

The kingship of Jesus

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Preacher: Andy Meadows

[0 : 00] Our first reading today is from Jeremiah chapter 7, which you'll find on page 768 of the Church Bibles. Jeremiah chapter 7, verses 1 to 15.

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord. Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all you men of Judah, who enter these gates to worship the Lord.

Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. Do not trust in these deceptive words.

This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord. For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly execute justice with one another, If you do not oppress the sojourner, the fatherless, or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, And if you do not go after other gods to your own harm, Then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever.

Behold, you trust in deceptive words to no avail. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, And go after other gods that you have not known, And then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, And say, we are delivered, only to go on doing all these abominations.

[1 : 33] Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the Lord. Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made by name dwell at first, And see what I did to it, because of the evil of my people Israel.

And now, because you have done all these things, declares the Lord, And when I spoke to you persistently, you did not listen, And when I called you, you did not answer.

Therefore I will do to the house that is called by my name, And in which you trust, And to the place that I gave to you and to your fathers, As I did to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my sight, As I cast out all your kinsmen, all the offspring of Ephraim.

The second reading, as printed on the sheets, is from Luke chapter 19, Starting at verse 28.

And that can be found on page 1058 of the Bibles, On the chairs. So Luke chapter 19, commencing at verse 28.

[2 : 48] And when he had said these things, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he drew near to Bethpage 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 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 away, Went away and found it, Just as he had told them.

And as they were untying the colt, Its owners said to them, Why are you untying the colt? And they said, The Lord has need of it. And they brought it to Jesus, And throwing their cloaks on the colt, They set Jesus on it.

And as he rode along, They spread their cloaks on the road. As he was drawing near, Already on the way down 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.

And 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.

[4 : 24] And 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 are 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. And he entered the temple And began to drive out those who sold, Saying to them, It is written, My house shall be a house of prayer, But you have made it a den of robbers.

And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes And the principal men of the town Were seeking to destroy him. But they did not find anything they could, For all the people were hanging on his words.

Heavenly Father, We pray that we would hear from you this morning, And that we would respond with heartfelt worship. Amen.

[5 : 42] Our world is a world that resists authority. By and large, The world wants to break off the shackles that bind. We see that on a grand scale, With resisting police, With riots, With corporations finding loopholes not to pay tax, And that political backbencher Is always seeking to lead a revolt Against the party leader.

But we also see it in the world, In our lives, And in us. We see children resisting parents, That child in the supermarket throwing a tantrum, Because they can't have 12 miles bars, That the resisting teachers, The boy who deliberately has their shirt untucked, Or the girl who has their skirt slightly too short, Than what it should be.

Resisting bosses kicking back against demands that they make. Or how we drive, Just pushing the boundaries of our speed, Just slipping through that red light, And I tell myself, Well, it was too dangerous to stop.

Or my favourite one that I find myself doing, Is you're on the tube, The tube driver asks you to move down the carriage, You take a little shuffle, And that's it. But it's also our natural human reaction, To resist Jesus' authority.

When we put our trust in Jesus, And live with him as our king, There's still that battle, To recognise his kingship, In every area of our lives. It may be outright refusal, In some areas, To live as Jesus wants us to live.

[7 : 19] But probably more common, Is to sideline. To sideline Jesus' kingship, When making decisions, About our time, Our money, Our work, Our children's lives.

More likely, Is the temptation to be complacent. It creeps in, And we can act as though, Jesus' kingship, Has no relevance, At that particular part of our lives.

Well, it's Palm Sunday this morning, And we remember Jesus, Riding into Jerusalem, On a donkey, Whilst the people waved palm branches.

Though interestingly, In Luke, There's no mention of palm branches, And strictly speaking, Luke doesn't, Jesus doesn't actually enter, Jerusalem on a donkey, But apart from that, It fits perfectly. And, We've been parachuted into Luke's gospel, So it's good to take stock, Of where we are.

Jesus is heading, To Jerusalem. We're told that, Chapter 951, Where it starts, When the days drew near, For him to be taken up, He set his face, To go to Jerusalem.

[8 : 27] The journey is repeated, In chapter 13, 22, And 17, 11, And then most recently, In 18, 31, Just turn back one page. Chapter 18, Verse 31, And taking the twelve, He said to them, See, We are going up to Jerusalem, And everything that is written, About the Son of Man, By the prophets, Will be accomplished.

For he will be delivered, Over to the Gentiles, And will be mocked, And shamefully treated, And spat upon. And after flogging him, They will kill him, And on the third day, He will rise. Jesus is a man, On a mission.

He resolutely, Sets out, For Jerusalem. And now we come to, Verse 28 of our passage, Look down. And when he had said, These things, He went on ahead, Going up to, Jerusalem.

This is the last lap, Of the journey. Jesus is, He's coming into land, He's on the final approach. And what will he find, When he gets there? What will he find, When he gets to, God's holy city?

How will they respond, To Jesus? We're going to look at, What Luke wants us to see, About Jesus' authority, This morning. His identity, And his mission.

[9 : 45] And then how Jerusalem, Will respond to him. So firstly, Have a look on, The outlines on the back, Of your service sheet. Firstly, Jesus is God's, Rightful king.

Jesus is God's, Rightful king. Verse 29, Jesus gives, To disciples, Specific instructions. Verse 30, They are, To find a colt, A young donkey, If no one, Sat on.

If anyone asks you, What are you up to? Tell them, The Lord needs it. So, Verse 32, The disciples went, They found it, Just as Jesus said, They found the colt. Verse 33, The owners ask the question, And that's fair, Isn't it?

Excuse me, What are you doing With our donkey? You would ask the question too, If you saw someone Taking your bike. The Lord needs it. Seems to go down well, And the colt is brought to Jesus.

Now why, Why a few verses Talking about that, Telling us what he's going to find, And then him finding it? Well, Luke wants us to know, That Jesus is in complete control, Of events.

[10 : 46] He knows he will be handed over, To be killed. He knows he will rise again. Everything is going according to God's plan. Every detail, Is as Jesus told them.

And we shouldn't see the donkey here, It's like Jesus going on a donkey ride, On a beach, Or a poor man's horse. But instead, Jesus is a king, Coming in peace.

See in the Old Testament, When King David, Passed on his throne to Solomon, He got the people to get his donkey, And put Solomon on a donkey, And he paraded through the streets, And everyone shouted, Long live King Solomon.

He is the king on a donkey. And likewise is Jesus. He is coming to Jerusalem, As God's king. And so he receives, The red carpet treatment. Verse 36, Have a look.

Cloaks were laid on the road, Just like, When Jehu was proclaimed king, In 2 Kings 9. It seems as though, Jesus' disciples, Get who he's claiming to be.

[11 : 48] That he is God's Messiah king. The promised one, Of the Old Testament. And the whole multitude, Of disciples begin to rejoice. Verse 37, They praise him, For the loud voice, For all the mighty works, They had seen.

Maybe they saw, Lazarus being raised, From the dead. Maybe they were there, And they ate the loaves, And the fishes. Or maybe they saw, The change in Zacchaeus, And received that, The biggest tax rebate, Of all time.

Maybe they were there. They knew he was from God, And they had waited for him. And now the time had come. They'd waited for him, To publicly announce, That he is God's king.

We're told in John's gospel, They tried to force him, To become king earlier, And he crept away. He didn't want it. But now is the time, Jesus is publicly announcing, He is king.

And look down what they say, Verse 38, Blessed is the king, Who comes in the name of the Lord, Peace in heaven, And glory in the highest.

[12 : 51] Now the first half, Is a quotation, From Psalm 118, As the Jews approached Jerusalem, On their pilgrimage to Passover, They'd sing certain psalms, Along the road, And they'd get closer, And closer, And they'd keep singing.

And as they enter Jerusalem, They'd be singing Psalm 118. It's a victory song. Like the supporters, Of a winning team, Erupting at the final whistle, Into the song.

They are praising God, For victory. And the shout, Comes from verse 26, Of Psalm 118. Blessed is he, Who comes in the name of the Lord.

But do you notice, The subtle difference? Jesus' disciples, Slightly changed the shout, Blessed is the king, They shout.

This is Jesus, God's king, Riding into Jerusalem, For a coronation, Where all heaven and earth, Will recognize that he is king. He's in charge, He calls the shots, He has God's authority, Rule over Israel, And the whole earth.

[13 : 54] But they are expecting, A different type of king. Have a look back, Chapter 19, Verse 11.

As they heard these things, He, As Jesus proceeded, To tell a parable, Because he was near to Jerusalem, And because they supposed, That the kingdom of God, Was to appear, Immediately. This is the expectation, Of the people.

Jesus did show his authority, By setting up, God's kingdom on earth, On earth, And bring peace, Restoration, Prosperity for Israel. The Romans are kicked out.

The good times roll. I don't know, The last time you had, Unfulfilled expectations, Or if you check, Trip advisor, When you're planning to, When you go on holiday, To make sure, You know what you're going to expect, When you get there.

But sometimes the visit, Does not fulfill expectations. Some people leave, Hilarious remarks on Trip advisor, Just showing us, What they expect. One person described, The Eiffel Tower, As just a big lump of metal.

[15 : 06] On Stonehenge, Big bits of stone, In a big field. Or on the Egyptian pyramids, It just looks like, A game of Jenga, That's gotten out of hand. Their expectations, Unfulfilled.

Well, As Jesus, Heads to Jerusalem, The crowd's expectations, Will not be fulfilled, Straight away. Because Jesus' mission, Is different, To what they were expecting.

Look down at, Verse 38 again, And the second half, Of their cry. Peace in heaven, And glory, In the highest. Sound familiar?

We're back at Christmas. The angels, Announcing, The birth of Jesus, Glory to God in the highest, And on earth, Peace to those, On whom his favour rests. But this is what, God's king has come to accomplish.

Not political peace, But peace with God. End of war, Between God and mankind. VE day is coming. A restored relationship, And peace, With the creator, Of all things.

[16 : 12] He was coming, To take up his throne, But it wasn't going to be, The way the crowd expected. And the week unfolds, And we know that. He would take his throne, But it would be through death, And suffering, Resurrection.

You see, Jesus knew his days, Were numbered, His case was terminal, And the end of the week, The atmosphere, Would completely change. But he knew, That it was through him, Being delivered over, Killed, And rising again, That peace with God, Is achieved.

That the treaty is signed, With his blood. Well, Jesus rides into Jerusalem, As God's rightful king. Well, How does that affect us now?

Well, We should recognize, Who Jesus is, And what he came to do. So we have the right, So we have the right, Expectations of him. A popular view of Jesus, Is that, He has a man, A man, Who had compassion, On the poor and diseased.

He's a humanitarian, A mother Teresa, Princess Diana, Type figure, On a, Humanitarian mission. But if we have, If we have that view, Then our expectations, Will be unfulfilled, And they're skewed, Will miss his main mission, To give us peace with God.

[17 : 33] Lots of us will know the pain, The worry, And the stress, Caused by lack of peace, With a particular person, Or people, A fractured relationship, Maybe a wider, A family member, Or someone at work, Or a neighbor, When your heart, Beat quickens, Um, You go all clammy, Your throat goes dry, And you just feel it, In your stomach, You don't have peace, With that person.

But when we come to church, Or we wake up, In the morning, We should not have that feeling, Towards God. If we're trusting, With Jesus, We don't need to war, We don't need to, Um, Fear war, With God.

That peace, Has been achieved, It's over. Because at the end of the week, Jesus dies, To face God's punishment, Instead of us. It is finished, He will cry.

V-E day, A relationship restored. And secondly, When we put, Our trust in Jesus, And ask him, To be king of our lives, Well, He served us, And now we serve him.

In all areas of our lives, Our time, Our money, Our parenting, Our work, Where to live, Where to go to church, Should we move away?

[18 : 56] All areas coming under, Jesus kingship, And authority. And the danger, Is the sideline. The danger to be complacent, To not acknowledge, Jesus as king.

To not acknowledge, That Jesus is king, In our day-to-day decisions, And planning for the future. Jesus is God's, Rightful king. Well, Palm Sunday is here, It's a joyous scene, It's a carnival, The crowds are welcoming Jesus, Like a crowd welcoming, A winning team, On an open top bus parade.

But there's a fly in the ointment, Not everyone, Is joining in. Look down at verse 39, And 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. The religious leaders of the day, Want to silence Jesus, Keep his disciples quiet.

They want Jesus to say to his disciples, They can't say that, Tell them off. What does Jesus say? Well, If they, If they kept quiet, The rocks would cry out.

[20 : 03] There's no keeping quiet, On this day in history. Even the rocks knew, What time this was. Yet they didn't. The Messiah king, Is heading to Jerusalem, To his people, What will he find?

Well, The carnival turns into, A funeral procession. He's going to find, A barren and blind Jerusalem, That will reject him. An ignorant Jerusalem, Who will be judged, For the rejection.

And that's where we come, To our second point this morning. Rejecting Jesus' kingship, Will lead to judgment. Rejecting Jesus' kingship, Will lead to judgment. I wonder, What makes you cry?

Have a think, What makes you cry? Maybe it's pain. Maybe it's tiredness. Being slighted. Maybe a picture, Of a cute puppy or a kitten, Is enough to set you off.

Or maybe you're, The other end of the spectrum, Who remained unmoved, When Bambi's mum was killed. Or when Mufasa, Was thrown to his death, You just didn't even, Didn't even blink.

[21 : 09] Maybe that's you. Well here we get a snapshot, Of what makes Jesus cry. Have a look down, Verse 41, Why is Jesus so emotional? And when he drew near, He 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 are hidden, From your eyes.

We shouldn't, See the word, Wept there, And think a quiet whimper. This is a sobbing, A wailing, Body shaking, Tears flowing, Down the cheeks. Probably a bit awkward.

It's a carnival coming in, And then he bursts, Into tears. Why the emotion? Verse 42, Because Jerusalem do not know, What day this is.

They are blind to God's king, Have not recognized, The opportunity for peace. And the end of verse 44, They will not leave, One stone upon another, In you, Because you did not know, The time of your visitation.

God's rightful king had come, But Jerusalem, God's city, The establishment, Will reject him. We saw last week, That a blind beggar, Recognized who Jesus was, And received sight.

[22 : 33] But here Jerusalem, Will not recognize Jesus, And become blind. And out of this rejection, Comes judgment. And Jesus gives us, A detailed description, Of what will happen to Jerusalem.

Verse 43 and 44, It's deeply personal. 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.

You, you, you, you, you, This is going to happen, Because you, Will reject, Me. You do not recognize, What time in history this is.

Forty years later, The prophecy came true, The Roman army besieged Jerusalem, And leveled it to the ground. And the Jewish historian, Josephus said this, About the destruction, While the sanctuary was burning, Neither pity for age, Nor respect for rank was shown.

The city was so completely razed to the ground, As to leave future visitors to the spot, No reason to believe, That the city had ever been inhabited. Complete destruction.

[23 : 45] And it's a judgment, That Jesus proclaimed, With tears in his eyes, Let's not miss that. But their ignorance, Is utterly culpable. Jerusalem knew the terms of peace, They told of the Messiah, Who had come, To reconcile a man to God, Who would die, The end of war, But they will reject him.

How have they gotten, Into this position? How are Jerusalem blind, To God's rightful king? Even the stones know, What time this is.

Well verses 45 and 46, Give us insight, With Jesus at the temple, He shows us what's going on. Have a look down. He entered the temple, And began to drive out those who sold, Saying to them, It is written, My house shall be a house of prayer, But if you have made it, Into a den of robbers.

Jesus drives out those, Who are selling things, In the temple courts, And combines a quote, From Isaiah 56, And Jeremiah 7. He gives us in the first half, From Isaiah 56, The idea, What should be happening?

That God's place, Is a house of prayer. But then he proclaims instead, What is happening? Turn back if you will, To Jeremiah chapter 7, Keep a finger in Luke, Page 7, 6, 9, Because the people, In Jesus' time, Are doing exactly, What they did in Jeremiah's time.

[25 : 22] Verse 9, Will you steal, Murder, Commit adultery, Swear falsely, And make offerings to Baal, And go after other gods, That you have not known, And then come and stand before me, In this house, Which is called by my name, And say, We are delivered, Only to go on doing, All these abominations, Has this house, Which is called by my name, Become a den of robbers, Robbers in your eyes, Behold, I myself have seen it, Declares the Lord.

Jeremiah condemns the people, For living how they want to live, Fuller of sin, Following their idols, And gods, Only to stand before God, And saying, We are delivered, We're saved, We're fine.

They go to the temple, To be worshipped, To claim to be saved, Only to continue in their sin, Throughout the week, And the kind of activity, Has turned the house of the Lord, Into a robber's hideout, The den of robbers, Is a place of sanctuary, Whilst committing all the evil acts, Go out robbing, Go and hide away, Are safe, And then go out robbing again, A den of robbers, And Jesus, And God says he's seen it, And it will bring judgment, And ultimately, It led to the exile, And Jesus imports that imagery, Into his day, And proclaims that nothing has changed, And judgment is coming, Because of it, Linking back to his earlier words, Jesus is saying, Jerusalem will be destroyed, And that is a foretaste, Of God's divine judgment, On the last day, To all those who reject his authority, Jeremiah and Jesus, Proclaim the grave danger, Of false religion, A religious life, That turns up on the Sabbath,

Presumably, A sense to God's authority, But yet through the week, Does not get a look in, And then still expecting, To have peace, Imagine a worker, Who turns up to all the meetings, On time, Looks the part, Says all the right things, But then all the time, In between meetings, They are planning a revolt, Just undermining, The boss's work, A vote of no confidence, No interest in submitting, And when they're found out, The records are recovered, On the computer, The emails are read, And yet they still expect, To keep their job, Because they turned up, To all the meetings on time, And said the right things, It's madness, But that's like, The worship Jesus found, At the temple, And sadly, This type of worship, Does go on, Around us today, A worship that is centered, Around religious acts, And not around a wholehearted, Bowing the knee to Jesus, God sees that worship,

And it does not bring peace with him, Instead it will bring judgment, And so we mustn't deceive ourselves, When it comes to our worship, Because if we are not repentant, Even all the religious acts, We do, Then we are on dangerous ground, Turn back then to Luke 19, Because this passage ends, With a stark contrast, Verse 47, Jesus was teaching daily, In the temple, The chief priests, And the scribes, And the principal men of the people, Were seeking to destroy him, But they did not find, Anything they could do, For all the people, Were hanging on his words, They are people, Listening to Jesus in the temple, They're hanging on his words, They want him to go on, Maybe Jesus wants to sat down, No, keep going, And yet the leaders, Who are there, They're seeing Jesus there, But they want nothing to do with him,

[29 : 05] They want to destroy him, Not listen to him, And so as I said at the start, Maybe it's not outright rejection, Of God's kingship, That is our problem, It may be, But maybe it's complacency, Sidelining, And so we must take care, That we do not become complacent, As a church, And as individuals, And end up like these Pharisees, Going to temple, Performing religious acts, But not listening to Jesus, Have no, No regard for his authority, Because rejecting Jesus' kingship, Will lead to judgment, And so Jesus gives us a warning, Performing religious acts, But not recognizing God's authority, Throughout the week, Will lead to judgment, Not peace but war, A war no one can win, But also, Let's end with the encouragement, Of Jesus here, At the triumphal entry, Recognizing Jesus to be God's rightful king,

And bowing to him in forgiveness, Brings complete peace with God, By the end of the week, Jesus will be led up the hill, He'll be nailed to a cross, And a judgment that was proclaimed, To Jerusalem, Both by Jeremiah and Jesus, Does not even come close, To what Jesus went through, Taking on the rejection of God, And a full force of God's anger, That we should be, Have peace with him, Through his blood, Let's have a moment of quiet, And then I'll pray, Father God, We thank you that you, Sent Jesus to be your rightful king, Riding with all your authority, We thank you for this king, Who came to die for us, To bring us peace with you, Help us father, Not to be complacent, When it comes to recognizing, Your kingship in our lives, Please help us to dwell, On the fact that you are in charge, That you call the shots, And may we serve you, With all our lives,

Amen, Amen,