

Palm Sunday

Luke 19:28-31 - NKJV - *The Triumphal Entry*

²⁸ When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

²⁹ And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, *that* He sent two of His disciples,

³⁰ saying, "Go into the village opposite *you*, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring *it here*."

³¹ And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing *it*?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.'"

The message of Palm Sunday is a message that everybody needs to hear.

- Most of us understand Palm Sunday to be *the Sunday before Easter*.
- It is the day that *Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey*
- People laid palm leaves and cloaks down on the streets to honor Him.
- For most of us that is the extent of our understanding of Palm Sunday.

But there is so much more about this story that is important for us to understand.

Our text stated that before going to Jerusalem, **Jesus** was staying in Bethany at the home of **His close friends** Lazarus, Mary and Martha.

The Gospel of John records Jesus having dinner with his friends. This was to be **Jesus' last moments of peace and comfort on earth**.

- While He was there, **Jesus sent two of His disciples** into the village to retrieve a colt/donkey that had never been ridden before.
- **Jesus was going to ride** this donkey into Jerusalem.

I want to draw your attention to a few details about this event.

First of all, the fact that Jesus is going to Jerusalem is significant.

- On many other occasions, we find **Jesus leaving Jerusalem** because of the dangers He faced there...
- That is why most of Jesus' ministry was in **the area of Galilee**.

It was dangerous for Jesus every time He went to Jerusalem.
It was always a difficult decision for Jesus to go.

But on this occasion it was especially difficult;

- Jesus knew what He was about to face in Jerusalem.
- He knew He was about to be tortured & crucified.

Jesus was about to enter Jerusalem in a way he had never done before.

- Jesus was about to enter Jerusalem riding a colt.
- He wasn't going to walk in or sneak in.

But on this trip to Jerusalem, Jesus was going to make a very public declaration of who He was.

- In times of war, a king would always ride a stallion or horse.
- In times of peace, a king would ride a colt or donkey.

For Jesus to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey was to declare that He was the King.

- Jesus rode in on a donkey, not a horse....
- This was a peaceful declaration of who He was.

How would the people of Israel react to this????

The Gospel of John gives us some great insight into this story that the other Gospels do not record;

John 12:1-2 – NKJV - The Anointing at Bethany

12 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.

² There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.

John 12:9-13 – NKJV - The Plot to Kill Lazarus

⁹ Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.

¹⁰ But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

The Triumphal Entry

¹² **The next day** a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

¹³ took **branches of palm trees** and went out to meet Him, and cried out:

“Hosanna!

‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’ - The King of Israel!’

Just a short time before Palm Sunday, Jesus had performed His greatest miracle...the raising of His friend Lazarus from the dead.

We don't know exactly how much time passed between these two events, but we do know that when the people found out that Jesus was at Lazarus' house...

- **They came not only to see Jesus, but to see Lazarus and this miracle for themselves.**
- **The Bible says that the very next day was Palm Sunday.**

The latest buzz in the city of Jerusalem was Lazarus being raised from the dead.

When **Jesus** came riding into town on ***Palm Sunday....***

- There was **an electricity** in the air, ***an excitement!***
- **Jesus** was the **topic of conversation**.

It was Passover time.

- **People were gathering in Jerusalem** from everywhere **for the Passover**.
- **The Passover** is the **most celebrated** event on the ***Jewish Calendar***.

Think of the people who were in Jerusalem on this day.

- **Jesus' disciples** were there.
- Among the crowds would be **those Jesus had healed**.
- There would be many of **His followers** there.
- Those who had **witnessed His miracles** and **heard His teachings** would be there.

But there would be others as well;

- The **Sadducee's**, the **Pharisee's**.
- The **keepers** of ***the law***.
- Those who were **jealous of Jesus**.
- Those who **felt threatened by Jesus**.

Then there were **the Romans**;

- The occupying government....they would be there.
- **Watching and waiting** for any sign of rebellion against Rome.
- They would be there in force, ready to crush any uprising.

All of these people had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem that day.

- They were **waiting** on both sides of the road.
- Many of them laid their cloaks down on the streets **as a sign of reverence** to this King.
- They had cut down Palm branches in anticipation of His arrival.

Jesus arrives riding on a colt...surely this is their King!

- **People** are pushing and shoving each other to get a glimpse of Him.
- **The people are waving** their Palm branches and shouting. "**Hosanna, Blessed is the King of Israel** that comes in the Name of the Lord."
- This is the setting that **Jesus rides into on Palm Sunday**.

Now imagine with me **how Jesus must have felt that day**.

- **Jesus** understood that there were just a few more days until His Crucifixion.

Jesus knew that the thousands of people who were shouting, "**Hosanna to the King**", would be shouting, "**Away with Him, Crucify Him**" in just a few days time!

Jesus knew that the people did not really understand what this moment meant.

- They were caught up in the moment.
- They had **heard about** all of the wonderful things that **Jesus could do**.
- They thought that **Jesus was coming to rescue them** from their oppressors.

They expected Jesus to become the physical king of Israel and restore her back to her glory days....as it had been under King David.

- Yes, there were a few in the crowd **who really knew Jesus**.
- There were a few of His true followers there.
- But even they did not understand what was really happening.

When Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on a colt, The people understood it to mean that – Jesus was claiming to be a conquering King

- A war lord - Who would *come in and crush Rome*.
- That is why they were waving Palm Branches and shouting Hosanna!!!

The Greek word for Hosanna means to save.

The waving of Palm Branches was a practice that had begun 200 years previous.

A blood thirsty Syrian king named Antiochus Epiphanes had beaten the Jews into submission.

- On one occasion he slaughtered a pig in the *Holy of Holies* and made the priests drink its blood.
- After several years of this, a man named **Judas Maccabee** had enough.
- Maccabee, whose name meant 'hammer', and his brothers launched a guerrilla war against Epiphanes.

Nine years later, Maccabee and his band of renegades miraculously overcame the Assyrian army and drove Epiphanes out of Jerusalem.

- The people spontaneously celebrated by waving palm branches.
- From that time forward the palm branch became a symbol of deliverance from oppression.

On Palm Sunday some 200 years later, the people were waving Palm Branches and shouting Hosanna in anticipation of Jesus becoming their deliverer from the Roman oppression.

The people missed the message - **Jesus was not** riding a horse as a King of War would, but **was riding a colt...**the symbol of peace.

- **Jesus** had come to Jerusalem, not with a political message, but with a spiritual message.
- **Jesus had come** to Jerusalem as a King of Peace and Love and Compassion.
- **Jesus had come** to Jerusalem with a message of forgiveness.

When I continue reading our text, it states;

Luke 19:41-44 - NKJV - Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

⁴¹ Now as He drew near, **He saw the city and wept over it,** ⁴² saying, ***“If you had known, even you,*** especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

⁴³ For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

When Jesus ascends the hill to Jerusalem

- When he gets **close enough** to **hear the people's cry**
- **See** the **Palm Branches waving** in the air
- **His heart sinks** in his chest and **Jesus begins to cry!**

Why did **He cry**??????

This is the one and only time in Scripture we find Jesus crying over a multitude of people.

The only other account **where Jesus cried** was when **His best friend Lazarus died.**

- It is not that **Jesus wasn't emotional....**
- **Jesus had compassion** on the multitudes.
- That is what **moved Him to perform miracles.**

Jesus cried over the multitudes only one time.

- ***It was on Palm Sunday that Jesus cried for all of humanity!***
- It was on Palm Sunday - Jesus cried for all of **His children - you and for me!**

The reason Jesus cried was because the people had totally missed the message.

He saw the masses of people **lining the streets crying out** to Him **to rescue them, to save them.**

- **He saw their faces, He looked into their eyes, He saw the emptiness.**

They did not understand why He had come.

They had **missed the message of peace, love and forgiveness.**

All he could do was weep and cry over them and say;

- If you only understood why I came? Or what this day is all about?

Jesus was crying because the people had *missed an opportunity to change their future.*

- They had **missed an opportunity** to *change their world.*

The New Living Translation says *Luke 19:42-44* –

42 "How I wish today that you of all people would understand the way to peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from your eyes.

43 Before long your enemies will build ramparts against your walls and encircle you and close in on you from every side.

44 They will crush you into the ground, and your children with you. Your enemies will not leave a single stone in place, *because you did not accept your opportunity for salvation.*"

Palm Sunday could have been a new beginning for Israel.

- *Israel had an opportunity to show Rome something new and meaningful.*
- *Israel missed a glorious opportunity to be a light in a dark world.*
- *Israel missed an opportunity for Salvation* because she was ***too concerned about her present condition.***

Too caught up in the realm of the physical to be concerned about the spiritual.

- They were too caught up in their temporal life
- To be concerned about their eternal life.

That is why Jesus wept.

He had spent His entire life trying to get this message across to them

- But they missed the message.

That is why Jesus wept.

When Jesus looked at the city of Jerusalem,

- All He could see was the *beautiful Temple in ruins*
- And the enemies of God *crushing the people on every side.*

That is why Jesus wept.

The message of Palm Sunday has not changed in 2000 years.

- Jesus is still weeping today.
- He is weeping for your family.
- He is crying over SPRINGFIELD.

But His weeping is about over.....

There is a day very near where the Bible says that *Jesus is coming back* not on a colt, but on a white horse.

In other words, *He is coming back* not as a peaceful King, but as a conquering King.

He is coming to defeat the armies of this world once and for all.

- Did you know that you and I can be a part of that army?

You can be a part of that army if you receive His message today!

- On that day it will be too late to receive anything from God.
- On that day it will be too late to wave Palm Branches and cry out Hosanna.
- On that day it will be too late to save your family.

The people of Israel were so caught up in their problems that they tried to make Jesus into somebody He wasn't.

- They tried to make Jesus into the Jesus they wanted.
- They tried to make Jesus into the Jesus that was useful to them.

When they found out that Jesus would not be the Jesus they wanted, they rejected Him.

- *Their cry changed from* "Hosanna, save us" to "**He is guilty, crucify Him.**"
- And the very same people that were laying their coats down in reverence for Jesus, murdered Him just five days later.

CLOSE: - This world is making Jesus ***into the Jesus they want***.
They are making Jesus into the Jesus that is useful to them.

The Bible says that ***Jesus is the same***, yesterday, today and forever.

- We are either ***for Him*** or ***against Him***.
- We either ***accept His message*** or ***reject it***. – **NO GRAY AREA** w/God!

I have to ask myself, ***am I anything like the Jewish people*** on Palm Sunday?
Too caught up in the cares of this life to consider things of eternal importance?

Is Jesus weeping over me today?

What does Jesus see when He looks into your face? - Is Jesus weeping over you?

We can't make Jesus into who we want Him to be.

- If Jesus ***doesn't fit*** into your plans... You need ***to change your plans***....
- If ***Jesus doesn't fit your life***... You need ***to change your life***....
- Allow Jesus to change your life!!!!

Don't get too caught up in ***your life on this earth*** that you miss out on what Jesus has been planning for ***your eternity***!

- You need His Grace/Mercy/Love/Forgiveness/His Spirit - **TODAY!!!**

You can be the light in your dark world – Or an example to those around you.

I wonder ***what would have happened*** on that Sunday 2000 years ago ***had the people understood?***

I wonder ***what would have happened*** that Sunday had the people ***accepted Jesus as their Spiritual King?***

What I really wonder about the most is ***what could happen in Springfield Ohio - if we really understood*** how much ***Jesus wants us to impact our world?***

- ***Jesus wants to change you*** and ***then change your world*** through you!
- ***That is what it is all about!***

