

3/15/2008 Sermon Prep

Palm Sunday is a remembrance of Jesus' Triumphant entry into Jerusalem but the story begins a few weeks earlier with His friend Lazarus.

John 11:1 Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair. 3 So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick."

4 When he heard this, Jesus said, "This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for God's glory so that God's Son may be glorified through it." 5 Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 Yet when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days.

7 Then he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

8 "But Rabbi," they said, "a short while ago the Jews tried to stone you, and yet you are going back there?"

9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light. 10 It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light."

11 After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

12 His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better."

13 Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.

14 So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, 15 and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

16 Then Thomas (called Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

17 On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. 18 Bethany was less than two miles<sup>[a]</sup> from Jerusalem, 19 and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. 20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

21 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; 26 and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

27 "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ,<sup>[b]</sup> the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

28 And after she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." 29 When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. 31 When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

32 When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. 34 "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

37But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

38Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. 39"Take away the stone," he said.

"But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

40Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

41So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

43When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

45Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him. 46But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. 47Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

"What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. 48If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

49Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! 50You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish."

51He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, 52and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to

bring them together and make them one. 53So from that day on they plotted to take his life.

54Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the Jews. Instead he withdrew to a region near the desert, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.

55When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover. 56They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple area they asked one another, "What do you think? Isn't he coming to the Feast at all?" 57But the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone found out where Jesus was, he should report it so that they might arrest him.

Several weeks go by

Mark 11:1As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, 2saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 3If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.' "

4They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, 5some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" 6They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. 7When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. 8Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. 9Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

10 "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"  
"Hosanna in the highest!"

11 Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the temple. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

Matthew 21:4-5 and 10-11 Adds

4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

5 "Say to the Daughter of Zion,  
'See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.' "<sup>[a]</sup>

10 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

11 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

Luke 19:37-40 Further adds

37 As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen,

38 shouting:

"BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;

Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

40 But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"

41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it,

42 saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.

43 "For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side,

44 and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

And further John 12:12-19 adds

12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. 13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

"Hosanna!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Blessed is the King of Israel!" 14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written,

15 "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion;  
see, your king is coming,  
seated on a donkey's colt."

16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. 18 Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him. 19 So the Pharisees said

to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"

The story of Jesus' triumphant entry begins with Lazarus and the hope that was given to the people by such an amazing and irrefutable miracle.

There was no longer any doubt in what the Lord could do...that He had supernatural power over death through resurrection.

Surely this man is the Messiah long awaited Messiah or messenger of God come to liberate God's people.

Hosanna means 'Save' and this was the expectation of the people ...that Jesus of Nazareth would save them from their enemy the Roman Empire, an occupation army in their 'promised land'

...that God had sent a warrior to do their bidding for them.

...that Christ would enter into their nation and fulfill their fondest desires...a secret weapon...the ultimate accessory.

And they were wrong, wrong, wrong...what were they?  
Jesus disciples then made the same mistake we still make... the one we talked about here a couple of weeks ago...

They made plans and wanted to get God in on their plans or worse:  
They make plans for God  
...but God Eternal does not accept our to-do lists

There is a place for petition or supplication in our prayers but in the end we must like Jesus ask that God's will not ours be done.

The nation of Israel needed to recognize the visitation of the savior the Messiah and place itself in the will of the savior...this did not happen

The Jewish people needed to accept Christ for who He was not who they wanted Him to be.

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When we receive Christ do we receive who he is or do we try to receive who we want him to be?

Do we ask Him to fight our battles and utterly destroy our enemies Old Testament style.

But, Christ came to deliver us from the old battle that had been raging for centuries...he turned things upside down and backwards

He brought the new covenant...a new plan, man  
Where the king serves the lowly, the first becomes last and the meek inherit the earth,

Jesus' triumphant arrival in Jerusalem was that of a warrior but a 'warrior of peace' if I may use an oxymoron...a peace warrior...if this seems twisted it is

Luke 19:38 shouting:

"BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;  
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

'Peace in Heaven'?...the peace of mans sin against God reconciled  
But not 'peace on earth'; that's left for Hallmark and beauty pageant competitors

Matthew 10: 34"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn

" 'a man against his father,  
a daughter against her mother,  
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law -  
36a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.

Ephesians 6:17 Take the helmet of salvation and the **sword** of the Spirit, which **is** the **word** of **God**.

### **Fightin' words**

Hebrews 4:12 For the **word** of **God** is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged **sword**, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Christ words challenged the leaders and people of His day

Christ came to destroy their hard heartedness

He came to destroy their hard heartedness and take away their authority and sin and replace it with God's heart of love, God's authority and repentance...and for that they crucified Him...and extended His offer to the world.

Christ challenges us the leaders and the people of His day

He is still here to take away our hard heartedness and replace it with a heart of love.

To forgive our sin and establish God's authority over our lives

People reject Church, religion, God, Christ because of the confrontational nature of sin revealed

They try to re-engineer our societies and redefine sin to take some of the sting out of their rebellion against God

But sin can't be forgiven unless revealed

According to the world's way...they see your sin, you must pay for it, you must restore yourself

God's way: The Spirit convicts you of sin, you see your sin, confess your sin, Jesus has paid for it, you accept and are restored by His sacrifice

Jesus didn't fight the Roman Empire because that it was not the most dangerous enemy.

Our sinful nature was and is the most dangerous enemy

The thing that the nation of Israel needed the most it wanted the least. A new heart.

Jesus ignored the unnecessary and proclaimed the gift...turned the tables

*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.  
I will take away the chariots from Ephraim  
and the war-horses from Jerusalem,  
and the battle bow will be broken.  
He will proclaim peace to the nations.  
His rule will extend from sea to sea  
and from the River to the ends of the earth. -[Zechariah 9:9-10](#)*

The Messiah brought a gift...take it or leave it.

Heavenly Father we thank you that:

Jesus received a new body

And that we are in that body

That through His sacrifice and our acceptance

we have become the body of Christ

Help us to see that nothing in this world is more important than doing your will

Not money, not possessions, not my spouse, not my pets, not my children, my job, house, boat, nothing is more important, nothing is more important, nothing is more important than doing God's will for my life.

Being integrated fully into His body.

Help us to drink deeply of the spirit of His self-sacrificing love,-- love that moves us, as it moved our Lord, to give all, to live and labor and sacrifice, even unto death, for the saving of humanity.

We pray that "Christ shall be magnified in 'our bodies', whether it be by life or by death."

We celebrate His triumphant entry into our hearts, spirits, and lives and we accept Him for who He is.