

# The King of kings is here; let us worship him

Message for Sunday, March 29, 2015  
by Bruce Fraser

**Scripture:** Mark 11:1-11 and others

## Children's Message:

[Last year we put together a cardboard skeleton to represent the "dry bones" vision in Ezekiel 37. I brought that skeleton out and suspended it from the ceiling.]

Do you remember our friend here, that you helped put together last year? I've attached some strings to its hands and feet. That means I can make it do whatever I want. If I want to move the hand, I just pull the string like this. [*Demonstrate as I explain.*]

Now that's fine when we're playing with a puppet. But that's not a good thing if we try to control each other. But we like to control others. If I say to someone, "Help me," I want her to help immediately. [*Pull the hand towards me.*] If I say to someone, "Come here," I want him to come right now. [*Pull the skeleton towards me.*]

That's what happened when Jesus came to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The people were happy; they thought Jesus would be the new king, and make life better for everyone. Well, Jesus *did* make life better, but not the way they wanted it. So lots of them were unhappy with Jesus.

Here's the good news: Jesus did not give us power to control each other. He gave us something even better: power to love each other. Power to forgive others when they hurt us. Power to keep on loving when we feel like giving up.

In fact, Jesus allowed others to control *him*: they beat him, and killed him on the cross. But Jesus did that so that our sins could be forgiven.

[Thanks to Lavern Franzen for this idea, from *Smile! Jesus is Lord.*]

**Message:** "The King of kings is here; let us worship him"

## 1) The King of kings is coming!

From time to time, there are things in the life of Jesus that have huge significance, but they are easy to miss. For instance, in John 8:58, when Jesus says, "Before Abraham was born, I am," it sounds like poor grammar. But the people didn't try to kill him that day because he ended a sentence with an incomplete verb. It's because they recognized he was referring to Exodus 3:14, where

God says to Moses, "I am who I am. Tell the Israelites that I Am sent you." In other words, Jesus was claiming the name of God for himself.

Today's reading about Palm Sunday is another example.

**Mark 11:1-2, 7-11, New International Version:**

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ...

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 fields. 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!"

The key part there is Jesus riding on a colt. This is what we read in the prophet Zechariah:

**Zechariah 9:9, New International Version:**

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

So riding into Jerusalem, the capital city, on a colt is the sign of the king. But this wasn't just any ordinary king. Listen further to the kind of king which Zechariah describes in the next verse:

**Zechariah 9:10, New International Version:**

He shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the great River to the ends of the earth.

This prophecy wasn't for just any king; it was about the King of kings, the Saviour of the world, the Messiah.

But before the week is over, he is no longer a King, but a criminal. Even worse — he is branded as a blasphemer, an evil sinner against God. Pilate and the soldiers mock and torture him, making a farce out of his title, "The King of the Jews." They nailed him to a cross and killed him. Palm Sunday didn't last very long.

## 2) It's a privilege and a joy to serve the King

Jesus calls us to follow him. That means more than just playing “Simon Says.” It means that his values become ours; his will becomes ours; his righteousness becomes ours; his life becomes ours. When we follow Jesus, we are finally living the life we were created for.

John 10:10, Today's English Version:

“The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness.”

Jesus said he came to bring us abundant life—as opposed to just getting by. Making Jesus the Lord in our lives, and following him day by day is the key to this.

John 15:10-11, New International Version:

“If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”

It's a privilege and a joy to serve the Jesus the King.

Chip Ingram tells about visiting China, and about a conversation he had with “Abraham” (not his real name; not safe to reveal his identity). Abraham tells his story:

We do a house church; we meet in secret, in a house church, because there is still a lot of persecution against Christians.

I was on a tour visiting churches around the region, while my wife was leading the house church in our home. In the middle of a worship service, the police raided the house. They demanded, “Who is the leader here?”

My wife said, “I'm the pastor. These people are just visiting; let them go.” So they arrested my wife and took her down to the police station. They beat her for two days. When I got back home a day later, she was black and blue all over from the beating.

[At this point, Chip said, “I was getting pretty emotional listening to this. I was imagining this was my wife, and what I would do if someone beat her up like that, and I was getting more and more angry.]

Abraham's eyes watered at this point, as he was getting emotional, too. He said, “What an honour it was that we would be privileged to

suffer for our Saviour in some small way, the same as he suffered for us.”

He talked further, that they prayed for those police officers, that they would realize the injustice of their actions, and that realization would draw them to put their faith in Jesus.

Chip realized that Abraham's response to persecution was vastly different from what he was prepared to do. He was very humbled, as he realized he was in the presence of someone for whom saying “Jesus is King” went far deeper than it ever had in his life.

## 3) King forever; let us worship him

But the cross and the tomb were not the end. God raised Jesus up from the dead, to be King forever. Here is how Paul put it:

Philippians 2:9-11, New International Version:

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

In God's sight, Jesus isn't King for a Day. He is King for eternity!

### Next Steps:

- For many Canadians, the Queen is a distant and irrelevant tradition from a past century. For many, that description fits “King Jesus,” too. Stop and think: How central—or irrelevant—is Jesus in my life, apart from Sunday morning? Be honest.
- Jesus calls us to follow him. Not because he has a big ego, but because we need him in our lives, if we're going to amount to anything worthwhile.
- So renew (or make) your commitment to worship Jesus as Lord, to stay close to him through prayer each day, and to follow and obey him day by day.