

What's The Point? Luke 19:28-44

Welcome to the start of our Passion Week services; If you're visiting with us for the first time, welcome to our church; My name is . . . Glad you're here

We've been looking forward to this week for some time, and have some different things in store; And my hope/prayer is that you'll remember, and reflect, and celebrate . . . Like never before – starting right now; With Palm Sunday; Luke 19:28-44 (**Intro**)

- Palm Sunday is one of those days of the year that I really didn't pay much attention to in my life; It just wasn't a big deal; It seemed like an add on Something mentioned in passing, but not too important Yes, Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey; And yes, people were excited; But so what? What's the point? Is it just filler, or did it happen for a reason? And the answer, is “for a reason” – several of them in fact; Found right here in Luke 19, starting in v28

[28] *And when he [that's Jesus] had said these things [referring to the parable he had just told them about the kingdom he was establishing], he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.* If you've ever wondered why the gospel writers seem to always say . . . *Going up* to Jerusalem, no matter which direction it was . . . It's b/c the city was on the top of one of the highest mountains in Palestine, Mt Zion And in this case, the contrast was even more pronounced, b/c Jesus was coming from Jericho; A city located near the Dead Sea, which was *below* sea level So he was going *up* to Jerusalem

[29] *When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, [30] saying, “Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied [a young donkey in this case], on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. (Map)* Bethpage and Bethany were two adjacent villages on the eastern slopes of the Mt of Olives, or *Olivet*; You can see it here on the map And the Mt of Olives is about a ½ mile across the Kidron Valley fr Jerusalem (**photo**) Which looks something like this

So on the road from Jericho, he sent two disciples into the village to get a donkey Saying in v31 – *If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ you shall say this: ‘The Lord has need of it.’*” [32] *So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. [33] And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?” [34] And they said, “The Lord has need of it.”****** Which is a bit strange, until you realize that Jesus' reputation probably preceded him Especially after raising Lazarus from the dead right there in Bethany just a month or two earlier; So they let them take it

[35] *And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. [36] And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. [37] As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen [from casting out demons to healing the blind], [38] saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”*

- This is 5 days before his crucifixion, and 4 days before the Passover meal Which is important, b/c Passover was one of the 3 major feasts in the OT, when God-fearing people from all over the Middle East came to Jerusalem to celebrate

And what a celebration it was in those days; Causing the population to swell from 25k to 125k in a matter of days; That would be like the Quad Cities . . . Growing from 300k to 1.5M overnight; It was March Madness at its best And if you put that together with the anticipation for Jesus, and the opposition to him, and the *mystique* surrounding him . . . You start to understand why there was so much hoopla over his appearance

And the *point*, first of all, was . . .

To fulfill the Scriptures (Mt 21:4-5)

Which Matthew is explicit about in his gospel; In fact, he interrupts the narrative right after Jesus tells the disciples to get the donkey (**21:4-5**), and says . . .

[4] *This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet [the prophet Zechariah], saying, [5] “Say to the daughter of Zion [the people of God], ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’”* That's Zech 9:9

So the point of Palm Sunday, was to fulfill the Scriptures – in this case, the prophetic writings of Zechariah 500 years earlier; Showing us that what God says, he does And that the Scriptures can be trusted*****

- But here's the deal – you'll never see it, if you don't know them; If you don't *know* the Scriptures; Which is the *second* part of this point

Palm Sunday was intended to fulfill the Scriptures . . .

• And spur us on to know them more

I think that's why Matthew *quotes* Zechariah; To whet our appetite, and give us a desire to know more; I mean, what disciple wants to miss out on something their *teacher* says?

Like the fact that Zechariah *also* prophesied that this coming king would be *righteous* and have *salvation* (Zech 9:9); And, that he would establish his rule over all the earth (10) Which means that when Jesus commandeered that donkey, he was not only identifying himself as a king, but the *Messiah* – the promised deliverer; The one who would save All of which you'd miss, if you don't know the Word; *That's* the 1st point of Palm Sunday; And I hope it fuels your fire to dig in

The second point, was . . .

To recognize Jesus as king (v28-38)

With the emphasis on *recognize*; B/c that's what they did; Saying in v38 – *Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!*

Who comes with the power and authority of God himself; *Blessed* is he – holy is he, hallowed is he, welcome is he; B/c he's king

And Mark records them as saying – *Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!* (Mk 11:10); B/c kings *bring* kingdoms; They recognized him for who he was

And then added that famous Palm Sunday refrain – *Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!* Which is a Hebrew word from the Old Testament, meaning “save us”; Or “you're the

God who saves us”; So in shouting *Hosanna* . . .
They didn’t just recognize him as *a* king, but *the* king; The *God*-king
The one promised of old, to save his people and usher in a new order

- And they didn’t just pull that word *Hosanna* out of the *blue*
It comes from a *Psalm* they sang, Ps 118; And Jewish history tells us that they sang it as they made their way to Jerusalem each year for the Passover; Specifically, **v25-26**
Where it says – *Save us* *we pray, O LORD!* Or in Hebrew – *Hosanna* we pray O Lord
O LORD, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!

Sound familiar? That’s v38; The very words they shouted to Jesus
Why? B/c they saw him as the *fulfillment* of those words; The fulfillment of the Psalm;
The *answer* to their prayer
A prayer they had just sung, a few days before, as they went up to the temple*****

So the point of Palm Sunday was to recognize and identify Jesus as the King and Savior;
The King and Savior they had been longing for
It was on their heart, and came out of their mouth

- Not only that, but it was reinforced by the waving of palm branches, and the laying of their coats on the road and the donkey
The latter being a traditional way to *welcome* new royalty; Found in 2 Kings 9:13 when Jehu was proclaimed king
Their act of laying down their coats for Jesus, reinforced the words of their mouth

And the waving of palm branches did the same; Coming from their worship during *another* feast that they celebrated each year – the Feast of Tabernacles
Where they cut palm branches and leafy branches per Lev 23:40, and waved them during worship to *symbolize* their longing for a Savior and deliverer

So here they were, coming out to meet Jesus with longing in their hearts, praise on their lips, and palm branches in their hands . . .
B/c they saw him as the Savior and King they had been looking for, all these centuries

- No wonder they cried, *Peace in heaven and glory in the highest* – an expression of joy and exultation; Their prayer had been answered
Hosanna, the God who saves, was here; Their king had come

And the point, is to worship him *now*; To recognize him as king . . .

- **And worship him now**
That’s the point for us; Especially when you take into account what *we* know, compared to what *they* knew; We know the *sacrifice* Jesus went on to make
And the resurrection he made; And the Spirit he gave; And the forgiveness we enjoy;
And the power we get; And the love we have; We know things they didn’t
And are reminded of them every time we *celebrate* Palm Sunday
All for the purpose of worship; That’s the *point*

But when you compare ours w/ theirs, they put us to shame; And we need to correct that
Palm branches or not, we need to worship like we mean it
We need to praise like he deserves; We need to overflow like we’re full

That’s the point of Palm Sunday now – to renew your passion and refresh your worship
B/c Hosanna wasn’t just there, he’s *here*

- Unfortunately, some people don’t get it; And they didn’t then either
Which is another point of the whole event; It was intended . . .

To show that some didn’t get it (v39-42)

Like the Pharisees in v39; They said to Jesus – “*Teacher, rebuke your disciples.*” As in, tell them to be quiet; Why? B/c the Pharisees didn’t get it
They didn’t see Jesus for who he is, and therefore thought that the people’s words were blasphemous and irreverent

To which Jesus responds by saying in v40 – *I tell you, if these were silent* [these people, these disciples, these worshippers], *the very stones would cry out.*
IOW my praise is so inevitable and my glory so compelling, that if I were to tell *them* to be quiet, nature itself would take up the cause
Inanimate objects would sing my praise

The praise of Jesus can’t be silenced; How many years of martyrdom have proven that?
Snuff out one person’s life, and 10 more take their place to praise
You see, once your heart of stone is replaced with a heart of flesh (Ez 11:19), you *can’t* be quiet; And *won’t* be quiet
Having tasted and *seen* that the Lord is good, you can’t *help* but praise him
It’s one of the ways to know that you’re *saved*

- Then he says in v41 – *And when he drew near and saw the city* [the city of Jerusalem, the population at large], *he wept over it, [42] saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.*

They didn’t get that praise can’t be silenced, and they didn’t get the prerequisites for peace
The things that lead to a lack of turmoil in our heart; And a lack of conflict in our life;
And a lack of loneliness in our soul; That’s the peace Jesus is talking about

And they didn’t understand the things that *lead* to that – like *faith* in him, and repentance of their sins; They didn’t get it
And what’s worse, their heart was so hard or their life so distracted, that those things were now *hidden* from their sight; They *couldn’t* get it

In which case Jesus wept; He wept for their blindness, he wept for their ignorance, and he wept for their stubbornness; They didn’t get it, and it tore him up

But it wasn’t for nothing; In fact, it was for us; Jesus wept to show that some didn’t get it..

• **And make sure we do**

That’s the *point*; To make sure we *do* get that Jesus is *Hosanna* – the God who saves us
And that there *is* no other way (Jn 14:6); And that we *have* put our faith and trust in him
And *do* know the prerequisites for peace; And *don’t* remain silent in praise
That’s the point; Do you get it? If so, you’re going to have an opportunity at the end of the service, to *break* your silence

And finally, the point of Palm Sunday was . . .

To warn them of judgment (v43-44)

The very thing Jesus alludes to in v43; Would that you had known what made for peace . .

[43] For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side [44] and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

IOW you didn't recognize your Savior when you saw him; When he was right in front of you; When the evidence was obvious

In which case, you're going to be judged he said; Destroyed

And it happened; 40 years later during the Roman siege of Jerusalem; A siege that brought death and suffering of the worst kind

And eventually led to the utter destruction of the city; Just like Jesus said

But at the time, it was a warning; A warning to wake them from their slumber, and jolt them from their complacency

And it still is; B/c there are *consequences* for rejecting Jesus, and missing *your* day of visitation; Consequences *far* beyond hardship in this life

We're talking suffering for all eternity

Which means that if Jesus is knocking at the door of your heart – get it; This may very well be your day of *visitation*

But it's not all bad news; B/c the point of Palm Sunday is also to . . .

• **And prepare us for heaven (Rev 7:9-10)**

This is the best part of the whole thing (band)

We celebrate Palm Sunday to not only remember Christ's *first* triumphant entry, but to *prepare* for his second; His return; His return as King of kings and Lord of lords

This time, riding on the clouds; And this time, receiving our worship on a *throne*

This is preparation (palm branch)

And I say that, b/c the Apostle John tells us in **Rev 7:9-10**, in a vision of heaven at the end of time – *After this* [after hearing about the completion and fullness of the church]

I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

Do you see it (music)? Just like the OT believers waved their branches in *longing* for

Hosanna; And just like the Palm Sunday crowd did, to praise him as *king* . . .

We too, will stand before the throne in *heaven* someday, with a crowd *far* bigger than theirs, and worship with palm branches in *our* hands, and praise on *our* lips

Praise like – "Hosanna! Salvation belongs to our God"

That's the point of Palm Sunday – it prepares us for heaven (**Summary**)

So what do you say we stand and get started right now?

Pray – Lord, the last thing in the world we want to do, is give way to the stones b/c we're too quiet; So let our praise be your welcome, and our song be a sign, that we are here for you; To worship you as King of kings and Lord of lords (no amen)