

## INTRODUCTION

I turned 50 in January and someone in the church was kind enough to send me a revised list of hymns for the over-50 crowd:

1. “Precious Lord, Take my Hand, and Help Me Up”
2. “It is Well with my Soul; but my Knees Hurt”
3. “Nobody Knows the Trouble I have Seeing”
4. “Go Tell it on the Speed Bump”
5. “I Love to Tell the Same Story”
6. “Just a Slower Walk with Thee”
7. “Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah, I’ve Forgotten where I Parked”

There were a couple of others, but I couldn’t remember them!

We sometimes forget Jesus never reached the human age of 50. After living in the flesh for only 33 years, He was crucified. In our passage today, we arrive at the final week in Jesus’ human life. It begins on Sunday with what is often called Palm Sunday. It was the day of cheers and tears.

Luke 19:28-45. “After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ‘Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone ask you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it.’” Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, ‘Why are you untying the colt?’ They replied, ‘The Lord needs it.’ They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: ‘Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!’ [Psalm 118] ‘Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!’ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples!’ ‘I tell you,’ he replied, ‘if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.’ As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, ‘If you, even you, had only known on *this* day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.’”

On that day there was a joyful parade as Jesus entered the city—then He stopped and wept. Let’s examine both aspects of this day of cheers and tears:

## I. THE CHEERS OF THE CROWD

Everyone loves a parade. Around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July our choir sings: “We need a parade, we need Old Glory flying high. We need a parade, confetti fallin’ from the sky!” Whether it’s the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade, or the Rose Bowl Parade, or the Tyler Rose Festival parade, there’s just something exciting about a procession on display with floats, marching bands, and clowns! When Jesus entered Jerusalem to die, there was a parade, too. This took place during the Passover season when the population of Jerusalem swelled from about 30,000 to almost 200,000. In this act Jesus was fulfilling prophecy, and previewing future prophecy that still hasn’t been fulfilled.

## **1. PAST: Jesus entered Jerusalem as a humble King**

When a conquering king entered a city after a time of warfare, he would ride on a horse or something even more impressive. History tells us Julius Caesar returned to Rome in 45 B.C. in a golden chariot harnessed to 40 elephants! But whenever a king entered a city on a donkey it was a sign he was coming in peace.

As you can see from this picture, people were celebrating by laying their garments in front of Jesus—that’s like rolling out the red carpet. John tells us they were waving Palm branches as well; that’s why it’s called Palm Sunday. Jesus was intentionally fulfilling the scripture God had given through the prophet Zechariah 500 years earlier. The Bible says, “Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! See your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey.” (Zechariah 9:9)

Four generations earlier, Judas Maccabees, who was called “the Hammer” rallied an army of Jewish men to fight against the Syrians who occupied Jerusalem. In 163 B.C. he entered Jerusalem riding on a massive stallion, and the people shouted and waved palm branches and cheered, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” They cleaned out the Temple, burned incense, offered sacrifices, and lit a huge menorah that burned for eight days. Judas was their hero—and many thought he was the Jewish Messiah. To this day our Jewish friends celebrate 8 days of the Festival of Lights or Hanukkah. Not long afterwards, Judas was killed in battle, buried, and that was the end of the Hammer.

Two hundred years later, when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the Jews were occupied by another world power, the Romans. They were hoping Jesus would be a military Messiah to lead them in battle to overthrow the Romans. But Jesus intentionally rode a donkey to let them know He was coming in peace. He was not a revolutionary like the Hammer—He was a Redeemer. A revolutionary is willing to kill others for his cause but a redeemer is willing to die for others.

## **2. FUTURE: He will enter Jerusalem as a conquering King**

Jesus only fulfilled a portion of Zechariah’s prophecy; there is a part of it He will fulfill at the Second Coming. What happened on Palm Sunday is often called the triumphal entry but it was actually a tearful entry. However, there *will* be a time in the future when Jesus returns and He will be welcomed into the city of Jerusalem as the conquering King.

The Bible teaches Jesus is going to return in the clouds and the Christians alive at that time will be instantly “raptured” or removed to be with Him. Then there will be seven years of terrible tribulation on the earth in which a world leader will align the nations of the world against Israel. Don’t you see that happening already? Revelation 16:12 says “The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, (where is the Euphrates River? Iraq), and its water dried up for the kings of the East.” (look at the nations to the east of Israel) Then verse 16 says, “Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.”

Jesus didn’t fight against the Romans 2,000 years ago. But when He comes again, He will fight and win the battle of Armageddon. You can read all about it in Revelation and Zechariah: “I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True...He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.” (Revelation 19:11, 13) “On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west...The Lord will be King over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name.” (Zechariah 14:4,9)

Hallelujah! Jesus is going to enter Jerusalem as the King over the whole earth! Ezekiel 44 predicts the Messiah of the future will enter through the Eastern Gate of the Temple. He also predicted the gate would be shut and only the Messiah Prince would enter it. Today, all the other gates surrounding Jerusalem are open. As Ezekiel predicted, the Eastern Gate is shut to this day. Christians or Jews didn’t shut the gate, Muslims did. The Ottoman Turks closed off the Eastern Gate because it was close to their Dome of the Rock, the third most holy site of Islam. They knew the Jewish Messiah would enter that gate, so they sealed it and turned it into a Muslim graveyard. They did that because an Orthodox Jew would never walk on a grave so they think that will prevent the Jewish Messiah from entering. But an old graveyard won’t stop Jesus. On that day, the real triumphal entry will take place!

That’s scripture–history and prophecy. Prophecy is just history in reverse. But there are a couple of personal lessons we can learn from this event:

**a. Personal Lessons: Even if you feel insignificant, the Master can use you!**

Learn the lesson of the donkey. Jesus sent his disciples to a specific place to secure a specific donkey for him to ride. It was a colt nobody had ever ridden before. Years ago, I had an old, salty rancher tell me there is nothing more stubborn and wild than a young, unbroken donkey. He said for Jesus to ride an unbroken colt was a miracle that ranked right up there with walking on water!

It’s like the dude ranch that advertised, “For big people we have big horses; for little people we have little horses; for fast people we have fast horses; and for slow people we have slow horses; and for people who have never ridden horses, we have horses that have never been ridden!”

A donkey isn’t a thoroughbred horse, it’s a plain, ugly animal. A horse is a magnificent animal; it has a coat that shines in the sun, beautiful large eyes, and a flowing mane that ripples in the breeze. It has long graceful legs that gobble up the miles of a journey. Take a look at a donkey on the other hand. Nobody would ever call a donkey beautiful. They have floppy ears that are too

large and their hair looks disheveled. They make a braying sound that always makes us laugh. In Jesus’ day, horses were the Ferraris–donkeys were the pickup trucks.

You may be thinking, “God doesn’t need me. I’m certainly no spiritual thoroughbred. Emotionally, and spiritually, I’m more like an old donkey than a graceful horse.” Congratulations! The Bible says, “God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong—so that no one could boast before Him.” (I Corinthians 1:27) The thing that made our little donkey special was the disciples said, “The Lord *needs* him.” I’m a disciple of Jesus today, and the Master has sent me to you today to deliver this message: “The Lord needs you.” It’s like the old picture of Uncle Sam pointing his finger with the caption, “Uncle Sam needs you.” Jesus is looking at you with eyes of love today, saying, “I need you.” Just as He created this colt for a special purpose in life, He has a purpose and plan for your life, you’ll only discover that purpose in Jesus.

### **b. Personal Lesson: Don’t let anyone discourage you from praising the Lord!**

Verse 38 tells us the people were shouting and singing their praise to Jesus with loud voices. Then in verse 39, the Pharisees told Jesus to rebuke His disciples—in other words, have them settle down and be quiet. Jesus refused to pour cold water on the fire of enthusiasm they expressed. Instead Jesus said, “if they don’t praise me, the stones will cry out!” For years I thought He meant the rocks and stones on the ground would cry out in praise, but I think He meant more than that. All creation does praise God, but I believe the stones Jesus spoke of here were the stones used to build the wall around Jerusalem. 400 years earlier Nehemiah had led the people to build the walls using massive stones, the gates, doors and walls each had spiritual meanings. Jesus was the Stone which the builders rejected that has become the Chief Cornerstone. Psalm 24:7 says, “Lift up your heads O gates, be lifted up you everlasting doors that the King of Glory may come in!” If the people didn’t praise Him, the stones in the walls and gates would testify of His Lordship!

This jubilant scene is reminiscent of something that happened 1,000 years earlier. David was king and the Ark of the Covenant, representing the glory of God, was being brought into the city. 2 Samuel 6 says there was great rejoicing, shouts of praise and loud trumpets. Every six steps they stopped and offered a sacrifice. David was so overjoyed the Bible says “he danced before the Lord with all his might.” (2 Samuel 6:14) His wife, Michal (one of Saul’s daughters) had a Pharisaical spirit and she criticized him and said he was making a fool out of himself. David, thoroughly rebuked, told her he would not stop celebrating before the Lord, but instead, would be even more energetic in his praise.

Are you living a life of praise? Or have you allowed someone to silence your praise? Praising the Lord is not just something you do in church, it is a constant attitude. In fact, if you don’t praise the Lord out there, and then come in here and praise the Lord, you are a hypocrite. A life of praise is a daily attitude.

Charles Swindoll writes: “Do you possess an Attitude of Praise? The longer I live, the more I realize that attitude is more important than facts, than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes. Attitude will make or break a company, a church,

home. We cannot change our past. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one thing we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it. And so it is with you—you are the only person in control of your attitude.

So, my friend, praise the Lord, even if the Pharisees tell you to be quiet! It was a day of cheers, but we also must see:

## II. THE TEARS OF THE KING

As the Jesus parade approached the city, amid the shouts of praise and Hosannas, there was the eerie sound of the agonizing wail of a broken heart. Jesus was weeping—at His own parade! At the funeral for His friend Lazarus, Jesus wept. The Greek word used in that setting was *dakruo* which means a silent weeping, a tear slid down His cheek. But the word used here in Luke 19 is *klaio* which means a “loud weeping or wailing.” You can almost hear it when you say the word, “Klaio.”

I’ve had the privilege of visiting Jerusalem 14 times and whenever I am on the Mount of Olives I look at Jerusalem and think about Jesus crying. Here’s a picture of part of Jerusalem seen from the Mount of Olives. The roof in the center of the picture is a small chapel called *Dominus Flevit* which is Latin for “the Lord’s tears.” The building is designed like a teardrop. Whenever I stand there I always pray for the eyes of the Israelites to be opened to the Messiah, and often, I am unable to keep the tears from coming from my own eyes. Why did Jesus cry that day? Here are at least two reasons:

### 1. Jesus wept because of superficial belief

He realized the cheering crowd was filled with people who were caught up in the excitement, but they were not truly recognizing Him as the Messiah. Before the end of the week, the cheers of the fickle crowd would turn to boos. Why? These people were looking for a Liberator to make their lives easier. Instead Jesus invaded their religious comfort zones and upset them. In the next verse after this passage, He scattered the tables of the crooked money changers. Over the next few days He would say things that were neither popular nor politically correct. Some of the ones shouting “crown Him” would be the same ones shouting “crucify Him.” Instead of “Hail Him” they’d be shouting, “Nail Him.” Jesus saw their superficial belief and it broke His heart.

Today, Jesus must certainly weep when He sees the shallow level of commitment in our lives. Some people come to church on Sunday and sing “Crown Him with many Crowns” and then Crucify Jesus with their filthy language and habits on Monday. They sing, “I exalt thee” on Sunday morning and by Tuesday their song is “I Forgot Thee.”

### 2. Jesus wept because of spiritual blindness

Jesus’ heart was broken because the Jews did not *see* Him. They didn’t *recognize* Him as their Messiah. He said, “If you had only known what would bring you *peace*—but now it is hidden from your eyes.” Then Jesus made an amazing prophecy that came true 40 years later. As He looked at Jerusalem He was able to visualize a terrible scene of the Holy City being surrounded and burning. All because they missed God’s time of coming to them.

Jesus prediction was fulfilled precisely in 70 A.D. when the Roman general Titus laid siege to the city. For the forty years after Jesus’ resurrection and ascension into heaven, the Jews continued to rebel against Rome until the Roman army finally decided to deal with them.

We know about the details of this battle because of the eyewitness account given by the Jewish historian, Josephus. Josephus was a Jewish soldier who joined the Romans because he disagreed with the constant Jewish rebellion. Titus gave the Jewish leaders many opportunities to surrender, but they refused. The subsequent battle was not pretty. There is a painting by the Scottish artist David Roberts which pictures this scene, which Josephus describes, “General Titus gave his soldiers leave to set the suburbs on fire, and ordered that they should bring timber together, and raise banks against the city...So all hope of escaping was now cut off from the Jews. Then did the famine widen its progress, and devoured the people by whole houses...and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged.” (After the attack began) “While the holy house was on fire, everything was plundered that came to hand, and ten thousand of those that were caught were slain; nor was there a commiseration of any age, or any reverence of gravity, but children, and old men, and profane persons, and priests were all slain in the same manner.”

That’s why Jesus cried that day. But God always has the last Word—literally. Did you know when Jesus returns the nation of Israel *will* recognize Him? Folks, this is an amazing time to be alive to see us on the verge of the fulfillment of scripture. None of these prophecies had a chance of being fulfilled before 1948, because there was no Israel! Let me read to you what God says will happen at the next triumphal entry at the Second Coming of Jesus: “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace. They will *look on me*, the one they have pierced and mourn for him as one mourns for an only child...if someone asks him, ‘what are these wounds in your hands?’ he will answer, “the wounds I was given in the house of my friends.” (Zechariah 12:10; 13:6)

When the Jews see the nail prints in the hands of Jesus, they will recognize Him as their Messiah—and they will do the crying then—but it will be a time of grace and healing as they acknowledge Him as their true King. So whatever happens in this world, do not be afraid, God is in control. Jesus *will* reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

Before we finish, let’s note a few personal lessons:

**a. Personal Lesson: You’ll never know peace until you surrender to Jesus!**

Jesus wept because the Jews thought liberation from the Romans would give them peace—but they were wrong. He said, “If you only you had *known* what would give you peace.” He was talking about Himself, only Jesus could give them peace. Peace is misunderstood today as well. Thousands of Americans are marching and protesting a possible war with Iraq because they insist all war is wrong. Don’t misunderstand me, I pray this crisis can be resolved peacefully with no bloodshed, but *peace* is not the absence of warfare. Jesus said up until the end of time there would be wars and rumors of wars. What these Americans need to remember is the reason they have the freedom to protest and freely express their viewpoints is because Americans went

to war against Japan and Germany. During these days of crisis, we need to remember regardless of what the French are saying, Saddam Hussein is the bad guy and George W. Bush is the good guy. Trust me—Al Qaeda isn’t going to wait for the U.N. Security Council’s approval before they strike us again. While we’re at it, we need to remember nobody elected Martin Sheen President—he just plays the character on television. Peace is not the absence of war.

Peace will only be realized when you surrender to the Prince of Peace—Jesus. Peace is not the absence of trouble; it is strength and security in the midst of trouble. Some people claim Jesus was a pacifist, but in Luke 12:51 He said, “I didn’t come to bring peace, but a sword.” But He did promise to give His followers inner peace. In John 14:27 He said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid.”

### **b. Personal Lesson: Rejection of Jesus leads to terrible judgement!**

The destruction of Jerusalem was the consequence Israel experienced for rejecting Jesus as the Messiah. In the same way, if you spend your entire life, and you never recognize Jesus is God and He is your only hope for salvation, you’ll experience the same kind of terrible judgement. You will be eternally separated from God in a place the Bible calls hell. But God loves you and He has given you many opportunities to see and receive Jesus—today is another chance. Will you trust Him today?

### **c. Personal Lesson: That which makes Jesus cry should also break our hearts!**

Jesus looked at the spiritual blindness and superficial belief in Jerusalem and He wept. When was the last time you wept over your city? We aren’t really going to have an eternal impact on our city until we carry such a burden that we weep for the people here without Jesus. Will you pray, “God burden my heart. God, break my heart for children, teenagers, and adults who live around me, but they are blinded to the truth about Jesus.” William Booth was the founder of the Salvation Army. He sent a group of Salvation Army soldiers to a wicked city and they failed in their efforts to reach the people. They telegraphed General Booth reporting they had tried everything, but nothing worked. They tried everything they could think of to touch the people there. They feeding them, clothing them, and housing them, but there was no response. They asked for his orders, and General Booth telegraphed two words in response: Try tears. Is there a person or problem you have prayed over and tried everything you know of and nothing is working? Try Tears.

## **CONCLUSION**

The saddest words in this passage are found in verse 44. The people of Israel did not recognize the time of God’s coming. In other words, Jesus was claiming to be God—the King—but the people didn’t recognize Him, so they didn’t receive Him. Could it be that today, God is up to something, and we aren’t recognizing Him? How tragic.

Let me close with a true story. More than a century ago, two sportsmen were sailing along the coasts of Scotland. They anchored their boat at Inverness and went ashore to explore the

countryside. At the end of the day, they got lost. As darkness arrived they decided to try to find lodging for the night. They knocked on the door of a humble cottage and requested a meal and bed, offering to pay, of course. The farmer looked at the two men with suspicion and sent them away.

The two men knocked on the neighboring cottage, and the owner welcomed them. He gave them a warm meal and a bed for the night. Only in the morning did he discover one of the men was Edward, Prince of Wales, who would later become King Edward V. Imagine the shame and regret of the first farmer who refused to recognize and open the door to his future king.

Jesus is here—He is God—He is the King. Will you recognize Him? Will you open the door of your heart and ask Him to come in and be your Savior?

## OUTLINE

### I. THE CHEERS OF THE CROWD

#### 1. PAST: Jesus entered Jerusalem as a humble King

"Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! See your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey." *Zechariah 9:9*

#### 2. FUTURE: He will enter Jerusalem as a conquering King

"I saw a heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True...He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God." *Revelation 19:11, 13*

"On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west...The Lord will be King over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name." *Zechariah 14:4, 9*

#### PERSONAL LESSONS:

1. Even if you feel insignificant, the Master can use you!
2. Don't let anyone discourage you from praising the Lord!

### II. THE TEARS OF THE KING

Jesus wept because of:

1. Superficial belief
2. Spiritual blindness

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace. They will LOOK ON ME, the one they have pierced and mourn for him as one mourns for an only child...if someone asks him, 'what are these wounds in your hands?' he will answer, 'the wounds I was given in the house of my friends.'" *Zechariah 12:10; 13:6*

#### PERSONAL LESSONS:

1. You'll never know peace until you surrender to Jesus!
2. Rejection of Jesus leads to terrible judgement!
3. That which makes Jesus cry should also break our hearts!



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To put it in Texas terms, “You’re mighty welcome to use any and all of my ingredients; just make your own chili!”

For the Joy...  
Pastor David Dykes