



SEE, YOUR KING COMES TO YOU

The world looks to kings. It turns its eyes toward political leaders—the rulers of this age. It bows before presidents and potentates, governors and senators. Sometimes, however, it seems as though it is just such people who can break a country, sending it into untold sorrow and hardship. One thinks of the likes of Hitler in Germany, Mussolini in Italy, the Chinese Mao whose slaughter of his own subjects is unsurpassed, and perhaps Gorbachev in Russia who blundered his country into economic ruin.

The rulers in the lands of Israel and Judah many years before Jesus were no different. Their kings were full of corruption, deceit, and unholy living:

Jereboam of Israel who built shrines to false gods in the high places and set up two golden calves—one in Bethel and one in Dan—for the people to worship (1 Kings 12:25-33ff).

Jehoram who reigned in Jerusalem eight years and he did evil in the eyes of the Lord (2 Kings 8:16-24).

Jehoahaz who did evil in the eyes of the Lord by following in the ways of Jereboam (2 Kings 13:1-9).

Ahaz who at age 20 became king in Jerusalem and reigned for sixteen years. He did not do what was right in the eyes of the Lord his God. He even sacrificed his own son in the fire, following the detestable ways of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites (2 Kings 16).

Manasseh may be the worst of all. He was 12 years old when he became king and he reigned in Jerusalem 55 years. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord following the detestable practices of the nations. He rebuilt the high places...erected altars to Baal and made an Asherah pole. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them. In both courts of the temple of the Lord he built altars to all the starry hosts. He sacrificed his own son in

the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord (2 Kings 21:1-18).

The people which God once brought out of slavery in Egypt with His mighty hand was plagued by the unrighteousness of its kings. These kings were oppressing, misguiding, disrupting, disturbing the peace, bringing their countries to ruin with their unjust and shameful ways, engaging in human sacrifices and bloody wars—needless wars in which many died. This was the leadership under which the people lived and they were carried along with the wicked rulers by their wicked deeds.

After their Babylonian captivity, exiles returned to Jerusalem, the city from which they had once so forcefully been carried away. They returned to rebuild the temple, and the walls, and the city, and to return to the ways of the Lord. Things seemed to be taking a turn for the better. They were going to get back on their feet once again. Then suddenly, a prophet and priest of the Lord, named Zechariah, stands up and says *“Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you...”*

Now what were the people to think? They had seen their kings. They had seen what they did. They were unrighteous, foolish leaders who had led them into ruin. There were a morally bankrupt group of men who delighted in sacrificing their own children into the fires of their false gods. When Zechariah said to them *“See, your king comes to you...”*, perhaps some reacted with, *“No! Not again!”* But the words of the prophet went on: *“...See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey...”* (Zechariah 9:9).

Now it was time to sit up and listen. What was all this about? A king who was *different* than the ones they had known. They had known unrighteousness, barbaric destruction, roughness and toughness, war and bloodshed and turmoil. But the adjectives that described this coming king were different. This one would be, righteous, having salvation, gentle, proclaiming peace to the nations. The unique manner of this king's appearance would be striking as well. A humble king on top of it all? Who could believe it!

This all would be quite different from what they were used to. *“When is He coming, Zechariah? When do we see someone who rules in such a manner? When do we see a king coming who is righteous, who has in mind to save His people, who is gentle and humble in heart, who proclaims peace to the nations? This is the type of king I want!”*

This king didn't come to Jerusalem during the time of Zechariah. But as the prophet had said, He *would* come and He *did* come—on a dark night in the

little town of Bethlehem, He came. And then He came, thirty-three years later, to Jerusalem just a few days before He died a most horrible death. On that day, Jesus asked His disciples to bring Him a colt and “*when they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, He sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the field. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!”* (Mark 11:7-10 NIV).

Jesus came to the city of Jerusalem in *righteousness*. Nobody could point an accusing finger at the Righteous One. Nobody could drag the skeletons out of His closet. He was the Son of God. Not once had He failed in His obedience to God’s will. He was the perfect, spotless Lamb able to place His righteous life at God’s altar in your place.

Jesus came to the city of Jerusalem in *gentleness*. While other kings had come with harshness and force, storming city gates and putting people to death, forcing others to become loyal subjects, this King came in meekness and humility. This King came saying “*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls*” (Matthew 11:28-29 NIV).

Jesus came to the city of Jerusalem *having salvation*. While other kings had come promising freedom, protection, and salvation from neighboring armies, this King came promising protection in the struggle that is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. He came to do battle against the Devil—your enemy who desires nothing more than for you to be buried with your sins in Hell. Jesus brings you protection and salvation.

This king comes to give you something that no earthly king can ever give. He comes to wash you clean with His sacrifice on the cross. Your King tells you that come what may you have salvation in Him because in His death He has suffered your guilt, your condemnation, your shortcomings, your mistakes. He has opened the way for you to God, opened the way for you to Heaven. He has saved you for a glory ready to be revealed in the last time (cf. 1 Peter 1:3-5).

Jesus came to the city of Jerusalem bringing *peace*. While other kings had come announcing that their rule would bring an end to earthly strife, Jesus came bringing a greater peace—a peace that much of the world does not even understand. It is the peace that comes from knowing that should you die this very hour, you have nothing to fear when you stand before your

Creator. It is the peace that comes from knowing that you no longer have to “seek out God” and wonder whether or not you will be pleasing to Him. Jesus Christ was pleasing to Him in *your* place and He became the peace for our minds and hearts.

SEE, YOUR KING COMES TO YOU!—Not to rule in an earthly, governmental way, as do the kings and leaders of the world, but to rule in a far greater and more majestic manner. Our King comes to reign in our little worlds with His perfect *righteousness* given for us; with His *salvation* earned for us; with His *gentleness* in spite of us; with His *peace* to fulfill us...in our families, in our homes, in our lives, in our thoughts, and in our souls.

SEE, YOUR KING COMES TO YOU! Lay down the palm branches of your hearts for Jesus, and line His paths with your best garments! Amen.

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. NIV®. Copyright© 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

— **Pastor David P. Schaller**

Excerpted from *Ministry by Mail*—April 5, 2009
Full sermon available at: www.lutheransermmons.org

