

Jesus rides into Jerusalem

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Date: 28 September 2025

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[0 : 00] Good morning. This reading is from the book of Luke, continuing. He said, And he said to him,

Well done, good servant, because you shall have authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, your minna has made you, and you are to be over five cities.

Then another came, saying, Lord, here in a handkerchief, for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not sow.

He said to him, I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank?

And he said to those who stood by, Take the minna from him. And they said to him, Lord, he has ten minnas.

[2 : 07] I tell you, more will be given. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.

And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he drew near to Bethage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he said to his disciples, saying, Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever 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 and found it just as he had told them.

And as they were untying the colt, its owner said to them, Why are you untying the colt? And they said, the Lord has need of it. And they brought it to Jesus.

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.

[3 : 41] 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.

Amen. Let's continue our worship now as we sing together, when we all get to heaven. Amen. Sing the wondrous love of Jesus, Sing his mercy and his grace.

In the mansions bright and blessed, He'll prepare for us the place When we all get to heaven.

What a day of rejoicing that will be. When we all see Jesus, We'll sing and shout the victory.

When we all the pilgrim party, Cloths will overspread the sky. But when traveling days are over, Not a shadow, not a sign.

[5 : 24] When we all get to heaven, What's the day of rejoicing that will be? When we all see Jesus, We'll sing and shout the victory.

Let us be true and faithful, Trusting, serving every day.

Just what ends of him in glory Will the trials of life repay? When we all get to heaven, When we all get to heaven, What a day of rejoicing that will be.

When we all see Jesus, We'll sing and shout the victory. Onward to the prize before us, Soon his beauty will behold.

Soon the pearly gates will open, We shall tread the streets of gold. When we all get to heaven, When we all get to heaven, What a day of rejoicing that will be.

[6 : 44] When we all see Jesus, We'll sing and shout the victory. Thanks Paul for your prayers.

Thanks Paul for your prayers. When we all see Jesus, When we all see Jesus, We will sing and shout the victory.

When we all see Jesus, When we all see Jesus, When we all see Jesus, When we all see Jesus,
When we all see Jesus, We will sing and shout the victory.

What a truly, truly glorious day that will be, eh? It certainly will be the greatest day. The greatest day. And when I finally get there, There is lots and lots of great conversations I need to have. First and foremost, I long to talk with my master, Jesus. There is, of course, one particular line that I am desperate, To hear.

[8 : 18] I pray. I trust. I will be able to hear those words. Well done. Good. I'm a faithful servant.

And we will come back to that. Because then, Then I'm looking forward to meeting, To meeting John the Baptist, Peter, Mary, Moses, and so on.

And then there is, There is a rather random one or two others, That I'm hoping to talk to. I'd really like to talk, With people like Simeon in the temple.

Or Bartimaeus. And also, Also, I want to find, The guy who gave, The guy who gave, The guy who gave his donkey, To Jesus.

Did you notice in verse 30? And Cain was reading for us. Jesus says, Go into the village, Ahead of you.

[9 : 33] And as you enter it, You will find a coat tied there, Which no one has ever ridden. Untie it, And bring it here.

If, This is a big if. If, If, Anyone asks you, Why are you untying, The coat? Say, Well, The Lord needs it.

And then verse 33. As they were untying the coat, Its owners, The guy who actually owns, The donkey, The coat, He, His very self, Asked, Why, Why, Why untying my coat?

The donkey that I own. They replied, The Lord needs it. Oh, Yep, Go. No problem. Listen, We, Are at the very last week, Of this precious, Amazing, Biography.

And after all the buzz, And the fast moving paces, And the quick moves, Luke now slows, A way, Way, Way down.

[10 : 56] And this final week, Now unravels, Across five long chapters. And it's amazing to see, How the week begins, For Jesus.

Because here at this point, At the start of the week, He is extremely famous. Everyone knows him. Everyone loves him. Everyone wants a part. Everyone wants to get close, And be involved.

Do what they can, To be part of the kingdom of Jesus. And so, For this donkey owner, It's a no brainer.

Yep, I'm in. Take my donkey, For Jesus, Please. As I get to be part, As I get to serve the kingdom.

[12 : 00] As soon as the owner of the donkey, He heard that Jesus needed him, Without a second thought, Sent it straight away. What, An incredible, Stance.

For life, For faith. What a guy. So I want to ask him, What was it all like? What was it like, What was it like, To be asked, To help Jesus?

And next, What was it like, To be part of this, Special kingdom event? Did you actually understand, The extremely royal, And noble way, Your animal was to be used?

Was it hard? Or was it easy to give? Was it time consuming? How did you feel? Were you proud? Surprised? Nervous?

What were the weeks, The bumps, The years, After it all, Like for you and your family? How did it affect, And change your life?

[13 : 16] And lastly, How does it feel to know, That two thousand years later, Years later, We all still read, About you giving your donkey, To Jesus?

And I suppose, That's all great. Something to look forward to. But what about right now? What about today? Because actually, On the back, The back, Of the inspiration, That this donkey owner, Is giving us.

The correct way, To channel that inspiration, Is, Let it prompt us, To begin thinking, About our own, To King Jesus.

For we need to take note, We need to take into account, That just before, This amazing, Palm Sunday day, Jesus talks about yours, And mine, Service to him.

Verse 28. Verse 28. After Jesus had said this, He went on ahead, To Jerusalem, Where Palm Sunday happened.

[14 : 40] After Jesus had said what? After Jesus had said this, He went and did Palm Sunday. After Jesus had spoken, The wondrous parable, About the king, Who went away, And left particular

folk, With an amount of income, To put to work, Before he returns.

So firstly, We need to note verse 11 there. Particularly, Because he was near Jerusalem, And the people thought, Was going to appear at once, He then said, A man of noble birth, Went to a distant country, And then to return.

And the catch, The catch if you like, Return. For what we need to remember here is, He is just about, To launch into, Once he moves from here, And gets that donkey, That's it, Monday, Thursday, I'm on the coast.

So he, The king in the story, Jesus, The king in the story, And this particular, Going away and coming back, Reflecting others, Which do point to the resurrection, This one instead is pointing, And so very excitingly, Or maybe a little cautiously, The workers, In the money, To put to work, Is us, It's me, It's you, And we live, And is living, Between the ascension, And the second coming. Are you rather serious? It's about us, It's about us, Using whatever God, Whatever God has, Has gifted or skilled us with, For service in the kingdom.

[16:46] Just before the donkey, Into Palm Sunday, Towards the cross, I'm going away, I'll be back in a second coming, Between now and then, Here's a parable, That you guys need to really take serious.

And so this is, This is why the donkey owner inspires me, To sit up, To take account, To pay attention, To get myself sorted, To examine my own, Ministry before the Lord, To examine my own skills, And gifts before the Lord, Because Jesus tells me, I'm coming back, And when I do, We're going to have a chat, What you've done, With the skills and gifts I've given you.

Because like you, I am one, I am one, Who lives, In the precise time, That this parable, Is directed at. And like you, I am also skilled, And gifted with things, To give and do for Jesus, During my time on earth.

And whereas the donkey, May provide the perfect, Practical example, The parable, Which of course includes practical, Is also addressing, All the skills, All the gifts, All the abilities, That we have been given by him, To use for the works, Of his kingdom, Before he returns.

And in whatever way, Our skills and gifts come out, They all amount, To the one, Same focus. The same focus, That the use of the donkey had.

[18:28] It's all about enabling, The good news of Jesus, To move one step further, Into the world. You see the donkey, The donkey, Enabled the good news of Jesus, To go that little bit further.

It took Jesus, A step closer, To more people. More people, Met Jesus, Because of the donkey. Again, Everything, That we are skilled with, That we use, For his work, Enables more people, To meet him.

It takes, His good news, A step closer, To another soul. Unlike my questions, For the donkey owner.

Was it hard? Were you nervous? Did it take time? Yeah, Maybe. For the donkey owner. But it was worth it. And those questions come to us. Is it going to be hard?

Is it going to take time? You have to learn? Yeah, maybe. But it's going to be worth it. It's going to be worth it. And so just what exactly, Are each of us skilled and gifted with, For kingdom work?

[19:51] Playing music, Preaching the word, Helping the poor, Providing finance, Delivering bibles, Looking after accounts, Teaching children, Making meals, Visiting the sick, Helping prisoners rehabilitate, Assisting the elderly, Going out on a broad street evangelism, Writing leaflets, Discipling others, And much, much more, Are some examples.

But to make it a little easier, All of these skills, Gifts and attributes, And many others, Are all caught up, In two or three, In two or three, In two or three, Simpler, Combined, New Testament lists.

The first, of course, Be in Ephesians 4. The Bible says, Christ himself, Gave the apostles, The prophets, The evangelists, The pastors, And teachers, To equip his people, For works of service.

And just before, Anyone thinks, Well I'm safe, I'm not one of those, Maybe you're not in the, Formal sense, Or if I can be a little provocative, Maybe you're not, According to the way, British culture, Has developed, These last, Three, Six, Nine hundred years.

Leaving us, With a hierarchy, And a professional standard, Which the church, Sort of wrongly, Church of Scotland, Anglican Church, Succumbed to, Over the centuries, Leaving, Many, Ordinary, Decent Christians, Feeling, They aren't skilled, And equipped, As an evangelist, As a teacher, As a preacher, Because, well our culture, For a long time said, You need to be, Like this, And you need to achieve this, And you need to have done this, To be able to be considered, For such positions.

[21 : 57] Culture may say it, It's not really the Bible, Is it? For the Bible clearly says, Regardless, Of status, Or qualifications, God will equip, Whomever, From wherever, And whenever, For works of evangelism, Teaching, Pastoring, Apostleship, Prophecy, At his own will, At his own choosing, God equips, The called, He doesn't, Call the equipped, And it's not wrong, To assume, That every Christian, Has at least, One of these, Giftings, Some, May have more, Yes, And yes, The ones called, To full time ministry, All of you, Most likely, Have at least, One, And if you, Really believe, You don't, Then you need to ask,

Holy Spirit, To show you yours, But for the rest of us, You need to be aware, Of your one, And you need to develop it, You need to train, In it, You need to nurture it, Pray into it, Grow in it, Read the right books for it, Attend the right conferences for it, Do the right stuff, As this parable commands, You need to use it, To put it to work, Is what he said, When he gives them the money, To work, Look after it, Grow it, Nurture it, And then, On top, Of whichever one of those, Gifts we have, We are all witnesses, Jesus tells us, We are all to be witnesses, Of what God, Has done for us personally, And like the parable says, We must put our story, To work, To work, On a Wednesday night, We are meeting here, To work on our story, To be, To be confident, In our story, Of how we came to faith, Because we must put our stories, To work, For the growth of the kingdom, To build up Christ's church, And then on top of that, And then on top of that, So on top of that Ephesians 4, Whichever one you have, On top of your witnessing, Is one more area, Which doesn't take time, To work out actually, Because this is personality based, So it's natural, And we all definitely have, One, two, three, four, five of them, And they come out, In a few lists, From Paul, James and Peter, And I've tried to, Summarise them, Or give them a 21st century take, Such as, Serving, Hospitality, Mercy, Giving, Encouragement, Building up, Administration, Treasury, Accounts, Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Discernment of spirits, Tongues, Interpretation of tongues, Leadership, Stewardship, Looking after the younger, Looking after the older, Looking after widows and orphans, Looking after the poor, Caring for fellow disciples, In their struggles, As well as those outside of the church, Befriending, Mentoring, And so on. All these, Come up, In the New Testament, As gifts, Skills, Callings, Given, For the running, And building, Of the kingdom of God.

[25 : 48] To be used, By us, Between the cross, And the second coming. And the second coming. On Westerhills Baptist Church, This applies, Directly to us.

Look, God gives these skills, As gifts. Because when you, Love something, With all your heart, You want to do actions, To help that cause.

This is true of anyone, Christian or not. Whoever is passionate, About anything. The climate change, Politics, The third world, Art, Drama.

Whenever, Your heart is given to one of these, Literature, Literature, Art, Drama. Whenever, Your heart is given to one of these, It brings you joy, To give to it. And so naturally, When your heart's given to God, And His kingdom, You naturally want to use your, Natural gifts and skills, To give back to His kingdom.

And that would bring you joy, Just the way the artist would get joy, From pursuing the art, And putting it up there. The Christian gets joy, From promoting Christ's kingdom, And building it, And developing it.

[27 : 10] So it's a joyful, When God skills us, In one or more of these ways. Because, Well, As I say, Because we love Him so much.

Because we know what He's done for us. And so, We are fully devoted to His message. And so we want to get involved. Like the guy and his donkey, It's just brilliant, To be involved.

With the world's greatest king. A king like no other. King of kings. So yes, It is a gift. And listen, God doesn't give these gifts randomly.

But carefully. To each, According to one's unique ability. God elevates you, From commonhood. By matching, Your unique abilities, To His custom, Near assignment.

And as you use them, You will begin to hear those words. Well done. Good and faithful servant. To hear those words, eh?

[28 : 20] Listen, Listen, Maybe your dad, Never praised you. Maybe your teachers, Always criticized you. Maybe your employers, Don't credit you much.

But God will lift you up. And to have Him, God, The holy almighty Lord, Call you good. Say well done to you.

Wow, Wow. That makes it all worth it. That makes it all worth it. Because only He, Can take ordinary ones like us, And make us good, And make us good, And useful.

And that's why it's so, So important, Not to get carried away, Hey, hey, I'm skilled, And gifted, As a manager, Or an accountant, Or a singer, Or a singer, So I'll push, For power and control, And my little role of the church, Because, Because it's a gift from Him, In the first place.

So we must not get ahead of ourselves. Because as Paul writes, In Romans, The grace given me, I say to every one of you, And myself, Do not think of yourself, More highly than you ought to, But rather think of yourself, With sober judgment, In accordance with the faith, God has distributed to each of you.

[29 : 51] Paul's right on it. Your gift, Is by the grace of God, And all credit goes to Him, For it. Actually continues, It says in verse 6, The reason I'm saying this, Is because we have different gifts, According to the grace given to us.

And he goes on to say, If your gift is prophesying, Prophecy, Then serve, And so on and so on. But the key word there again, Is grace. Gifts given by grace.

I.e., You may think you're the best person, At your role, But God says, Well, I give you that gift by my grace. And I grace. So we do well to remember, A.e.

It is all by him, Through him, And for him. And if you do get carried away, And exalt yourself, He'll bring you back down, In a good, Fatherly, Patient, Peaceful, Way.

As you serve, Be humble. Give the glory to God, And you will hear those words, Well done, Good and faithful. Use your God-given skills and gifts, To take great risks for God.

[31 : 07] Because the only mistake, Would not be to take the risk. And the one important measure, That stands out here, In all these things is time.

They all require us to give, Give of our time, To Jesus, And spreading, His message. So Wester Hills Baptist Church, The challenge, To us all, Today is, Are you and I, Willing to give our time, To Jesus?

Are we willing to genuinely, Acknowledge, The areas God has gifted, Skilled, And enabled us in, And then sacrifice time, Time to do them.

And this of course means, We are willing to go well beyond, Just attending services, And reading his word at home. We are willing to not only attend, But to serve.

In the cram, In crew, Serving coffee, At am, And pm, As well, Services. Providing, Inviting others back for lunch, And all the church community, Well beyond the Sunday, Midweek meetings, The Dove Centre, Months, And things, In the background, Accounts, And finance, And committees, And, The care home, Out and about, In his estate, The food bank, Building, And do stuff, That furthers the good news.

[32 : 51] Remember the guys, In Jesus' parable, Were called to look after, What they had been given. They were called, To put this money to work.

That's the key phrase here. We are called to put to work, Whatever skills and gifts, God has given us. We must not, Be negligent, Be disinterested.

We must put to work, Our gifts, And skills. Colossians says, Whatever you do, Work at it, With all your heart, As working for the Lord, Not for human masters.

That's a big difference, When you do something, Because you're working for the Lord, And when you're working for human masters. That's what this parable is, Warning.

Work hard, Nurture your gifts, God expects you to. And maybe, Maybe, As hinted on earlier, You're wondering, Well, I'm not actually sure what mine are. Well, Again, As hinted on earlier, Simple.

[34 : 02] What do you already do? Take it from there. Try things out, Explore, Ask, Invite. I'll spend time with you, If you'd like. Won't take long, Won't be hard, I'll find it.

Though, Don't we often make it hard? Don't we often make it long? Don't make it long? I must discover my unique, Skilled, Gifting, Read books, Go on pilgrimages, Fast, All while the people and the works, Go past you.

There is certainly a season, For waiting. But what's in front of you? Right now? What's in your life? Right now? What's around you? Right now?

Look and see, And you will naturally know, What you can do, To help, Whomever or whatever, Is around you. And in your life right now. When you write, Your CV, Or apply for a job.

You don't have to go on a pilgrimage, Or wait five years to answer it, You just naturally know. You know if you're a musician, If you're a teacher, If you're a leader.

[35 : 12] You know if you're a hospitable, If you're encouraging, If you're dependable. And if, Big if, If you do wonder about the other gifts, That you might like, And all that sort of stuff, Then it's okay to explore them, Pray about them, Even ask God for them.

But in all honesty, You will know the first handful. That you definitely have. And on the other end, Maybe you feel, You're at the end of your service.

Or maybe you need to accept you are. And perhaps you're wondering, Well what now? What do I do? Well time for you, To equip, To teach, And prepare, The next generation.

The younger ones to replace you. Lead by example, By preparing them. By putting courses together, That can equip them. By getting them with you, By getting them with you, And teaching them what you do, And how they can carry it on.

You must decrease, They must increase. It's not really an option, But a command. Notice in the parable, We will be held accountable, For not putting, To work our skills.

[36 : 27] That includes, That includes, Getting the younger ones with you, And equipping them, To replace you at some point. Souls are dying, To eternities without Christ.

On a mass, Global scale. And when we think about, All that in this sense, Then why on earth, Would you not, Give your time to Jesus? And why would you not, Give your time to spread, In his good news?

And so to bring it all back round, To ordinary decent Christians, Truth is, Everything, That each of us do, Is just one small, So effort, In the span of Christ's, Massive, Kingdom.

And that's enough, That's all he asks, That one little bit. All the donkey owner did, Was give his donkey. Others were used, For the next bits and so on. Same with us.

All we need to do, Is our one small part, And he will have others, To carry it on. And knowing that, Makes it easier, Much, Much, Easier.

[37 : 41] Until to finish, It all off. I'll introduce you to, Mr. Kimball. Who on earth is, Mr. Kimball?

Well by the world's standards, He's, He's a nobody. But in Jesus' eyes, He's a, He's a pretty big deal. He was a quiet, Rather nervous bloke.

But he knew, He could talk well. And so he had this burden, To tell people about Jesus. He finally plucked up the courage, And then when, In a Boston shoe shop, He told the clerk there, About Jesus.

It was a small piece of his time, A small deed for Jesus. Now the shoe clerk, Most of you will have heard of, D.L. Moody. Moody became a, A famous evangelist, And had such a passionate zeal, That his preaching, Stirred up the heart, Of the famous baseball player, Billy Sunday.

To start preaching, To thousands and thousands, Of baseball fans. Billy Sunday, Motivated a particular, Mordecai Ham, Who probably haven't, Heard off again.

[39 : 03] To start preaching, To go into the ministry. Mordecai Ham, Was always disappointed, At the lack of people, That responded to his preaching. At the lack of people, That came to faith, Through his evangelism.

He couldn't quite, Get it. But one day, When preaching, In North Carolina, He led a, A local, Dairy farmer, To faith. Finally, After years, The dairy farmer, Billy Graham.

Who was of course, God's next, Appointed, Worldwide preacher. Which saw, Pheasants, And phasants saved. All these folk, Played one small role, Each.

But back at the start, It was a rather quiet, Nervous Mr. Kimball, Who put his gift to work, Kicked off a wall of dominoes, Which led to Billy Graham, Getting saved.

Which led to, Faisants, And phaisants, Getting saved. Between the cross, The ascension, And the second coming, We are told, To look after, The talents, Given to us.

[40 : 15] We are told, To put them, To work. And as we said, A couple of weeks ago, At the 6pm devotions, Just look at whom, We are telling people about.

Just look at the wonderful king, We are serving. A king like no other. This king arrived, Humbly and peacefully, On a donkey. Not declaring war, Not raising a revolution, But bringing rejoicing, And laughter, And joy, And peace.

Not demanding, Not commanding, Not ordering, But offering, Offering friendship, And love, And forgiveness. What a joy, To serve him. Let's put our skills, And gifts to work, For such a king as this.

Because, Again, As Paul writes, We are God's handiwork, Created in Christ Jesus, To do good works, Which God prepared, In advance, For us, To do.

Let's pray. Lord Jesus, Thank you for your word.

[41 : 32] Thank you for this parable. Thank you for its clarity. It's hard to miss the point. So help us be bold, And courageous with the point.

Lord, Help us all, As a family of believers, Together in unity, See, But individually, Go, And really, Make a firm decision, About whatever skills, And gifts you've given us.

And then, Make sure we come back, And say, Right, I've got this, Need to use it for you, Lord. Make sure we come back, Right, I'm skilled, In the community, I'm going to kill them.

If you're calling people, To move into Wester Hills, Can affect their hearts, And stir them up, To move in now, Lord. Lord, Give us peace, Give us help.

Keep us humble, Lord. Let us not get too far ahead of ourselves. Keep us humble, Lord. And help us always be ready, Lord, To equip, May be known, May be praised, May be worshipped. All for you, Jesus.

[42 : 43] Amen. So, Blessed be his name, Whether he gives or takes away. Do stand if you're able.

Blessed be your name, In the land that is plentiful, Where your streams above, In the land that is plentiful, Where your streams above, In the land that is plentiful, In the land that is plentiful, Where your streams above, In the land that is plentiful, Where your streams above, Abundance above, Blessed be your name, Blessed be your name, And blessed be your name, And a fountain in the desert plains, And a hope for the wilderness, Blessed be your name, Blessed be your name, Blessed be your name, Blessed be your name, Every blessing you pour out, I'll turn back to praise, And when the darkness closes in the heart, Still I will say, Blessed be the name of the Lord, Blessed be your name, Blessed be your name, Blessed be your glorious name Blessed be your name With the sun shining down on me When the world's small as it should be Blessed be your name Blessed be your name On the road marked with suffering Blessed be your name In the offering Blessed be your name

Every blessing you pour out of Turn back to praise When the darkness closes in the heart Still I will sing Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your glorious name You give and take away You give and take away My heart will choose to sing Lord, blessed be your name You give and take away

You give and take away My heart will choose to sing Lord, blessed be your name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your name Blessed be your name Blessed be your name It would be lovely to see you at six if you're able.

[46 : 49] If not, next Sunday morning, family harvest service. Pray about that and we look forward to seeing you at that. Peter says, each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, one another, as faithful stewards of God's grace.

So may we all leave here determined to define our God-given skills and abilities and then go forth determined to put them to work. May we serve the kingdom and one day hear his precious voice say, well done, good and faithful servant.

And never forget to be humble, remembering it all by his grace. And so Jesus, equip us all, enable us all, and guide us to serve you now and for always by your strength and your strength alone.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen.