

Luke 19: 28-44; “The Time of Your Visitation”, A Palm Sunday Sermon
Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on March 24th, 2024,
in the Morning Worship Service.

Luke chapter 19 is the chapter of visitation. In verses 1-10 we find the Lord Jesus visiting the house of Zacchaeus and visiting him with salvation. In verses 11-27 there is the parable of the minas. We find the Lord Jesus visiting his servants to look in on whether they had been faithful with the spiritual resources which had been entrusted to them in the Word of God. In verses 28-44 we find that Jerusalem, the Jewish nation taken collectively under that city’s name did not know the time of their visitation.

What was it that Christ came to bring, that Jerusalem did not recognize? We find the answer in the verses that we have just read. When Christ came to do His greatest work, His work of redeeming men; He visited the people of that day with 3 holy and perfect attitudes which He manifested, which we ourselves need to think about. Since this is the case, let us pray that by Christ’s grace that we will be able to manifest them in a God-glorifying way, when our Lord calls us to do so.

1st of all – We see that He visited men with the holy and perfect attitude of true humility. (verses 28-36)

The time of Christ’s visitation was important, not only for the people of that day, but for us here as well. In verse 42 Jesus says – “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace.” “But now they are hidden from your eyes.” This tells us that Christ’s visits are not to be taken for granted or ignored. For each of us has a day. That day is our life. In this day we hopefully will have received the preaching of His blessed word. And in this day Christ would have us to share the blessed truth of God, His gospel, and His word, to people all around us.

If you are a person who does not know the Lord yet, God would have you to respond to the promptings of His Holy Spirit. He is beseeching you to obey the gospel which is preached to you now. He is saying – Be reconciled to Me. For now is the day of grace. Each of us should realize that the day of grace will someday come to an end. It is so important that you be ready for His coming. His coming at the end of the world to judge the world, yes. But His coming to you at the time of your death also. Christ visits you with His teaching now, and with His Spirit at times like this, so that you might recognize your need for salvation.

Will you receive Christ, no matter how old you are, so that you might worship Him and serve Him all the rest of Your days? This takes humility. And true humility comes from Him. And, for those of us who are Christians, He visits you that He might evaluate what you have done with all of the grace and the truth that He gives to you. If you say that you know the Lord, and yet you do nothing to obey His word, you will prove yourself to be a wicked servant in the end.

If, however, you will believe in Christ’s words and act upon them, then He shall be pleased with you, and you will be blessed. If you are faithful, when He returns, you will hear Him say – “Well done, you good and faithful servant.” “Enter in to the joy of your Lord.” Jesus said to His disciples in verse 30 – “Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat.” “Loose it and bring it here.” “And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it?’, thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’”

The Lord knew all of these things without ever having to go there Himself. He knew all those things, and yet He used His knowledge humbly and wisely. We see His humility evidenced in the choices which He made on this particular day. We see it in His deliberate choice to humble Himself with regard to His Prescience. His Prescience is His knowing all things with regard to the future. Here, at this critical time, it was His ability to know beforehand, about all the various situations of people, who He knew He needed help from. He knew that the colt was tied. He knew where it was located, and the question that would come from the owner when he was asked for it.

If anyone might have been able to show off His knowledge in this regard, it was the Lord Jesus. But you never find Him doing that. Instead, you find Him speaking and acting very humbly in

relation to all that He said and did. He set the perfect example for His disciples. He had more knowledge of things and people than any man ever had. And yet He used His great knowledge by making it subservient to His obedience to God. Let me ask you if this is true of you? Does your knowledge of the Scriptures, your knowledge of the things of this world, and people around you, lead you to a greater humility?

Does it lead you, further yet, to think more about what it will mean for you to do God's will in the various situations that you encounter? If you are pursuing righteousness, and Jesus was perfectly righteous, will you not pray to be more like Him? Will you visit others with your humility, and not with your pride of knowledge? Jesus' humility on this day led Him to choose to come into Jerusalem, not on a war horse, but on a colt the foal of a donkey. He would fulfill the scripture in Zechariah 9: 9 which says – "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!" "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!" "Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey."

Jesus knew the purpose for which the Father had sent Him into the world. But He went about to fulfill God's purposes in perfect humility. He knew that the only way for sinners to be saved was by humbling Himself and becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Ask yourself now whether you are humbling yourself to become obedient to the things which are written in the Bible which the Lord would have you to keep and to do? The people who were following Him, it says in verse 11 of this chapter, thought that the kingdom of God would appear immediately. But Jesus knew that suffering must come to Himself first, so that He could atone for all of the sins of God's people.

And so, Jesus sent two of His disciples into the village of Bethpage where He knew they would find a colt tied. This was the foal of a donkey on which no man had ever sat. Jesus knew all these small but important details. His coming to Jerusalem must picture what His intent was, and what His kingdom was to be like. He made the choice of this lowly animal because His intent was not to set up an earthly kingdom, but to bring people into His heavenly kingdom. This could only be accomplished by His humbly submitting to the cross.

He would not come riding up to the cross on a majestic steed, or in a chariot. He would come to it slowly and deliberately riding upon a colt, the foal of a donkey. He came to establish His kingdom by fulfilling all the righteousness of God's holy law. He the King of glory would become the servant, and die for His subjects. He would be meek and lowly and submit to the punishment which they deserved. This was His passive obedience. He was endowed with salvation because He was, and had been, righteous in all His ways before God and men.

He would submit to become the sacrifice lamb who would take away the sins of the world. He would ride on toward Jerusalem on this lowly animal. It would be His active obedience to move deliberately, but humbly to the cross. The Lord Jesus had been actively obedient all through His life. Everything that He had done before this had qualified Him to be passively obedient at the cross, to submit to these sufferings on behalf of sinners like ourselves.

As you go about to live for God, will you not remember this truth? Remember what great humility it took for the Lord Jesus to willingly and lovingly humble Himself to purchase your salvation. He came riding on the donkey on which no man had ever sat. No one has humbled Himself like this, so completely, either before or since. No one has ever been born sinless but Jesus. No one has lived sinlessly except Jesus. No sacrifice on any other man's part could purchase the forgiveness of sins, and an eternal inheritance, but that of Jesus.

No righteousness of mere man could be imputed to us as a robe of righteousness to cover all of our sins. For His righteousness must cover all of our obedience where it falls short of the glory of God. The Lord had need of this donkey. He had need of him to show forth the fact that He, the meek and lowly One, was going to the cross to die for sinners. His own glory was so very great. But it was veiled in human flesh. And so men in those days did not see a proud Warrior Conqueror. They saw a Man who said He had come from God. But His words were gracious, and His works of power and mercy to the needy, were undeniable.

Men beheld the glory of His humility, and they began to see where the grace to save them from sin, came from. They saw where the grace to change them, in the attitudes of their heart, came from. He alone had this power. And it is the same today. He who came in this lowly fashion would have you, when you receive His grace, to pray to live out this same humility in your life. You deny yourself, you pick up your cross, and you follow Him. You who are Christians have come to taste and see that Jesus is gentle and humble of heart. And you have found rest for your souls. He is your Savior for He was willing to take the lowly place for you.

Those of you who may be unsure of your salvation, or perhaps lacking in assurance, what is your response to Him now? When you see that He rode into Jerusalem on this lowly donkey, what do you think? Do you cry out in your heart – Hosanna to the Son of David? Hosanna means – Save Lord, I beseech You! You are saying – I approve of your having taken this lowly position for me. You had to do this for me! Are you waving the palm branches of surrender in your heart? If you were there that day, and you saw Him riding by, would you spread your garments in His way as He passed by you? Would you have given Him the glory that is due His name?

Are you saying, even now – Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord? Are you saying – Blessed Jesus, come to my heart, and change my life so that I will want to keep Your commandments? You see, Jesus visited men with a true humility then. And He can visit your heart today, right now, and teach you true humility. He can lead you by His grace to a better obedience to God. He says – Have faith in Me. Come to Me and take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me. You will never regret it. You will always and continually rejoice!

2nd – We see that Jesus visited men with a true willingness. (verses 37-40)

The willingness of Jesus was a willingness to be recognized for who He was, and what He had done. This did not conflict with His humility. His humility caused Him to always seek for the glory of His Father. In John 8: 29, Jesus said – “He who sent me is with me, the Father has not left me alone, for I always do those things which please the Father.” It was not pride or a desire for recognition that He said this. It was not to obtain the approval of men that motivated Jesus. It was His desire to see God praised, and to see God glorified. He approved of the whole multitude of the disciples rejoicing and praising God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen Him do.

He was willing to be praised as the blessed King who comes in the name of the Lord. The crowd saw His willingness to teach them and to heal them. They did not yet know of His willingness to die for them. His humility concealed it from them. His love would prove it very shortly. But He was unwilling to rebuke His disciples when they praised Him and when they praised His Father. Teacher – Rebuke your disciples, say some of the Pharisees. They thought that to praise God for Jesus and His works was wrong. A legalist always will think this way.

The legalist does not see His need of a humble suffering Savior. He believes that his being religious in a moral sense, will justify him before God. This man Jesus cannot claim Deity, they think. He is just a teacher. He is not God made manifest in the flesh. He cannot bring in the Kingdom of God. He cannot take away sins. He cannot give eternal life. But Jesus’ reply was a rebuke to them. He did have a true willingness to rebuke error and unbelief. He said – “I tell you, that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.” A heart that knows Jesus must praise God.

Charles Spurgeon once said: “A proud heart will never praise God, for it hoards up praise for itself.” “A true heart cannot keep praise back, and the Lord Jesus commends it Himself.” Let me ask you now – Do you have a heart to praise God? Do you praise the Lord Jesus for coming in the name of the Lord to fulfill prophecy, to make an end of transgression and sin by willingly going to the cross on your behalf? Do you have a willingness to praise God? If you do, it is because you have seen the willingness of Jesus to be your sin-bearer. If we will not praise Him, the stones will cry out.

3rd – Jesus visited men with a true compassion. (verses 41-44)

Here we see exhibited before our eyes something of the tender mercies of our God toward even the non-elect. We see His sympathy and His love toward the lost, the perishing sinners who had

rejected Him, or who were about to reject Him. Jesus, who had just been praised and blessed by the multitude of the disciples knew and perceived how fickle the human heart is. He knew how quickly some who praised Him that day would perhaps be crying “crucify Him” tomorrow. And yet, His tears were not for Himself. Not one tear of Jesus was shed for Himself. His tears were all shed for perishing sinners.

When it says He wept, the English translation doesn't convey all that well what the Greek means. It means that He sobbed, He cried loudly. He lamented the fact that they had not believed in Him. They had not received Him as a nation. He cried because they did not know the things which made for their peace. What brings peace to our souls is when we listen to the words of Jesus and act upon them. When we shut our ears to His teachings, when we neglect to act upon what the preacher and our Bibles tell us will bring peace, then the time will come when the things of peace will be hidden from our eyes.

There may be some here this morning who have not entered in to covenant with Christ yet. I want you to see that if Christ wept over perishing sinners in that day, that He is still willing to gather you under His wings for salvation, today. If you will believe in Him, He will save you, and you shall dine with Him spiritually in your soul. This gospel which I preach to you today comes to you from hands of the crucified One, the One who intends it for your everlasting good in His offering it to you this day.

Christ Himself has a greater care and concern for the soul of each one here than all of us put together. He was and is a Divine Person. He felt with the perfect feelings, the anguishing consequences of the rejection of these people. And He knew that Jerusalem would be destroyed, that it would be leveled to the ground. He knew that even the mothers and the children would die as well because they did not recognize the day of His visitation to them. And it was for this that He wept. God in Christ had come to them, and He was with them. And now, many would refuse Him and would not listen. They would finally agree that it was right that Jesus be crucified. It was not right, but Jesus knew that it was most necessary for you who will have Him as your Savior and Lord.

What will your response be today? Will not those of you who know the Lord see how deeply compassionate our Lord was towards sinners? Will you not pray, even now, to learn to feel for perishing sinners and learn to weep over their lost state? Some of us are far too intellectual about our perishing relatives and friends. We coldly wonder if God has not chosen them before the foundation of the world, but if we are to be more like Christ, and truly see and feel where their sin will take them; will it not cause us to weep for them?

I can remember in the height of my rebellion in sin, when my opposition to my Father's trying to tell me about Christ was the greatest; that was when he cried over me the most. He cried over me when I did not deserve to be cried over. This leads me to close by saying this: Let not your faith be silent and hidden. Let your lips speak the praise of our text – Blessed be King Jesus who came in the Name of the Lord. Even now, He comes in humility. He comes willingly. Even now, He comes compassionately to your heart. He comes to bring you peace, and to bring you to heaven. He comes to show you His glory, and change you to live for it. Praise be to the Savior!