

**The Rock: 04-03-2022**

**Palm Sunday**

**Title**: The return of the King

**Scripture**: Luke 19: 28-48 (black bible  
Pg. ESV)

**Theme**:

Celebrating Palm Sunday and the return of the King, one word stands out more than any other to me: Humility.

**Introduction**:

Listening to Chuck Swindoll this past week talk about what Jesus did during His last week here on earth was tough, convicting and powerful.

He said if you were to sum up His entire ministry and wrap it into one word for that one week it would be: Humility.

Over the course of this Lenten season here at The Rock, we have seen Jesus walk out the beatitudes in His last days.

We saw Him challenge Peter, a man who it seems was willing to kill for Jesus, but not die for Him. A man who would insist he would never deny Him, but at the moment of truth, his courage fell flat.

In all of that, in humility, Jesus loved and forgave Peter. Why? Because He knew what Peter would do and loved Him in spite of it.

The painful story of Judas came across our screen, even if but for a moment. "Do what you came to do, friend." Friendship didn't end with the betrayal as N.T. Wright told us, it was just now tinged with pain and sadness.

To the thief on the cross and his last minute confession which gave him paradise. A beautiful think as we looked at hunger and thirsting.

We see a man so undeserving, and really, are any of us? But we see him forgiven, as were all who abused Jesus and mistreated Him.

In that I find hope.

### **The Story:**

The King of glory, who is worthy of all our praise, walks in humility and submission to the will of the Father, no matter what. Why? For you and for me, for all who call on Him.

As we look at this divine parade (the triumphal entry), we discover that it is not a glorious battle victory celebration.

One where the victorious King or General enters the city to conquer or parade their spoils of war.

No, this is humility at its best, if one can say that. The King comes in such a way that even His people don't understand.

Perhaps because it is in a way they don't want. Yet it is the true picture of leadership / kingship.

I want us to look at this under three headers this Palm Sunday:

- 1- The entry (verses 28-40)
- 2- The weeping / judgement predicted (versus 41-44)
- 3- The declaration: "I have returned" (versus 45-48)

The expectation of any people who were looking for their king, was one of Pomp, pride and power. Miles and miles of people lining the streets, cheering as horses, or in our day, cars passed by.

All rolling down the motor way in a giant display of power. It's an intimidating sight for anyone who is against the ones in power, and a beautiful one for those that aren't.

So, the first header this morning: The entry.

**-Luke 19:29-34 (ESV)**

"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. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'" So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" And they said, "The Lord has need of it."

We've got none of pomp and circumstance happening here with Jesus. Poor in spirit, also poor in material possessions as he has to borrow a ride into the city.

Humility. It's not much of a ride, is it? Or is it? King David rode a donkey, just a passing thought. But there is no big white horse arrayed for battle, letting people know that the King is here, He's back!

We shouldn't get too hung up on wondering about the fact that Jesus knew where to send the disciples to borrow a donkey.

It could be as simple as Jesus had arranged it already so the man who owned it would be prepared to let them take it.

It could be divine insight and God's favor in the moment. Or in my judgement, it's both. Heaven and earth are about to collide in the great cosmic battle, so why wouldn't we understand that even in the littlest things in life, Heaven and earth meet -everyday.

Anyway. It's history and mystery all together.

Jesus is placed on the donkey and if you can picture in your mind's eye, just for a moment, a stream of people lining a hillside -Hardack perhaps, lifting their voices with singing and hollering as Jesus is led from the top down to the valley below, and to the entrance of the city.

**-Luke 19:35-38 (ESV)**

"And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had

seen, saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

Jerusalem, that great city would swell to a couple hundred thousand during the Passover festival, and as with any city would be loud and crowded.

Their voices literally echoing down the valley as they sang about the coming King, the promised one. Luke, captures something for us that I don't want us to miss.

He records for us that they were singing from Psalm 118, and verse 26 in particular. It is a Psalm of God's love for His people.

The shouts are of praise for Jesus as the promise-fulfiller, the Messiah to come. He tells us they are singing and shouting because they have seen "the mighty works" of God. Those things Jesus had done, they recognize as having come from God.

But, it's verse 27 of that Psalm which caught my attention in my readings:

**-Psalms 118:27 (ESV)**

"The Lord is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!"

What a beautiful picture here, and a warning. Coming down the hill, the Mount of Olives, to the singing and the joy of the people, is the King -meek and gentle- AND at the same time, here is the sacrifice who is going to make the world and all creation right again.

**-Zechariah 9:9 (ESV)**

"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."

**-Hebrews 9:26 (ESV)**

"But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

Heaven and earth are on a collision course -Jesus heads down the hill and in typical fashion, the powers that be do not like what they are seeing because, well...

**-Luke 19:39-40 (ESV)**

"And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

Shut these people up and creation itself will shout about what is happening today!

We are quick to rail against the Pharisees -understandably so, because everything Jesus is doing is a threat to their power and their control.

The Temple, in Jesus' day, was the epicenter of Jewish power. Yet, here comes this carpenter with very questionable lineage, and people are hailing Him as King.

Just a quick warning to us all: Let's be careful that we don't fall into that worldly trap of pride, power and arrogance.

Thinking that we somehow hold the high ground because we are "in Christ." He calls us to humility, to meekness, to mourn, to being poor in spirit.

This is what is on display in this beautiful triumphal entry- Humility -the King who washes feet, even those of His enemies, looks at His city and weeps:

Why? Judgment -header number 2:

**-Luke 19:41-44 (ESV)**

"And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the

things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Had the people understood, and had they received Jesus as Messiah King, peace would have come to them.

Now, we do not have time today to unpack that in a way which would do justice to it. But, as was the case with the Babylonian exile, the challenge to submit to those in authority over you for their betterment, ends up being for your betterment.

Learn to live at peace with those who rule over you. That's always the command. To be the best citizens as Christians that one can be.

For them, to accept Christ as King would be to "give up the fight" in a sense for worldly power and domination. "If you would see what I am doing for you..." That is the key.

Jesus came to deliver His people from the real enemy: Sin and Death.

Since Adam and Eve sinned -death has held the high ground, the victory. The real battle everyone faces is the spiritual one, where the enemy of our souls, the devil, fights against God for power and control.

"If you would see that I have come to free you from that curse, that bondage to sin, then things would be different.

But you want to destroy the Romans and set yourselves back up as your own independent kingdom, ruling over others."

They could not see that what Jesus was doing was for so much more than that. What matters in the here and now for the believer, ultimately, is the then: Eternity!

But they missed it. We too, often miss, that it is the first who will be last and the last first. If we wish to lead, we have to serve -wash feet as it were.

They want none of that. Listen, even His closest friends wanted none of that. I'm not sure any of them ever washed feet, not even their own.

They want none of that. Thus, Judgement would come, and it did. AD 70, the Roman

General names Titus Justice sacked the city, destroyed everything, desecrated the temple and sent the Jewish people scattering to the four winds.

Why? They didn't recognize that the King had returned. They didn't see that what they needed wasn't more power, but rather humility, to seek forgiveness and receive the promised Messiah.

That gives us our third header: The declaration: "I have returned."

**-Luke 19:45-48 (ESV)**

"And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, saying to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers. And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him, but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words."

This is where Jeremiah comes in. I want to encourage you to remember that we need the whole Bible if we are going to be a whole Christian.

Jesus didn't quote Jeremiah because it sounded cool and fit the moment. No, and this is what rattled those in charge:

**-Jeremiah 7:1-7 (ESV)**

"The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all you men of Judah who enter these gates to worship the Lord. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. Do not trust in these deceptive words: 'This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.' "For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly execute justice one with another, if you do not oppress the sojourner, the fatherless, or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own harm, then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever."

In essence, what Jesus has done is to disrupt the daily sacrifice, stopped the money-making machine and threatened their seat of power.

You seek power for the sake of power to control the people, not to serve. Jeremiah was right about you! You neglect the most vulnerable and needy among you,

and yet you come here in power and full of pride saying:

**-Jeremiah 7:8-11 (ESV)**

"Behold, you trust in deceptive words to no avail. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, 'We are delivered!'—only to go on doing all these abominations? Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the Lord."

These people in power knew exactly what Jesus was saying - He is the one- and they want nothing at all to do with Him. In fact, Luke tells us that they want to destroy Him:

**-Luke 19:47 (ESV)**

"And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him..."

The one who is calling them to amend their ways -in other words, repent of their sins, turn to God and be healed. Instead, they seek to kill Him.

This is the power struggle as the Son comes to the vineyard. Glancing down the page of your Bible into chapter 20, we see Jesus describe this very thing.

You've rejected all the prophets I've sent. Now, look at the love and compassion of God -even with His rebellious people:

**-Luke 20:13 (ESV)**

"Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.'"

As we close this Palm Sunday, I would say that anyone who says God is a divine dictator, who just demands of us some sort of forced compliance in order to make us unhappy, has never read the Bible.

It is we, who are the problem. He holds out His hands to us all day long in a desire to bless. What did they do?

**-Luke 20:14-15 (ESV)**

"But when the tenants saw him, they said to themselves, This is the heir. Let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.' And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them?"

That is for Friday however. But today, remember His triumphal entry, it happened in total humility, in the meekness He told us to have, and it guarantees the promise of God for all of us who believe.

As we enter Holy week, will you consider Jesus, if you haven't? Will you put yourself aside to taste and see that the Lord is good, that He loves you and desires the best for you.

Come to Him, and He will in no way turn His back on you.