

A WALK TO THE CROSS (and Beyond)
No Secular Answers For A Spiritual Problem
Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:39-44
Easter 2017

I. THE CUSTOM:

Palm Sunday...was *Lamb selection day* (**Exodus 12**... selecting the *Passover lamb*). On the *Sunday before Passover*, people picked the *lamb* that was going to be sacrificed the following *Friday*...celebrating *deliverance*.

And on **Palm Sunday**...**Triumphal Entry**...The **Lamb of God** entered on a donkey on *lamb selection Sunday*. The **Lamb** that would ultimately be *rejected* by most of those *Jews* that had gathered to celebrate **Passover**.

II. THE COMMAND: (Matthew 21:1-7)

On their way from **Jericho**, Jesus and the disciples came to **Bethphage**...a village about $\frac{1}{2}$ *mile* (.8 *km*) *east of Jerusalem*, on the south side of the **Mount of Olives**.

When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.” This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold your King is coming to you, Gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’” The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats (**Matthew 21:1-7**)...

Though *all four Gospel* accounts include the **Triumphal Entry**...only **Matthew** mentions a *donkey* along with a *colt* (**vs. 2**). The other *Gospels* only mention a *colt*. This *isn't a contradiction* in Scripture...it's the *same event*. But because **Matthew** is *writing to a Jewish audience*, he's focusing on the prophecy in **Zechariah 9:9** where a *donkey* and a *colt* are both mentioned.

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

~Zechariah 9:9

Now, this wasn't the normal manner in which a king would have arrived. They usually came as *conquerors* riding on *horses*. A *colt* or *donkey* was a *symbol of peace*. But here, **Matthew** shows how Jesus' actions *fulfilled the prophet's words*, further showing that Jesus is **Messiah**.

III. THE CROWD: (Matthew 21:8)

Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road (**Matthew 21:8**)...

Most of the crowd...refers to *the common people*.

Cutting branches from the trees (*palm branches*)...*palm branches* weren't a symbol of *peace* and *love*. At that time, *palm branches* were a *symbol of freedom*.

The people remembered the last time the *Jews* were *free* (the **Maccabean revolt**...167 **B.C.**)...and *palm branches* were the image *on the coins* during that *time of freedom*. *Palm branches* were a *nationalistic symbol of freedom*... the same as our *stars and stripes*.

IV. THE CRY: (Matthew 21:9-11; Luke 19:39-40)

The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!” When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?” And the crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.” (Matthew 21:9-11)

Shouting (cry out)...it’s in the **imperfect tense** meaning that *the shouting was persistent*. At the beginning they were *quiet*...not wanting to draw the attention of the *Roman soldiers* that were present during **Passover week**. But when they saw Jesus...that’s when they began to **shout** (Luke 19:37)...and the **shouting** was *tenacious* and *insistent*...their cry was one of *determination*.

Hosanna...A **Greek** word that comes from the **Hebrew** that means *to save* or *save now*...*we want our freedom*...*we want deliverance*. It was a *political word*...a *secular word* more than a *religious* one...even though it had become a common acclamation from **Psalm 118:25-26**, and was sung at the **Feast of Booths**.

“O Lord, do save, we beseech You; O Lord, we beseech You, do send prosperity! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord; we have blessed you from the house of the Lord.”

~Psalm 118:25-26

Here, the crowd wanted *salvation from the oppression of Rome*...not the *spiritual salvation from sin* that Christ offered.

It needs to be stated that we should select *godly individuals* to represent us in *government*...and we should be glad when they are *elected* (**Romans 13**). And we are told to *pray for those in authority over us* (**I Timothy 2**).

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...”

~Psalm 33:12

“...How blessed are the people whose God is the Lord.”

~Psalm 144:15

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.”

~Proverbs 14:34

But *don’t look to government* to bring *revival* or *spiritual awakening* to our nation...or even *freedom* or *deliverance*.

Some of the **Pharisees in the crowd** said to Him, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.” But Jesus answered, “I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!” (Luke 19:39-40)...

The reason Jesus responded to the **Pharisees** in this manner is that another significant *prophecy* was *fulfilled* at this time...the prophecy of **Daniel** concerning *the time of Messiah’s coming* (**Daniel 9:25-26**). This is the very moment in time prophesied by **Daniel over 500 years earlier** that stated that **Messiah** would arrive in **Jerusalem** at this very time in history. This event marked the *official presentation* of Jesus Christ to the nation of **Israel** as the *rightful Son of David*.

V. THE COMPASSION: (Luke 19:41)

When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it (**Luke 19:41**)...*twice* Scripture records that Jesus *wept*...and both occurred during the same week.

The *first* was when **Jesus** went to **Bethany** to be with **Mary** and **Martha** after the *death of their brother Lazarus*. It is recorded that **Jesus wept** when **Mary** approached Him and He *saw her weeping* (**John 11:32-35**).

The *second* is here...when **He approached Jerusalem** on the *Sunday* before **Passover...Palm Sunday...Lamb selection Sunday**.

At the *death of Lazarus*, the word used (Gk. *dakruso*) describes *a quiet weeping...a silent hurt, pain, or grieving*. It could be translated that He *shed a tear*.

When **He approached Jerusalem**, the word used (Gk. *klaio*) describes a *loud sobbing...anguish...wept aloud*.

VI. THE CONDEMNATION: (Luke 19:42-44)

“If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.” (Luke 19:42-44)...

Sin brings *judgment...individually* and *corporately*.

Rejecting Jesus Christ as the *Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world...brings judgment*.

This *judgment...this condemnation...occurred in 70 A.D.* with the *destruction of Jerusalem*.

The people *wanted a king* and *sought peace...politically!*

LESSONS WE MUST LEARN:

- **Spiritual awakening and revival will never come through a POLITICAL avenue or political process.**
- **Positions of power and influence do not CHANGE or TRANSFORM HEARTS.**
- **Behold the Lamb of God (Jesus Christ) who takes away SIN.**

MATTHEW 21:1-11

1 When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, **2** saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. **3** If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.” **4** This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

5 “Say to the daughter of Zion,
‘Behold your King is coming to you,
Gentle, and mounted on a donkey,
Even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’”

6 The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, **7** and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. **8** Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. **9** The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David;
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest!”

10 When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?” **11** And the crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Luke 19:39-44

39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.” **40** But Jesus answered, “I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!”

41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, **42** saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. **43** For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, **44** and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”