



Empowering People to Change the World

Palm Monday 2018
The Majesty of the King
and the Fickleness of Men

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Palm Monday: The Majesty of the King and the Fickleness of Men

Thank you for your prayers last weekend. The Marriage GetAway at Maranatha Bible Camp was a huge success. We are so empowered by the dozens of you who prayed throughout the 24 hours for two days

- This is a text I received on Monday:
“Pastor Steve this is ____ (I told him I would not use his name in sharing this.) I just want to thank you and your wife again for coming this past weekend to camp holly and I really needed it from what I learned we had some of the best conversations on the way home that we have ever had and into the night you are a big inspiration in my life now and thank you for that we even discussed about taking a wkend to come to your church one Sunday you have a good afternoon and we will be in touch”
- We are now entering what the Church historically has called “Holy Week or Passion Week”, the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem at Passover, the Last Supper and the crucifixion of Christ.

Turn in your Bibles to John 12

- A monumental moment in the history of our Lord. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all record this event.
- This is the event, which we tend to call the triumphal entry. Sometimes it is called “Palm Sunday.”
- A more accurate chronology of this week in the life of our Lord would actually put it on Monday, the second day of the week of Passover.
- While this on the surface looks like a triumphant day of acclamation, as the people acclaim Jesus as King, but in just a few days, even by Friday, the people are crying for Barabbas to be released and the one they had claimed as King of the Jews, to be crucified.
- But let’s look back to 6 days before and the lead up to the Triumphal Entry.

John 12:1-19

- We begin the Passion Week of our Lord on Monday. They hailed Him as King. He comes into the city to the hosannas and the hallelujahs and the praise of the people of Israel. “King Jesus,” they say, “has arrived to take His throne.”
- Their hearts are bright with hope, anticipation that the long-awaited Messiah is indeed this one named Jesus of Nazareth, this Galilean. He has accumulated a massively profound reputation by doing miracles for three years during His ministry; which have been talked about across the land and essentially done in every village and town and hamlet throughout Israel.
- It all culminated in this amazing raising of Lazarus from the dead. This our Lord chose to do in the little village of Bethany. Two miles east of the eastern wall of the temple in Jerusalem very close to the city where word about this resurrection could be verified and where testimony would spread literally and infiltrate the whole of Jerusalem.
- This at the surface, at the beginning, looked like the most hopeful moment in the life of our Lord, but this King came to die. This is Monday.
- He arrived a couple of days before. We saw that at the beginning of chapter 12. Jesus came six days before the Passover. That puts Him in Bethany.
 - He came through the little tiny hamlet of Bethpage into Bethany, and then He spent that Sunday with his friends: Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.
 - There was actually a supper made for Him there in the home of a leper that He had healed by the name of Simon. Simon must have had a home to accommodate our Lord.

- Simon's family, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, all the disciples who were traveling with Him. It was a great supper to celebrate the Lord who had raised Lazarus from the dead, a wonderful celebration. These are friends of Jesus.
- At that celebration there was a high point of love and affection that came towards Jesus from the two sisters of Lazarus.

Vs. 3

Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

- And then there was Mary in verse 3, who took a pound of very costly ointment kind of perfume of pure nard. Nard was an herb that produced an amazing fragrance that could be captured in oil, and this was pure. It came from the Himalayas. It had to come by camel, so it was rare and it was costly. Judas even points out that it would take a year's income to buy a pound of this.
- In a lavish and extravagant expression of her love, she broke the alabaster jar in which it was contained and poured it all over Jesus, the other writers tell us, from head to foot. The whole house was filled with the fragrance. Then she loosened her hair, which was not to be done by a woman of dignity, but she did it and wiped His feet with her hair. An amazing treatment of our Lord out of deep, profound spiritual love for Him.
- No sooner does the fragrance of the perfume dominate the room in an expression of love than we see immediate hate in Judas in **verse 4**, who says, ***“Why wasn't this perfume sold for that year's wages and given to poor people?’ He said this not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief and he had the money box.”***

- He was the traveling treasurer of the disciples and he used to pilfer or steal what was put in it. So the pinnacle of love and hate was seen in that very first day at the very supper when our Lord was to be honored. He was honored in lavish expression of love, but He was dishonored by the betrayal of Judas that very same event.
- The word got out, as you remember, that Jesus had arrived. He was the most important person at Passover. He was the most important person in the country. He was the person everybody wanted to see because He cast out demons, He healed, He created food.

Vs. 9-11

⁹ Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

- *So a large crowd of the Jews in verse 9 learned that He was there, there had not been another resurrection in which a four day period had passed from the death to the resurrection.*

- But on the other hand, the leaders planned to put Lazarus to death also. They wanted to execute Lazarus because his testimony so effective that the Jews were abandoning the temple religion and heading toward believing in Jesus. This miracle had a massive impact at the final moment of our Lord's public ministry. It is His final public ministry.

- Now we come to Monday.

Verse 12 This is a Dramatic Shift

The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

Now, let me just stop there for a moment and say this is a pretty **dramatic change**. It is a very dramatic change. There had been times before when they would have wanted to crown Jesus king, but He did not allow it to happen.

- Back in chapter 6 after He had just created food to feed maybe 20,000 people plus in Galilee. **Verse 15, *Jesus perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king withdrew again to the mountain by himself alone.*** They wanted to make Him a king back in John 6, up in Galilee. He didn't allow it to happen. He prevented it from happening, and He disappeared.
- In chapter 8, Jesus goes into the temple treasury in Jerusalem and taught there. It says in **Verse 20, *"No one seized Him because His hour had not yet come."*** His hour had not yet come. At the end of that **Chapter 8, verse 59, *"They picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple."***
- Sometimes He removed Himself. Sometimes they were restrained. Sometimes, no doubt, they were restrained by divine power because it wasn't His hour, but look at **verse 23 of chapter 12. *Jesus answered them saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."*** Now it is His hour. It is His hour because it is God's hour.
- So understand this: Jesus creates a demonstration. He creates all of this. He sets this up. He sets it up by healing Lazarus, raising him from the dead. He comes to Bethany, the point of that miracle, days or maybe a few weeks earlier. He lingers there. He remains there to draw the crowd to see Him, to see Lazarus, to strengthen the testimony of that miracle power.
- We are talking hundreds of thousands of people in that city and this Passover season. He wants to generate the enthusiasm of the masses. He wants not only to be received for who He is, the

King, even if it's only a fickle reception. But He also wants to exacerbate the fury of the leaders of Israel so that they will against their own plan, wind up crucifying Him on the very day that God has ordained at the Passover. He forces the Sanhedrin to change their plans with respect to His execution to harmonize with the purpose of God.

Vs. 13

took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The King of Israel!"

- The large crowd took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him and began to shout, ***“Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.”***

There are 3 crowds in this scene, like 3 waves colliding, 3 types of people represented.

1. There is the crowd, the masses that are in the city of Jerusalem, surging toward Him as He approaches. They have heard of the miracles and the supernatural manifestations.
 - They are proclaiming Jesus as King and savior.
 - If you drop down to verse 17-18...¹⁷ ***Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness.*** ¹⁸ ***For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.***
 - They love Jesus for the miracles, the signs and wonders, the things He has done and will do for them.
 - **The Fickle and Faint**
 - They are lingering around because Lazarus had been raised from the dead.
2. Then look at **verse 19: *The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are***

accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!”

The Pharisees who hate everything that Jesus represents—they hate his righteousness, his exclusiveness of saying “I am the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but through me.”

- We might call them **The Fierce and Fearful.**
- They fear Jesus and hate him.

3. Then you have the Friends of Jesus, the disciples—the 11 (not including Judas here), Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. They LOVE Jesus! **They are friends of Jesus**

So you have a crowd in Jerusalem surging to meet Him when they hear He’s coming, and you have a crowd that is already gathered again on Monday, apparently in Bethany, coming with Him to Jerusalem. But then you also have the disciples, the dear friends of Jesus.

You remember how true a friend Lazarus was, causing deep sadness to Jesus even over his death, even though He knew He would raise him from the dead. So very likely, He stayed in their home. He had the supper the day before at the home of Simon. In the morning on that Monday, he left. Very soon after leaving, He approaches the Mount of Olives. If you are standing at the eastern gate of the temple mount and you look directly east, you would look over the Kidron Valley, and that is where the blood flowed that was run from the animals that were being sacrificed.

So it would be a time that you would see blood flowing into that stream if it was the morning sacrifice, the evening sacrifice and especially later in the week at Passover when the lambs were all being slaughtered. You would see the Mount of Olives, and you would see the Mount of Olives rise. Well, if you went around to the right, you would go to the back side and two mile walk, you would come to Bethany. Jesus leaves Bethany in the morning and has to come up a little of the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives and around that mount.

- Along the way, the people cut down palm branches, which were ubiquitous in that country at that time. They threw those palm branches down in front also to make a highway, make a pathway for their coming King. Palm branches are always associated in the Old Testament with celebrations. They were used in celebration. They were used in expressions of joy. This is the most joyous moment certainly in the life of Israel during the time of our Lord.
- They had done something like this 100 years before. A conqueror by the name of Judas Maccabeus had essentially conquered Acra, brought back Acra to Israel. One hundred years before our Lord, they did something like this. They threw down palm branches, and were hoping that he who had conquered Acra was their Messiah who would throw out all the occupying enemies and give them back their freedom and bring in the promises of God. He was not.
- So here they are 100 years later, a completely different generation expressing the same kind of joy and euphoria to this one who has demonstrated power far beyond the previous one 100 years earlier.
 - No one could heal like Jesus
 - No one had ever taken a few fish and loaves and multiplied into food that fed thousands
 - No one had ever raised the dead.
- But, He's not riding on a white horse. (John sees Him doing that the next time He comes with blood splattered garments and a two-edged sword."
 - A different kind of leader.
 - This time, He comes humbly. He comes peacefully.
 - He comes to die.
 - His coming has critical biblical prophetic significance. He will fulfill prophecy. He will fulfill divine prophecy.

- How large is this crowd? Hundreds of thousands, nobody would debate. We have one extant existing census, ancient census indicating that on one Passover in Jerusalem 256,500 lambs were slain. That's a quarter of a million lambs. If you establish, say, ten people for each lamb because a lamb was a family sacrifice, that would take it up to 2.5 million people. We cannot be certain of that.
- This is a massive crowd, crushing crowd, a crowd overrunning everything, and they have these palm branches, which are symbols of strength and beauty. Strength because they flourish in a desert; beauty because they are evergreen. They become symbols of joy. They become symbols of enduring salvation.
- They are hailing the conquering hero. That is what they are doing. Their redeemer has arrived. Deliverance from Roman domination is imminent. They require a mighty deliverer. This is a mighty deliverer because He raised Lazarus from the dead.
- They say, "Hosanna." That word is in Psalm 118:25. It is actually the word "hosanna." It gets translated to "save now." That's what it means, but it is the word "hosanna". It is a plea for deliverance. "Save now, save now, deliver us."
- - They are using Psalm 118 because Psalm 118 is the conqueror's Psalm and Psalm 118 was always read and always recited at Passover.
 - It is the final Psalm in the Hallel, the sequence of praise psalms.
 - So they are at the Passover celebrating God's salvation, salvation to come, and they cry out, "Save now, save us!" They are calling Jesus their savior.
- We have the crowd, 1st group. Most people today in the U.S., they are the "Fickle and Faint," who will cry out to Jesus as Savior on Monday and for Jesus to be crucified on Friday! Isn't that interesting?

- Palm Monday is about the Majesty of the King, who has come to die for the sins of the world, but it is also about the fickleness of people, who on one day, call Jesus their savior, messiah, and king, and in the same week, cry out for His death.
- People love Jesus when He will deliver them. Their hope and expectation for a miracle. People love the Jesus who can multiply their bread and resurrect their dead.
- But under the pressure of the culture, they soon leave, running away from their skin deep convictions.

Versus 14-15

14 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: 15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt."

There is prophecy fulfilled here. In verse 14, when Jesus found that young donkey, He sat on it. It was to fulfill a prophecy of ***Zachariah 9:9, "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming seated on a donkey's colt."***

- Propheying the arrival of a Messiah. You have a fulfilled prophecy. As Jesus comes exactly the way the prophets said He would come. There is another prophecy that has to be considered, being fulfilled at this very moment.

In **Luke's** account of the triumphal entry. As they come into the city, He's approaching down the Mount of Olives, **verse 37, "The whole crowd praising God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles they had seen."** They were all shouting, **verse 38, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord," from the Hallel, Psalm 118:26.** But then it goes on to say, **"We have blessed you from the house of the Lord"**

- To illustrate it, He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling. He didn't attack the Romans. Who did He attack? He attacked the Jewish people at the heart of their

worship, their religion. They are beside themselves with fury as they express in **verse 19**, ***“The world has gone after Him.”*** They try to silence the disciples and to get them to silence their Master. Can’t happen. The stones would cry out. He is worthy of all of this praise, but it’s so short-lived and He knew that. He knew exactly what was coming, and He gave them a preview of what was coming by attacking their system personally at its busiest time of the year, throwing people out of the temple.

The Majesty of the King, the Fickleness of People

Vs. 19 is so important...”*Look, the world has gone after him*”

- The crowds follow Jesus for what He will do for them, what they can get from Jesus!
- The Religious, the Pharisees are angry. The impact of Jesus is making them angry. That shows the massive impact of Jesus on a superficial level who are only looking for a supernatural experience.
- The same people screamed for His crucifixion a few days later. It is really a testimony to the far-reaching reality of superficial faith. Hear them now.

It’s the same today, the same 3 kinds of People:

1. The Fickle and Faint

Those who hail Jesus as their savior and king, but when difficulties come or pressure or temptation mounts they will abandon their superficial fickle religious beliefs.

2. The Fierce and Fearful

Then there are those like the Pharisees who truly hate Christianity, hate Jesus, hate everything He stands for.

We see this even recently with The View host Joy Behar mocking Vice President Pence because of his faith in Christ.

This is largely the case on our university professors today—they are the modern day Pharisees of our time.

3. But then there are the Friends of Jesus—those who have a personal relationship and intimate worship of Jesus

- Two Triumphal entries? One by the fickle on the streets leading down the Mt of Olives, with palm branches.
- But the other that preceded the other—Mary anointing Jesus’ feet with oil and wiping it with her hair!
- Look back at vs 3 “Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spike nard...”
- Mary was a friend of Jesus.

Lazarus was a friend of Jesus—he had been raised from the dead!

We observe 3 Qualities of Friends of Jesus:

- 1) Vs. 2 Jesus is invited into their home. They ate supper with Jesus; Jesus slept in their home. A friend of Jesus brings Him into their personal life—all that they do. Jesus wants to be your friend not just on Sunday, not just on Friday, but 7 days a week, in everything you do.
- 2) Vs. 3 Mary worshipped Jesus! She worshipped Jesus—worship is focused attention. Worship is preoccupation with Jesus. Remember the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10—Martha is serving and serving and Mary is listening at the feet of Jesus. But it’s what Jesus says to her: “Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better.”
- 3) Mary worshipped Jesus with all she had, everything she possessed was given over to Jesus. This spikenard was a entire year’s worth of wages—maybe \$50-\$75k. Friends of Jesus have committed everything to Jesus. Jesus said, “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it (Matt 10:39.)

What about you?

- Have you truly given your whole heart to Jesus? He wants it all; He wants you to truly experience Him and know His salvation in your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Let’s worship! Let’s join Mary in giving our whole heart to Christ in worship this morning!

Look at **Revelation 7:9-10**

⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"