

PALM SUNDAY, ZION, 2021

Today is "Palm Sunday." This is the day when we commemorate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. He presents Himself as the "promised Messiah & King". This was a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. But the majority of the people who witnessed this event did not understand its significance.

However, some did. They worshipped and praised Jesus' name. Matthew tells us that a multitude of people **"went before and cried out, saying: 'Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' " ...Hosanna in the highest!"**

But as you know, things quickly changed. Within a few short days the people who should have welcomed Jesus as their Messiah and King rejected Him! Some of the same people who cried Hosanna, on Sunday would cry crucify Him, before the week was over! On Sunday Jesus was being worshipped, and on Friday He was hanging on a cruel cross. After the horrific events of the crucifixion, Jesus would bow His head and die. They would place His body in a borrowed tomb. And on the next Sunday Jesus would rise from the grave in great power and victory.

Because of His victory, we have the opportunity to be victorious as well! Jesus had walked the earth for some 33 years. He had fulfilled many prophecies. He had preached with great power and authority. He had worked many miracles. He had changed countless lives. Now the time had come for Him to accomplish God's plan of redemption.

The events of passion week began on a dusty road just outside of Jerusalem. That road would lead to pain, sorrow, anguish, and death, but it would end in victory. It would become the most triumphal event in the history of the world.

A Triumph is a celebration of victory. As Jesus entered Jerusalem a great celebration took place. The Savior would soon be victorious over sin, death and Hell. On Golgotha's cross Jesus was victorious in securing our redemption! Today we consider 5 things.

NUMBER ONE: THE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY ON THE ROAD TO THE CROSS. Jesus rode into Jerusalem riding on a borrowed donkey. This was a direct fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. Zechariah 9:9 reads, **"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.**

Zechariah spoke those words 520 years before Jesus was ever born. At the time he spoke them Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Babylonians. It was still in ruins. The process of rebuilding had just begun. But Zechariah spoke of a day when the Messiah would come, and Jerusalem would be filled with His glory.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you.

Many people rejected Jesus from the very beginning. John 1:11 tells us that "**He came to His own and His own received Him not.**"

They did not believe He was the Promised One. That He would fulfill many prophecies during passion week. But each and every prophecy that He fulfilled proved that He was exactly who He said He was!

Scholars say that the probability of 1 man fulfilling just 8 of the prophecies referring to the Messiah is 1 in 100 Trillion. Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies the first time He came. And He will soon fulfill another prophecy. That is the prophecy of His return! He said He would rise from the grave and He did. He said He would come in the clouds one day surrounded in glory and HE WILL! He is the fulfillment of every prophecy.

NUMBER TWO: WE LOOK AT ALL THE PEOPLE HE ENCOUNTERED ON THE ROAD TO THE CROSS.

As Jesus rode into the city, there was a multitude of people present. Some were followers. Some were enemies. Some were skeptics. They just didn't know.

SOME WERE FOLLOWERS. Many of Christ's followers were in attendance that day. They were not just present... they were "rejoicing." They were "**praising God for all the mighty works they had seen!**" They were thrilled to see the Savior! They were overcome with awe and joy to see Him because of His mighty works.

But that was not the case for everyone in that crowd. Some were enemies.

SOME WERE ENEMIES. The enemies of Christ are never too far away. The Pharisees were some of the most ardent enemies of our Savior. Throughout His ministry, wherever He went the Pharisees would soon arrive. Time and time again they attempted to trip Him up in theological debates. On this day some of the Pharisees demanded that Jesus "**rebuke His disciples**". Why? For what reason? Because they were acknowledging His Lordship. They were celebrating His presence. They were lifting up their praises to God. They were greeting their Messiah King. They were rejoicing in their coming King.

The Pharisees did not like it. They didn't want Jesus to be acknowledged as Messiah, King, Savior and Lord. He wasn't the deliverer they were looking for. They wanted the voices of the people to be shut down.

People may not praise Christ as our King, Savior and Lord. But that does not change the fact that that is what He is. Nor does it change the fact that He is worthy of all praise. Jesus said that if the multitude had remained silent, God would have given the stones a voice to praise Him.

There was never a shortage of those who were enemies of Christ. While on this earth He would deal with false accusations and threats. He would deal with oppression. He would deal with persecution from the Pharisees, Sadducees, Chief Priests, Scribes and Elders.

Is it different today? Whenever Jesus is present, His enemies are not too far away. But not everyone was either a believer or a disbeliever. Some people just didn't know what to think. They saw Jesus doing things that only the Messiah could do but then the religious were telling them not to follow Him. Not to believe in Him. Not to worship Him. Not to celebrate His coming. Not to receive Him as their King.

They were not enemies of Christ like the Pharisees, but they were just not convinced that He was who He said He was. We live in the same world today. There are followers of Christ. There are enemies of Christ and there are some who are skeptical about Him. Christ!

When Robert Ingersoll the notorious skeptic, was in his heyday, two college students went to hear him lecture. As they walked down the street after the lecture, one said to the other, "Well, I guess he knocked the props out from under Christianity, didn't he?" The other said, "No, I don't think he did. He did not explain my mother's life, and until he can I will continue to believe.

What is the best proof of the Lordship of Jesus Christ for those who are doubting? It is the changed, transformed, renewed lives of those of us who believe.

NUMBER THREE: WE SEE THAT HE WAS PRAISED FOR WHAT HE HAD DONE. He had transformed lives. He had made people new. He had healed their brokenness. He had spoken to their deepest needs. He had spoken to their greatest hurts. He had alleviated their pain. He had made the blind to see, and the lame to walk. He had reconciled people to each other when it was thought to never be able to happen. He had calmed the storm. He had raised the dead. He had set those who were captive to fear, sin and death free. He had spoken good news to all who were spiritually poor and peace to all people.

The atmosphere of worship was amazing on that day! An entire multitude joining together, all shouting and praising the Messiah for His mighty works.

We have even more reasons to rejoice and praise our Savior. We are living on this side of the Cross. We know more than that crowd knew! We know that Jesus was crucified. We know that He rose from the grave. We know that He ascended into heaven. We know that one day He is coming back for us. We know that we will live with Him throughout eternity! We know that He has defeated sin Satan, death, Hell and the grave. Knowing all that motivates us to join together with a loud voice and shout praises to our King! But the crowd didn't just praise Him for what He had done.

NUMBER FOUR: THEY ALSO PRAISED HIM FOR WHO HE WAS. John's Gospel tells us that these people held palm branches in their hands symbolizing victory and triumph. Through His death, Jesus would conquer death. He would secure our victory. Therefore, it was fitting that He should have the victor's palms laid before him. As the crowd praised Him they referred to Him as: "Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee" - "Son of David" - "the King of Israel" - "The King that comes in the name of The Lord."

They praised Him for who He was, and we do the same. We praise Him for the fact that: He is Emmanuel. He is Lord. He is Master. He is Savior. He is our Comforter. He is our Healer. He is our burden bearer. He is our friend. He is the ultimate conqueror and so much more! We praise Him because He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

NUMBER FIVE: WE SEE POWER ON THE ROAD TO THE CROSS. The first time He came the people saw many of "His mighty works". But the truth is, in many ways Jesus was limited the first time He came, but things will be much different the next time He comes!!!

The first time He came as a lowly carpenter, when He returns, He will come as a risen conqueror!

The first time He was mocked and scorned, when He returns, men will fear and tremble.

The first time He came weeping, when He returns He is coming with a shout!

The first time He came to redeem us, when He returns He will rule us.

The first time He came alone, when He returns He is coming with Saints & Angels.

The first time He was mocked and scorned, when He returns His enemies will be under His feet.

The first time He had nails in His hands, when He returns He will be holding the scepter of righteousness.

The first time He hung on a cross, the next time He will sit on a Throne.

The first time He was judged in Pilate's Hall, when He returns He will be the Judge.

The first time men put Him to death, when He returns He will destroy the enemies of God!

The first time He was meek & lowly, when He returns He will come in power & glory.

The first time He wore a Crown of Thorns, the next time He will wear the Crown of Crowns.

The first time He was called King of the Jews, He will return as the King of Kings.

The first time He came as "a lowly Nazarene", The next time He is coming as the " Lord of Lords"

There is coming a day when Jesus will return in great power and glory!! Are you ready for His arrival??

Jesus traveled that road to victory in order to redeem you! Everything that He endured during passion week, He endured for you! On Sunday He made His "Triumphant entry" into Jerusalem. He was worshiped and praised by many. Sadly, many of the same people would turn on Him a few days later.

He would face great agony in The Garden.
He would be betrayed by Judas.
He would be denied by Peter.
He would be abandoned by His disciples.
He would be seized and arrested by His enemies.
He would be falsely tried and convicted.
He would hear the crowd cry "Crucify Him."
He would be scourged.
He would be beaten.
He would be stripped.
He would be mocked.
He would be Crucified.
He would be placed in a borrowed tomb.

But praise God He would come out of that tomb 3 days later to live forever more!! He was then seen by His disciples. He would be seen by many other witnesses. He would then ascend to Heaven to sit down at the right hand of the Father.

But He left us with the promise that one day He would return. Soon He will come again with the shout of the ark angels and the trumpet of God. He will call us out of this world of sorrow and we "so shall we ever be with the Lord".

In Romans 6:23 we are told that "the wages of sin is death." But through Jesus' sacrifice, your sin debt was "paid in full" at Calvary. As we trust in Him and live by faith we are delivered from sin, death, hell, and the grave. For our salvation. For our life and for others the lives of others He walked the road that led to the cross.

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