

The upside down coronation

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Date: 06 April 2025

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[0 : 00] I think we all remember the King's coronation a few years ago, a few years ago now, a historic occasion. I think most people, there's lots to do with historic, there seems to be something on every day, but I think it was watched by most people around the world, or a lot of people.

Now I'm not here this morning to see if you're a Royalist or not, that's not my intention. But maybe at the time, you remember that there was different reactions that people had to it all, the whole, everything that was going on.

I think the vast majority in the UK were supported, seemed to look that way on the TV. And you remember what the coronation was like, you all remember that. It was, for the most, it was a celebration, there was flags flying, there was constant rolling interviews with people that they dragged up that you never heard of, but they wanted to see what they thought of the coronation.

So, the high coverage on the BBC was presented, and it was for the majority of this kind of uplifting time for the nation big celebration. But, you did get a few who were totally against it.

You remember there's protests, some people tried to throw eggs at the King, they held up big banners, like, Not My King. Right, well, he is actually, but they did have the banner saying, Not My King.

[1 : 24] And you do wonder, don't you, why is that? Why the strength of different opinions? Why do some people want the monarchy to continue, and some people despise even the very idea of it?

Well, it is, there's lots of reasons, isn't there, about why that could happen. It could be that people think that it was a waste of money, but they could be upbringing, what people have been heard when they're growing up.

They could be fear of how things are changing. Maybe they think the royal family is just not in touch with everyday people, they've got too much power. Maybe there's jealousy or mistrust. Maybe some are misinformed, and so don't quite understand.

In our passage this morning, we see part, not the full, but we see part of a coronation procession. We see the coronation procession of the King.

At the end of the procession, which we'll see next week, at the end of the coronation procession, the King will be lifted high and take his place. Not on the throne, but on the cross.

[2 : 31] This is a coronation, he's not got a gold crown, but a crown of thorns. We have a coronation procession like no other. It is upside down, it is back to front. It is not long live the King, but crucified.

There's nothing like the coronation of King Charles. There's no celebration or music, just eerie silence and darkness. And yet, and yet, it is the most important coronation that has ever and will ever happen.

Because this coronation impacts every single person that has ever or will ever walk on the earth. And so this morning, we're thinking about Jesus' coronation procession, what it means for him as King, and what that means for those directly responsible for his death, what they're directly responsible and what that might mean for us.

Two things we're going to look at about Jesus in this passage that we've got. Jesus the real King, Jesus the rejected King, and then Jesus the tortured King. Jesus the real King, Jesus the rejected King, and then Jesus the tortured King.

So, Jesus the real King. Just a reminder of where we're at in the last 12, 24 hours of Jesus' life. You can picture the scene we read, the first one, it's very early in the morning.

[3 : 46] Jesus has been awake with the chief priests all night. He's exhausted, no doubt. He's been condemned to death by the religious elite, and he's taken, we read in the verse just before, or the verse back in 65, he's already taken and beaten.

They struck him with their fists and blindfolded him. So that's where we're at as we come to the early morning of the day of the very first Good Friday.

Verse 1 we read, he's led away and handed to Pilate. You see, the reason that has to happen, the Jewish authorities had to get the Roman governor involved.

You just remember where we're at with Jerusalem, we've got the Roman Empire is in charge of Jerusalem. And so any decision like this about condemning someone to death, putting someone to death, it had to be approved by the governor who's in charge of the city.

The Jews are actually in charge, it's the Romans. So it had to be approved by Pilate who was the Roman governor for that area. It presents a little bit, it actually presents a little bit of a problem for the high priest in the council of Sanhedrin, who just condemned him to death, the Jewish council.

[4 : 58] Because to be put to death by a Roman you have to do an offence against Rome. And Jesus has not done anything wrong at all, he hasn't done anything against Rome. He's announced himself as the living God, but that actually wasn't a Roman concern.

That wouldn't be enough for the Romans to put him to death. And so there's a slight twist you'll notice is what Jesus is actually accused of. He's accused, earlier in the court, he's accused of blasphemy.

But here look what they say to him, they, from what we get from Pilate is they present him as he's making himself out to be king. He's making himself out to be king. That was an offence against the Roman authorities.

He was claiming royal authority. It was a crime that pitted themselves against Caesar. Caesar was the king. So to say you were king was pitting yourself against Caesar.

And there was the threat, maybe if someone did that, maybe they were gaining a following. A threat to public order. If a self-proclaimed king had a significant following.

[6 : 04] That's why he asks in verse 2, what does Pilate say? He says, are you the king of the Jews? Are you the king of the Jews? And you just have to, you pick up the kind of a tone I wonder with which, with the way that Pilate asks that.

Because I think you can see why he asks him that question. Because right now, he's just been accused of saying he's the king. But right now, Jesus looks as far from royal and regal as you could possibly get.

He doesn't look royal and regal at all. He's knackered. He's probably got a black eye or two. He's kind of disheveled looking. You can imagine his hair would be kind of sweat, blood disheveled.

And he's in chains. And I wonder if the intonation with which Pilate asks him, are you the king of the Jews? Are you really? Are you sure?

Like, because, like, look at you. You're in chains and you're like, you're a total bloody mess. The question posed by Pilate, I think, is a bit of disbelief.

[7 : 11] Are you serious? And so, I think that's why we get, it's the answer that Jesus gives that astonishes Pilate. He says, you have said so.

You've said so, Jesus replies. That very short sentence, you have said so, from Jesus, is packed full of meaning. I think actually, in the way that we read it, we don't quite pick up what he's saying.

It means something that I think needs paraphrasing for us to get to the heart of what Jesus means. You have said so. And I think we're going to paraphrase its meaning for us to understand that it would be this. You have said so.

It's basically saying, you, governor, on your own lips said the word king in relation to me. That is right. That's what he means by that phrase.

You, governor, on your own lips said the word king in relation to me. And that's right. You have said so. You have said so in that short sentence. Jesus is confirming your assumption is right.

[8 : 12] It's right to associate the word king with me. Now notice, he continues to refuse. He refuses like a lamb that was led to the slaughter. He's silent. He refuses to respond to the false accusations.

But he will state his identity. That he is the real king and the true king. What does that mean? If Jesus is the king, it means that in this whole situation, in this whole scenario, with everything that's going on, whoever it looks like he was in charge and who has authority, Jesus is the one who actually has the authority over this whole situation.

He's the one in charge. He's the one in charge. Pilate, he must have found that laughable given the state of the man who stood in front of him. He's not looking like, he's not looked at as a king by Pilate.

He doesn't see Jesus as having authority over him in any way, shape, or form. or thought of, how could this man claim that he's king and have authority over me?

And we see that so clearly is what happens with the way Pilate acts. Pilate, as we read, Pilate knows Jesus is innocent, he can't find a crime against him.

[9 : 25] When he presents Jesus as the king to the crowd, he says, verse 14, what crime has he committed? He knows Jesus is innocent. Pilate has the authority to set him free.

But we see verse 15 who actually has the authority over Pilate. It's not Jesus. Jesus does have the authority but he doesn't treat him that way. Verse 15, wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released the rabbis to him.

Wanting to satisfy the crowd. The crowd ruled Pilate. the crowd are in charge of Pilate.

Public opinion will decide what happens. Not Pilate. It's the crowd that calls Pilate to act because he's scared of them. You see, Pilate, he's like, he's like the captain of the ship but without a look.

you see, the way the public opinion tosses him up and down and whatever they whatever they shout for, whatever they want, whichever they, whichever they, the way their things will go, they will decide his decision making.

[10 : 39] They are in charge of him. Jesus is the real king of the ship and I don't know, maybe you read this and maybe you want him to, maybe you don't but he is in charge, he's the maker of heaven and earth and one day all will bow down before him.

There's a temptation in everyone to give the place that should be reserved for Jesus to someone or something else but whenever we do that it doesn't end well.

Sometimes it can be good things, Pilate wanted to satisfy the crowd, he wanted them to be on his side and so he gives them what they want, they leave him and I wonder, do we ever find ourselves being in that similar kind of thinking, being led by someone or something else in those moments whatever it is, whatever is going on, whoever it is, that thing or that someone is operating as the king in our lives rather than Christ.

Without Jesus we are run on a ship crossed by the way. We're a captain that is controlled by outside circumstances like everyone else.

Maybe you've never thought about Jesus before. To make Jesus your king is to, this is what it means to make Jesus your king, it is to willingly submit to his ways in all of your lives because you know, because you not only know that he does have authority over you but that that authority and the plan he has is good and he wants to give you eternal life.

[12 : 16] That's the reason he would do that. Because you know that his plan for you is good and he wants to give you eternal life and he's a good king. He's a king we're following. you can let him be the rudder to your ship and he will lead you to pleasant shores.

You can let him be the rudder of your ship and he will lead you to pleasant shores. We acknowledge him as our king, as our lord today. So that's the first thing we see Jesus is the real king or the true king we might say perhaps.

The second thing that we're going to look at is Jesus, we look at Jesus the real king, the true king. The second thing is Jesus the rejected king. Jesus is rejected by his own people the crowd like a pack of wolves baying for his blood.

And in this upside down coronation the king is presented he's presented like you know he's not on the on Buckingham Palace the king's presented. This is the new king.

Here the king is presented but not to shouts of joy or cries of praise but to vicious slanderous calls for his crucifixion. We get a sense of how much hatred there is for him.

[13 : 29] As was custom at Passover the Jews had the custom to release someone and the man called to the stage as it were who was presented alongside the king and we read he's a murderer an insurrectionist and today what you might call depending on which side you're on a freedom fighter or a terrorist.

This is about Barabbas he's a if you want to think of what he's like today he's a murdering terrorist he's not a nice man Barabbas is not a nice man his actions would have brought oppression on the Jewish people he acted outside of the law with murderous intent a terrorist that had been bad and feared and we see we see this custom of releasing someone this happens today doesn't it pardoning people maybe it's the king's coronation but I think especially it might have been possible recently you know President Trump are coming in and President Biden leaving as they begin or leave their term of office it's normal they haven't pardoned themselves you got you had President Trump pardoning lots of the people who were at the January the 6th riot and you had

Biden pardoning his son and yet here we've got the king's coronation the true king himself and and he's the one and somebody the guilty is pardoned where the innocent is kept back to apply it's astonishing in Matthew the gospel we learn that Barabbas his first name is also Jesus he's called Jesus Barabbas if we dig a little deeper Barabbas you can split that name up Bar means son of and Abba means father so Barabbas he's called Jesus son of the father what's his name Jesus Barabbas Jesus son of the father so we have you've got Jesus Barabbas Jesus son of the father and then you've also got Jesus son of the blessed one Jesus son of the father so you've got this presentation on the you've got the presentation of the king and the question is really which

Jesus son of the father do you want do you want Jesus son of the father or do you want Jesus son of the father it's amazing that Jesus the son of God the son of the blessed love the one who deserves to be pardoned is the one who's condemned to death Jesus Barabbas the murderer and the murdering terrorists who has crimes astonishing crimes against his name is the one who's kept back not only is that a custom of incoming presidents it was a common custom for Caesars in the Roman Empire to pardon people it's ironic that Jesus who actually has the ability to pardon people is the one who does it but by being condemned to death it's an upside down coronation it's an upside down coronation what we see here what happens here we know it's a picture of what is happening in the gospel what we see is the good news that Jesus offers each of us

Jesus stays in chains the righteous one is punished will go to death and the criminal is freed that is a scandal is it not that is a scandal there is in a British court that's a lingo someone can't go and be punished if it's known someone can't be punished for what somebody else has done yet here is what in the spiritual way that God has made this happen Jesus is punished there is a substitution the innocent man is swapped and substituted for the guilty criminal it's the truth of the news of Jesus Christ of why he came because before the living God each of us without exception have committed those spiritual crimes in his eyes and more often than not we see that with some of the choices we make in day to day life we know we've been selfish we've said things we regret we've got angry and been unkind acted deviously and even thought unkind things

[18:19] I'm sorry if you've heard this illustration before but I can never think of a better one but I want you to imagine you've got the movie of your life and everything that you've done is on display for everyone to see a movie of your life including every thought you've had everything you've done there'd be moments for sure that you're looking forward to see played back a great time just remember that it's brilliant but there is the moments the thoughts you've had the things that you've done even now when I'm saying this you're like oh man to let everybody see that where you start to cringe I can think even in my own head I'm thinking of things specific moments that I'd be totally embarrassed about that I'd never want anybody else to see terrible thoughts you maybe have had about people when we think of ourselves like that that is the picture of when we've lived outside of the good that God has planned for us and we start to get an understanding of what sin really is that because of all that stuff that we know it's there the living

God he can't just let you up it wouldn't be right for him to sweep all that stuff under the carpet and act like it never happened that's not good our job we know that someone must pay Jesus Christ goes to the cross and pays the price for all on earth he dies in our places substituted in here with the rabbis we get that picture of what Jesus does for you and for me just in the same way that he swaps places with the rabbis he swaps places with you and me he wants to do it for each as if we believe and trust in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour he is that substitutionary payment that his death is for you and your place in Peter 3.18 spells it out for Christ also suffered once for sin for righteous that's Jesus for the unrighteous that's us why to do this to God our sin keeps us from having that perfect beautiful relationship with the living God but with those sins out of the way there is nothing stopping you from having a perfect relationship with the human you're pardoned by the pain not just because he feels like doing it it's not a subjective kind of decision that he just makes if he's feeling up or down it is an objective concrete fact that if you put your trust in Jesus his death is for you in your place and he dies to buy that pardon for you forever you are pardoned by the king forever there's

Jesus the real king Jesus the rejected king and finally Jesus the tortured king Jesus the tortured king Jesus these verses 16 to 20 Jesus is dressed as a king but humiliated as a morbid dressed dressed as a king but humiliated as a morbid verse 15 we see he's flogged and then handed over to be crucified verse 17 they put a robe on him they twist a crown of thorns and set it on his head they mock him hail king of the jews they strike him on the head with the staff they spit on him and they pay homage to him and then they strip him naked and put his clothes back on it's utter humiliation isn't it it's utter barbaric in the dust x-rated violence not suitable or appropriate for children kind of behaviour that is what it is what we goes on in these verses are the kind of things that if you've ever seen or witnessed you can't unsee it's like a nightmare to even think you think of the coronation king child the gold the finery the attire and then you look at this the upside down back to front matrix goodness knows what his body looks like barely human barely alive chunks of human flesh ripped out of his body the excruciating pain is a crown a thorn is placed on his head and pierces his brow bloody battered bruised the emotional toil that he's going through the humiliation of being spat on he's treated less than human you know it's how primary school children will treat a worm what's going on how do primary school children treat a worm they play with it they chop it in tears they push it dip it in water do all sorts of things to it it's less than human the reason they treat a worm like that is because it's a worm this is how

Jesus is treated he's treated like a primary school to treat a worm the question maybe we're asking is why this level of dehumanizing brutality couldn't you just die in a human manner you know you think of the way that people are executed they couldn't just be short down wouldn't that have been easier wouldn't that have been kinder we're going to focus on a little bit more of that next week as we look at why the crucifixion we get part of an answer in what is written about Jesus death 700 years before he died it's in the book of Isaiah I don't know if you're going to quickly turn to that Isaiah 53 it comes on page 741 you just want to quickly turn to it 741 Isaiah 53 741 I'll just read it for us in verse 4 from the

Bible 741 it says surely he took up our pain it's talking about Jesus 700 years before he died surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering yet we considered him punished by God stricken by him and afflicted but he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities the punishment that brought us peace was on him and by his wounds we are healed in Isaiah 53 we read of this suffering servant who will come 700 years from the time it's written and how his suffering will benefit God's people that those who turn to him must all take place and take place this way for us you see in verse 3 despised rejected by mankind a man of suffering familiar with pain he's despised he's held in low esteem he takes our suffering he's punished he's afflicting he's stricken he's pierced he's he's wounded rejected flogged scourged afflicted smitten wounded punished and then we get two wise verse 5 to bring us peace and by his wounds we're healed peace with

[26 : 00] God and everlasting healing healing emotionally healing physically and healing spiritually we are healed from the impact of our own sin but also healed from the effect of living in a world ravaged by sin we get peace with God not odds with Jesus not odds with God and we get this promised future where all our suffering our pain all the emotional people the tears and the frustrations are taken away the punishment the wounds the blows Jesus takes it is by then through this that he will heal our deepest wounds even the mental scars we carry this is all a part of the cup that he drinks for us he does it all to bring us true and lasting healing and so that we will have true and lasting peace if you're feeling anxious today if you're feeling stressed if you've had a stressful week and there's lots of toil on your emotionally maybe if you're struggling physically with different burdens maybe if you're struggling with those things what we have here is the promise that one day a day will come when all those things will be taken away the pain the suffering the anxiety the distress

Jesus is wounded to take those things away from you not just the sins that we do but the effects of sin on our lives by living in a world ravaged by it it is taken away so that you will have peace with God but you will have a forever experience of peace that is promised to you because of his wound so we get Jesus as a coming for landing three things Jesus the real king Jesus the rejected king and Jesus the tortured king Jesus is the real king he's the king of kings he's the lord of lords he has authority over all he has authority over you and me will you acknowledge him as your king as our king today he's the rejected king he comes to be rejected to swap places with us innocent yet treated as a criminal so that we who have committed spiritual crimes against him are treated as innocent and walked in and finally

Jesus the tortured king the brutality the punishment the torture all of it to give us peace with God and complete and full healing one day we may experience foretaste of that in our life but we can rest assured that it is the true and blessed future the foretaste to there to point us forward to the future that it will be for all who put their trust in him it is an upside down this is what we see what we've read it is an upside down formation procession accused for being a king presented as a king rejected as a king dressed as a king and yet that's exactly who he is exactly who he is he's the king he's crowned and lifted hard for all to serve to serve each one of us so that all who put their trust in him can know true life and freedom from the Lord let me pray almighty

God we thank you for your son we thank you for Jesus we thank you that he would go on this upside down coronation procession one that no king has had a coronation procession like one where he would be treated so inhumanly as a worm beat it bruised and battered for us who would in this example swap places with us treated yet innocent yet treated as a criminal so we thank you that we who have committed crimes against the living God you swap places with us who put our trust in you I pray that you would refresh our minds today so that we would live each day knowing that whatever we're going through that you have this promise awaited each and every day knowing that we have peace with God and future and total full healing awaited so we ask for your blessing upon each one of us in Jesus name amen and and and and and and