

Jesus came to be Enthroned as the Promised Rescuing King

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- [0 : 00] Good afternoon and welcome to our Easter lunchtime Bible talk. Now we're finishing our look at some of the things that Jesus came to do as Mark wants us to see them.
- So perhaps you could turn up in your Bibles with me to Mark chapter 15. You'll find that on page 852. And we're going to be reading verses 16 through to 41.
- Mark chapter 15, verses 16 through to 41. And the soldiers led him, that is Jesus, away inside the palace, that is the governor's headquarters.
- And they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed him in a purple cloak. And twisting together a crown of thorns they put it on him. And they began to salute him, heal, king of the Jews.
- And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him. And kneeling down in homage to him. And when they mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him.
- [1 : 00] And they led him out to crucify him. And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.
- And they brought him to the place called Golgotha, which means place of a skull. And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh. But he did not take it. And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them to decide what each should take.
- And it was the third hour when they crucified him. And the inscription of the charge against him read, The King of the Jews. And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left.
- And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself and come down from the cross.
- So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, He saved others. He cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we might see and believe.
- [2 : 09] Those who were crucified with him also reviled him. And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried aloud with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?
- Which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And some of the bystanders hearing it said, Behold, he is calling Elijah. Elijah. And some ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.
- And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, Truly, this man was the Son of God.

There were also women looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James the younger, and of Jusus and Salome. When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him.

And there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem. This is the word of the Lord. But now let's turn to prayer. Heavenly Father, we pray that you would indeed use these gifts that we've given to encourage our partner church in Sterling to raise up a gospel worker to serve you faithfully.

[3 : 45] May they receive this as a great encouragement of the support of fellow brothers and sisters from around the country. And this afternoon we pray that as we gather here, we can be confident that you still speak to us through your living and active words.

Help us now to hear and to respond with all of our hearts that we might love you more and be delighted to love those who are around us and to exalt to them, you, your Son, the Lord Jesus, as our King.

And it's in his name we pray. Amen. Please do turn again in your Bibles to Mark chapter 15 as we turn our attentions to that now.

A coronation is a grand affair in the life of any nation or any people. Queen Elizabeth II's coronation was beamed live to around 20 million people around the country on TV.

10 million further people listened on the radio. Tapes of it were flown in an RAF plane all the way to Canada so that they could see it and hear about it on the same day.

[5 : 05] It's a coronation that took place in Westminster Abbey, a building as grand as we can imagine. It has 10 bells, 2 towers, and is 3,000 metres squared.

She was crowned with a crown of gold that weighs 2.5 kilograms and contains 444 precious stones. It was a grand affair, fit for royalty.

That is what a king or a queen should look like. That is what the world expects of its royals. Grandeur, splendor, victory. These are the words that describe kings and queens.

These are what coronations are to focus on. Royalty is strong, rich, and powerful. And we've been seeing a bit about King Jesus and Mark over the past few weeks.

Mark has been building a picture of Jesus throughout his gospel that is expansive, that is cosmic, that shows us Jesus as completely unlike anyone else ever.

[6 : 11] Right from the beginning, the very first verse is a proclamation that this king, this long-awaited king has arrived. And ever since, the whole story builds and builds as we get to see more of why Jesus has come, as we get to see a growing picture of who this Jesus, this king is.

And it's all heading towards a glorious end, a wonderful coronation before the world for this long-promised king. Queen Elizabeth's coronation made history for being the first coronation to be completely filmed on TV.

The coronation of King Jesus wouldn't have got a look in. And that's what we see in verses 16 to 20. Jesus is crowned the king.

This is the big event, and Mark will move on to explain its significance shortly. But before he explains it, he wants us to know very clearly that this is a coronation.

Before he digs into this theological significance of what's happening, he wants us to see the coronation. But it's a coronation completely unlike any other.

[7 : 23] Mark is clear, though. Jesus is the king. But he's not what the world was looking for. Jesus has just been to trial in front of Pilate, someone who does have power as a representative of the king.

But in the end, we see in him a ruler who is unable to do the job of ruling justly. And so finding no fault in Jesus, he gives in to the crowd and hands out the punishment to Jesus that he'll be killed.

And so we get to verses 16 to 20. Look at them with me now. Five times in these verses, Mark uses kingly phrases to describe what's happening.

Verse 16, these events take place at a palace. Verse 17, he's given a purple cloak and he's given a crown of thorns.

Verse 18, he's healed as king. And verse 19, they kneel down to pay homage to him. This is the coronation of Jesus. And the irony that Mark uses is no mistake.

[8 : 29] Jesus is the king that has been misunderstood all the way through this gospel. He's been opposed and now he's to be killed. From the very opening verse, Mark has been building to this point.

This is the crowning moment of King Jesus. He's the king who's come to rescue. He is great David. He's the greater son. He's the true shepherd, the true leader, the true king of his people.

And just as his own disciples have struggled to understand who he truly is, just as religious leaders have struggled to understand who he is, so too do the governing powers of the day and they kill him.

He is displayed clearly by Mark in these verses as who he truly is. He has his crown. He's healed as king. But of course, it's all in mockery.

Mark's very clear. Even though it seems false, even though it seems unrealistic, even though it seems like mockery, Jesus is still very much the king.

[9 : 34] And as he's led out to his throne in verse 20, he does so just like the prophesied servant in Isaiah. He's led out to be crucified like a lamb to the slaughter.

He's led out to his throne, which is the cross. And we begin to see even more that this is a king unlike any other. And so Mark begins to unpack the significance of this enthroning event.

Verses 21 to 32, Mark tells us what kind of king Jesus would be. And he says that Jesus is the king who suffers to rescue his people. Verse 20 has already given us the clue as to what kind of rule Jesus will have.

His throne is not grand and gold. His throne is a cross. His crown isn't one that sparkles with precious stones, but it's one of thorns that pierce him.

Jesus is the king who has come to suffer and die for his people. He is a suffering servant. Come to rescue his people finally. He is the king who has come both to lay down his life and demand that his followers do the same.

[10 : 41] This end section of Mark's gospel is rife with references to Jesus being the suffering servant from Isaiah 53. In his trial, he was quiet when faced with charges.

Or as Isaiah writes, he opened not his mouth. He's led out to be crucified. Or as Isaiah says, like a lamb to the slaughter. He's beaten brutally.

He's mocked. He was innocent at his trial. No fault was found. He was the innocent lamb. And he's killed. All of these are flashing lights telling us that Isaiah's suffering servant is here.

The one who would be pierced for God's people's transgressions. The one who would be crushed for our iniquities is here. Isaiah writes that he had no former majesty that we would look at him.

And we've seen that this coronation is not one the world would recognize as being kingly. He's despised and rejected, mocked and beaten, just as was prophesied.

- [11 : 42] And still no one knows who he truly is. They even mock his teaching, thinking that it's been bogus. Verse 29. His claim that he would destroy the temple.
- They say, aha, nonsense. He's mocked. Save yourself. Come down from the cross. Verse 31. You've saved others. You cannot even save yourself.
- What kind of king is this? Verse 32. Let the Christ, let this king of Israel come down from the cross. So that we might see and believe.
- But his way has not been to save himself. He has come for the lost sheep. He has come for his true people. He has come to rescue people from sin and all of its terrible consequences.
- He has come, as Mark tells us in chapter 10, as a ransom for many. Jesus is the king who wouldn't get down from the cross. And that is why millions today still see and believe him.
- [12 : 48] As they claim in verse 32, getting off the cross wouldn't have led to them believing in him. They've seen his whole ministry. They've seen his miracles.
- And they haven't believed in him. Quite the opposite. It is because Jesus stayed on the cross and didn't see of himself that people still follow him today.
- The cross was his throne. His is the kingdom marked not with the glory of this world. He turns wisdom upside down, as Paul says.
- For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing. But to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men.
- And the weakness of God is stronger than men. The cross is true power, true wisdom. The cross is true strength, even though it looks puny.
- [13 : 44] Even though it looks weak and wretched. As grand and great as the kings of this world look, Jesus is the king. As glorious and powerful as the kings of this world look, Jesus, his throne that is the cross, is the only one that matters.
- And he didn't get off it. Westminster Abbey is nothing on Golgotha. That's what greatness looks like. And it challenges all of our categories.
- This is the better David. This is the better Moses. This is the rescue that has been needed ever since man rejected God's rule. It's not liberation from ruin.
- It's liberation from sin and death and all of its consequences. Here is a rescuing king who's come, who can really, truly deal with the problem that has seen the world unravel ever since the fall.
- Here is a rescuer who can deal with sin and undo its awful effects. Here is a king who stands in the place of his followers, innocent, but taking the guilt of others.
- [14 : 56] Blameless yet punished. Taking the penalty that is owed to those who are guilty. Substituting himself to offer a rescue that will last long, long after escape from Egypt or long after Canaan.
- That offers a rescue that offers a rescue that lasts forever. This is the kind of rule. This is the kind of king and kingdom that Jesus has brought. His coronation is very different.
- Because his kingdom and his rule is very different. And so we can take confidence and comfort from this. For any of us who have walked the same path of suffering, who have been persecuted for being part of Jesus' kingdom, all of our troubles are ennobled.
- Because we share in the same way that Jesus did. And his crowning moment makes all of our suffering much more great, much more wise, much more powerful than what the world would see it as.
- This is the kind of kingdom. This is the kind of rule. This is the kind of king that we have. And Mark moves on to unpack even more just what's significant about this death.

[16 : 14] And it's a death that brings victory. Verses 33 to 41. Jesus brings a real and lasting gospel to his people. Jesus brings a real and lasting gospel to his people.

At the very start of Mark's gospel, he announces that this is the gospel of Jesus the Christ. In the ancient world, this word gospel was the good news generally associated with a king who's won in battle.

The gospel of a victorious king returning to his people. And Mark surely wants us to know that whilst Jesus is killed, this is anything but defeat.

In these verses, there are four allusions back to the opening of this gospel of Mark. In verse 34, Jesus cries, just as in chapter 1, verse 3.

Verse 38, the curtain is torn just like the heavens are torn open in chapter 1. There's a declaration that Jesus is the son of God, just as in 1, 1.

[17 : 17] And in verse 41, he's ministered to, again, just like in chapter 1. This is the king. This is the victory. This is the climax of the gospel story.

This is the good news. This is the king finally bringing victory to his people. He's brought hope that will not run out, that will not end, that will not disappoint.

This is the gospel declaration of victory over all that oppresses. And Mark draws it out for us in four ways. Verse 33, the first one, there is darkness.

Three hours of darkness. I remember back to the summer of 1999, when the solar eclipse was the big event of the summer. I was looking forward to it for about a week.

And I sat inside watching TV, when suddenly my mom came in to say, Did you see it? I didn't. I missed it.

[18 : 22] It lasted mere minutes. We read here that there were three hours of darkness in the middle of the day. That is not a normal thing. That can't be explained by a solar eclipse.

Mark isn't wanting us to think about how the sun and the moon align. He puts us in here because he's pointing to judgment. There is darkness because judgment has fallen.

Emos talks of the day of judgment coming and says, On that day, declares the Lord God, I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.

Or darkness like Isaiah talks about, For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light. The sun will be dark at its rising and the moon will not shed its light.

I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity. Darkness comes because judgment has come. And it falls on Jesus, not us.

[19 : 23] Second, this causes Jesus to cry out. Verse 34, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Truly, Jesus has now been forsaken by everyone.

Not just by the leaders of Israel, not just by the crowds, not even by his disciples. But he stands in our place and faces the forsakenness that we ought to endure.

Jesus stands in our place and faces the absolute forsakenness that is owed to humanity for their continued desire to scorn God. He quotes this from Psalm 22, and that's a psalm that ends on the note of salvation.

This event, this kingly event, points to rescue. He cries out, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And it points that he is here to rescue his people from the ends of the earth. Third, the drink, verse 36.

[20 : 33] Back in Mark chapter 10, Jesus tells his disciples that they are not able to drink the cup that he will drink. And in chapter 14, Jesus prays, All things are possible for you, Father.

Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will. Jesus is given a drink. And surely the drink he has given is the cup of wrath.

Jesus is taking upon himself the wrath of God that is due to sinners. This was the only way. Wrath poured out, but not upon us.

Wrath poured out upon our rescuing king. Number four. Verse 38. The curtain of the temple is torn in two. No longer is the temple the only place where God's people can be with him.

Jesus is the true temple of God. Verse 29. He has destroyed the temple. And the renewed, better, truer temple is here. And it is King Jesus.

[21 : 42] People can now truly come and commune with God through Jesus. Sin is dealt with. No longer a chasm between God and his people. Relationship is no longer difficult.

The true people of God can be drawn to him. The world over. Now the Gentiles can be brought near. Now those outside of Israel can be grafted in to all that he's doing to rescue.

Now finally the serpent's head can be crushed. And the true people of God. All those who would put their trust in Jesus. Can be rescued.

For all those who see in Jesus their rescue from sin. For all those who see that truly this is the son of God. The true king of God's people. They can claim that in my place condemned he stood.

And no sooner is this curtain torn in two than a Gentile proclaims. Verse 39. Truly. This man was the son of God.

[22 : 48] Four things that tell us what the cross is doing. Judgment has come. Jesus takes our forsakenness. Wrath is poured out on him and not us. And the curtain of the temple is torn.

That we might truly have relationship with God through Jesus. What kind of victory is this gospel of the king? It's the victory that defeats sin forever.

It's the victory that verses 40 to 41 looks forward to victory over death. Mark points us to Galilee in these verses. The very place where he said to them.

I will meet you once I have been raised. He's come to achieve victory over sin. And victory over death. The cross looks weak.

It looks like defeat. Nothing about it looks kingly. Nothing about it looks impressive. But the word of the cross is the power of God to those who are being saved.

[23 : 50] The cross is true greatness. God turns what this world thinks is powerful upside down. And brings into the world a hope that is far greater than anything else.

A hope that will endure forever. And through this weak looking cross. Through what looked like defeat. God has given to his people his very self for their rescue.

Sin can be forgiven. No longer do we need to be estranged from God. Judgment is faced for us. Here is the king who lives up to his billing. Here is the king who doesn't disappoint.

Here is the leader who faithfully leads and feeds his people. Here is the king enthroned forever. And isn't he completely unlike anyone else ever?

Mark wants us to be astounded by Jesus. He is truly wonderful. Even in death. He looks far more remarkable than anyone else could.

[24 : 56] He offers a real and lasting hope for his people. Not only did he die for his people. But his death was able to achieve what we needed most.

The full white hot wrath of God. Poured out. Not on us. As we deserve. But on Jesus. True justice done.

All evil punished. No wrongdoing overlooked. But poured out on a substitute who is innocent. A sacrifice that would last forever.

And it's all ours. As we respond like the centurion. Truly this man. Was the son of God.

Truly this man. Is the king that we ought to follow. Truly this man. Is the king that we want.

[25 : 56] Amen. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus. The love of God the Father. And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Be with us all. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.