

“Blessed is the King”

March 24, 2024

Luke 19:28-44

I. Introduction

For Jesus’ disciples as well as the visitors to Jerusalem who had come for Passover, the change of attitude towards the Man from Galilee must have been frightening. Earlier in the week, on what is now called Palm Sunday, the crowds had cheered as Jesus entered Jerusalem, but days later some of the same people had followed the same Man as He carried His cross to Golgotha. And then they had watched and ridiculed Him as He was crucified. It’s hard to comprehend how quickly their attitudes changed.

When Jesus began the 2-mile walk from Bethany to Jerusalem on that Sunday morning, He was followed by a large number of disciples, admirers, and those just looking for more entertainment. After all they had seen Jesus do and heard Him teach during the past 3 years, the crowd, including the disciples, were filled with anticipation that now was the time that Jesus would exhibit messianic power, judge Israel’s enemies, and establish the glorious kingdom promised in the Old Testament and taught by the religious leaders. They never understood that Jesus had come to die. Jesus Christ, the sinless Lamb of God, had come to bear the punishment for the sins of the world and to satisfy divine law and divine wrath against sin by dying on the cross. He came to die and then to rise from the dead, not only conquering sin, but also conquering the grave for all who would believe in Him—in [John 11:25](#) He said, “**I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.**”

As the Bible predicted over and over, Jesus’ death didn’t happen accidentally; it was planned from the beginning. In [John 1:29](#) John the Baptist had called Him, “**The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**” As Gods’ Passover Lamb, Jesus had to satisfy the requirements of God regarding Passover and the Passover Lamb. [Turn to Exodus 12:1-6.](#) But there was going to be one **HUGE** difference, this time the Passover Lamb, Jesus the Christ, would rise from the dead. In [Luke 18:31-33](#), speaking of Himself, Jesus said, “**We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.**”

Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem marked the end of a journey that had begun some 30 years earlier in a stable in Bethlehem. Now, in Jerusalem, He would face His greatest challenge and complete the work of salvation for which He had come. Sadly, in spite of Isaiah's prophesy of the Suffering Servant in [Isaiah 53](#), the people had no thought of a Messiah as a sacrifice for sin but rather a Messiah who would establish an earthly kingdom. But there could not be exalted glory until there was shame; there could not be a kingdom until there was a cross; there could not be a royal crown without a thorny crown. All of that would happen at the end of the Passion Week culminating with His crucifixion and resurrection. Jesus' triumphal entry and coronation was just the beginning. But before the grand entry could occur, there had to be some preparations.

II. Jesus' Grand Entry

A. The Preparations As we read in Exodus, timing was important. The spotless Passover lamb was to be brought into the house on the 10th day of the month and watched or observed for 5 days, until the 14th of the month, when it was to be sacrificed at Passover at twilight, i.e., between 3 and 5 pm. As the Lamb of God, Jesus had to fulfill those conditions, too. That He was sinless was beyond doubt. He had lived with His Apostles and disciples 24/7 for 3 years; He had been questioned and grilled by the religious leaders of the day, but no one could point to any sin in His life. Peter wrote in [1 Peter 2:22](#), “**He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.**”

So, to satisfy the timing, Jesus entered Jerusalem 5 days before Passover—this would be the 10th day of the month. If Jesus was going to be seen and accepted as the Passover Lamb, He needed to be acclaimed and welcomed by those He came to save. To bring this all about, Jesus did something He had never done before; something He had continually told others **not** to do for Him. He allowed His followers and others to give a public demonstration in His honor. He rode into Jerusalem in such a way that He made an unmistakable claim to be the Messiah, God's anointed One and the Lamb of God.

Because of their importance, the preparations were carefully planned. Luke implied that there was a password that was to be used by those who came to get the colt: “**The Lord needs it.**” Perhaps when Jesus had been in Jerusalem on an earlier visit, He had made arrangements with the owners of the

donkey for this particular time. Or, perhaps in His omniscience, Jesus had foreseen the colt and knew what the disciples needed to say to get the colt. Regardless, the plan had to be carried out quietly because in [John 9:22](#) the Jewish leaders had let it be known that anyone confessing Christ would be excommunicated or worse. The fact that the rulers planned to kill Jesus made it even more important that the owners be protected.

The preparations were a deliberate claim to be the promised king. 500 years before the crowd hailed Jesus as king, Zechariah had prophesied in [Zechariah 9:9](#), “**Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.**” By riding a colt of a donkey, Jesus was representing Himself as a King of peace and not a king of war. His peace was a peace between God and mankind. He wasn’t coming to slay Israel’s enemies or establish an earthly kingdom. He came to give Israel—all mankind—the opportunity to be saved—to become part of the Kingdom of Heaven. When He comes a 2nd time to judge and reign as the King of kings, then He will come as the conquering hero riding on a white horse ([Revelation 19, 20](#)).

The preparations would lead to a deliberate challenge to the religious leaders. Up to this point, Jesus had not allowed His enemies to take His life—either He withdrew from them like He did in [Matthew 12:12-16](#) or He just walked through them and went away like He did in [Luke 4:28-30](#). But now was the accepted time, the right time for the death of the Lamb of God. [Mark 14:1-2](#) says, “**Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some sly way to arrest Jesus and kill him. ‘But not during the Feast,’ they said, ‘or the people may riot.’**” Even after Jesus’ Grand Entry, the Jewish leaders were determined to wait, but God’s plans said otherwise. Jesus had to die as the Passover Lamb in the right place at the right time and before all the people. And the events of this coming week, beginning with the grand entry, would force the leaders’ hands. They would have to act sooner rather than later.

B. The Grand Procession and Celebration After the preparations, there was the grand procession itself and a grand celebration as Jesus was acclaimed King. Jesus rode on a colt which had never been

ridden before, but He was God—the Lord of Creation—so neither the weight of Jesus nor all the noise and commotion of the crowd bothered the colt at all. The streets of Jerusalem were swollen with people. Since every Jewish male from 12 years old and up was required to gather in Jerusalem for Passover and since many would bring the rest of their family along as well, Jerusalem, a city of 500,000 people, would be filled with over 2 million people; thousands would have lined the streets as Jesus entered “riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9).

Many of the people knew who Jesus was—they had seen Him or heard of Him; they may have known someone who had been healed by Him. So, as He rode into Jerusalem, Matthew wrote that “A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road” (Matt. 21:8). The expectation that the Messiah had finally come to bring deliverance from all foreign oppression was so great that the crowd began to shout words from Psalm 118:25-26, a Messianic psalm, “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” Matthew 21:9 adds that they also shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” ““Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Hosanna in the highest!” *Hosanna* means “save now.” Jesus had come to bring deliverance, but not from Roman rule but from the rule of sin in people’s lives. The people wanted and expected deliverance from Rome. Jesus came to bring deliverance from sin.

The crowd acknowledged Jesus as “the king who comes in the name of the Lord.” Jesus was the king, the coming one; the Son of David, He was the Messiah. But the crowd on that day wasn’t interested in Jesus saving their souls but in His saving their nation. Now, at last, they thought, He had come to be the Conqueror—to be their Liberator. What better occasion or time could there possibly be for God’s Anointed One, the Messiah—the Christ, to make the ultimate and finale deliverance of His people from Roman tyranny than at Passover—just like Moses had done thousands of years earlier at the 1st Passover.

But the people wanted Jesus on their own terms, and they would not bow to a King who was not to their liking, even though He was the Son of God. They wanted Jesus to destroy their enemies, including Rome, not their cherished sins or their hypocritical, superficial religion. But Jesus would not deliver them

on their terms, and they would not be delivered on His. So, by the end of the week, they would turn on Him and demand His crucifixion.

C. The Condemnation As Jesus entered Jerusalem, there were cheers but there was also condemnation. Not everyone shared in the crowd's excitement, Luke wrote that “**Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples!’**” The Pharisees condemned the enthusiasm on general principles, and they certainly didn’t want Jesus proclaimed as the Messiah. They couldn’t control the rabble, but they demanded that Jesus should. **John 12:19** says, “**So the Pharisees said to one another, ‘See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!’**” The Pharisees were afraid of Jesus and afraid of the crowd. If this kept up, they were going to lose their standing with the Roman rulers and their standing as the religious elite. Jesus didn’t help when He said that the shouting was inevitable. “**I tell you,’ he replied, ‘if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.’**”

D. The Tears Not only was there celebration and condemnation, there were also tears. Only Luke recorded Jesus’ lamentation or weeping over the city of Jerusalem on that day. As Jesus looked at Jerusalem, He wept loudly because the people had ignored God. No matter where Jesus looked, He found cause for weeping. If He looked back in time, He saw how the nation had wasted its opportunities and had ignored the prophets that had come before Him. If He looked within, He saw spiritual ignorance and blindness in the hearts of the people. They should have known who He was—God had sent many messengers ahead to prepare the way. If He looked around, Jesus saw that religious activity had accomplished very little. The temple had become a den of thieves, the religious leaders were out to kill Him, and the city was filled with pilgrims celebrating a festival but with hearts filled with sin. Finally, if He looked ahead, He saw the terrible judgment that was coming in AD 70 when the Roman army would destroy Jerusalem killing 600,000 Jews, taking others for the coliseum, and demolishing the city—“**They will not leave one stone on another.**” All of this horrific judgment came because Israel refused to recognize her Savior—turn to **John 1:10-11.**

III. Conclusion

God had a plan for salvation, and it was carried out to the smallest detail—down to the exact day and hour. Contrary to the feelings of His followers, the death of Jesus wasn't a plan of defeat. It was part of the plan of victory—the victory of Jesus over sin and death; victory for those who accept Him as their Lord and Savior. As [John 1:12](#) says, “**Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.**” Do you believe? Contrary to the thoughts of many today, what you believe does make a difference, in [Acts 4:12](#) Peter said, “**Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.**”

There aren't a lot of events in Jesus' life that are recorded in all 4 Gospels like His grand entry into Jerusalem. Obviously, it was an important event—it wasn't important only to show us that God's plans always work, it, also, showed us what our attitude should be towards God's plan. Writing about Jesus in [Philippians 2:8](#), Paul wrote that in spite of all Jesus had and all He was, He “**humbled Himself and became obedient to death.**” If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, how's your attitude? Like our Savior and Lord, Christians need to be humble and obedient to God. During His last week of ministry, Jesus courageously faced His enemies and then humbly and obediently went to the cross to die for the sins of the world. We are called to be just as courageous and just as humble as we obey God in our lives.

On a day of celebration like Palm Sunday, it isn't right to end here. In [Acts 1:10-11](#) angels told the disciples standing and watching Jesus disappear into heaven, “**This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.**” He will come as a warrior-king with majesty and power. As Paul wrote in [Philippians 2:10](#), then “**every knee will bow before Him.**” If you are one of His children, you will join in the greatest coronation of all time—heaven itself will ring with celebration. [Turn to Rev. 5:11-14.](#) What a grand and glorious day that will be. By comparison, Palm Sunday will be as if it were a mere whisper. Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, our Lord and Savior will be crowned, and we will be with Him to celebrate His victory. Let's rejoice today and every day and “**praise His glorious Name forever. May the whole earth be filled with His glory**” ([Psalm 72:19](#)).