

Great Expectations -- Palm Sunday 2006

Intro: What are they waiting for? What are they longing for? Doesn't this all seem strange? Didn't we – you – have a war in this country to make sure no kings showed up? It is very hard to understand someone who longs for a king.

I. Bad King Good King

- A.** When Israel first decided they needed a king, God and Samuel made it plain they had one: Him. He was a good king to them, loving them, showering them with blessings, and supplying the rule of law to ensure justice and fairness.
- B.** They insisted that they wanted a human king. God warned them about what kings do: 1 Samuel 8.
 - 1. He will draft your sons and make them run with his chariots and horses.
 - 2. ...he will send them into war.
 - 3. ...he will make them work his fields and crops
 - 4. ...he will take your daughters to be cooks and servants
 - 5. ...he will take the best parts of your fields and goods
 - 6. ...he will tax you and make you work harder and harder.
- C.** But they insisted on a king other than God. And they got one, and another one, one after another, until the country was broken, divided, poor, and under the yoke of a foreign king – an emperor who claimed to be God.
- D.** All during the hundreds of years of bad kings the people cried out for a righteous king, one who would bring back the good old days of God's rule. They longed for salvation, justice, fairness, protection, and deliverance.
- E.** We have a hard time longing for a king. They are either bad guys or irrelevant old men waving from carriages.
- F.** Illustrations from Robin Hood and The Return of the King.
- G.** This is the king they were looking for! (Isaiah 11:1-9)

[the children enter and the block of songs]

II. Expectations – the peoples' and Jesus'

- A.** As the people saw Jesus head for Jerusalem, they rejoiced because they expected him to be that king; the king they had

longed for, hoped for, and prayed for in the dark watches of the night.

- B.** And Jesus cried when he looked over the city, for they expected a king who would save them without sanctifying them. They expected a king who would deliver them without cost.
- C.** They were expecting a king who would remove their problems.
 - 1.** The study indicating church goes live longer. That's not always helpful. God is not here to make us live longer or more healthily.
 - 2.** God is here to get us ready for our next home.
- D.** Jesus' expectations were very different from the crowd's.
 - 1.** He was expecting arrest, the whip, the crown of thorns, and the cross.
 - 2.** He was expecting rejection and humiliation.
 - 3.** But he was expecting something more: He expected himself to live righteously and faithfully through it all.
 - 4.** He expected to triumph at the end of the journey, and he expected the journey to be difficult.
 - 5.** When Peter pulled the sword to protect him, Jesus told him, according to John, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" John 18:11
 - 6.** Jesus said, "Not my will, but Thine be done." Luke 22:42
- E.** The people expected – demanded – someone to fix their lives and free them. They expected to be freed from dark times. Jesus expected – and demanded of himself – obedience, honor and faithfulness in the middle of dark times.
- F.** Because of that faithfulness, we ARE saved, the darkness IS rolled away, and we ARE saved. All that we could have wanted and more. While we still have a long way to go on our individual journeys home, we know that the king has come and that our king is faithful.

(a call for Anthony to come and sing *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*)