

## Luke 19:28-40 “Our Salvation Unfolds” 3/24/24 Palm Sunday

Today is Palm Sunday, the first day of Holy Week - It is a very important time in the calendar of the Christian year - Not only do we observe the events surrounding Palm Sunday - But Holy Week contains many other important parts of our faith and concludes with Easter

Unless you are brand new to the Church, you have probably been to a Palm Sunday service before - So today it is pop quiz time - But don't worry, it is the easiest possible test, a True or False

In addition, this quiz doesn't count toward your final grade - On the last day, you will need to know Jesus as your Savior - If you do, nothing else matters - But for today, let's see how good our Palm Sunday knowledge is

True or False - According to the Gospels, the people waved palm branches when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday

False - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all record Palm Sunday, but none of the four Gospels say the people “waved” the branches but that they spread garments and branches in Jesus' path - And on top of that, only John mentions that they were palm branches

True or False - The date of Jesus' triumphal entry, five days before Passover, was a special holiday in His time

True, sort of - It wasn't called Palm Sunday in Jesus' day, and neither would most describe it as a holiday - But it was the day that each Israelite family chose the lamb they would sacrifice for Passover on the tenth day of the month - As the people shouted “Hosanna,” they didn't realize they were choosing Jesus Himself, the Lamb of God, as their sacrifice

True or False - By their actions, the people were publicly proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah

True - When Solomon was anointed king, he rode into the city on a mule, to the shouts and praises of the people<sup>1</sup> - Zechariah prophesied the Messiah would arrive the same way “gentle and riding on a donkey”<sup>2</sup>

True or False - The fact that Jesus rode a donkey portrayed him as a warrior king

False - Conquering kings would ride war horses; the donkey symbolized peace and humility - Jesus’ entry was a stark contrast to the war-like Romans, whose military presence was very visible

True or False - The shouts of “Hosanna!” meant “Praise the Lord!”

False - The Hebrew word Halleluia means “praise the Lord;” - The Greek word Hosanna means “save us!” or “save!” - The Palm Sunday crowd assumed that Jesus would bring political liberation - But our Lord was about to deliver us from our sins, not free the people of that day from Roman occupation

True or False - When the people spread branches and garments in Jesus’ path it was to pay Him honor

True - The people were boldly declaring that Jesus was their king - It was common in Bible times to spread garments in the path of princes and kings, especially at their coronation

True or False - The shouts of “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” were words of a Jewish hymn

True - The phrases “Hosanna” and “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” both come from Psalm 118: 25-26, which was one of the praise psalms used every Passover - These Jewish psalms would have been as familiar to the Jewish people as Christmas carols are to Christians<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 1:43-45

<sup>2</sup> Zechariah 9:9

<sup>3</sup> Quiz © 2000 by Christianity Today International/Christian Reader magazine, March/April 2000

Palm Sunday is a day to remember the grand celebration of Christ's joyous entry into Jerusalem - It is a day for us to be happy, and Praise God - Like those crowds on that first Palm Sunday

In Jesus' day, it was a time when the crowds went absolutely wild - Cutting branches and laying them in Christ's path - Laying their garments before Him - Shouting Hosanna in the highest - Our King is here!

Luke 19:29-30 "When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here."<sup>4</sup>

If you glance back at the beginning of Luke 19 you will notice the account of Jesus and Zacchaeus which begins with Luke 19:1 "He entered Jericho and was passing through"

If you have a map in the back of your Bible, it may show Jericho near where the Jordon River empties into the Dead Sea - That is an area that is significantly below sea level - The Dead Sea is about 1300 feet below sea level

Now imagine traveling on foot from there to Jerusalem - Which sat on top of a mountain less than 20 miles southwest of Jericho

John MacArthur notes that, "The road from Jericho to Jerusalem was a steep ascent, rising some 3,300 feet in about 17 miles"<sup>5</sup> - Here's the point of this geography lesson - Notice that it was not until Jesus drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, about 2 miles from Jerusalem, that He sent for the colt

Therefore, the colt was obviously not for transportation - Arriving on that donkey's colt was to fulfill the Scripture prophecy found in Zechariah - And it also proclaimed a message

---

<sup>4</sup> Scripture quoted has been taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version,

© 2001 by Crossway (Good News Publishing, Wheaton, IL)

<sup>5</sup> The MacArthur Study Bible, John MacArthur author and editor, © 1997, (Word Publishing, Nashville, TN)

Today the donkey is thought of as a beast of burden - But in Biblical times, it was a noble animal - According to Rod Mattoon, "When a king went forth to battle, he rode upon a horse. When he came in peace, he rode upon a donkey"<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, a colt that had never been ridden was suitable for holy purposes - Like the red heifer that had never been yoked, that Numbers 19 defined as a proper sacrifice for a sin offering - A colt that had never been used was very suitable for our Lord's use

The message Jesus was sending by riding on the donkey's colt was that He is the Messiah who fulfills prophecy, and He was coming in peace - There were many waiting for a Messiah who would drive the Romans from the Holy Land

But Jesus did not come to free the people of that day from Roman rule - He came to free people of all time from their bondage to sin - He came to bring humankind salvation

The Pharisees played right into God's plan for our salvation - Even before Palm Sunday, John reports that they were very annoyed that all the people who witnessed Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead were now bearing witness to the miraculous things Jesus could do

And now Jesus arrived fulfilling the prophecy recorded in Zechariah 9:9 "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey"

Both Mark and Luke mention that this animal had never been ridden or sat upon - If you know anything about donkeys, horses, or colts - You know that you do not just take one that has never been ridden and just set someone on its back - If you do; the donkey, horse, or colt will immediately do its best to throw the intruder to the ground

---

<sup>6</sup> Treasures from Luke, Vol 5, Dr. Rod Mattoon,

© public domain, published April 2011, (Lincoln Land Baptist Church, Springfield, IL)

Yet here our Scripture says that “they brought (the colt that had never been ridden) to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it” - And then our Lord just rode the colt - If that had been me on that animal, I would be trying to hold on to a bucking bronco

God’s Word doesn’t tell us why our Lord wasn’t immediately thrown to the ground - Perhaps it was a miracle - Or maybe the animal just realized that its creator was on its back - Obviously there are things that Jesus can do that humankind should not even attempt

The people throwing their cloaks on the colt and in Jesus’ path were significant too - Do you have any idea how valuable someone’s cloak was in that day? - Many people only had one or at best two

A cloak might not be worth much after a donkey walks on it - In a crowd like that, there was no guarantee that once you laid it down you were ever going to see it again

These people, many of whom were very poor, weren’t as concerned about those cloaks as they were about worshipping Jesus - For the people on Palm Sunday, praising Jesus might have cost them something - Sometimes our relationship with Jesus costs us something too<sup>7</sup>

Out of the 3 million people that Josephus figured were there to greet Jesus on that first Palm Sunday - When He rode into town the triumphant king - There were undoubtedly some who were there just for a parade

By the time Friday rolled around they may have fallen away - Or worse yet, they may have been among those yelling “Crucify, Crucify Him!” - We are not to be half-committed Christians - Who fall away at the least trouble - Who just go along with the crowd

Dan Yeary said that, “Half commitment is the difference between following Jesus and merely being religious - Half commitment is being an admirer of Jesus instead of a disciple - Half commitment talks much, sings some, gives little, cares less, criticizes a lot, and serves never”<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Cloaks illustration adapted from Matthew Rogers in “Mission: Hosanna!” SermonCentral.com

<sup>8</sup> Dan Yeary as quoted by Treasures from Luke, Vol 5, Dr. Rod Mattoon,

© public domain, published April 2011, (Lincoln Land Baptist Church, Springfield, IL

Following Jesus is not something we are to do halfway - We are to invite Him to be our Savior - Serve Him as our Lord - And follow Him anywhere

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem that day, many shouted His praise - So we too are called to shout His praise - As those who worshipped Jesus with their whole hearts that first Palm Sunday - So we too are called to be worshippers of our Lord and Savior

As those who demonstrated that Jesus is worth more than anything by offering their cloaks, their donkey and colt - So we too are called to put Jesus first before absolutely everything

The challenge of today's passage is to find places where our lives are out of line with the text - Could we truly be on that Jerusalem road, shouting praise to our King? - Or are there places in our lives where Jesus isn't really our King?

Are there sins that we cling to? - Does Jesus really rule in our decisions? - Could we really worship Jesus with our colt, our donkey, and our cloak? - Even if it was our one and only donkey, colt, or cloak? - If any of those things need fixing, we had better fix them

Nothing about us should be more important than our Lord Jesus - Nothing should be more important than following Him wherever He might lead us