

## YOUR KING IS COMING

### John 12:12-16

**John 12:12-16** <sup>12</sup> On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, <sup>13</sup> took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and *began* to shout, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel." <sup>14</sup> Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, <sup>15</sup> "FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT." <sup>16</sup> These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

As we saw last time Jesus had come to Bethany, on His way to Jerusalem, because of the Passover. But you'll remember that it was a short time before this that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, and because of the religious leaders wanting to kill Jesus, He then left Bethany and went to a city called Ephraim.

**John 11:54** <sup>54</sup> Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.

It was from Ephraim where Jesus, several days later, went back to Bethany to spend time with the family of Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead.

**John 12:1** <sup>NAU</sup> Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

And so, it is now the second time visiting Bethany when Jesus decides to go to Jerusalem specifically because of the celebration of the Passover.

**John 12:12** <sup>12</sup> On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

Some of that crowd undoubtedly had gone to Bethany and found out about Jesus' intention to continue on to Jerusalem, which is a relatively short distance from Bethany, maybe a couple of miles as the crow flies.

**John 11:18** <sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off;

These people go ahead of Jesus and alert others who have already been in Jerusalem and like fans going to a concert to see their favorite band so as to get the best seats, they prepare ahead of Jesus and get ready for His entrance into the city of David, Jerusalem.

They then do a very interesting thing.

**John 12:13** <sup>13</sup> [they] took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and *began* to shout, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel."

The first thing we see here is that they took palm branches, which assumes that they cut them off of palm trees. Now, what could have prompted them to cut down palm branches with the intent to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem?

Well, this is not the first time that we see the employment of palm branches by the Jews in their history as they desire to honor God. In fact, palm branches were commanded by God to be used to celebrate Israel's exodus from Egypt as they roamed the desert and dwelled in makeshift booths during their wanderings.

**Leviticus 23:40-44** <sup>40</sup> *'Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.*

<sup>41</sup> *'You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month.* <sup>42</sup> *'You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths,* <sup>43</sup> *so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.'* <sup>44</sup> *So Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the LORD.*

And so, Palm branches together with other leafy bushes were to be used to celebrate God's goodness and provision for Israel as they were led by God to the Promised Land. This practice, which God commanded to take place in the seventh month, would be lost among the Jews after their captivity but regained when they got back to the land after leaving Babylon's grip as God brought them back to Jerusalem to rebuild the city.

**Nehemiah 8:1-2** <sup>NAU</sup> And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the LORD had given to Israel. <sup>2</sup> Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men, women and all who *could* listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.

**Nehemiah 8:8-18** <sup>8</sup> They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading. <sup>9</sup> Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest *and* scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law. <sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, "Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." <sup>11</sup> So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved." <sup>12</sup> All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them. <sup>13</sup> Then on the second day the heads of fathers' *households* of all the people, the

priests and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe that they might gain insight into the words of the law. <sup>14</sup> ***They found written in the law how the LORD had commanded through Moses that the sons of Israel should live in booths during the feast of the seventh month.*** <sup>15</sup> ***So they proclaimed and circulated a proclamation in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of other leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written."*** <sup>16</sup> So the people went out and brought *them* and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. <sup>17</sup> The entire assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them. The sons of Israel had indeed not done so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day. ***And there was great rejoicing.*** <sup>18</sup> He read from the book of the law of God daily, from the first day to the last day. And ***they celebrated the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly according to the ordinance.***

In both of these instances the Jews had experienced an exodus from bondage in their history, (one out of Egypt and now one out of Babylon), and they were commanded by God to celebrate His victory for them as He made His presence known to them and gave them the hope, (between their former slavery and their return to His promised land), that was to be restored and then they were commanded by God to show thankfulness to the Lord and adoration and joyfulness at the thought that God is with them.

By the way, the Jews would come to use palm branches for other forms of celebration in other instances of thanks in their customs as we read in the Apocryphal book of Maccabees.

1Maccabees 13:51<sup>51</sup> On the twenty-third day of the second month, in the year 171,<sup>[a]</sup> there was a great celebration in the city because this terrible threat to the security of Israel had come to an end. ***Simon and his men entered the fort singing hymns of praise and thanksgiving, while carrying palm branches and playing harps, cymbals, and lyres.***

It was in the second book of the Maccabees that we see Judas Maccabeus, a Jewish priest and a son of the priest Mattathias. He led the Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire (167–160 BCE). It was during that revolt against the Seleucid Empire that he and his troops captured the temple and cleansed it from the pagan influences.

It is of this account that we read in 2Maccabees 10:1-7

“Judas Maccabeus and his followers, under the leadership of the Lord, recaptured the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> They tore down the altars which foreigners had set up in the marketplace and destroyed the other places of worship that had been built. <sup>3</sup> They purified the Temple and built a new altar. Then, with new fire started by striking flint, they offered sacrifice for the first time in two years, burned incense, lighted the lamps, and set out the sacred loaves..... <sup>5</sup> They

rededicated the Temple on the twenty-fifth day of the month of Kislev, the same day of the same month on which the Temple had been desecrated by the Gentiles.<sup>6</sup> The happy celebration lasted eight days, like the Festival of Shelters, and the people remembered how only a short time before, they had spent the Festival of Shelters wandering like wild animals in the mountains and living in caves.<sup>7</sup> ***But now, carrying green palm branches and sticks decorated with ivy, they paraded around, singing grateful praises to him who had brought about the purification of his own Temple.***

To celebrate Jesus as King of the Jews was a clear acknowledgement, during the final days of our Lord's ministry, that the Jews believed that their bondage to Rome was coming to an end as they connect the word of God, given in the past, with a man in the present who they believe fulfills a prophetic word from God for their future. Notice the words they use.

**John 12:13** "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel."

Where did they get the idea that someone would be sent by their God and Deliverer, to be their King? And what did it mean to them to have a King, which at this point in their history they had not possessed for hundreds of years?

This quote is actually taken from<sup>ESV</sup> **Psalms 118:26** Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD.

The context of this psalm is actually a song of victory while in the midst of turmoil. In all likelihood these are the words of David, King of Israel, who acknowledged that God is their deliverer and can be trusted to set His lovingkindness on the nation as they repent and turn toward Him.

**Psalms 118:4-7** <sup>4</sup> Oh let those who fear the LORD say, "His lovingkindness is everlasting." <sup>5</sup> From *my* distress I called upon the LORD; The LORD answered me *and set me* in a large place. <sup>6</sup> The LORD is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me? <sup>7</sup> The LORD is for me among those who help me; Therefore I will look *with satisfaction* on those who hate me.

This Psalm expresses the need of Israel to look toward God to bring them out of their distress and deliver them into a Kingdom led by God's champion as He sends them the needed relief from her enemies.

And so, many of the Jews during the time of Jesus' ministry understood that He seemed to satisfy the biblical qualifications of a Champion, (a King), acknowledging that Jesus is that King, as He practices the power of God almighty by raising men from the dead, Lazarus in particular.

By the way, the dispersed Jews during the Babylonian captivity, when they were finally allowed to return to the Land, and were then able to start construction on the temple, expressed their joy as they acknowledged the lovingkindness of the Lord that David records in Psalm 118:4, "***His lovingkindness is everlasting.***"

**Ezra 3:10-11** <sup>10</sup> Now when the builders had laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to *praise the LORD according to the directions of King David of Israel.* <sup>11</sup> *They sang, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, saying, "For He is good, for His lovingkindness is upon Israel forever."* And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

And so, when the Jews begin to shout of Jesus, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel," this is no empty statement as they enthusiastically welcome Jesus into Jerusalem acknowledging that He is the one sent by God to lead them once again into victory. He is the one who gives them joy. He is the one who is their King, at least at this short moment in history.

And what is also important to understand is that this statement, which is taken from Psalm 118:26, is preceded in the psalm by David's understanding that God Himself is responsible to send a King who will be the cornerstone of a new Israel.

**Psalm 118:22-29** <sup>22</sup> *The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone.* <sup>23</sup> This is the LORD'S doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. <sup>24</sup> This is the day which the LORD has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it. <sup>25</sup> O LORD, do save, we beseech You; O LORD, we beseech You, do send prosperity! <sup>26</sup> *Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD;* We have blessed you from the house of the LORD. <sup>27</sup> The LORD is God, and He has given us light; Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. <sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I give thanks to You; *You are my God, I extol You.* <sup>29</sup> Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For *His lovingkindness is everlasting.*

This Psalm is a Messianic psalm prophesying the coming of the stone that the builders of Israel will reject, but is a stone that will be marvelous in the eyes of those who can see as they rejoice and are glad in the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Jesus Himself tells us that He is that cornerstone upon which a new eternal Kingdom will be established.

**Matthew 21:42-43** <sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER *stone*; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES '?' <sup>43</sup> "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.

The people who produce the fruit of this Kingdom that God establishes in the chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ, will be a people led by a King who is the offspring of David. This too, is established as the word of God makes clear that the offspring of David will sit on David's throne forever.

**Isaiah 9:6-7** <sup>6</sup> For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> *There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over*

*his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore.* The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

This offspring of David who will sit on David's throne is clearly revealed to Mary, the mother of Jesus.

**Luke 1:30-33** <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and *you shall name Him Jesus.* <sup>32</sup> "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and *the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;* <sup>33</sup> *and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."*

This is the prophesied King who now stands in Jerusalem accepting the praise of the Jews who shout "Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord" and they conclude with the words, "even the King of Israel."

They did not understand, for the most part, that this King was not to overthrow Rome to establish a Kingdom made in their image, but would ultimately overthrow Babylon to be replaced by a Kingdom that is made without hands and will fill the earth, as depicted to Nebuchadnezzar by Daniel.

**Daniel 2:32-35** <sup>32</sup> "The head of that statue *was made* of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, <sup>33</sup> its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. <sup>34</sup> "*You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.* <sup>35</sup> "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. *But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

**Daniel 2:44** <sup>44</sup> "In the days of those kings *the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.*

This is the stone that the builders rejected. It is His eternal Kingdom that was established when Christ fulfilled His ministry before the Father as He returned to His throne after His resurrection to sit at the Father's right hand to rule and reign until He finally returns to this earth to consummate that eternal Kingdom. This is the contrast of kingdoms that Jesus pointed out to Pilate.

**John 18:36-37** <sup>36</sup> Jesus answered, "*My kingdom is not of this world.* If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, *My kingdom is not of this realm.*" <sup>37</sup> Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" *Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come*

*into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."*

This is the Kingdom that Jesus sets out to establish by accepting the praises of the Jews who acknowledge that He is the King of Israel as He rides into Jerusalem as we continue in our text.

**John 12:14-15** <sup>14</sup> Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; *as it is written*, <sup>15</sup> "FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT."

Again, it is the word of God that identifies who this King will be that was prophesied many years before by the prophet Zechariah; "as it is written."

<sup>ESV</sup> **Zechariah 9:9** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

And notice too that Jesus makes clear that by finding a donkey, upon which to ride into Jerusalem, He is purposefully owning the prophecy that identifies Him as the King of Israel, "righteous and having salvation." But because He disowns being a King of the nation of Israel at this time in history, as He reports to Pilate on the day of His crucifixion, He is re-identifying what it means to be a King of a nation and expanding on the meaning of the nation of Israel.

So, what kind of a King is Jesus purporting to be and what nation or Kingdom will He rule if it is not the actual nation of Israel as seen in the Middle East today?

The short answer is that His kingdom is one that will have no end as was made clear by Daniel as he gives Nebuchadnezzar a word directly from God. And we know that this Kingdom, over which Jesus is presently King, is not of this present world, thus not a King over a physical nation called Israel at any time in this present age.

So, if the prophecy given by Zechariah specifically says that the daughter of Zion will see their King riding into Jerusalem, and yet Jesus has no intention of ruling from Jerusalem as King at this time in history, who is being addressed when they are identified as the daughter of Zion?

The prophecy has a dual meaning because those witnessing the arrival of Jesus into Jerusalem are part of the crowd that must be identified as the covenant daughter of Zion. And yet, because they will reject the King in a short time, they prove themselves not to be the true offspring of Abraham, but rather of their true father who is the devil.

**John 8:44-45** <sup>44</sup> "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

But this does not negate the fact that Jesus is the King of the Jews, the King of Zion, the ruler of a people called the daughter of Zion. But this nation, this Kingdom, is ultimately a heavenly Kingdom that includes peoples from every tribe, nation and tongue who are called the New Jerusalem, the true seed of Abraham, be they believers in an OT setting or a NT setting, which obviously must include those saints going back as far as Adam, Eve and Abel and including subsequent saints that Abraham was told by God would encompass all the nations of the earth.

**Genesis 17:5-8** <sup>5</sup> "No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. <sup>6</sup> "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you. <sup>7</sup> "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. <sup>8</sup> "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

God reestablished this promise with Abraham and made it clear that this everlasting covenant was to be for the entire world as all of his descendants would enjoy being in the land forever.

**Genesis 22:15-18** <sup>15</sup> Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, <sup>16</sup> and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup> indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. <sup>18</sup> "***In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,*** because you have obeyed My voice."

When God told Abraham that his descendants would inhabit the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession it was in the context of what was revealed to Abraham by God about the nature of Canaan, which Abraham understood, and the writer of Hebrews reveals.

**Hebrews 11:8-10** <sup>8</sup> By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. <sup>9</sup> By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; <sup>10</sup> for ***he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.***

This city was not a plot of land in the Middle East to which Abraham could have visited during his lifetime, rather the city encompasses Zion which is another way of describing the inheritance.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Hebrews 12:22** But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,



In other words, Abraham understood that this City called Zion was heavenly in nature which tells us that this city that Abraham longed for was pointing to the eternal dwelling of God's people on the new earth.

**Revelation 21:1-5** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, <sup>4</sup> and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." <sup>5</sup> And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

In fact, all of the saints who are mentioned in the book of Hebrews, who were associated with the promise that God would reestablish Eden, (the Promised Land), for His people, including Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob, are said to have understood that the inheritance was spiritual in nature that would translate to a country of their own which is eternal in nature, which as we have seen above in Revelation, is a physical inheritance on the eternal new earth.

**Hebrews 11:13-16** <sup>13</sup> *All these [Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob] died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.* <sup>14</sup> For those who say such things *make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.* <sup>15</sup> And indeed if they had been thinking of that *country* from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. <sup>16</sup> But as it is, *they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.*

Unless we understand who the Israel is, about whom God prophesies and promises an eternal inheritance, our eyes will always be looking down to this earth expecting a temporal fulfillment to an eternal promise of a new Kingdom. The Israel that God speaks of is first and foremost Jesus who is the true Israel who came up out of Egypt.

**Matthew 2:13-15** <sup>13</sup> Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him." <sup>14</sup> So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt. <sup>15</sup> *He remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON."*

It was out of Egypt that the nation of Israel was released from their bondage by God, but the Israel that God ultimately and prophetically had in mind was the Son of God who would deliver His people from the bondage of sin and the curse, as

Jesus uses the word of God, found in Hosea 11:1, to clear up that the true Israel, who came out of Egypt, was Himself.

Therefore, all who are in Christ, (whether OT saint or NT saint), who are the true Israel by faith, are necessarily identified and are now considered Israel as Paul makes clear.

**Galatians 6:15-16** <sup>15</sup> For neither is *circumcision* anything, nor *uncircumcision*, but a *new creation*. <sup>16</sup> And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the *Israel of God*.

In Christ we are that new creation, that new Israel who are part of the New Jerusalem that we see in Revelation. This is why Jesus is riding into Jerusalem on a donkey to fulfill what was written of Him; not to set up a Kingdom or to rule over a people who hate Him, but to establish a new Kingdom that is not of this present world, nor will ever be of this present world.

A true Jew would never hate his shepherd who leads him to fertile pastures. A true Jew is one who loves and follows the Shepherd no matter his ethnicity.

**Romans 2:28-29** <sup>28</sup> For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. <sup>29</sup> But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

**Romans 4:16-17** <sup>16</sup> For this reason *it is* by faith, in order that *it may be* in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, <sup>17</sup> (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU") in the presence of Him whom he believed, *even* God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.

And so, when Jesus speaks of fulfilling what was written in the prophets concerning His Kingdom and His Kingly rule as the One who comes to the daughters of Zion, He is speaking of a future Kingdom that was established with His first coming to redeem a people for Himself. Unfortunately, this was lost even on His own disciples at this time, as our text makes clear.

**John 12:16** <sup>16</sup> These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

Much of what Jesus was doing was lost on the Jews including His disciples, though Jesus would often explain to them in a plain way what He often delivered to the Jews in parables.

**Matthew 13:34-36** <sup>34</sup> All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables, and He did not speak to them without a parable. <sup>35</sup> *This was* to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: "I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES; I

WILL UTTER THINGS HIDDEN SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD." <sup>36</sup> Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

And then He went on to give the explanation. But even after clearly teaching His disciples they would either forget or were simply unable to have the ears to hear at the time as for example when Jesus spoke of His subsequent death and resurrection.

**Luke 18:31-34** <sup>31</sup> Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. <sup>32</sup> "For He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, <sup>33</sup> and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again." <sup>34</sup> But the disciples understood none of these things, and *the meaning of* this statement was hidden from them, and they did not comprehend the things that were said.

It wasn't until after the resurrection and ascension of the Messiah that the disciples began to understand, (as the Spirit gave them understanding), many of the things Jesus taught as we see in our text.

**John 12:16** <sup>16</sup> These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

The Kingdom that Jesus purchased for His people, the Israel of God in all ages who have the faith of their father Abraham, is a Kingdom that we are a part of today if we are in Christ.

<sup>ESV</sup> **Philippians 3:20** But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

If our citizenship is in heaven this very moment, and yet we are still living in the present age on this sin-filled cursed earth, how is it possible for both to be true at the same time? Because like the prophets of old who spoke of a coming seed of David who would rule over an eternal Kingdom, those prophesies had an "already/not yet" fulfillment.

The future eternal Kingdom of God was established at the first coming of Christ.

**Matthew 3:2** <sup>2</sup> "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

**Matthew 12:28** <sup>28</sup> "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then *the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

The Kingdom of heaven was brought near at Christ's coming into this present world the first time though, as was noted earlier, this Kingdom was not to be consummated on this present cursed world in this present age as Jesus made clear to Pilate just prior to His crucifixion.

And yet this Kingdom has invaded this present world in and through Christ along with His followers who are part of the new creation, the new Kingdom.

<sup>ESV</sup> **2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Notice that Paul does not say the new is coming, but rather, the new has come, present tense. That includes aspects of both a people who are new and the Kingdom which is new. From the standpoint of a new people, this is what Jesus refers to as being born again, or born from above as we are given a new life today that leads to eternal life in the presence of our King and Savior in the future Kingdom that will find its eternal home on the new earth amidst the new heavens where we will rule and reign with Him forever.

G.K. Beale in his excellent book, “A New Testament Biblical Theology” puts 2Cor. 5:17 into perspective:

*“Christ’s death and resurrection launched the beginning of the latter-day new creation prophesied by Isaiah (cf. 2Cor.5:17, “there is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come,” with Isa.43; 65-66); this new creation marks the turning point of the ages, which Paul refers to as “the now” (2Cor.5:16) and later formally defines as the “acceptable time” and “the day of salvation” (2Cor.6:2). The end time prophecies of Israel’s restoration from exile reach beginning fulfillment in Christ’s, the true Israel’s, resurrection and in those in the church who identify by faith with him (e.g., 2Cor.6:16-18).”*

This new creation fits within God’s redemptive plan as the already/not yet aspect of our salvation where on the one hand we are saved from God’s wrath **today** through Christ’s righteousness put to our account **by faith**.

**Hebrews 11:1** <sup>NAU</sup> **Now faith** is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

But we also know that we will be saved from God’s wrath in the future when faith turns from conviction of things not seen to actually seeing the present hope in all its glory.

**1 Corinthians 13:12** <sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

This “already/not yet” aspect of our salvation is also pointed out by Paul in Romans.

**Romans 5:9-10** <sup>9</sup> Much more then, **having now been justified by His blood**, [TODAY], **we shall be**, [IN THE FUTURE], saved from the wrath of God through Him. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies **we were reconciled to God**, [TODAY], through the death of His Son, much more, **having been reconciled**, [TODAY], **we shall be saved**, [IN THE FUTURE], by His life.

This is part of what Jesus meant during His first coming when He ministered to the world in the flesh.

**Luke 19:9** <sup>9</sup> And Jesus said to him, "**Today** salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham.

**Luke 7:50** <sup>50</sup> And He said to the woman, "Your faith *has saved you*; [TODAY], go in peace."

The apostle Paul would concur regarding our present salvation and our future salvation through Christ.

**Ephesians 2:8** <sup>8</sup> For by grace *you have been saved*, [TODAY], through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;

**Romans 8:24-25** <sup>24</sup> For in hope *we have been saved*, [TODAY], but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he *already* sees? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it, [OUR SALVATION IN THE FUTURE].

The writer of Hebrews actually uses the words once and second to describe our salvation which takes place the first time Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost, as He will come a second time for our salvation.

**Hebrews 9:28** <sup>28</sup> so *Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many*, [TODAY], *will appear a second time for salvation*, [IN THE FUTURE], without *reference to sin*, to those who eagerly await Him.

This salvation which appears at the second coming of Jesus Christ is the inheritance we await and it is an inheritance that was secured by the resurrection of our Lord and Savior.

**1 Peter 1:3-5** <sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a *living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*, <sup>4</sup> to obtain an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

If our citizenship is presently in heaven then our future hope and inheritance is secure and will not fade away for we who are in Christ Jesus. We are already saved in Christ and we will one day be saved when Jesus appears to usher in the new Kingdom that we gained in this world through our belief in our Savior.

Like the Jews proclaiming the entrance of the King to Jerusalem in the first century, we who are true Jews after the faith of our father Abraham, sing a new song of salvation today and in the future Kingdom out of thanks and gratitude.

**Revelation 5:9-10** <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with

Your blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. <sup>10</sup> "You have made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

And after the example of those Jews in the first century who waved palm branches for what they thought was a King to deliver them from Rome, we will gladly wave those branches as we cry out with loud voices praising our risen King on the new earth.

**Revelation 7:9-10** <sup>9</sup> After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, *and palm branches were in their hands;* <sup>10</sup> *and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."*

I can only end with this:

**Revelation 22:20-21** <sup>20</sup> He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. *Come, Lord Jesus.* <sup>21</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.