

⁹ Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!

Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!

See, your king comes to you,

righteous and victorious,

lowly and riding on a donkey,

on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰ I will take away the chariots from Ephraim

and the warhorses from Jerusalem,

and the battle bow will be broken.

He will proclaim peace to the nations.

His rule will extend from sea to sea

and from the River^[a] to the ends of the earth.

THE CHURCH CELEBRATES PROMISE, THEN FULFILLMENT

No one parties like the church parties. Sure, the world parties and in a way we, the church, parties like the world parties too. The world celebrates fulfillment or achievement, and the church celebrates fulfillment or achievement too. But the church also celebrates promise. The world can't celebrate promise because the world can't know for sure what will happen in the future. For example, our very own Arizona Diamondbacks can only have a parade after they win the World Series. The Snakes can't have a parade today because they can't promise they will win the World Series and be sure they will fulfill this promise. But the church can and does celebrate promise because if the promise is from God, then the fulfillment is as good as done. And that is what we have going on in the Palm Sunday parade.

And so, as our text says, *"Rejoice greatly, daughter Zion! Shout daughter Jerusalem!"* Zion and Jerusalem are not two different daughters. Zion and Jerusalem are two different names for the same woman and that woman is the church. These names, daughter Zion and daughter Jerusalem, apply to us today. These names, daughter Zion and daughter Jerusalem, applied to the disciples and to the crowd in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. And these names, daughter Zion and daughter Jerusalem, first applied to the returning remnant of believers in Jerusalem.

This returning remnant of believers with the prophet Zechariah had once lived as captives in the country of Babylon. For a time, this first daughter Zion celebrated the promise that after seventy years of captivity they would return to Jerusalem. And after 70 years in Babylon this first daughter Zion celebrated the fulfillment as they returned to Jerusalem. And following the leadership of Nehemiah, this first daughter Zion finished an amazing building project. The first daughter Zion built a wall around the entire city of Jerusalem in 52 days, and they built the wall under enemy attack. The Bible tells us the first daughter Zion built this wall with a building material in one hand and a weapon in the other hand (Nehemiah 4:7). Wow! Way to go daughter Zion! But daughter Zion was not as fast building of the temple. In fact, the foundation of the temple had been laid more than fifteen years before Zechariah's prophesy and the fulfillment of this project was nowhere in sight. A good number of this daughter Zion had finished homes with paneling! The prophet Haggai brought the law, and the prophet Zechariah brings the gospel.

The prophet Zechariah wants negligent daughter Zion to see something, *"See your king comes to you."* Daughter Zion hadn't seen a king for about a hundred years. And many of the kings daughter Zion had seen were sinister and had been defeated, but this king of promise, this king who was coming to them, would be *"righteous and victorious."*

This was a promise and over all the Old Testament years many prophets prophesied many promises. And often the daughter Zion who had first heard the promise, had also lived all their years on earth without seeing the fulfillment of these promises. Then, these old and ancient promises or prophecies could become neglected and forgotten by the next generation of daughter Zion, not promises remembered and celebrated.

Matthew, the taxman turned gospel writer researches the Old Testament prophecies like an accountant search for tax deductible receipts. And a goodly number of these Old Testament promises or prophecies could be

described as accidental. For instance, when Micah prophesied the Savior would be born in Bethlehem, the Lord made use of Caesar and census and the timing to make sure Mary and Joseph would be in Bethlehem. But this Palm Sunday promise is clearly intentional. The instruction for the disciples. The anticipated response of the owner. On Palm Sunday our Savior King Jesus knew exactly who he was and our Savior King Jesus knew exactly what he had come into Jerusalem to accomplish. And in true messianic fashion our Savior King Jesus celebrates the promise because the promises of God are as good as done.

For a while this holy week will look like chaos for our Savior King. For a while this week it will look like Jesus is the victim, not the victor. For a while this holy week it will look like suffering and death equals' defeat. For a while this holy week it will look like the body of Jesus was missing and the likely culprit was a graverobber. But the Palm Sunday promise and fulfillment tell a different story. The entire holy week our Savior King was completely in charge of everything. Our Savior King knew the whole time what his suffering and dying meant the forgiveness of sins. And Our Savior knew full-well he would wake up on that first day of the week after his well-deserved Sabbath rest.

Rejoice greatly present-day daughter Zion. Shout (in your heart is fine) present-day daughter Jerusalem. We live in the fulfillment of verse 9, but we are still living in the promise of verse 10: *I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River^[a] to the ends of the earth.*

I would still suggest you lock your doors at night. I would still recommend we fund the police and support our military. We are still living in a time when self-defense is necessary, but the time is coming when all the enemies of our body and soul, including our very own sinful nature, will be taken away. And on the day the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will not only rule every square inch in the kingdom of glory, but also in every chamber of our own hearts. That is a promise that is still outstanding to this day and applies to past-day daughter Zion, present-day daughter Zion, future-day daughter Zion – so don't neglect this promise and forget about it as past believers have done. Let this Word of God dwell in you richly and affect the way you live for God.

That first daughter Zion completed the building of the temple in a more-timely fashion. The daughter Zion with Jesus on Palm Sunday rejoiced and shouted and welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem as their king. And what will present-day daughter Zion do? What will you do as we live in the promise of verse 10 and await its fulfillment?

How about you repent of your sins? How about you repent of the times you have neglected God's Word and the appropriate applications in your life? How about you consider the good examples of daughter Zion in our readings today? Most of all how about you see your king come to you today in God's Word? And how about you see your king come to you in both promise and in fulfillment. And celebrate that the promises that are made about Jesus are always as good as the fulfillment. That is a high bar of love and dedication, and our Savior king does it for us. And without blushing with embarrassment tells his disciples as I have loved you so you must love one another. So what do you think about the promises you make to your Savior King at your confirmation becoming as good as done in your life? I think with a sinful nature the fulfillment of our confirmation vows is impossible, but with the strength God provides, the strength providing through a Savior King who comes every day to present-day daughter Zion in Word and sacrament makes all things possible.

So rejoice present-day daughter Zion. You don't have to shout present-day Zion, but it would be okay if you did. Most importantly, celebrate this day both as a fulfillment and as a promise. Don't celebrate confirmation day or a baptism day or a wedding day or as a fulfillment. Those who celebrate these days as fulfillment neglect the still outstanding promises of God and the appropriate applications to their lives and will not stand the judgment on the day our Savior King visits us. Celebrate these days as they are meant to be celebrated as days of promise, days that still looking for a greater fulfillment, and adjust the time you spend with your Savior King in Word and sacrament and your life of praise and godly living as you wait the final fulfillment of all God's promises. Amen.