

DOCTRINE FOR THE YOUNG

KING OF KINGS

by the Rev. Geoffrey S. Childs

Think back to Christmas. The angel Gabriel came to Mary before the Lord was born, and told her that she would have a son. “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest” . . . “and of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 2:32-33). That is, the Lord, the King who was coming, would rule forever. When He was born, the wise men went to Jerusalem and they asked the king of that day, Herod, “Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him” (Matt. 2:2). So the King was born—the promised Messiah, who was to rule and bring salvation.

When He was thirty years old, He went down the Jordan, and there He was baptized by John. For three years, Jesus taught, and His disciples thought He was a king. They thought He would free them from Rome.

Then came Palm Sunday. In the morning He got up very early and walked toward Jerusalem, a very dangerous place for the Lord. His enemies were there.

Hundreds of people heard that Jesus was coming. And then thousands. And they streamed toward Him as He took the path toward Jerusalem. They knew what was happening. The Lord was coming as King. This was His coronation, just like King Solomon, a thousand years before. And they felt great delight and happiness. They put down their clothes before Him. If they couldn’t find garments, they cut down palm branches. They laid a path for the Lord, their King. And they shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” (Matt. 21:9). That means, “Save us, we beseech You! Be our King!” The joy that people felt that day was tremendous, because their Savior the King had come. He would free them from Rome! The whole city shouted for joy.

But very shortly it ended. Four days later the Lord was betrayed by Judas. He was led to Pilate. Pilate said to the Lord, “Are you King?” The Lord answered, “You say I am King. But My kingdom is not of this world. If it were of this world, then My servants would fight” (John 18:35-37). Pilate said, “I find no fault in Him.” But nevertheless he delivered the Lord to the mob. Then they put on Him a scarlet robe; they put a reed in His hands; and they put a crown of thorns upon His head. And they mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews.” They forced Him then to carry the cross, and He was raised on the cross to die. And over His head Pilate wrote, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”

It seemed as if the King was dead. On Saturday it was quiet. And Sunday morning, very early, an earthquake shook the place where the Lord was buried. The guard at His tomb fell down as if dead. And the Lord was not there! He appeared later to the disciples.

It took an earthquake—it took a resurrection—for them to realize who this King was. He was no King of this earth. He could have ruled this earth so easily. But His kingdom was of the universe, of the stars, of the galaxies, the tiniest atoms, of all creation. He was the King of the universe. But more than that. It takes an “earthquake” in our minds, a whole different way of thinking, to see who the Lord is. He is no King for us on this earth. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, to all eternity.

Text: Matthew 21:1-11