

Son of David, Son of God
Mark 11:1-11; 12:35-37
4/5/09
Oxford Circle Mennonite Church

In October, 2008, Philadelphia experienced a historical event of such magnitude that people took to the streets in celebration for several nights. The Phillies went to the World Series and won. The curse was broken. How many of you remember that last pitch? We waited almost 48 hours for those last couple of innings to be played but finally it was finished and we won. Then we had a parade. I didn't go to the parade but Vandy and Bethannie did along with about a million other people. It was the biggest thing this city has seen in years. We finally were able to celebrate a championship team. We didn't expect this back in the summer. We didn't think it could happen. That's what was so amazing about it. It was like an unexpected gift.

Well, the events of Palm Sunday are sort of like October, 2008. Three years before this, no one would have expected Jesus to burst on the scene and wow the people with his miracles and teachings. For a long time, Jesus wasn't on anybody's radar screen at all. But when he started preaching and teaching and healing people and casting out demons, people started taking notice. For three years he traveled around preaching that the Kingdom of God was near and demonstrating the kingdom by healing the sick, casting out demons, and raising the dead. This provoked the religious establishment. People either loved or hated him.

Shortly before Palm Sunday, Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead and this was one reason why so many people were crowding around Jesus on this day. They were celebrating this miracle. But also, these were pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration. They would have been singing as they came anyway. But, recognizing Jesus, they turned this into a parade, a triumphal procession. They thought Jesus, the one who could raise the dead, was coming to overthrow Rome and establish David's kingdom once more. Their exclamations of praise indicate this. They were saying "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David. This was huge for them. They had been waiting for

the Messiah, the heir to David's throne, for a long time and they wanted to celebrate because they thought they would be a sovereign nation once more.

But they really didn't get what Jesus was entering Jerusalem for. In Mark 11:11 we read that "Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the temple. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve." He just looked around and left. That's not what someone would do if they were coming to overthrow Rome and reestablish David's throne. The people weren't really getting who Jesus is.

Yes, he is the son of David. Both Matthew and Luke record Jesus' genealogy and show that he was descended from David. Luke tells us that the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to a son and that the Lord God would give him the throne of his father David and he would reign over the house of Jacob forever. But he is much more than just a descendant of David. While teaching in the temple later that week in Mark chapter 12 Jesus asks the people to consider who the Son of David is. He quotes what David wrote in Psalm 110 *"The Lord said to my Lord; 'Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.' David himself calls him 'Lord' How then can he be his son?"* An ancestor would not have called his descendant "Lord" because that word shows a high level of respect. Normally the older would have been respected and preferred above the younger. Yet David refers to his descendant as "Lord." Jesus' audience would all have understood that this Psalm refers to the Messiah and gotten the point he was making that David would not have referred to his descendant as "Lord" unless he were more than human and far superior to him.

This is why the religious leaders were getting so upset with Jesus. He was, by his actions and teachings, making clear claims to be Messiah and Son of God. Luke and John both record that, as Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the Pharisees were there. Luke writes that some of them told Jesus to rebuke his disciples and make them stop crying out praises. But Jesus said, "I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." (19:39,40) In other words, the

truth will be proclaimed. People were rightly welcoming the Messiah, the Son of David, yet very few wanted to accept the fact that he is also the Son of God.

The Son of David was expected to overthrow Roman authority and reestablish Israel as a sovereign nation. The Son of God came to overthrow the kingdom of darkness and bring in the kingdom of God. The Son of David was expected to kill his enemies and plunder their riches. The Son of God came to be killed and to set free those who are captive to sin, plundering the kingdom of darkness of the souls that have been held captive. The Son of David was expected to administer the king's justice and keep order in the land. The Son of God came to administer the justice of God and bring true peace between Holy God and sinful humanity. The Son of David was expected to take the throne and be lifted up as leader. The Son of God was lifted up on the cross and became the sacrifice for the sins of the world. Yes Jesus is the Son of David and he has the human right to rule as David's heir. But he is much more. He is the Son of God and he has been given all authority in heaven and on earth and under the earth and he rules over all. Jesus was much more than people expected.

In Mark chapter 11, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. He did this deliberately. He sent his disciples to get the colt and probably had already arranged with the owner to use this animal. He tells his disciples if they are questioned about taking the animal to say "The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly." And this did the trick. It was probably a code he had worked out ahead of time with the owner so they would know the disciples were there on Jesus' orders and so they were able to take the donkey. Jesus didn't walk into Jerusalem because he wanted to enter the city as a king would. He's letting it be known that he is in fact the Son of David that the people have been waiting for. Jesus, as the Son of David, is someone the people can relate to. He's Jewish, not Roman. He's joining in their celebration, participating in their parade. Maybe he was singing along with them, we don't know. But he's in there among the people.

Jesus, the Son of David, is someone we can relate to. He has experienced life just as we experience it. At different times he was happy, sad,

tired, excited, angry, frustrated, disappointed. Hebrews 4:15 says “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin.” A few weeks ago, I asked Bethannie what she got out of her Sunday school lesson and she told me the lesson was from Mark 11:12-26. Jesus was hungry and he went to the fig tree and it didn’t have any figs and so he cursed it. Then he went to the Temple and the moneychangers were there and he drove them out because they had no business scamming people in God’s house. She said, “I can relate to Jesus in this story because he was hungry and tired and frustrated with the people. Jesus was having a really crappy day!” If you don’t remember anything else from this sermon, remember that Jesus had crappy days too! Yet he didn’t sin. We can relate to this Jesus.

Jesus the Son of David opened up a two way avenue to God for us. God has come to us in the flesh so that we can come to God. God became what we are, human, so that we can come to God and be transformed into the likeness of His Son, Jesus Christ. There was a movie that came out several years ago called “A.I. Artificial Intelligence.” In this movie an advanced prototype robot child is programmed to show unconditional love and this couple buys this robot child named David, to have as their own child. But something happens and they end up returning David to the manufacturer. The problem is that David now loves his owner/parents, especially his mother, and he won’t be reprogrammed to forget that and be able to love a new owner. Instead he keeps trying to find a way to get his original owner/mother to love him. At one point, he has a conversation with a character who tells him his mother will never love him because he is not human. David is not made of the same stuff as his mother and she can never love him. She can only love a child who is her own biological child, who is made of the same stuff she is made of. So David decides that he must find a way to become human so his mother will love him.

God has become human, not in order to win our love, but because of His own love for us. John 3:16 says “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal

life.” Colossians 2:9-10 says “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.” God, in Christ, has become the same stuff we are because He loves us so much. And because He has become what we are, and because he has worked salvation for us, we can now be His sons and daughters, and heirs of His household. Paul writes in Romans 8:14-17 “For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.”

Jesus is the Son of David and the Son of God. He is fully human, just like us in every way except without sin and he is fully divine, having all the fullness of God within Himself. John writes in his gospel “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth....He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (1:1, 14, 11-12).

We have something to celebrate today just as the people did 2000 years ago when Jesus entered Jerusalem. We celebrate the fact that our God has become human, has lived among us, and has made possible the forgiveness of our sins, and reconciliation with holy God. We celebrate that Jesus Christ rules over all, that he did not consider equality with God something to be used for his own advantage but took on the nature of a servant, was made in human likeness, and was obedient to death, even death on a cross. And because of this God has exalted Jesus Christ to the highest place and given him the name that is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on

earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:6-11)

Today we worship and celebrate the Son of David, the Son of God. We celebrate that God has come to us so that we can now come to God. As the worship team comes up, think about this. God has opened up the way for us to be His children, forgiven of all our sins, empowered by God's Holy Spirit to live the life that He created us to live, made a full member of God's household. We have reason today to praise and worship our God.