

(Service for the King) 4. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

by A.B. Simpson

Transcript

"And if any man ask ought of you, say the Lord hath need of them. Tell ye the daughter of Zion; Behold, they King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass and a colt, the foal of an ass." Matthew xxi. 3, 5. There were few in these days of our Lord who had not either seen or heard of a Roman triumphal procession, or witnessed on a smaller scale the pageants of Herod; and they had heard all over the world of the majestic and magnificent entrance to the capital of returning consuls, and generals and emperors after some great victory; how, for days before, the city was clothed in holiday attire; everything was suspended but pleasure and pomp and at the appointed time the procession began to move along the sacred way toward the capital, preceded by great masses of splendid soldiers in perfect discipline and uniform, followed by long trains of captives, including kings and princes, and sometimes queens and beautiful women, walking in chains before the victor, while great multitudes of cattle for the sacrificial altar followed next behind; and then came the king or general himself in a gorgeous chariot drawn by many horses, clothed with every color of splendor, and followed by the vast train of the people given up to the carnival and revelry, until at last the pageant reached the steps of the capitol; and then some of those queens and kings and princesses would be taken aside and executed there, as the first sacrifice of the cruel, selfish triumph; and then the cattle were slain and offered in sacrifice to their heathen gods. So the mighty Caesar or some of his satellites would show himself the king. That was the human kingdom, that was man's stairway to a throne, and it was covered with cruelty and selfishness and blood.

The dear Lord Jesus in this chapter gives us His triumphal procession. He, too, was marching to a throne and to a kingdom. For thirty-three years He had been stepping up to it by the slow ascension of suffering and love. He refused from the devil the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them in a moment of time, and He would take His kingdom from His Father only "the pathway of blood, and sorrow and holy ministering love. And now, after long refusing earthly glories, after refusing the Galileans His consent to make Him a king, after passing so long through the pathway of obscurity, at last He puts aside the veil and lets them see Him in His true royalty and His kingly glory, and He begins to ascend the throne which for a little while only He will keep, but by and by He is going to sit upon forever.

Starting first from Jericho, He begins by healing poor Bartimeus, and then saving Zaccheus. Then He passes on to the home of Bethany, and is anointed by Mary, and then the next morning He passes on down the slopes of Olivet. Two of His disciples were sent before Him to prepare the way. A little ass and its colt upon which no man had ever sat are the chariots which He uses "sitting upon the lowliest, most

commonplace of burden bearers, one that was used for toil and the meanest drudgeryâ€”on that little beast of burden He sits down, with the garments of his disciples as His trappings, then the multitude strew the way with palm branches and the little children cry: "Hosanna to the Son of David;" until at last the multitude join the procession, for there were three million of people at this time gathered around Jerusalem; it was the feast time, and on side hundreds of thousands of them were dwelling in little tents on the hillsides; and they heard the sounds and flocked around and joined them, until there was as vast a procession, perhaps, as ever accompanied Caesar to his throne; and, in the midst, rides the royal Nazarene, meek and lowly, and sitting upon an ass.

On the way, He pauses just before the descent, and gazes on the city. There is no light of triumph on His brow today; there is no self-glorying in that face, as He halts and looks down on the city at His feet. He gazes a moment, and then there burst from His eyes great floods of tears, and He weeps and weeps again in the hour of His triumph, and says, "If thou hadst known the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes." And then He passes into the temple and as a King claims His place as its Master, driving out the earthliness and claiming it for His Father and Himself and stands there in the face of His enemies teaching and healing for whole week, defying them to arrest Him until His hour has come, a king in every sense--of wisdom, power, suffering and love. He shows Himself here as a King.

First, we see Him as the King of human hearts. He begins His royal march at Bethany, and receives first from Mary the offering of her love. Then, next we see Him as the King of the Jews, the Son of David, claiming the throne of Jerusalem, which He is yet to restore and possess. Then we see Him as the King of the Temple, stepping into His own house and saying; "My house." Three years before He had performed a similar miracle and said, "My Fatherâ€™s house." But He calls it "My house" now and He cleanses it by His word. Then, we see Him as the King of Love, weeping over sinners, and pardoning them in His mercy and then finally, we see Him as the conqueror of sin and sorrow and death, with a crown of thorns on His brow, the Author of redemption, the Prince of our salvation. You think of Him as your priest, you think of Him as your prophet, but He wants you to know Him as your Kingâ€”ruling over you, ruling in you, conquering for you, and taking you to spread His kingdom abroad through the world.

Then, the coming of Christ to His kingdom, in this instance is the type of His coming to the individual heart. His ascension, His descent from the Mount of Olives, and His entrance to Jerusalem, is the foreshadowing of that which has come to some of our hearts, and which He wants to have come to all. O, it is a glorious hour in the soul\

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