

## **Palm Sunday, April 10, 2022 – Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam**

*Luke 19:28-40 -- <sup>28</sup>After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. <sup>29</sup>As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, <sup>30</sup>“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. <sup>31</sup>If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’” <sup>32</sup>Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. <sup>33</sup>As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” <sup>34</sup>They replied, “The Lord needs it.” <sup>35</sup>They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. <sup>36</sup>As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. <sup>37</sup>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: <sup>38</sup>“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” <sup>39</sup>Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!” <sup>40</sup>“I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”*

All glory, laud, and honor to you, Redeemer King, to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring. The people of the Hebrews with palms before you went: our praise and prayer and anthems before you we present. (Christian Worship, 2021, #412, v.3)

We are going to sing this well-known and old hymn after the prayers this morning. “All glory, laud, and honor, to you, Redeemer King,” is a favorite one for Palm Sunday. Christians sing the hymn around the world on this day. There is an interesting story about the hymn’s origin.

The story—although it may be apocryphal—goes like this: On Palm Sunday a crowd had gathered in the ancient French city of Angers to see the annual procession of dignitaries headed by the king, Louis the Pious, son of Charlemagne, pass through the streets.

Their route went by the cloisters where Theodulf, Bishop of Orleans, had been imprisoned and deprived of his bishopric for supposedly plotting. As the procession drew near his cell it came to a halt, for a voice could be heard singing something that they had never heard before, “All glory, laud, and honor!”

The king listened, deeply moved, and when he discovered that the singer was the imprisoned Theodulf, he ordered his immediate release, and restoration as Bishop. Further, he commanded that the lovely hymn should be sung every year during the Palm Sunday processions. Most likely since then in many places around the world, this hymn has been sung every Palm Sunday. The hymn is often a favorite for processions both inside and outside churches on Palm Sunday as worshippers wave either their palm branches or palm crosses and remember that first Palm Sunday when Jesus entered Jerusalem.

So we join today in that procession, but as pastor pointed out when he introduced the epistle lesson, Palm Sunday presents a paradox. A paradox is a sentence that contains an apparent contradiction. Sentences like “The more you learn, the less you know,” or “Less is more,” are paradoxes. Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday presents just such a paradox. We call it his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, but a few days later there doesn’t appear to be anything triumphant about it. The gospel lesson today invites us to:

### **Rejoice to See the Savior-King Enter Jerusalem!**

- He enters Jerusalem to die.
- He enters Jerusalem to conquer his enemies.

Our text began by: "After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem." When you have the opportunity, check out Luke 19. At the very beginning you will see how Zacchaeus became a follower of Jesus. In the next verses right before our text Jesus taught about the parable of the ten minas, or the ten

talents and how people were to be faithful with what that they were given. As the people were thinking about that, as the crowd talked about the meaning of that parable, Jesus goes to Jerusalem knowing full well exactly what was going to happen. From this time on until his crucifixion and his resurrection, what happens? "As he approached Bethpage 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, because the Lord has need of it.'"

Jesus' disciples listen and go ahead, and they untie the colt. Jesus already gave the disciples the answer they were to give to the owners, because the owners come and say, "Why are you untying it?" The simple answer was, "The Lord has need of it." Not very powerful words we may think. But these words of Jesus are powerful enough so that the owner doesn't stop them, powerful enough so that the owner doesn't say to the authorities, "They are stealing my colt." This is the powerful word of God that caused them to realize the Lord has need of it.

What happens? "Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them." They untied the colt and brought it to Jesus and threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. In Mark it tells us, "The colt, the foal of a donkey." Matthew says the same thing. This wasn't the usual transportation of a king. Donkeys were reserved for the servants and the poor people; and yet, we see our Savior-King riding into Jerusalem on this colt, this donkey, as a king; a king who comes in humility. What a paradox! Jesus did it all for us. He did all of this riding into Jerusalem knowing that he wasn't going to walk out on Friday. That Good Friday he was going to suffer the agony of the cross and the torturous death because of our sins. From Philippians comes this verse: "And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:8). Not just death, but death on a cross, the worst way to die, long and agonizing. Jesus did all of this because of our sins. Even though he entered Jerusalem to die, we rejoice because by his death we have the best blessing we could ever have!

We rejoice to see our Savior-King enter Jerusalem because he enters to die and (Here's another paradox.) through his death he defeats his enemies. That victory is our victory because the enemies he defeated our fiercest enemies.

On this day Jesus again reveals his divinity. He sent two disciples to fetch that donkey colt and those two found circumstances to be exactly as Jesus had said they would be. A few short days before this he showed that he is true God when raised Lazarus from the dead in Bethany.

The crowd that cheered Jesus as he entered Jerusalem had seen proof of this. Our text reports: "...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'" (Luke 19:38b). Because of the miracles they had witnessed, the Palm Sunday crowd was convinced that Jesus was a powerful king worth following. Just before his parade into Jerusalem Jesus had healed two blind men in Jericho. Think of how modern medicine has yet to give someone their sight back. Sure, doctors can improve eyesight through laser surgery but that process can also decrease one's night vision. I doubt if those two men in Jericho had any problem with their night vision after Jesus healed them. If you're not impressed with that miracle, then be impressed, as the crowds were, with how Jesus had raised his friend Lazarus from the dead (John 11). Jesus had done this simply by telling the dead man to come out of the tomb and he did! It's no wonder Jesus said to Lazarus' sister: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies" (John 11:25b).

Jesus has turned apparent defeat into victory. He has done what Isaiah had written about in today's Old Testament lesson: "He will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope." (Isaiah 42:4). Yes, in Jesus' death, justice is carried out. Our holy God demands perfection, a total absence of sin. He demands that death pay for sin and guilt. Our Savior-King takes on the penalty as our substitute. In his death sin and Satan are defeated and we through him are victorious. He dies so that we can live. He dies but conquers death by returning to life on the third day.

So we have every reason to rejoice because the paradoxical triumphant entry into Jerusalem leads directly to the triumph of Easter. Jesus made his victory march before the victory was won. But the victory is won. He died. He rose from death. Our enemies of sin, death, and Satan are defeated. We can now look forward with total confidence to our triumphant entry into the eternal glories of heaven. When Jesus was born the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest, and **on earth** peace, good will toward mankind. (Luke 2:14 EHV). On the Palm Sunday the people honored Jesus by proclaiming, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! **Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.**" (v. 38) Our Savior-King has brought us peace with God as we live here on earth. This peace will be perfect when we enter heaven.

I think that the final two verses of this reading from Luke are extremely significant for our times. <sup>39</sup> Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" <sup>40</sup> "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." How many voices today wanted to silence Jesus, to slam the Bible shut, to forbid the proclamation of the Gospel. Jesus' response to the Pharisees. Gives us both direction and strength. Jesus will be praised. In fact our epistle lesson today says that a day (Judgment Day) will come when every voice will acknowledge that Jesus is the Savior-King. On that day there will be no more unbelievers. Everyone will know that Jesus is true God and the only Savior from sin, but those who died in unbelief will be hardened in their lack of trust in Jesus' salvation. So be those stones that Jesus talks about, cry out to those in your life and to the world that Jesus is the Savior King. You have what the world needs—Jesus. Share him and his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Rejoice to See the Savior-King's Entry into Jerusalem. Amen.

The peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Pastor Joel Jaeger  
April 10, 2022