

Concerning the Messiah's Entrance Into Jerusalem.

by John Gill

The sermon explains how the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9 was fulfilled in Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem, highlighting his characteristics as a king, just, and having salvation, lowly and riding upon an ass.

Scripture: Isaiah 9:6, Zechariah 9:9, Matthew 21:4-5, Mark 11:9-10, Luke 19:38, John 12:14-16, Ephesians 2:14, Philippians 2:7-8, Colossians 1:20, Revelation 11:15

Topics: "Fulfillment of Prophecy", "Messiah"

Description

John Gill emphasizes the significance of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem on an ass, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9. He argues that this event not only confirms Jesus as the Messiah but also highlights His roles as a king, a just savior, and a humble servant. Gill points out that the Jewish people's recognition of Jesus during this event, as they shouted 'Hosanna,' reflects their understanding of the prophecy. He asserts that the characteristics of the Messiah described in the prophecy align perfectly with Jesus, who embodies righteousness, salvation, and peace. Ultimately, Gill concludes that this remarkable entrance was a fulfillment of ancient prophecy, showcasing Jesus as the true King of Zion.

Transcript

The Prophecies Respecting the Messiah

CHAPTER IX.

Concerning the remarkable occurrence of the Messiah's riding to Jerusalem upon an ass, wherein the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9. is particularly considered.

Having traced the prophecies which concern the Messiah quite down to his entrance upon, and discharge of his work and office as a prophet, I cannot proceed any further, without taking notice of a remarkable occurrence, which was to happen towards the close of his ministry, namely, his riding to Jerusalem upon an ass. That Jesus did do so, a little before his death, not only the evangelists assure us, who are to be credited, but even the Jews themselves, the avowed and implacable enemies of Jesus, have acknowledged; now hereby an ancient prophecy was fulfilled, as the evangelists observe, Matthew 21:4, 5, John 12:14-16, the prophecy referred to is Zechariah 9:9, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation, lowly and riding

upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

That this prophecy in its primary, obvious, and literal sense, is to be understood of the Messiah, and no other, and may justly be applied to Jesus, is what I shall attempt to prove. Some indeed would have Zerobabel here intended, others Nehemiah, and others, Judas Maccabæus; but neither of them were kings, nor were they poor, or is it any where recorded of any of them, that they rode upon an ass to Zion, or Jerusalem, in such a public manner, attended with such demonstrations of joy, as this person is said to do; and no other person being mentioned, to whom this prophecy is supposed to be applicable, the Messiah must be intended, to whom all the characters here mentioned exactly agree; who is frequently represented in the Old Testament as a king, and as Zion's king; as one that should execute judgment and justice in the earth, as the Saviour of his people, and the prince of peace.

Several Jewish writers understand this prophecy of the Messiah, and it is certain that the Jews, in the times of Jesus, so understood it, as is manifest from their behavior towards him; for when they saw him coming to Jerusalem upon an ass, they spread their garments and branches of trees in the way, and cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David, Blessed be the king of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord; which shows that they looked upon this prophecy to be a prophecy of the Messiah; and from this circumstance concluded that Jesus was he, or they would never have attended him with such kind of acclamations, and given him such magnificent titles as these; and indeed there is nothing in the whole prophecy, which, as it solely concerns the Messiah, but what is entirely applicable to Jesus.

First, The person here prophesied of, is represented as a king, as Zion's king, and as one that should come to her, for her good. That the Messiah was to be a king, is no controversy between us and the Jews; one of the most common and usual epithets they give him, is the king Messiah; but the controversy between us, is, whether he was to be a temporal or a spiritual one; the Jews expected him in the former character, and therefore rejected Jesus, because he was not such a one; a king he was, and never denied it, though he declared that his kingdom was not of this world; he is Zion's king, the king of saints, and will rule and reign as such for ever, for the good, safety, and protection of his people, and to the confusion of all his and their enemies.

Secondly, Another character of this great person is, that he should be just, or righteous in all his works, actions, and administrations, which well agrees with Jesus, who was just in all his actions both to God and man, he rendered to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's; his whole life was one continued series of righteousness and holiness; so that though his enemies sought, time after time, an occasion against him, they could find none; and therefore, in order to take away his life, which they thirsted after, they exhibited a false accusation against him; and though they carried their point so far, as to prevail upon Pilate to adjudge him to death, yet he washed his hands and declared him to be an innocent person.

Thirdly, It is said of this king of Zion, that he is one having salvation, that is, one that has a commission to effect it, is every way qualified for it, and is become the author of it. Such an one is Jesus, as his name signifies, who is become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy objects from a late writer, that the Hebrew word should be rendered saved, and that it relates to Zerobabel, or some person who came from Babylon, and was saved during their captivity and destruction; to which I answer, that granting the Hebrew word should not be rendered actively having salvation, saving, saving himself, or a Saviour, as most versions do, the word being in the passive form, though there are many

instances of words in that language, which are of the passive form, that are to be understood in an active sense; I say, granting that it should not be rendered so, but passively, saved, there is no need to apply it to Zerobabel, or some person who came from Babylon, and was saved from thence, to whom the other characters in the text will by no means agree: for in this sense of the words, it is applicable enough to the Messiah, Jesus, who was saved, rescued, and delivered out of the hands of death and the grave, and thereby became a fit and proper Saviour for others; for had he not been saved himself, he could never have been the Saviour of others.

Besides, I find the Jews use this word among the several epithets which they give to the most high God, in their solemn prayers and addresses to him: now, if it may be predicated of the great God, it may surely of the Messiah, without any diminution of his glory; yea, even as considered, in his highest nature, as the eternal Son of God. Fourthly, Another epithet given to this great person in the text, is, that he is lowly or poor, as the word may be rendered; which character alone is sufficient to exclude the above-mentioned persons from being intended here; Zerobabel cannot, who was governor of Judah, and with such vast expenses rebuilt the temple; nor Nehemiah, who, during his captivity, was cupbearer to the king of Persia, and afterwards made governor of Judah, though he did not eat the bread of the governor, but at his own charge kept one hundred and fifty Jews at his table out of his own substance, gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty basons, five hundred and thirty priests garments; and therefore surely could not be a poor man; nor can Judas Maccabæus be intended, for the same reason, who was much enriched with the spoils he took in war, wherewith he adorned and beautified the temple; but the character well agrees with Jesus, who was not only born of poor parents, and brought up in a mean and obscure manner, but even in his more public life was attended with poverty in his outward circumstances; he had no where to lay his head, was obliged to some women for his sustenance, who ministered to him of their substance, and when he died had nothing to leave his mother, but bequeaths her to the care of one of his disciples.

Again, if we render the word lowly or meek, it exactly suits with him, whose unparalleled meekness and lowliness of mind appeared in his assumption of human nature, in his courteous and affable carriage to persons far inferior to him, even publicans and sinners, and in his ministering to his own disciples, especially in that last act of his washing of their feet, in which, as well as in all the actions of his life, he set them a pattern, and taught them to learn of him, who was meek and lowly.

Fifthly, This person is further described by his riding upon an ass; and accordingly the Jews have expected the Messiah to make such an appearance, as Jesus did, which is not only attested by the evangelists, but acknowledged by the Jews themselves, as has been already observed. Sixthly, This person was to remove all the instruments of war, and speak peace unto the heathen (v. 10), which has been exactly fulfilled in Jesus, who having made peace by the blood of his cross, has by his ministers preached it both to Jews and Gentiles; whose gospel is the gospel of peace, his kingdom a kingdom of peace, and he himself the prince of peace.

Seventhly, his kingdom was to be very extensive; for it is said that his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the earth; which is the reason Jarchi gives, why it is impossible to understand this prophecy of Zechary, of any other but the Messiah, of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end; and which will more manifestly appear when the kingdoms of this world shalt visibly become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

Eighthly, The coming of this person is represented as something very remarkable and extraordinary, and as what would be matter of joy to Zion; and therefore, a behold, is prefixed to it, and Zion is called upon to rejoice and shout; all which was literally fulfilled in Jesus' entrance, into the city of Jerusalem; for it is said that all the city was moved, being surprised at the strange and uncommon appearance he made, which was attended with shouts and acclamations of joy, from the people, crying Hosanna to the son of David. So that from the whole it appears, that this is another literal prophecy of the Messiah, which had its exact accomplishment in Jesus.

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