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The King is coming

Mark 11:1-11

Introduction

Palm Sunday gets its name from this account in Scripture. Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey and the people respond by cutting down palm fronds and placing them with their coats down on the road. Let's read it.

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Mark 11:1–11 (ESV)

1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples **2** and said to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. **3** If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.' " **4** And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it.

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5 And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" **6** And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. **7** And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. **8** And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields.

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9 And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! **10** Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!" **11** And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

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This is a picture of Jerusalem at the time of Jesus.

Jesus probably rode through this gate, which is called the “Golden Gate” but during the time of Christ it was called the Beautiful Gate, or *Sha'ar Harachamim* (שַׁעַר הַרַחֲמִים), the **Gate of Mercy**.

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The gate is located in the middle of the eastern side of the Temple Mount. The portal in this position was believed to have been used for ritual purposes in biblical times.

In Jewish tradition, this is the gate through which the Messiah will enter Jerusalem. Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I sealed off the Golden Gate in 1541 to prevent the Messiah's entrance. The Muslims also built a cemetery in front of the gate, in the belief that the precursor to the Messiah, Elijah, would not be able to pass through, since he is a Kohen, that is a direct descendant of Aaron, since they are not to enter where dead bodies reside.

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Why is Palm Sunday such a big deal?

Think with me a moment.

Each Christmas we fill our homes with symbols.

1. Candles for the light of Christ.
2. Angels to remind us of the messengers of God.
3. Manger scenes to remind us of the humble birth place of Jesus.

Why is symbolism of Palm Sunday such a big deal?

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First is the dramatic action of Christ.

1. When prophets couldn't get their message through by words anymore, they planned a dramatic action. This one was planned, a secret code word had been established. Remember there was a death sentence upon Jesus head. All this happened just 5 days before Jesus would be killed on the cross.

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Second, it was the courage.

2. It took incredible courage. It was an incredible thing to think that a man with a price upon his head. An outlaw., deliberately riding into a city in such a way that every eye was fixed upon him. This took sheer courage.

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Third,

3. It was a deliberate claim to be king.

This is what the people shouted in the account of Palm Sunday in Matthew and Luke. They shouted the Scripture:

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A messianic Scripture -- Zechariah 9:9

Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion!
Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you,
righteous and having salvation,
gentle and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

The donkey was a noble beast in Palestine. Only in war did kings ride a horse, when they came in peace, it was on a donkey. So Jesus came to His people in love and in peace. I can think of only one conquering king in history who came in love and peace. It is Jesus.

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4. It was one last appeal

Before the hatred of men engulfed him, in this ride is the picture of Jesus pleading “even now, will you not take me as your king?”

Today, palm Sunday, may I ask you something dramatic, courageous, deliberate, as a last appeal? Will you receive him as king?

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The King is Coming

I’m going to ask you to do something dramatic, that is going to take courage, that will be a deliberate act of the will, as one last appeal. Here it is:

The Christian message is simple—straight-forward, and easy to grasp. God does not want us to be confused about His love and plan for us. Let me share it with you in five simple statements.

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1. Life Is Short.

James 4:14: "Life is like a vapor."

I Chronicles 29:15: "Life is like a shadow."

Job 7:6: "Life is like a swift messenger."

In other words, life is uncertain, fragile—here today, gone tomorrow!

Psalm 139 tells us that our days on this planet are determined by God while we are still in our mother's womb. Only He knows how long we will live—two weeks, two years, 40 years, 80 years.

A minister was visiting one of his members in the hospital on Saturday. The patient was sitting up in a chair. He said to his pastor, "I've not felt this good in a long time. In fact, the doctor is going to release me tomorrow." But he never left the hospital. He died that very night. Life is short!

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2. Eternity Is Long.

Suppose that a sparrow took a drop of water in its beak from the Atlantic Ocean, then flew across the U.S. and deposited it into the Pacific. Then suppose he kept repeating this process until he had emptied the Atlantic into the Pacific. And when he had completed this, eternity would only have just begun.

The Bible tells us that the souls of men and women will spend eternity in either heaven or hell. The description of heaven found in the Bible is wonderful. The picture of hell is absolutely horrible. God has provided a way for us to be sure that we spend eternity with Him in heaven. That way is through faith in this Son, Jesus Christ, who came as a King riding in peace.

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3. Sin Is Black

This world is full of sin, and it has entered your heart and mine. Ever since Adam and Eve allowed sin into their lives, everyone has been contaminated with it.

Isaiah tells us that “All have sinned and that we like sheep have gone astray.”

What is sin? It is very simply this – saying, “I will do what I want, when I want, how I want, where I want.” It is saying, I don’t need God as my guide. I will decide what is right and what is wrong. If it is right for me, then it is right.

The Bible tells us that that attitude is rebellion against God. It is breaking His law. It is unbelief. Unbelief that you need God. Unbelief is the worst kind of sin—it is that which damns souls to hell.

Do you want to be associated with someone who lives like that? Do you want to be married to them?

Let me ask you, would you ride with a pilot who had that attitude? “I don’t need runways, or air traffic controllers. I will fly where I want, how I want, when I want, and land where I want?”

If we could journey through the halls of hell and could talk to its inhabitants, we would find all kinds of people there: thieves, adulterers, liars, murderers, good people, moral people, respectable people—people who always obeyed the law.

What are they doing there? Well, if we would ask them, they would say, “We are here because we did not repent and receive Christ into our lives. To ignore Christ is to choose the devil.

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The penalty of sin is severe.

Ezek.18:20 says that “the souls that sins shall die.” Rom.6:23 tells us that “the wages if sin is death.”

The remedy for sin is found in welcoming this king Christ into your life. In just five days he will die and shed his blood on the cross for the forgiveness of sin.

John the apostle wrote about this

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I John 1:7 says, “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.”

Yes, sin is black but there is a remedy for it. Jesus provided us a way out—an escape from its awful consequences.

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4. Hell Is Certain

Illus.: “AS Hot As Ever”

Some years ago a man was preaching a revival in a large city church. A man in the church was a reporter and he would take sermon notes and then have them published each day in the paper. One night the sermon topic was on hell. When this was published, he received a scathing letter in which a man wrote, "Don't you know that only backwoods fools would believe in hell? Don't you know that thinking, educated people don't believe in it anymore? Even theologians don't believe in it."

The preacher wrote him back and said, "Yes, I know about what men say about hell. But I also know that they haven't destroyed the place. Its fires are as hot as ever!"

The Bible speaks more about hell than it does about heaven. Why is that? I believe it is because God loves us and wants to warn us so that we can find a way of avoiding it.

Yes, hell is certain and there is no escape except through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.

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5. Heaven Can Be Yours

Illus.: "The Way In to the Palace"

A wealthy American made a trip to London. He was all taken up with Buckingham Palace, where the King lived. So one morning he went to the gates, expecting to go right in. But two soldiers stuck out their bayonets and stopped him. He took a \$1,000 bill out of his pocket and said to them, "Take this money. I can pay my way in." But they said, "You can't buy your way into the King's palace. You have to be invited. And if the King invites you, you can go in free."

It's the same way with heaven. You can't buy your way in or work your way in or do enough good deeds to get in. There's only one way in—by accepting the invitation of Christ. His palace (heaven) is open to all who will trust Him for salvation.

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What's so great about heaven? I'll tell you.

Jesus is there ♦

Loved ones are there ♦

Bible characters are there ♦

Angels are there ♦

The devil isn't there ♦

Sin isn't there ♦

Pain, suffering, disease, and death aren't there ♦

Dear friend, let me remind you of these five things that make up the simple gospel story:

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1. Life is short
2. Eternity is long
3. Sin is black
4. Hell is real
5. Heaven can be yours

This is the message that Jesus came one last time to teach to all of Jerusalem. It was bold. It was direct. It got him killed. But it got me saved.

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So the only question that remains is what will you do? Will You Receive him as King?

Worship Team comes forward

Conclusion

Over in England, every day at noon a man by the name of Jim went to his church, sat down on the front row for five minutes, then slipped out. One day his pastor asked why he did this. Jim answered, "The world wears me down, and so I sit here in church and bow my head and say, 'Jesus, this is Jim. I need your help today.' And He always pours new strength into me.

One day Jim's pastor was called to the hospital. Jim was dying. When the pastor went into the room, Jim asked everyone else to go out. Then he said, "Pastor, when they brought me here they thought I was unconscious, but I heard them say that I was going to die. They left me alone for a few minutes. But I felt the presence of someone else in the room. I looked around but didn't see anyone. Then I heard a sweet voice saying, 'Jim, this is Jesus. I've come to take you home with Me. Don't be afraid. I'll go through the dark valley with you.'" Then Jim said to his pastor, "I'm not afraid. I'm ready to go." And within minutes he was gone.

Wouldn't you like to live like that? Have that sense of Christ's presence and be able to say along with the apostle Paul, "Whether I live, I am the Lord's; whether I die, I am the Lord's. So, whether I live or die, I am the Lord,s."

That's what Palm Sunday is all about. Jesus, boldly, bravely, peacefully coming in to make sure everyone in Jerusalem had one last chance.

What about you, will you receive Jesus as your king today?