

**Sermon Notes of
Assistant Pastor Fred Steven's Sermon on March 20, 2016
"Palm Sunday – Jesus' Triumphal Entry"**

[In today's sermon, "Palm Sunday – Jesus' Triumphal Entry", Assistant Pastor Fred Stevens, with the reading of Scriptures by New Hope's teens, shows the spiritual meaning of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, which we now call Palm Sunday.]

Notes:

Introduction:

- Today we're going to examine the story and meaning of Palm Sunday, Jesus' famous entry into Jerusalem.
- All the scriptures are taken from The Voice Translation.
- New Hope Teens (DNA – Disciples 'n Action) read the various Scriptures.

Entry into Jerusalem:

Matthew 21:1, Jesus, the disciples, and the great crowds were heading toward Jerusalem when they came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives. Jesus stopped and beckoned to two of the disciples.

Jesus: 2) Go to the village over there. There you'll find a donkey tied to a post and a foal beside it. Untie them and bring them to Me. 3) If anyone tries to stop you, then tell him, "The Master needs these," and he will send the donkey and foal immediately.

4) He sent the disciples on ahead so His entry into Jerusalem could fulfill what the prophet Zechariah had long since foretold:

**5) Tell this to Zion's daughter,
"Look—your King is approaching,
seated humbly on a donkey,
a young foal, a beast of burden."**

6) So the disciples went off and followed Jesus' instructions. 7) They brought the donkey and foal to Jesus, they spread their cloaks on the animals, and Jesus sat down on them. 8) The great crowd followed suit, laying their cloaks on the road. Others cut leafy branches from the trees and scattered those before Jesus. 9) And the crowds went before Jesus, walked alongside Him, and processed behind—all singing.

Crowd: Hosanna, praises to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Eternal One! Hosanna in the highest! 10) And that is how Jesus came into Jerusalem. The people noticed this strange parade. They wondered who this could be, this humble bearded man on a donkey who incited such songs.

- Jesus coming into Jerusalem was more than just a parade.

- It's more than a fulfillment of prophecy about the Messiah coming into Jerusalem.
- It has a larger context and to understanding it let's look at what had been happening in the days just before this event, as Jesus travels closer and closer to Jerusalem.

The Backstory:

Luke 19:1, Jesus enters Jericho and seems only to be passing through. 2) Living in Jericho is a man named Zaccheus. He's the head tax collector and is very rich. 3) He is also very short. He wants to see Jesus as He passes through the center of town, but he can't get a glimpse because the crowd blocks his view. 4) So he runs ahead of the crowd and climbs up into a sycamore tree so he can see Jesus when He passes beneath him.

5) Jesus comes along and looks up into the tree [and there He sees Zaccheus]. Jesus: Zaccheus, hurry down from that tree because I need to stay at your house tonight. 6) Zaccheus scrambles down and joyfully brings Jesus back to his house. 7) Now the crowd sees this, and they're upset.

Crowd (grumbling): 8) Jesus has become the houseguest of this fellow who is a notorious sinner. Jesus: 9) Today liberation has come to this house, since even Zaccheus is living as a son of Abraham. 10) For the Son of Man came to seek and to liberate the lost.

11) The crowd has been listening to all this, and everyone assumes that the kingdom of God is going to appear at any moment, since He's nearing Jerusalem.

- Jesus describes his (the Messiah's) first mission – “to seek and liberate the lost.”
- But the crowd was anticipating that Jesus, the Messiah, would very quickly establish the powerful Kingdom of God.

More occurred in Jericho:

Mark 10:46 By that time, they had reached Jericho; as they passed through the town, a crowd of people followed along. They came to a blind beggar, Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, who sat beside the main road. 47) When he was told that Jesus of Nazareth was passing in that throng, he called out in a loud voice.

**Bartimaeus: Jesus, Son of David, take pity on me and help me!
Disgusted by the blind man's public display, others in the crowd tried to silence him until the Master passed.**

Some of the Crowd: 48) Be quiet. Shush. Bartimaeus (still louder): Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!

Jesus: 51) What do you want from Me? Bartimaeus: Teacher, I want to see. Jesus: 52) Your faith has made you whole. Go in peace. In that moment, Bartimaeus could see again; and from that time on, he followed Jesus.

- This was one of Jesus' most unusual and spectacular miracles.

- The crowd didn't want Jesus to be slowed down on His way to Jerusalem by this blind beggar.

Jesus and the crowd proceed up to Bethany:

John 12:1, Six days before the Passover feast, Jesus journeyed to the village of Bethany, to the home of Lazarus who had recently been raised from the dead, 2) where they hosted Him for dinner. Martha was busy serving as the hostess, Lazarus reclined at the table with Him, 3) and Mary took a pound of fine ointment, pure nard (which is both rare and expensive), and anointed Jesus' feet with it; and then she wiped them with her hair. As the pleasant fragrance of this extravagant ointment filled the entire house, 4) Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples (who was plotting to betray Jesus), began to speak.

Judas Iscariot: 5) How could she pour out this vast amount of fine oil? Why didn't she sell it? It is worth nearly a year's wages; the money could have been given to the poor. 6) This had nothing to do with Judas's desire to help the poor. The truth is he served as the treasurer, and he helped himself to the money from the common pot at every opportunity.

Jesus: 7) Leave her alone. She has observed this custom in anticipation of the day of My burial. 8) The poor are ever present, but I will be leaving. 9) Word spread of Jesus' presence, and a large crowd was gathering to see Jesus and the formerly deceased Lazarus, whom He had brought back from the dead. 10) The chief priests were secretly plotting Lazarus's murder since, 11 because of him, many Jews were leaving their teachings and believing in Jesus.

- Jesus tells His disciples that what Mary did with expensive ointment pouring it over His feet was "in anticipation of the day of My burial."
- But the disciples didn't understand what Jesus was talking about – His death and burial.
- Notice an increasing intensity as a huge crowd, including many of the religious leaders, was gathering to see Jesus and to follow Him to Jerusalem.
- Now the chief priests were plotting to secretly kill Lazarus because he was living proof of Jesus' spectacular miracle of bringing him back from the dead.

The Palm Sunday's parade:

John 12:12 The next day, a great crowd of people who had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem; 13) so they gathered branches of palm trees to wave as they celebrated His arrival.

Crowds (shouting): Hosanna! He who comes in the name of the Lord is truly blessed and is King of all Israel. 14) Jesus found a young donkey, sat on it, and rode through the crowds mounted on this small beast.

17) Those who witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus enthusiastically spoke of Jesus to all who would listen, 18) and that is why the crowd went out to meet Him. They had heard of the miraculous sign He had done.

- Jesus entered into Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives not like an earthly king would in pomp and splendor but in a humble way riding a donkey.
- The crowds cheered Jesus on.

Pharisees (to one another): 19) Our efforts to squelch Him have not worked, but now is not the time for action. Look, the world is following after Him.

- But the Pharisees did not agree with the crowd and said something totally different.
- They were afraid Jesus would take away their power and authority.
- But they were also afraid to take action against Jesus at this time.

Jesus (to Philip and Andrew): 23) The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

27) My spirit is low and unsettled. How can I ask the Father to save Me from this hour? This hour is the purpose for which I have come into the world. But what I can say is this: 28) “Father, glorify Your name!” Suddenly a voice echoed from the heavens. The Father: I have glorified My name. And again I will bring glory in this hour that will resound throughout time.

29) The crowd of people surrounding Jesus were confused. Jesus: 30) The voice you hear has not spoken for My benefit, but for yours. 31) Now judgment comes upon this world, and everything will change. The tyrant of this world, Satan, will be thrown out. 32) When I am lifted up from the earth, then all of humanity will be drawn to Me.

- Jesus was telling His disciples, “the Son of Man was going to be glorified”.
- But that involved betrayal, scourging, crucifixion and then an agonizing death.
- These terrible events that would soon come to pass troubled Jesus’ soul.
- Jesus was tempted to pray and ask the Father to “save me from this hour.”
- But He didn’t, because He knew the very purpose of His mission here on earth was to reconcile humanity to the Father and to break the power of evil once and for all. .
- Then Jesus ends His thoughts by saying, “Father, glorify your name!”
- In essence, the Father is glorified by Jesus being revealed as the Son of God dying of the cross for humanity.
- Jesus tells us that His death on the cross will deprive Satan from his power and authority in this world.
- This will give humanity freedom from Satan’s rule over us.
- Jesus then said that His death by crucifixion, to reconcile humanity to God, will draw humanity to Jesus as their Savior.

Other important events of this week:

- The Fig Tree
 - After Jesus entered Jerusalem, he went back to Lazarus’ home in Bethany for the night.
 - On His way back to Jerusalem the next day, He saw a fig tree that was not bearing fruit.

- The fig tree represented Israel, who was out of touch with God and also not responding to his Son Jesus.
- Jesus put a curse on the fig tree, which then withered.
- This represented the consequences of their actions – the destruction of Jerusalem.
- The Mustard Seed
 - In this illustration, Jesus is talking about our faith in Him.
 - If we have faith in Jesus, we will be able to move mountains, meaning to be able to do incredible things in the name of Jesus.
- Teaching in the temple
 - Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there.
 - He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves.
 - “It is written,” he said to them, “‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’” (Matt, 21:13)
 - Jesus was declaring that the temple should honor the name of His Father.

Jesus challenged by the religious leaders:

Matthew 21:23, Chief Priests and Elders: Who gave You the authority to do these things? 24) Jesus: I will answer your question if first you answer one of Mine: 25) You saw John ritually cleansing people through baptism for the redemption of their sins. Did John’s cleansing come from heaven, or was he simply washing people of his own whim?

The elders knew that this question was tricky; there was no simple answer. If they acknowledged that John’s ritual cleansing was from heaven, Jesus would ask why they had not accepted John’s authority. 26) But if they said he had dipped people simply by his own accord, they would outrage the people who believed John was a prophet.

Chief Priests and Elders: 27) We don’t know. Jesus: Then neither will I tell you about the authority under which I am working. 28) But I will tell you a story...

- The religious leaders challenged Jesus about who gave Him the authority to do what He was doing in the temple.
- Jesus threw the challenge of the Jewish religious leaders back on them with a question about John the Baptist they were afraid to answer.
- Then Jesus gave this parable which was directed to the religious leaders telling them what they were plotting to do.
- It was the parable of “the vineyard”.
- The vineyard owner represents God the Father.
- And Jesus represents the owner’s son, who the tenants, representing the religious leaders, kill.

45) And so the chief priests and the Pharisees, the teachers and the elders, knew that when Jesus told these stories He was speaking about them. 46) Not believing, they

looked for a way to arrest Him – a stealthy way, though. They were afraid to make too bold a move against Him because all the people believed He was a prophet.

Other events followed:

- The Last Supper where Jesus told His disciples what was going to happen to Him.
- The agony of Jesus in Gethsemane, who yielded to the Father's will.
- The arrest and trial of Jesus.
- His scourging and crucifixion.
- And the RESSURECTION of Jesus which shows us who He really is.

Concluding comments:

- The Triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem we celebrate today, was not an isolated event, but was part of a larger story and context.
- The people were looking for a new King to displace the Romans and set up the Kingdom of God.
- The Pharisees were resisting a rebellion wanting to maintain their position of power and authority over the Jewish people.
- The Romans were maintaining their control over the Jewish nation.

- And in all of this, Jesus was TRIUMPHING!
- He showed Himself to be more than a prophet, more than a teacher
- He showed Himself to be a SERVANT, a SAVIOR who came to His people.
- He showed Himself to be a compassionate LORD who came seeking all sinners and drawing them to Himself that He might rescue them

- Jesus entered Jerusalem to the praises and songs of the crowd and drove into the heart of the darkness of this world – to overcome it, reclaim it, and become King over all.
- The disciples later understood that He became King and they gave their entire lives to serve Him, no matter what.

- He is still KING of the universe.
- Is he your King and Lord?

Communion:

- Senior Pastor Glen Weber presided over the Lord's Table.
- He emphasized that after creation, God entered into time and space with His Incarnation.
- Jesus experienced all of our difficulties and temptations of this life.
- After His death and resurrection, eternal life enters into us through the Holy Spirit.
- The elements show us that our sins have been forgiven and a new life has been given to us.

Closing Prayer