

Sermon to the Saints of God assembled at Topeka, KS: Sunday, January 8, 2017

Hosanna in the Highest – Part 2

Last week we examined the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem found at Matthew 21. Specifically, we focused on the significance of the people shouting “Hosanna in the Highest!” – proclaiming Jesus Christ as the long awaited Messiah. We looked at how the prophecy of Zechariah 9 applied to the first and second advents of Christ, including how it points to the coming Triumph of our victorious, conquering King. We will continue that examination today, by considering the anatomy of a Triumph, looking particularly at 1) the Triumph of the Ark of the Covenant, and 2) the details of a Roman Triumph.

The Triumph of the Ark of the Covenant

Let’s first turn our attention to the Triumph of the Ark of the Covenant. To do that, we need to establish some context. The Lord ordered the Ark of the Covenant to be made at Exodus 25, and appointed it to reside within the Veil of the Tabernacle (Temple), within the Holy of Holies – it could not be approached by the will and power of humans. It is where the Mercy Seat was located, and it was the resting place for the very presence of God amongst his people. While there is much more to say about this beautiful instrument than I have time, or light, to speak to today; we will focus on the ways that the Ark stands as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- It was made of wood, overlaid with Gold, reflective of the fact that Christ had to fully take on this flesh (wood), to bring about the work of salvation, and yet he is still God (gold).
- It was topped with a crown of pure gold, befitting his status as the creator and King.
- It stood in the place of an intercessor between men, and God the Father, as Jesus Christ, our intercessor does at this very moment.
- This marvelous treasure chest contained three things, and these things are indeed treasured up for us in Christ Jesus:
 - The tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments (standing representative of all the commandments of God).
 - Here we see Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God.
 - He bears about the will of the Father upon his heart, and is the only person in the flesh to perfectly obey the commandments of the Father.



- Pot of manna.
 - Jesus Christ is the bread of life that sustains our soul, and our eternal life.
- Aaron's rod that budded.
 - Jesus Christ, the Great Shepard makes use of the rod to instruct, guide, correct, and defend his people.
 - He brought life from death, when he defeated death in his resurrection – much like this dead stick blossomed to life and yielded fruit. (Numbers 17:8)

Next, we will briefly consider the powerful series of events that play out with the Ark in 1Samuel chapters 4 – 7. We have read this story many times - but this time, keep sharply in view that the Ark is a type of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

- Israel was in a backslidden condition, which included wicked leaders (e.g. Hophni and Phinehas), and the worship of false gods.
- They had just lost a battle against the Philistines, and were encamped at Ebenezer. They called for those wicked priests Hophni and Phineas to bring the Ark of the covenant of the Lord into the camp. When the Ark arrived in the camp, the Israelites made a “great shout, so that the earth rang again”.
 - They presumed to Triumph in their own honor, and before the victory was even won! They presumed to wield God like some human weapon.
 - False professors of Christ treat him like the rest of their man-made idols – they treat him like some kind of a mystical, superstitious trinket – a magical artifact to bet trotted out to fulfill their will.
- Despite their fear at the presence of the Ark, the Philistines slaughtered the Israelites (30,000 were killed in the battle at Ebenezer). There was no regrouping – the Israelites fled to their homes.
 - The condition of fallen man is hopeless – without Christ, we are truly dead in sin.
- The Philistines took the Ark to Ashdod, boasting in the spoils of war.
- The Ark was set in the house of Dagon (the fish god). This house of idols contained a statue of Dagon; the next day, they found that statue of Dagon flat on its face, bowing before the Ark. They stood their idol back on its feet, only to return on the following day to find it once again bowed down before the Ark; but this time, the head and hands were broken off.
 - This idol (like all idols) has no head to contrive his own will, and no hands to execute it. Your false gods of wood and stone cannot stand in the presence of the King of Kings; the only living God!
- After this, God began to visit painful, deadly plagues on the Philistines. They knew that God was punishing them because they had taken the Ark, so they shifted it

from city to city, hoping to escape from God – the plagues followed with it. After seven months of suffering, they determined to return the Ark to the Israelites. They delivered it back, with peace offerings of pure gold.

- They did everything that they could to convince themselves that God wasn't punishing them, and to try to avoid returning the Ark. When it came time to return it, they sent it on a cart that was pulled by two mama cows that had brand new calves to feed. They separated them from their calves so that they would surely turn around from their assigned task to get back to their babies – they said that if the cows turned back to their babies, then the Lord is not the cause of these plagues. But the Lord constrained those cows to go straight back to the Israelites – lowing as they went, in distress because of their babies.
- Once the Philistines were out from under the direct weight of God's punishing hand, the Philistines were enraged! They immediately went out to war against Israel again:
- **1 Samuel 7:3-12** “**3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. 4 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only. 5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD. 6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh. 7 ¶ And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. 8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. 9 And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him. 10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel. 11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Bethcar. 12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.”**
- The ark descends into captivity, because of the sins of men; it is brought forth from that captivity ENTIRELY by the power of God – he didn't make use of a single

human hand to effectuate the victory. Consider: God *directly* cast down the Philistine idols; God *directly* brought plagues upon the Philistines; God *directly* caused the cows to go forward, when their every instinct was to go back; God *directly* defeated the Philistines in battle.

- Consider the striking, and prophetic 78th Psalm; the first 59 verses describe the sinful, rebellious history of the Jews, which brings about this:
- **Psalm 78:60-72** “**60 So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men; 61 And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy’s hand. 62 He gave his people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance. 63 The fire consumed their young men; and their maidens were not given to marriage. 64 Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation. 65 Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine. 66 And he smote his enemies in the hinder parts: he put them to a perpetual reproach.**
- Jesus Christ descended with humility into the captivity of this flesh, and ultimately the grave, ONLY BECAUSE of our sin. The Father, indeed “delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy’s hand”. After which, He arose, BY HIS OWN POWER, victorious over sin, death, and hell. Humans desperately want to take credit for the victory, when the glory belongs to God alone. No free-will; no works-righteousness!
- “Here I raise mine Ebenezer” – Samuel raised up that memorial and called it Ebenezer: hitherto hath the Lord helped us. It’s noteworthy that he calls it “Ebenezer”, when that’s the location where they had LOST the battle - and the Ark - seven months earlier. Why? Because that’s a critical part of the memorial! It keeps squarely before our eyes that OUR SIN is the cause of Christ’s suffering, and that he has helped us with the strength of his own hand – NOT OURS!
- Over the next 50 years, the ark dwelt at Kirjathjearim, in the house of Abinadab. During that time, the following happens:
 - Saul takes up the throne as the first King of the nation of Israel.
 - Saul shows himself to be a profane man – a man of the flesh – and is told that the throne is not his, and that David will be the King.
 - David, in his youth, is anointed to be the King. Here we see one of the many ways that David stands as a type of the Messiah: Christ means “anointed” – he has been anointed to the throne, and it is most assuredly his, but he must wait to take it at the appointed time. During this time, Saul is a clear type of Satan, the usurper. Saul does everything that he can to kill David, to keep him from taking the throne. David, as with Christ, patiently waited for the appointed hour – not even bringing a railing accusation against Saul – he had many opportunities to take Saul’s life.

- David – the anointed king – spends the years of Saul’s reign living in humility, distress, and sorrow. Similarly, Jesus walked in the humility, weakness, and sorrow of this flesh, in a world that is his by rights, but he patiently endured it, to the saving of his people.
- Once Saul is killed, David rises to the throne, but the kingdom is not yet united, because the usurper (in the form of Saul’s son Ishbosheth) continues to create deception and division in the kingdom.
- Ultimately, the usurper is put down, and the kingdom is united under David. This will happen when Christ returns – once Satan, the great deceiver is put down, rebels will have no will to fight against Christ, and the redeemed Jews will be united under his reign.
- Once the kingdom was united, David immediately conquered Jerusalem (defeating the Jebusites), moved his throne there, and set about to bring the Ark there. Similarly, Christ will return to Jerusalem, uniting his people there, and take up his throne as the King of Kings.
- Consider now, the Triumph of the Ark:
 - **2Samuel 6:1-10 “1 Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims. 3 And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart. 4 And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark. 5 And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals. 6 ¶ And when they came to Nachon’s threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. 7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God. 8 And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah to this day. 9 And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me? 10 So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obedom the Gittite.”**
 - Although David sought to do right, he didn’t do it the right way. The Ark was not to be borne on a cart, but rather, being carried by Levites of the family of Kohath. We must continually, prayerfully seek

understanding from the scriptures as to how we are supposed to live this life, and how we are to execute upon our duty to follow the Lord.

- No one was supposed to touch that Ark, so when Uzzah took it upon himself to steady it, he was inserting himself into the work of that Redeemer that it symbolized, which amounts to the false doctrine of works-righteousness.
- **2Samuel 6:11-23 “11 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obededom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obededom, and all his household. 12 ¶ And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obededom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obededom into the city of David with gladness. 13 And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings. 14 And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. 15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. 16 And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul’s daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. 17 And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. 18 And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. 19 And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house. 20 ¶ Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself! 21 And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD. 22 And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour. 23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death.”**
 - There are many elements of a Triumph here - singing, dancing, instruments, shouting, entering through the gates of the city, gifts to

the people, the honoree is prominent and glorified, the people watch the procession, and join in the celebration.

- David purposefully DOES NOT make himself the focus of the Triumph. The Messiah is the focus, in the form of the Ark.
 - David put aside his royal apparel, and dressed as the common people. He danced with joy unto God, rather than carefully choreographed royal ceremonies.

The following beautiful prophecy of Jeremiah will help us to cement the connection between the Ark of the Covenant and Jesus Christ, and to now shift our focus from the Ark (the type), to Christ (the antitype), and his coming Triumph and Kingdom:

Jeremiah 3:14-19 “14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: 15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. 16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more. 17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. 18 In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers. 19 But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.”

Roman Triumphs

When the Lord Jesus Christ entered through the gates of Jerusalem, on the beast of burden, being celebrated as a King, it was done as a clear allusion to the Roman “Triumph”. When a Roman leader was victorious in a particularly important military campaign, he was celebrated in a ceremony called a “Triumph”. In this ceremony, the victorious leader was glorified to near god-like status in a “triumphal procession” through the streets of Rome. In the early years of the Roman empire, these triumphs were awarded to any military commander that won a great victory, but by the time Christ was walking the streets of that wicked society, the Triumph was reserved for the Emperor alone, which made the imagery of a triumphant Christ riding into Jerusalem all the more powerful and comforting to his disciples, and all the more enraging to those who rejected him. Why would we spend time looking at these Roman celebrations that

were filled with superstition, idolatry, and pride? God Almighty, in his wisdom, ensured that the people of the Roman empire would institute – and therefore be fully familiar with the concepts and imagery of a Triumph so that the Lord Jesus could instructively draw on that understanding, to create an illustration for those people, and then the Holy Spirit could record that event for our learning and encouragement. So, let us consider some of the elements of a Triumph, that we might have a fuller understanding of what Christ was teaching on that day, and so that we might be filled with joyful anticipation of the ascension of our anointed King to his throne.

First, let us focus on the circumstances that produce a Triumph.

- The victor must first have a commission to go forth to war. As a part of the Covenant of Grace, the Father sent the Son to secure the right to possess those children who were given him; and then to redeem the purchased possession. (Ephesians 1:14)
 - **Matthew 21:9** “**And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.**”
 - **Revelation 6:2** “**And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.**”
- There must be an enemy:
 - Satan and his legions
 - **Genesis 3:15** “**And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.**”
 - **Ephesians 6:12** “**For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**”
 - Sin
 - **Romans 7:22-24** “**22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?**”
 - Death and Hell
 - **Genesis 2:17** “**But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.**”
- The victor, having been given a commission, must be absent from the city, while he leads his host to war.

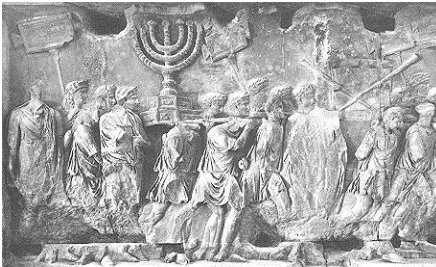
- **Psalm 110:1-7** “1 A Psalm of David. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. 2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. 3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. 4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. 5 ¶ The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. 6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. 7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.”
- Satan has risen up as a usurper, in the absence of the King, hoping to take the crown for himself, and to defile the inheritance of God, by plucking the sheep out of the hand of Christ. The whole world lies in his lap, and follows greedily after his deception, giving rise to the question: “when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8)
- There must be a victory
 - The victories that Christ has won already, and those that are yet to come, are too numerous to recount here, but it can be clearly said that he has conquered, and will conquer Satan, sin, death, and hell.
 - He conquered sin, death, and hell when he laid down his life on the cross:
 - **1Corinthians 15:54-57** “54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - In another sense, he will fully conquer death after his millennial reign. Remember, however, that these things were as good as done when the Lord promised to do them as a part of the Covenant.
 - **Revelation 20:11** ¶ And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and

hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

- The greatest war ever fought (the Quarrel of the Covenant), will culminate in the greatest battle ever fought (Armageddon), and the greatest victory ever won.
 - Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-4 “11 ¶ And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. 17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; 18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. 19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. 1 ¶ And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent,

which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,
 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

Having won the victory, the victor is granted the honor of a Triumph. Consider now the particulars of the celebration.

- The Triumphal procession begins by passing through the gates of the city; in Rome, there was a gate that was reserved for that purpose, which was called the “Porta Triumphalis”.
 - Psalm 24:1-10 “1 ¶ A Psalm of David. The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. 2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. ... ¶ Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. 8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. 9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. 10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.”
 - Spurgeon calls this the “Song of the Ascension”. This Psalm seems to be directly referencing the Triumph of the Ark entering into Jerusalem, but clearly is also speaking of the triumphant Christ.
- Vanquished enemies, led by soldiers, would be paraded at the front of the triumphal procession. Usually there would be a royal captive who was theatrically chained. Certain episodes of the battle may be represented, either through paintings, songs or reenactments. This portion of the parade would also include a display of some of the more impressive spoils of the war.
 
 - Christ does this in 2 ways
 - Displaying the vanquished foes – “leading captivity captive”:
 - In many ways, we have already seen Christ leading captivity captive. For example, he made a show of conquering death, when he rose triumphant from the grave – O death where is thy sting!

- When Christ makes a glorious production of binding Satan with a “great chain”, and confines him to the bottomless pit, it is both a great comfort and assurance to the saints of God, as well as a crippling defeat to the enemies of God. This casting of Satan into the bottomless pit is not a thing that will be done in a corner – that’s the point of leading captivity captive – it is a display! It is a deterrent; when the wicked behold their defeated captain being led in chains, they will be so demoralized that they have no heart to resist the rule of Christ.
- Displaying the spoils of war:
 - Christ has taken (and will take) to himself spoils of this war.
 - **Ephesians 4:8,11-12** “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. ... 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”
 - His people, themselves, are spoils of this great war. He has secured a right to them – his jewels - and he will indeed redeem them, and glorify them. He has plucked them as a firebrand from the burning (Zechariah 3:1,2), having been held captive by Satan, sin, and death. Most of them will be on display in this procession, having ridden with him into the battle of Armageddon.
 - Paul tells us that Christ gave gifts to men, when he Triumphed over death, in his first advent. The gifts that he lists are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Those particular men **are** each **gifts** that Christ received unto himself. He has also furnished each of them **with** gifts, and then presented those men (with their gifts) **as** gifts to all of the sheep in the world – they carry with them the gift of the Gospel. In that way, Christ is continually holding a Triumph in the earth! As the Gospel is preached, Christ is conquering!

- Lictors would come next in the procession, just ahead of their master (the victor who was being honored): these men functioned in a role like David’s mighty men. They were the personal guard of the victorious leader, and they executed upon his orders and judgments. Any man in the Roman empire that had the power to rule would have official “lictors” to serve him. The number of lictors that a ruler had would depend upon his rank and jurisdiction. For example, an emperor had 24 lictors.



- Attributes of a lictor:

- Personally chosen by the ruler that they served:
 - **John 15:14,16** “14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. ... 16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit ...”
- Organized into an exclusive brotherhood:
 - The Church of Christ; The Kingdom of God; The armies of heaven.
 - **1Peter 2:9** “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”
- Strong, experienced men
 - **Daniel 11:32** “... but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.”
- They operated within the bounds of the law, and their master’s will
 - When they participated in public pageantry, such as a Triumph, they would always walk in front of their master, carrying a “Fasces”.
 - Bound bundle of rods, with an axe passing down through the center of the bundle. It symbolized the unity of the kingdom under the law, and the ruler’s absolute power to enforce the law within his jurisdiction. Rods reflecting



the power to punish by scourging, and axes the power to execute.

- This practice made clear that the authority and honor belonged to their master, and that they were stewards, expected to execute upon that authority with fidelity.
- We must keep always in mind: everywhere we go, we are representing the Lord, and laboring for him, and under his authority. Without Him, we are nothing!
- **1Corinthians 4:1-2 “1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”**
- **2Corinthians 5:20 “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.”**
 - Clearly there are many elements here that are consistent with the angels and saints of God, and we know that the “armies of heaven” will most assuredly ride into the battle of Armageddon with the Lord Jesus Christ. (Revelation 19:14)
- The Victor came next; he was the focal point of the procession, as this was the man who was primarily being honored. He was adorned as a king, wearing a purple robe with gold embroidery. He wore a crown of laurel leaves, and carried a scepter in his hand. He rode a spectacular, tall-sided chariot, pulled by four horses.
 - Here you see the imagery that they drew from when they mocked Christ at his crucifixion, by putting a purple robe upon him, and a crown of thorns.
 - In addition to the description of the victorious Christ that we just read in Revelation 19, consider:
 - **Isaiah 63:1-6 “1 Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. 2 Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? 3 I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. 4 For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. 5 And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. 6 And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.”**

- Finally, the troops would parade in formation, singing songs of victory as they marched. Soldiers would be paid for their service after the Triumph. This included money, but more importantly land and citizenship.
 - **2Timothy 2:3,4 “3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”**
 - **Ephesians 2:19 “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;”**
 - **John 14:1-3 “1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”**



- Celebration of the citizens – the joyful citizens will no longer be in fear, waiting for news from the battlefield – the victory is won! The conqueror would give gifts, from the spoils of the war, to the citizens.
 - All of creation is groaning and travailing to bring forth the Revelation of Jesus Christ; all of creation will join in the celebration of the greatest victory that has ever been seen!
 - The redeemed 144,000 Jews will be present and protected in Zion when Christ wins the battle of Armageddon, and they will receive him with joy and gladness when he enters through the gates of Jerusalem in Triumph - Hosanna in the highest!
 - Jesus Christ will restore the fruits of the Abrahamic Covenant to the redeemed Jews; they will be in full possession of their earthly inheritance, including their land.
- Singing, clouds of incense, strewing of flowers, feasting
 - Consider the details of the Triumph of the Ark for a flavor of this.

- Offerings were made to the “gods”, giving thanks for the victory. This closed the cycle that began when the victor was commissioned for the work.
 - After his first triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus Christ gave *himself* as an offering to God, to atone for the sins of his people.
 - When Christ returns in Triumph, reigning for 1000 years, he will ultimately deliver up the perfected Kingdom of the Saints to the Father.
 - **1Corinthians 15:20-28** “**20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. 24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.**”

I love you all. Amen.