any hope we would just be the conquered ones we would be swept aside by Jesus righteous judgment and he would come and Jesus would sit on his throne and he would issue the orders and it would be our dutiful obedience to obey but it would be from a hardened sinful heart you see

Jesus the king that's revealed in the pages of scripture as he's prophesied in the old testament as those promises are fulfilled in the new testament he is far far far greater than the Jesus that we think we want and he's far far greater than the Jesus that we often hear presented by people some say that Jesus is simply the king to be obeyed he's full of majesty justice and judgment he demands and deserves your obedience and sometimes others might speak of Jesus that is full of meekness and grace and humility and patience coming in peace and service the truth is we need all of those things to be true about Jesus all of the time we can't divide Jesus we can't pick and choose and say this is who

Jesus is and this is who Jesus is and keep them apart he is the king who gives orders but the order is to go and fetch a donkey you see it's perfect power and perfect humility brought together he is lord and servant he's the one who offers his kingship in service to others the king who lays down his life for his followers is the king that you and I as sinners desperately desperately need and then he is also the king that we can follow out of heartfelt joy not a dutiful fear his band of followers thankfully in Luke 19 aren't put off by the less than kingly transport that a cult makes as the crowd begin going up to the festival and it's surging through those narrow village streets in

[ 25 : 09 ] Judea the crowd is surging through Bethany through Bethpage coming up to the Mount of Olives which as you start to come down the Mount of Olives Jerusalem comes into view right across the valley Kidron valley and there you have the temple on the eastern side of the city so as you're coming down the Mount of Olives Jerusalem and the temple come into view and his followers are laying their cloaks on the road to form a royal welcome carpet look back from verse 36 as he went along people spread their cloaks on the road and when he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen blessed is the king who comes in the he is to be blessed the king verse 38 who comes in the name of the

Lord and at this point we unknowingly I think pick up the words that were sung 30 years ago by the angels words of peace and glory to announce Jesus his birth to the lowly shepherds and now near the time of his death it's almost like things are coming full circle and those same words are heard again peace in heaven and glory in the highest for the disciples the kingdom of heaven is almost decisively breaking through and they don't need to contain it anymore they can see Jesus riding to Jerusalem they are putting their cloaks out for him other passages and descriptions talk about palm branches being waved and jubilation and calling Jesus the new David Hosanna peace is upon us glory will extend to the highest levels this is the king we want the king we need the king worthy of praise the king of mighty works verse 37 and we're there and we can almost taste the culmination of three years of faithful following the disciples are coming with their king to

Jerusalem to crown God's anointed one and usher in the never ending kingdom of God just to say Jesus is indeed praise worthy as we read these verses we're not to be cynical about them or to take away from what's happening here Jesus is praise worthy everything about the disciples words and desires and their praise and everything they say is good and proper and true yes we wonder if they are praising him for the kind of king they want Jesus to be or are they praising him for the kind of king that they need Jesus to be do you know what I mean is it is it king Jesus the powerful miracle worker alone or is it king Jesus the miracle worker who is also the greatest and final Passover lamb is it the Jesus they want or the Jesus they need and with the disciples who they want Jesus to be and who they need Jesus to be we know there's often a struggle there we know the story soon Jesus will be dead and all of the pent up expectations from the three years of following Jesus it's going to all come out isn't it they saw Jesus as the messianic king who was coming to Jerusalem to be crowned to restore the nation to restore Israel to make it great again to do that by removing the Romans preferably with a bit of humiliation for this great empire and when he appears to do neither in their eyes one of them is going to betray Jesus with a kiss all of them are going to flee and run away his closest and most loyal follower is going to deny having ever known him what are your pent up expectations for following

Jesus we've talked about the disciples do we think we're better do we think we're different what are your expectations maybe you've put in more than three years of following Jesus and you have a set

of expectations about how King Jesus is to rule maybe it's a struggle in your job it's cutting you down each day you go in it's just cutting a little bit of your soul away from you each and every day Jesus is king I am his royal daughter or his son surely Jesus from his throne sees my good works and I pray that he is a faithful lord and I pray believing that he will grant me the desires of my heart and my situation will change and that Jesus will give me and grant me a new job that he struggled with the idea of being single and would really love to be married and have a faithful and godly partner surely

[ 31 : 08 ] God has plans for me that include the best possible husband or the best possible wife then like the disciples I can be there praising him for his miracles in my life Jesus will give me a spouse Timothy Keller pastor and author writes the following which I think is helpful if your agenda is the end Jesus is just the means you're using him thus if Jesus is the king you cannot make him a means to your end you can't come to a king negotiating we need to remember Jesus is the king we need not always the king we want a new job or a spouse or a faithful husband or a faithful wife in our marriages those things are not ultimate

Jesus is the king not them however this is truly good news he is the king that goes to the cross in your place he is the humble king who is riding into Jerusalem on a donkey for your sake you are not submitting to Jesus out of fear beneath his throne alone you are submitting to him also out of love beneath his cross you see we can trust and we can worship someone who gives themselves utterly and completely for us how could you not trust someone like Jesus when they give everything for you you see our ultimate needs are not about jobs they're not it's not ultimately about marriage or recognition from others our ultimate need is to have our sins forgiven and when we die to be welcomed into

God's presence and rescued from eternal punishment that's our need our true need met by our true king and then it frees us it frees us to serve others it frees us to follow him it frees us to trust him and to enjoy his good gifts which come in his time briefly and finally one last portrait of king Jesus from verse 39 some of the pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus teacher rebuke your disciples I tell you he replied if they keep quiet the stones will cry out as he approached Jerusalem and saw the city he 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 you and the children within your walls they will not leave one stone on another because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you verse 39 the pharisees I think they echo the words of the skeptic or the words of the unbeliever the disbeliever they see this noise and this commotion all centered around Jesus and they want to contain the noise and they want to keep themselves and others from having to deal with the idea of Jesus as king they they they they they kind of lost control at this point and they know they can't do it so they ask Jesus to do it and we may find ourselves wanting to keep Jesus at arm's length this afternoon you see private and moderate worship is fine keep it to yourself but say that Jesus is the king that the praise of Jesus won't be silenced Jesus says if it's not the disciples then the stones are going to have to cry out the rocks and the ground will have to sing you see as believers we've been changed by what we've seen it's more beauty than the world has known and we cannot and should not be silenced or silent in our praise of him as

Christians as followers of Jesus have we seen that beauty is he not praise worthy and as he rides those final few meters towards Jerusalem so he's coming down the mount of Olives and the city comes into view Jesus heart breaks and we can say that because this is the strongest possible word in the Greek language for crying this isn't crocodile tears this isn't just a oh this is sad this is weeping bitter weeping as Jesus sees Jerusalem because Jesus longed to gather the people as a mother hen gathers her chicks and he knows as a prophet as Jesus as God's son that in less than 40 years the Romans will besiege the city 80 69 80 70 they will ransack it they will build embankments they will encircle it they will come in and ransack it and destroy Jerusalem the temple will be utterly annihilated and it hasn't been rebuilt since with the loss I think this thing we forget with the loss of over one million lives over one million lives are going to be lost in this city within a generation the Jews would greet each other and still do today with the words shalom peace and Jesus comes now offering peace but knows that peace will not be found a day of salvation verse 32 has come but is somehow hidden from the majority in that city so if you feel a stirring in your heart this morning as you see the people of God praising Jesus and you see Jesus being lifted up as the one who can save you from your sin listen to that stirring listen to that call and turn in repentance to him today repent of your sins turn from your sins and trust in Jesus the good news of Jesus is on offer today but if you

leave today then very soon you will be shouting out quiet quiet keep it down i don't want to hear anymore about jesus the king your heart will harden and the truth will become impossible to see do not harden do not call out for quiet do not turn your eyes away rather today is the day to turn to jesus the king on a donkey we can choose like the pharisees to try and silence the worship of jesus we can seek to deny all kinds of truths about him all the claims he made about being the son of god we can attack the authority of the bible and say it's all made up we can dismiss all the claims rationally but these verses warn us that peace will leave us and destruction will come his first arrival in jerusalem was by donkey and that's for a good reason but revelation the final book of the bible tells us that his second and final rival is going to be on a war horse a white war horse we have the story in our hands from beginning to end we have it complete we know how it's going to end will you this day take up the offer of rescue from the king on the donkey who is going to the cross god takes no pleasure in the death of anyone jesus weeps his plea to you is through these deep tears to come to him just one final application or thought for those that already follow jesus if you follow jesus if you are there with the crowds praising him do you sense with jesus the urgency of saying that today is the day of peace our tears are often reserved for our own situations our own expectations of king jesus are the things we cry over we carry our pent up demands for jesus the king after years of following him but jesus has no tears for his own cross he only has tears for the sinners who are facing destruction pray and weep and continue to hold out the offer of peace to your friends and your family who apart from jesus are facing destruction we need a great king we have and worship a great king let us serve a great king amen and because when you can stop all may and wouldn't you just like and

[ 41 : 43 ] Wisconsin to trib Vas