

## **Palm Sunday: An Unexpected Triumph, Luke 19:28-44, 4/09/17**

### **Bun in the Oven Video**

It's amazing how sometimes we just don't get it. How we can have all the pieces of the puzzle but miss the whole picture, miss the main point. Maybe it's with one of your children- You say a million times...lift up the seat before you go #1...or put down the seat before you go #2... Maybe with a roommate about when the rent is due... Maybe it's been a conversation with your husband or wife about what you need or how something makes you feel... or you keep showing your boss why the numbers aren't going to work...or you keep teaching something but the students don't seem to get it... why can we have the facts, why can we have all the pieces but miss the main point? Maybe it is a lack of knowledge or it isn't clear, maybe it is because it isn't important to the person...but often I find it's because we have selective listening. Our ears often only hear what they want to hear, what justifies us and makes us right, what makes us comfortable, what our hearts desire and long for. I don't want to really listen to my wife because if I did it would mean I'm not doing something right and I would need to change and I don't want to change. Or if I really listen to the accountant about the numbers I would have to end that project or admit failure and I don't want to do that... and so I will see what I want to see and hear what I want to hear.

2000 years ago the inhabitants of the City of God, Jerusalem had all the pieces, but missed the main point. Jesus, the Messiah came into the world. He fulfilled the prophecies, the one they were waiting for, he performed miracles, he was without sin, he was the perfect embodiment of God, he taught with authority. And what we will see vividly in the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem that Palm Sunday is that the people missed the main point because they only saw in Jesus the Messiah what they wanted to see. So let's look at the story from Luke 19:28-44 and role it all forward for our lives today and ask the question what difference does this make in our lives.

### **Luke 19:28-44**

*After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.*

Context, Jesus is leaving Jericho he's now heading UP to Jerusalem 3500ft elevation, about an 8 hour walk from Jericho. Why is he going to Jerusalem? Well just the day before he told his disciples plainly.

### **Luke 18:31-34**

*Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "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." The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.*

This was not the first time the disciples and even the larger crowds who followed Jesus heard this. Jesus was clear that he was coming on a mission to die, to give his life as the ransom for many. The disciples just could not accept that this was the plan. They heard what they wanted to hear. What they wanted to hear that Jesus was the Messiah! And he was. That he was going to be triumphant and bring peace. He did. But not the kind of triumph and peace they were expecting. Let's keep reading.

**Luke 19:29-34**

*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 asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, '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.*

Mount of Olives gives you a beautiful view of the ancient city of Jerusalem and specifically the Temple Mount. (Modern day) vs. (Jesus' day). And it is from this mount that Jesus begins his triumphal entry into the city where he would have entered the Eastern Gate, also called the Golden Gate.

And he would make that journey on a donkey...does that strike you odd? Wouldn't you expect a warhorse? Why a donkey? Jesus was making it clear who he was claiming to be. This was a clear fulfillment of prophecy, which Matthew's account points out.

**Zechariah 9:9-10**

*Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

*I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations.*

While a typical king or conqueror would come of a warhorse, the Messiah would come humbly, proclaiming peace. And peace is what the people were expecting...but was it the kind of peace they wanted?

Luke 19:36-38

*As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.* (Matthew's account tells us they also cut down Palm branches and waved them and placed them down)

*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!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"*

This must have been quite the seen! Thousands people coming out to welcome Jesus...not as teacher, not as prophet, but as the Messiah. You sometimes hear people say that Jesus never claimed to be the Messiah, it was the people that stirred that up and made him into something he wasn't...He was just a good teacher, he was a revolutionary...but this is clear evidence that Jesus was not ambiguous. He was intentionally claiming that He was the Messiah in the triumphal Entry. In fact so much that the Pharisees were appalled.

Luke 19:39-40

*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."*

The Pharisees were saying, "Jesus don't let all these people believe you are the Messiah. Correct them." And Jesus says powerfully... that his identity as the Messiah cannot be contained...even the stones would shout it. You can't keep the identity of Jesus hidden, it is clear and plain for all to see.

But then Luke gives us insight that completely changes what we would think of as a celebration and worship service, into an occasion of weeping, sorrow and mourning. Why? Because Jesus reveals that the people missed the main point. They only saw in him what they wanted to see, they only saw the triumph and the peace they wanted to see, not what Jesus was really coming to offer.

Luke 19:41-44

*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."*

See, the people totally missed the kind of triumph and the terms of triumph and peace Jesus came to bring.

Jerusalem's terms: *Overthrow Roman Oppression, Political Freedom and Power, Restoration to Prominence*. This is the peace their hearts longed for, the peace they desired.

**Jesus' Triumph and Peace Terms:** *Overthrow Humanity's Sin and Rebellion problem, Spiritual Freedom and Power, Restoration of Relationship with God*

But before any of this could be realized the deeper problem had to be addressed. And there was only one way that root problem could be dealt with. Jesus had to overthrow our sin and rebellion that separates us from God by dying in our place. Jesus came to provide a way for us to experience freedom and power over the sin that indwells us. And Jesus, through his death, paid the cost of our sin and became our peace so that we could have a restored relationship with God.

John MacArthur: *But there could not be exalted glory until Jesus took our shame; there could not be a kingdom until he bore our cross; there would be no royal crown without wearing our thorny crown.*

And this reality floods Jesus with a wave of emotion as he prepares to enter this city. Jesus knew what was about to happen. The people will reject his terms of peace, the Pharisees were going to get the upper hand. The people would be fickle and follow their leaders. And Jesus would be crucified by his own people. As an aside...Jesus knows the pain of rejection, the pain of watching those you love run to things that can never give life...and to their own self-destruction. The tears you have shed over those you love, over the lost, are tears that Jesus sheds.

Luke 13:34

*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings but you would not!*

And the self-destruction comes upon them...Jesus prophecies that within a generation the city would be obliterated. And this is exactly what happened just as Jesus described. In 70 A.D. the Romans in response to an attempted revolt, put the city under siege, built an embankment, and completely destroyed Jerusalem and slaughtered everyone inside of it. In fact the stones themselves that Jesus spoke of where pushed off the temple mount into the valley below, which were discovered during a dig. (Pictures inserted).

Inscription- Collapsed on the paved street are stones of the western wall of the Temple Mount enclosure. They were hurled down by the soldiers of the Roman Legion after the destruction of the Temple on the ninth day of the month of Av, 70 CE.

This is as far as we want to go in the text because we want to ask what this means for us today. Sounds bad for these ancient Jewish people and hindsight is 20/20... but what does this have to do with me today?

Luke did not record this text for us just to inform us about Jerusalem's doom, but more importantly to encourage us that Jesus Christ is always eager and willing to make peace with anyone who will accept the terms of peace he offers. "He wept saying, 'O that today you knew the terms of peace!'"

After Jesus had died and risen from the dead and returned to his father in heaven, he continued his peace offer to the world through his ambassadors. Paul describes his ministry in 2 Corinthians 5:19-21 like this:

*God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.*

*So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

For the people of Jerusalem, many were willing to accept Jesus as their political savior, as their conquering savior... but not as their savior from their own rebellion, sin and idolatry against a Holy God. Their hard-hearts and misplaced desires stood in the way of accepting Jesus' terms of triumph and peace.

Is there anything that stands in the way of you accepting Jesus' terms of triumph and peace today? Are you only hearing what you want to hear or seeing what you want to see about Jesus?

-Do you only want to see him as a good moral teacher? Or political revolutionary?  
-Maybe it is because you want to self-justify, you don't want to think of yourself as a sinner who has rebelled against a Holy God. You don't think you need a savior because you are good enough, kind to others. The Bible says all have sinned and fall short of God's glory. Kleenex to an oil spill...

-For me it was because I rejected the notion of spiritual authority in my life...I didn't want anyone or anything to tell me how to live my life... require you to change your life and there are things you don't want to give up. There are places that you are trying to find life. What I didn't realize is that those things were leading me to self-destruction and empty promises. career, money, sex, a relationship, status, a substance... they never give what it promises...empty saviors.

Jesus weeps over us- he wants us to come to peace with God while the offer for peace lasts. There is eternal destruction on the line. Will you accept his terms of peace?

Christianity 101 Class- April 30<sup>th</sup> at 4pm, childcare available.