

Hail to the King!

Matthew 27:11-66 (v. 27-31)

Introduction

In the Catechesis Minute, we talked about the three-fold kingdom of God: His kingdom of power (creation), His kingdom of grace (the church), and His kingdom of glory (heaven). At the beginning of the service, we read from **John 12**, how the crowd shouted, *“Hosannah! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the king of Israel!”* And just now, in **Matthew 27**, we read how the soldiers mocked Jesus, derisively shouting, *“Hail, King of the Jews!”* This swing took place in less than a week. And it’s a lot for us to take in during this brief service. But perhaps we can get some clarity by focusing on the kingship of Christ.

King of Kings

First, Christ is rightly called the “King of kings” because He is King over all the universe, over all creation. John says in the first chapter of his Gospel: *All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made (John 1:3)*. When one makes something, whatever he makes is his. He has ownership of it, responsibility over it, and control of it. To say that Christ is in control of all creation is not saying He is some kind of cosmic Puppet-master, pulling the strings and watching His creation dance to His tune. He made us in His image, complete with a free will. However, when Adam and Eve sinned, that free will was broken. We have freedom of choice about earthly things, like what to wear or what to eat for breakfast. But we are enemies with God and dead in our sins. God’s Law acts as a curb, to keep things in check. The thing is this, many people jump the curb.

King of Grace

Paul talks about His kingship in **Colossians 1** (read **Colossians 1:15-20**). Christ is king overall, but He is especially the King of the kingdom of grace, the church. In this respect, He is quite a different type of King. The kingdom of grace is how God has chosen to reconcile fallen humanity to Himself. And Paul says that He does that *by the blood of [Christ’s] cross (Colossians 1:20)*. As King of the church, His throne is the cross (Read **John 12:27-33**). This is how Jesus draws people from the kingdom of Satan into His kingdom of grace.

King of Glory

It is by virtue of His suffering and death that He is the King of glory, the King of heaven (Read **Revelation 5:9-10, 12, 13**). Because the Lion of Judah became the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, He is worthy to open the scroll and be the King of glory. And in the end, He will reign supreme (Read **Revelation 19:11-16**). He will have the final victory when He returns with the host of heaven at the end of time. This will be a total victory, where He will judge all the people of the world and establish His kingdom of glory in power forever and ever.

The Unrecognized King

But back to the present. There are many in the world today that do not recognize Him as King. Either they have never heard of Him, or they don't want to be bothered with Him. So, they scorn Him just like the soldiers in our Gospel lesson did today. The treatment Jesus received at the hands of the Roman soldiers was unthinkable. One would think that no human being could treat another like that. But that's part of the sickness of original sin. Today, we do the same thing to Christ when we live the way we want to and not the way He would have us live.

King of Hearts

Which brings us to the important question of the day. Jesus died on the cross to reign in our hearts and lives. When the Holy Spirit works faith in us, Christ sets up His throne in our hearts. The question is, "Do we recognize Him as King?" Behold, the King! Now, with our lives, we will either sneer with the soldiers, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Or we will say, "Hosannah! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" Hail to the King who died for us, whose body and blood we eat and drink today.

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
