

The title of this morning's sermon is, "*Misunderstanding Old Testament Prophecies of Jesus' Coming.*"<sup>i</sup>

On Sunday mornings we are working our way verse-by-verse through Luke's Gospel, and we find ourselves at **Luke 19:39**.

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This past week I read about some of the greatest misunderstandings in history. I settled on the Treaty of Wuchale as the second greatest misunderstanding.

On May 2, 1889, Ethiopia and Italy signed this treaty to promote friendship and trade, but the two countries wrote the treaty in their own language. One part, Article 17, was particularly problematic.

The Ethiopian version stated that their Emperor could use the Italian embassy to conduct his foreign affairs if he wanted. But Italy understood the Ethiopian Emperor was committing to using the Italian embassy. This doesn't sound like a big deal, but it led Italy to believe Ethiopia had given up its independence and become a colony under Italy's protection.

Italy informed all the European governments that they could no longer conduct diplomatic relations with Ethiopia, and instead could only deal with Italy. Ethiopia did not like this, so they denounced the treaty. Italy attempted to enforce it, and when this failed, Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1895. Ethiopia ended up winning, safeguarding its independence.

You heard that correctly: because of a misunderstanding over the wording of a treaty – that was supposed to promote friendship and trade – two nations went to war.

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I told you this is the second worst misunderstanding in human history. Of course, you want to know what's first?

The Treaty of Wuchale pales in comparison to the misunderstanding at [Jesus's triumphal entry](#). The people in attendance completely misunderstood what they were witnessing.

So let me explain what happened this week...

I started studying the verses immediately following the triumphal entry, and they are so shocking that they require considerable teaching to understand why Jesus responded the way he did. We will get to the verses in a moment, but first we must look at the Old Testament to see why Jesus responded in such a disturbing way...to what looked like praise and adoration.

Mark your spot in Luke and turn to the left to Zechariah 9. Zechariah is the second to last book of the Old Testament. Two books before Matthew.

**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.**

You probably recognize this verse because we looked at in detail a few weeks ago when studying the triumphal entry.

Here's something I didn't point out at that time...

Notice the middle of the verse says, "having salvation is he." This is not worded the way we would expect. We would expect it to say, "having salvation with him," as though Jesus brings salvation. But by wording it this way, Jesus sounds as though he himself IS salvation...which he is. His name means, "Yahweh is salvation."

Keep this in mind because we are going to come back to it.

The main reason I had you turn here is I want you to see verse 10, which we haven't looked at...

**Zechariah 9:10a I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off,**

Ephraim is another name for Israel because Ephraim was the largest tribe. Zechariah is prophesying of [the Second Coming](#) when Jesus defeats the nations that assemble against Israel: he cuts off the chariot, warhorse, and battle bow.

**Zechariah 9:10b and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.**

Jesus's rule stretches from the river, referring to the Euphrates, to the ends of the earth.<sup>ii</sup>

It says he speaks peace to the nations, because with all the enemies destroyed peace is established.

We know the order of prophetic events from previous sermons: Jesus returns, destroys enemies at [the battle of Armageddon](#), and then sets up his kingdom on the earth. Many well-known verses describe this as a time of peace...

**Isaiah 2:4 They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.**

**Isaiah 11:6 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.**

Now here's what I need you to notice that is very important for this morning's sermon...

Zechariah 9:9 is about Jesus's first coming, and Zechariah 9:10 is about Jesus's Second Coming. The arrival of the Savior in verse 9 is immediately followed by a description of his reign in verse 10. There have been at least 2000 years between verses 9 and 10, but the Bible puts them back-to-back.

This is known as "prophetic compression," and brings us to lesson one...

**Lesson One: The Old Testament Prophecies of Jesus' Coming were compressed.**

Let me show you two more examples.

Turn left to Isaiah 9:6. Isaiah is the first prophet in your Bibles, right after the poetical books.

**Isaiah 9:6a For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder,**

Pause right here.

You don't expect to see words like this about a child. A child can't carry the government on his shoulder. Again, this looks forward to the second coming followed by the millennial kingdom.

So, talk about a compressed prophecy! Now we don't even have verses back-to-back. In the same verse we just went from Jesus's birth to Jesus ruling the nations.

**Isaiah 9:6b and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

I want to get back to Luke, so I won't spend much time on this verse, but there is one title that probably needs some explanation, and that is Everlasting Father. You say, "I thought we were talking about a Child. Now we're talking about a Father? Are we talking about God the Father or God the Son?"

The child is Jesus. He is not to be confused with God the Father.

It's best to understand the title "Father" means "originator" or "source of." For example, in John 8:44, Jesus said Satan is the "father of lies." It's referring to lies originating from him.

In saying Jesus is the Everlasting Father it means he is the father – or originator of – time:

- Jesus Himself is eternal: **John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."**
- Jesus is also unchanging: **Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.**

Let me show you one more passage that is particularly interesting. Turn to Isaiah 61.

**Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;**

The Hebrew word for anointed is [māšah](#) (pr: muh-shack), where we get the word "Messiah," which means, "anointed one." To say Jesus is the Christ is to say he is the anointed one.

The Greek word for anointed is [chriō](#) (pr: kre-oh), which is where we get our English word "Christ."

So Christ and Messiah both mean anointed, but one is Hebrew and one is Greek.

You need to know everything in this verse is spiritual versus physical...<sup>iii</sup>

For example, it says Jesus is anointed to bring good news. Gospel means good news, so Jesus is anointed to preach the gospel to the poor. This doesn't mean physically, or financially poor. It means those who recognize they are spiritually poor, or recognize they are sinners who need to be saved.

He **proclaims liberty to the captives**, not physical captives, but spiritual captives to sin and death, which is a far worse captivity.<sup>iv</sup>

He **[opens] the prison to those who are bound...**and this is spiritual versus physical.

Does anyone remember an account when the last person we would ever expect to doubt that Jesus is the Messiah...doubted that Jesus is the Messiah...because he was in prison, and interpreted this physically versus spiritually?

Listen to this...

**Matthew 11:2 Now when John [the Baptist] heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples 3 and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?"**

This is shocking! You have John the Baptist, of all people, asking if Jesus is the Messiah. John knew better than anyone that Jesus was the Messiah. He was the forerunner of the Messiah. By this point:

- He identified Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world...
- He baptized Jesus and saw the Holy Spirit descend on him in the form of a dove and he heard the Father's voice ring out saying, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

So how could John ask this?

There were numerous prophecies in the Old Testament that the Messiah [**opening**] **the prison to those who are bound...**

**Isaiah 42:7 [the Messiah will] bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.**

**Isaiah 49:9 [the Messiah says] to the prisoners, 'Come out,' to those who are in darkness, 'Appear.'**

John knew these prophecies. He could not understand why he would still be in prison if Jesus was the Messiah.

Even John – whom Jesus said was greater than anyone who had ever been born of a woman – had problems when he looked at what was spiritual, but interpreted it physically.

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Now look at the next verse...

**Isaiah 61:2a to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,**

Pause here.

The word "year" should not be interpreted literally. It simply means a time or season.

The word "favor" can often be used interchangeably with the word "grace." Maybe you have heard grace defined as unmerited or unearned favor. That is a fitting definition.

So, when it says Jesus is anointed to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, it means Jesus is anointed to proclaim the time or season of God's grace.

Isaiah writes about the same period a few chapters earlier...

**Isaiah 49:8 In a TIME OF FAVOR I have answered you; in a DAY OF SALVATION I have helped you;**

Notice Isaiah uses "time of favor" synonymously with "day of salvation."

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Now let me get you to notice something important...

There is a comma after the word favor.

That is a 2000-year-old comma. We live before that comma and there are lots of titles for this season:

- The acceptable year of the Lord, which is how it's translated in the NKJV and KJV, which is a fitting title, because it communicates that now is the time to be accepted by the Lord.
- The Church Age...
- The Time of Favor...
- The Dispensation of Grace...
- The Day of Salvation...

Any idea what comes after this comma, or after this season is over?

Look at the rest of verse two for the answer...

**Isaiah 61:2b and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;**

That was a quick jump from the year of the Lord's favor to the day of vengeance of our God. We just moved from the first coming to the Second Coming...in the same verse. The only thing that separated these two comings is the comma. That is compression!

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Now turn to Luke 4:16.

**Luke 4:16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.**

Jesus was invited to preach because he was becoming famous:

- Verse 14 says **a report about him went out through all the surrounding country.**
- Verse 15 says he was teaching in the synagogues, being glorified by everyone.

So, when he shows up at his hometown, it is a huge deal, lots of excitement, and everyone wants to hear from him.

**Luke 4:17 And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,**

You will recognize what Jesus reads. It is Isaiah 61...

**Luke 4:18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”**

We read the Bible together in the evening as a family. Nothing fancy. We have been going through Romans, which we should finish soon. A child reads a verse, we talk about the verse, and then the next child reads the next verse.

Aside from the spiritual advantages to doing this, there is also the educational advantage of helping our children learn to read. It is not uncommon for kids to have to read a verse many times because they are reading it incorrectly. Part of reading a verse correctly involves pausing at the right places, such as commas, stopping at the right places, such as periods, and not pausing or stopping at the wrong places. If kids pause or stop at the wrong place they read the verse again.

You could look at the way Jesus read this verse and think that someone should tell him when you are not supposed to stop. He didn't just pause at a comma, he stopped at a comma.

Let me show you why he stopped here. Look at verse 20...

**Luke 4:20 And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.**

They were shocked too. They were like, “I can't believe he stopped reading at a comma. Doesn't he know you pause at commas and stop at periods?”

**Luke 4:21 And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”**

He said that the words he read were fulfilled. Just like we talked about when we were in Isaiah 61, these were the words that described his first coming and he could only read those words, because those were the only words he would fulfill...until his second coming.

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I could show you numerous other Old Testament examples of prophecies of Jesus's first and second comings being compressed, but I think you get the idea.

Now I want to ask you to do something...

Imagine you don't live during the church age. You live in the Old Testament. You don't know that there will be two comings. When you read these prophecies, would you see two comings?

Probably not.

And this brings us to lesson two...

### Lesson Two: The Jews expected Old Testament prophecies to be fulfilled in one coming.

The Jews expected all the prophecies about the Second Coming to be fulfilled right after the prophecies about the first coming...or here's another way to say it: they expected all the prophecies to be fulfilled at the same time...or here's another way to say it: they expected the Second Coming to be fulfilled at the first coming.

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Picture this...

You are a godly, faithful Jew studying the Old Testament and you read Isaiah 61 about the year of the Lord's favor, and what do you expect right after that? The day of vengeance of our God when Jesus defeats all your enemies.

Or you read Isaiah 9 that a child will be born, a son will be given, and what do you expect right after that? The government is going to be upon his shoulder.

Or you read Zechariah 9:9 that your King is coming to you humble and mounted on a donkey. And when you see this fulfilled, what do you expect right after that? You expect to see verse 10 fulfilled, which means the chariot, warhorse, and battle bow will be cut off from Jerusalem, which is to say all your enemies are defeated...which is to say Rome is overthrown.

And I went through all this to be able to make this point to you...

This is what they were celebrating at the triumphal entry.

They were not celebrating the first coming. They were celebrating what will happen at the second coming.

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Let me show you something interesting. Turn to John 12.

You might remember we were using John's Gospel to supplement Luke's account of the triumphal entry. There's one more detail from John's account that I want to show you that's not found in Luke's gospel. You can see that the triumphal entry is in verses 12 through 15. Look at verse 16...

**John 12:16 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.**

Now this is interesting. This says the disciples did not understand these things, referring to the triumphal entry and everything associated with it.

Why would it say this?

They seemed to understand everything:

- They quoted Psalm 118.
- They said Jesus was King.

Here's the truth...

They had no idea what was happening at the triumphal entry. They completely misunderstood the king they were receiving.

Look at verse 13...

**John 12:13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!"**

The palm branches show their misunderstanding.

During seminary I took a course on the intertestamental period, or the 400-year period between the Old and New Testaments. The famous account from that period is the Maccabees overthrew Syrian oppression. When that happened, the Jews waved palm branches. They do the same thing here because they think Jesus is going to overthrow Rome like the Maccabees overthrew Syria.

And this brings us to lesson three...

**Lesson Three: The Jews wanted salvation from Rome versus salvation from sin.**

Briefly take your mind back to Zechariah 9:9. We talked about how the verse says...

**righteous and having salvation is he**

Jesus had salvation with him, but it wasn't the salvation they wanted. They wanted physical salvation when Jesus was bringing spiritual salvation.

They were yelling Hosannah, which means, "Save now." They wanted to be saved, but from Rome. Jesus wanted to save them from the true and greater enemies they faced: sin and death.

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Turn to Luke 19. The triumphal entry is in verses 28 through 40. Right before this is the parable of the 10 minas. Look at Luke 19:11...

**Luke 19:11 As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.**

We looked at this verse a few weeks ago, but now we can understand it better.

The kingdom of God had already appeared. We know that. John the Baptist, then Jesus, then the 12, and then the 70 had been preaching that the kingdom of God had come. So why did Jesus say this?

The kingdom of God had come...spiritually. But the people thought it was coming...physically.

And there was so much confusion about this that before Jesus made his triumphal entry he had to preach an entire parable just to try to convince people the kingdom was NOT physically appearing immediately.

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And here is one more thing that makes the whole situation even worse...

There was one time every year when the Jews expected to be delivered more than all the other days combined and that was on Passover. Passover reminded them of when Moses delivered Israel from Egypt and it had them super excited about their Messiah coming and delivering them from Rome. And we are five days from Passover. The anticipation for Jesus to deliver the Jews is at an all-time high.

And that is what they were celebrating at the triumphal entry.<sup>v</sup>

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If you want to see just how bad their misunderstanding was, look at Luke 19:41...

**Luke 19:41 And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it,**

Now skip to verse 44...

**Luke 19:44 and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”**

We will look at these verses in detail next week, but I wanted to preach this sermon, so you had the foundation to understand them.

If you don't have the information from this sermon then you say, “This makes no sense. Why would Jesus weep after being worshiped? Why would he say they missed the time of their visit when it is obvious they didn't miss it?”

Because even though it looks like they were accepting Jesus, they were rejecting him. It looks like they were honoring him, we could even say worshiping him, but they were dishonoring him.

As one commentator, William Hendrickson wrote, “[They] are doing [Jesus] a gross injustice, for they do not accept him for what he really is.”<sup>vi</sup>

They didn't love Jesus. They despised him. They despised him so much that in a few days they would call out for his crucifixion.

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Think of Jesus's two comings this way:

- In Jesus's first coming he rides on a donkey to make peace between God and man
  - In Jesus's second coming he rides on a white horse to make war and destroy his enemies
  - In Jesus's first coming he is the Lamb
  - In Jesus's second coming he is the Lion
  - In Jesus's first coming he deals with the spiritual, people's sins
  - In Jesus's second coming he deals with the physical, defeating his enemies
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Let me conclude with this...

It should not be too hard for us to relate to the Jews. They missed the reason for Jesus' first coming, and we often do as well when we think Jesus should fix all our problems.

We must remind ourselves that Jesus came not to deliver us from trials, but to save us from sin and death.



My hope is that rather than judging the Jews for missing the meaning of Jesus' first coming, we would consider how we might miss the meaning as well.

Are we regularly thanking God that he has rescued us from sin and death, our biggest enemies, or are we like the Jews, regularly disappointed that we aren't being rescued from our earthly troubles.

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If you have any questions, or I can pray for you in any way, I'll be up front after service, and I'd consider it a privilege to be able to speak with you.

Let's pray.

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<sup>i</sup> Done on Luke 19:28-40:

- Wiersbe
- Gospel transformation Bible
- Stein
- Hendriksen

Done on Luke 19:41-44:

- EW
- FT
- HCC
- JM
- Nelson
- Wiersbe
- Hendrickson
- Stein

Done on Zech 9:9:

- EW
- Moody
- Nelson
- JM
- ESV Study Bible

Done on Zech 9:10:

- Nelson
- Moody
- JM
- ESV study bible
- Life Application

<sup>ii</sup> Numerous other versus prophesy of Jesus's reign during the millennial kingdom stretching across the earth...

**Psalm 72:8 May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth!**

<sup>iii</sup> He helps the brokenhearted. Think of...

**Psalm 34:18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the CRUSHED IN SPIRIT.**

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<sup>iv</sup> **John 8:34** Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave[a] to sin.

**Romans 6:16** Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Sin makes us slaves, but Jesus came to offer us spiritual freedom. The Gospel releases us from the slavery sin keeps us in.

<sup>v</sup> Let me get you to notice something. Look back at verse 37. There is an important detail in this verse and now is the time to draw your attention to it. We are told why they were rejoicing and praising God with a loud voice. It says for, or because of, all the mighty works that they had seen. This is why they were celebrating. It was physical. It was about what Jesus had done for them miraculously. It was about who he had healed. It was not about the spiritual. They were not excited about him saving them spiritually and dying for their sins. They were excited about what he had done for them physically and they expected in even greater demonstration in the future. In other words, it was all about the physical versus the spiritual.

<sup>vi</sup> William Hendrickson, Luke, page 873