Jesus is King

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*Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" **34** Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" **35** Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" **36** Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." **37** Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice*." (John 18:33-37)

1. The Church Calendar

According to the church calendar, today is one of the most important days of the year. For most of us, today is probably one of the least known important days of our church year. Do you know what today is? Today is the last Sunday in the church calendar for 2018, the last Sunday after Pentecost. Our theme for today's message is "Jesus, King of the Jews."

The term "king" is used to describe a male ruler of an independent state. In the Bible, God is called "king." 1 Timothy 6:15 says, "***which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords***." The term "Kingdom of God" refers to the state of God as king.

In the history of the Bible, 1 Samuel 8:7 highlights an important moment in the relationship of God and people. In the passage, the leaders of Israel come to Samuel and say, "***Give us a king to govern us***" (1 Samuel 8:7). Why did the Israelites want a king? The people wanted to be like the neighboring nations. The Israelites believed that a human king would bring them prosperity in the land of Canaan.

What we often overlook in this passage is that the Israelites already had a king. God was their king. Yet the people forgot that God was the king of Israel and the one who had given them everything that they needed. God brought the Israelites out of Egypt and into the promised land.

The deeper meaning that we see in this passage is that when the Israelites ask Samuel for a king, what the people are actually saying is that they no longer want God to be their king.

2. The King of the Jews

In today's scripture, the Roman governor Pilate asks Jesus, "***are you the king of the Jews***?" Among all the questions that Pilate could have asked Jesus, we see that Pilate asks a very tricky question.

During the time of Jesus, the Jews were under Roman control. The king of the Jews was Caesar. Pilate wants to know if Jesus is going to rebel against Rome? This question could have a deeper meaning, asking Jesus if he was the Messiah or religious ruler.

The Jews used the word "king" to refer to the Messiah. Jesus responds to Pilate, asking Pilate about whether he is concerned about Jesus being a political threat to the Roman government. Did Pilate care if Jesus was the Messiah or was he concerned about a political revolution?

Jesus replies that he is not a zealot or revolutionary leader. Pilate concludes that Jesus isn't a political but a religious leader. Jesus tells Pilate that he is on the earth to testify to the truth. The truth is that Jesus is the king, the Messiah.

After hearing this, Pilate tells the religious leaders that he has no charge against Jesus (18:38). In keeping with the tradition, Pilate releases a prisoner at Passover and appeals to the crowd to release Jesus. The Jews shout, "***No, not him! Give us Barabbas***!" The Jews insist "***according to that law he (Jesus) must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God***." Pilate tries to set Jesus free, but the Jews keep shouting, "***if you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar***" (19:12).

Pilate hands Jesus over to the Jews to be crucified. It is interesting to note that Pilate fastens to the cross a sign: "***Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews***" (19:19). The sign is written in three languages, Aramaic, Latin, and Greek (19:20). Aramaic is for the native Jews, Latin for the Roman forces, and Greek for foreigners and Jews visiting from other lands.

We often overlook that the sign is written in three different languages. The sign isn't written only for the Jews, but for everyone to be able to read. With the sign, the implied message is that Jesus is not only king of the Jews for the Jewish people, but also king of everyone. Jesus is king over all people all over the world.

Some might ask a question. Can a crucified person be a king? Although Jesus is crucified, he is king of kings. Why? It is because his crucifixion is not the end of the story. Jesus is risen from the dead.

3. Is Jesus Our King?

Even before his resurrection, Jesus was called as king. John 12:15 says, "***Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt***." The author of John tells us that Jesus' entry into

Jerusalem on a donkey is the fulfillment of the prophecy written in Zechariah 9:9. Jesus is our king. He is also our Lord. In Acts 2:36, on the day of Pentecost, Peter preaches, "***let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah***."

King and Lord is someone who has authority, control, or power over us. King and Lord is also the one who saves, protects, provides and guides us. The question is, do we believe that Jesus is our King and Lord?

The next four weeks are the season of Advent. During this time, we are reminded that we are waiting for the coming of the king who rules the entire universe. Jesus is the king of all the world. He is not only the king of the Jews, but also the king over us. We are waiting for his return.

4. Conclusion

What does it mean that Jesus is King? Exodus 13:21-22 say, "***The LORD went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night***. ***22*** ***Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people***." The Lord protects, guides, provides and saved the Israelites. When I went to Bolivia, I bought my airline ticket for me. That's all I did. My friend contacked a missionary in Bolivia and asked him to take care of us. I did not worry about anything. Do we believe that Jesus is protector, guide, provider and savior?

5. Application

Verse 37 says, "***Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice***." If we believe that Jesus is our king, we are called to listen to his voice. If the sheep does not listen to his shepherd. He will lose his way. He will be in big trouble.

In our lives, and in our church, Jesus is the one who sets our direction and guides us through every moment of life. If we put our trust and faith in the direction and follow him, there will be nothing to worry about. Our shepherd knows what is the best for us.

During this season of advent, we are reminded that the Lord is our king and is the one who cares for our lives, our family, and our church community. I pray that during this season of Advent we experience again what it means to have Jesus as our king. Amen.