

In Christ Jesus, who “set his face to go to Jerusalem” (Luke 9:51) to accomplish our salvation, we shout “Hosanna” for its **Palm Sunday - The King of Glory Comes!**

In our text our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is preparing to enter Jerusalem to kick off passion week, the week leading up to His crucifixion. All four gospels record this event in some way, shape or form. The bible says that Jesus selected two of His disciples and sent them into a neighboring village. Tradition holds that these two disciples were Peter and John. These two disciples went into the village to find a donkey that Jesus needed to ride upon into Jerusalem, fulfilling the prophecy, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; Lowly, and riding upon an donkey, and upon a colt the foal of an donkey.”

They untied the donkey and brought him to Jesus who rode upon this animal into Jerusalem. Jesus, is the main character in this passage of scripture, the disciples and the crowds play an important part, oh but how the role the Donkey played is often over looked...and upon a colt the foal of a donkey.

Donkeys have not enjoyed the most glowing reputation over the years. They are a notoriously stubborn animal, which is why their other name is applied to those who are difficult to get along with. But for all their negative qualities, donkeys have provided a great service to humanity for a long time. And as we’ve just heard, they’ve figured prominently in many Biblical stories.

Donkeys or mules were often the mount for kings before horses became more popular. King David made his successor known by having his son Solomon sit on the royal mule and paraded around as king (1King 1:33-34). The people of Israel may have been thinking of this on Palm Sunday when they shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” In the same way that Solomon the son of David brought peace and security to Israel, the people hoped Jesus would again make their nation great. They welcomed Jesus as a king, which is exactly what the prophet Zechariah said He was. He wrote, “Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’”

For each load whether noble or not that donkey had ever carried, no burden was as precious as this One. A donkey carried the Man, the One who called Himself “the Son of Man.” The donkey felt the weight of this Man on her shoulders, but she could not perceive the weight on His shoulders. He carried the weight of the whole world’s sin, the weight of knowing what had to be done to save sinners. Shortly before His Palm Sunday entrance, Jesus told His disciples, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and beaten and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day” (Matthew 20:18-19). Jesus knew what was coming, and He still carried on. He did not dig in His heels like a stubborn donkey who figures he has done enough. Jesus was focused on His mission and intended to drink the cup of His Father’s wrath to the bottom. In this respect, I suppose we could call Jesus stubborn. He would not yield no matter how terrible the road ahead looked.

Not all stubbornness is bad. A person can be stubborn about good things just as much as bad things. Stubbornness about sin is always bad. There are many who want to live life their own way, on their terms, and they will not let anyone say otherwise. Not even a passage from Scripture will make them reconsider. If God does not accept them just the way they are, then maybe the problem is with Him.

We tend to be most stubborn when we perceive that we have been wronged by someone. Maybe they were only teasing or joking with us, but we decided to take great offense. Maybe they said or did something hurtful, intentional or not, but our cold-shoulder response is ten times harsher than the initial word or action. We can be so stubborn that we will hold a grudge not just for days, but even for months and years! At that point, what could the offender do to satisfy your stubborn sense of justice?

But there is also a proper stubbornness. It is right to be stubborn about the Bible’s teaching. No matter what the world says, the Bible is true as it is written. “The word of our God will stand forever” (Isaiah 40:8). “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrew 13:8). The world can call you uninformed for believing in a six-day creation and a world-wide flood. It can make fun of you for thinking there is an almighty God and a life after this one. It can call

you silly for living according to the teachings of an old ancient Book. But you have nothing to be ashamed of. You have God and His truth on your side.

Jesus was stubborn about good things and good things only. He stubbornly refused the devil's temptations, stubbornly loved the people who hated Him, and stubbornly went His way to suffering and death. Nothing could stop Him. His great love for the world compelled Him.

Jesus lived righteously in every instance that you and I sinned against God by being stubborn about bad things and not stubborn enough about good things. He did not harbor hatred and nurse old grudges. He did not compromise God's plan for humanity established before the foundation of the world. He did not give one inch on God's moral law. Rather He fulfilled the law in every part.

He then blotted out each of our sins as if we never committed them. He suffered and died for our sinful actions, words, and thoughts, for our donkey-like stubbornness to persist in doing what you knew you shouldn't. This is the reason He rode through the gates of Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday. On Good Friday, He would be nailed to a cross from which He would say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). He was crucified on behalf of the ungodly, the stubborn sinners, including you and me. He was crucified to redeem us from all our sins, from death, and from the power of the devil.

Many centuries ago, a crude picture of Jesus was scratched onto a wall in Rome, in which Jesus was depicted on the cross with the head of a donkey ("Alexamenos graffito"). It was drawn to mock Christians. Christians were referred to as donkeys and treated with contempt. It was a designation they could wear with honor. They stubbornly refused to surrender to the pagan culture. They stubbornly confessed Jesus as Savior and God even when it led to their torture and violent death. They acknowledged themselves to be lowly creatures unworthy of anything good.

In this they were blessed, and so are you in the same confession. With Jesus, you are sometimes honored in this world, but more often attacked. You are despised and rejected by humanity and acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3). You take up your cross and follow Jesus to suffering and death. But your story does not end there. Jesus rose again from the dead, and so will you. Jesus is seated in glory in heaven as you will be. Whatever hardship or pain you feel in this life, however heavy the load you must carry, in heaven you will have rest from your labors (Revelations 14:13). Jesus warmly invites you to have this, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden," He says, "and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

The burden of faith in Jesus is heavy in this world, but it is light as a feather compared to the burden of sin. This, Jesus has removed from you, and He wants to remove it from everyone. He came to Jerusalem for this purpose, to save sinners. A lonely stubborn donkey carried the Man who is the ransom for the world. He carried the world's sin. He carried the world's hope. He carried the plan that would bring life to a world shrouded in death. We therefore carry on in stubborn confidence and hope, knowing what He already carried for us. Shout hosanna! **Palm Sunday - The King of Glory Comes! Amen!**