

Palm Sunday Patience
Luke 19:28-42

INTRO

We are in Luke's Gospel again this morning, however we are jumping ahead quite a bit. We finished Luke 8 last week but today we are going to look at Luke 19. Because today is Palm Sunday. Happy Palm Sunday! So we are going to spend some time today looking at what Palm Sunday commemorates, what is often called the "Triumphal Entry of Jesus."

Luke 19:28-40

28 And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.
29 When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, **30** 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.
31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'" **32** So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them.
33 And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" **34** And they said, "The Lord has need of it." **35** And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. **36** And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. **37** 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, **38** saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"
39 And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." **40** He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

Again, this is referred to as the Triumphal Entry of Jesus, that moment when Jesus, having come to the end of his earthly ministry, arrives in Jerusalem to begin his Passion Week, the week leading up to his arrest, crucifixion, and eventual resurrection.

As Jesus rides into town we see a crowd of people, "a whole multitude" rejoicing with a loud voice for what they were witnessing. The promised Messiah had arrived.

DAVIDIC COVENANT AND ISRAEL'S HOPE

To understand their excitement we have to understand a promise that was made by God to Israel and specifically to its king David roughly 1,000 years earlier. The famous king of Israel, David, receives a very important promise from God.

2 Samuel 7:12-13

12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

God makes a covenant with David that through David's family, or line, God would bring along someone whose throne and kingdom would reign forever. This was the long awaited Messiah, everyone was hoping to see.

Fast forward 1,000 years...Israel is no longer a sovereign nation but is now under the rule of the Roman empire. They now are not living under their own king but under Caesar. So you can imagine this only heightens the expectation and hope for their coming, promised King. And it is in this context we understand the scene from Palm Sunday...

THE PROPHECIES AND EXPECTATION

Jesus and His disciples begin to enter Jerusalem, Jesus sends 2 disciples ahead to a village to get a donkey which actually fulfills a prophecy in **Zechariah 9:9**

Zechariah 9:9

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.

Jesus gives them instructions on getting the donkey for his triumphant ride into town. We don't know exactly how this worked. Jesus could have possibly arranged for this beforehand so the owners knew that Jesus would be borrowing their donkey. Perhaps they were familiar with Jesus since he spent significant amount of time around that area. And hearing that he was in need they willingly gave their donkey to him.

We don't know the exact circumstances of it but the disciples get the donkey bring it to Jesus and like a team lifts up their coach in celebration and victory the disciples set Jesus on the donkey to ride to Jerusalem.

Again think about this. There were already rumors and hopes that this Jesus everyone was hearing about was the Messiah and then they see Jesus coming into Jerusalem on a donkey! Those who knew the OT and knew the prophecies would have immediately recognized this as a declaration that Jesus is the king they have been waiting for.

So they began laying down their cloaks on the road to show respect and reverence to King Jesus. Now the other gospel writers tell us that the people also brought palm branches and laid them down.

They then began shouting *“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”* Other texts show that the people were shouting “Hosanna!” which was taken from Psalm 118 and literally means “Save us!”

So there was a great commotion with the arrival of Jesus into Jerusalem. But not all were excited for the occasion. The usual suspects were there as well. The Pharisees, the religious leaders, want to no part of the celebration. And not only are they unwilling to celebrate the arrival of the king, they don’t want anyone to celebrate either.

So they say “rebuke your disciples, Jesus.” To which he simply responds, “Even if they were quiet, the very stones of this street I am riding down would sing my praise.” In other words, there is no suppression of the praise that the King deserves. Whether it is by the mouths of men or the shout of creation, the Creator King will be exalted.

This scene, the actions of Jesus and the disciples, the recording of this momentous occasion for all of us to read about now thousands of years later, is given to remind us that Jesus was and is the Davidic King, promised by God for his people. He exercises real authority over a real kingdom. As God had promised to David, Jesus as the true king will reign forever. His kingdom will never end.

So, when we come to Jesus we find in him not only a Savior but a king, One who lays claim to the entirety of our lives. One who exercises authority through his word over his people. To recognize him as your king is to submit yourself to his rule over your life. We live under the good rule and reign of King Jesus.

So that day the people saw the long awaited king, in the flesh, arrive and they praise God for him.

JESUS WEEPS OVER THE CITY

But what is interesting is what the next verses say...

Luke 19:41

41 And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it

Even in this seemingly great and victorious scene of people shouting praise to King Jesus, the text says that Jesus wept over the city. And these aren’t tears of joy. Why would Jesus be moved to tears here?

Luke 19:42

42 “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. (Goes on to describe the coming destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of Rome)

The reason for sorrow is that there were many who reject Jesus as the promised Messiah, but even further the people singing praise to Jesus arriving in Jerusalem did not fully understand what Jesus came to do. The people were seeking a Messiah that would victoriously ride in, overthrow the Roman government, and reestablish the throne and

kingdom of Israel. They were looking for an immediate, physical, literal fulfillment of God's promise to David.

In fact, **palm branches** represented victory. It was common for this kind of procession when a victorious king would return home from battle. The palm branch had become the national symbol of Israel, even appearing on Israel's coins. It would be like waving your nation's flag in nationalistic pride. The people were declaring a national victory over Rome! That is why they were shouting "Hosanna," "Save us now!" That is also why, some commentators believe, in verse 39, Jewish leaders were trying to silence the people, not just because they didn't accept Jesus as the King but because it would stir the Roman officials and they would punish them.

They were ready for the physical kingdom to be reestablished. But they didn't understand, that wasn't to be yet. Instead of a victorious king riding in on a warhorse, Jesus, the suffering servant comes in on a donkey, yes victoriously, but through the way of suffering. Later that week Jesus, the King, would assume the role of a servant and wash the disciples' feet, allow Himself to be arrested, mocked, beaten, whipped, nailed on a cross, and buried in a tomb. No doubt, this was not what the people were expecting from their coming King.

And Jesus knew this. In the passage just before this in Luke 19 Jesus gives a parable with the stated purpose of teaching those who thought the kingdom would come immediately. Rather, Jesus wanted them to recognize that the fulness of the kingdom would be delayed.

In fact, the Jesus' closest disciples didn't fully understand either. Back in Luke 9, we see a major turning point the life and ministry of Jesus. It is there that Jesus and his disciples start their journey to Jerusalem leading up to his arrival that we are talking about today. There is a certain moment on their journey where the disciples go into a Samaritan village to get things ready for their stay on the way to Jerusalem, but they aren't welcomed. The people don't want Him there...Disciples ask Jesus if he wants them to call down fire and destroy the village! Luke simply says, Jesus rebuked them.

The idea the disciples had was, we are on our way to Jerusalem, we believe your the Messiah, let fire fall on our opponents, victory is ours! But Jesus says, no, not yet.

If Jesus had come to only bring judgment, then yes, it would have been a great time to overthrow the powers that were. But Jesus didn't come to just judge, He came to save.

And in order to save, He had to die. He had to offer His life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of His people. **In other words, though His suffering and His death might look like Jesus lost, it was the only way to have true victory over sin, death, and Satan! Victory for the King first came not by the shed blood of his enemies but the shed blood of the King himself.**

THE PARADOX OF PALM SUNDAY

You see, Palm Sunday reminds us of the incredible paradox of following Jesus. A paradox is “a statement or proposition that seems self-contradictory”

GK Chesterton: a paradox is “a truth standing on its head, waving its legs to get our attention.”

Ex. “In order to make money, you have to spend money.”

A paradox that the people didn’t see or expect: **That is, life came through death. And victory came through surrender.**

It is a paradox that you need to see and embrace yourself. To have real life, you must die to your self. To have eternal victory, you must surrender.

Eternal glory and victory over death, sin, and Satan is Christ’s, but it came at a cost. The same is true for His followers. Eternal glory and victory over death, sin, and Satan is ours, but it comes at a cost. Though we need not die for our sins, for Christ has done that for us, we must die to self and take up our cross.

You need to realize this Palm Sunday paradox, because if you don’t, you will not last long in the footsteps of Jesus. You will become disenchanted by life’s difficulties because you expected something greater now and you will live life confused by what God is allowing to happen in your life.

Consider...those who were waving palm branches and praising Jesus on Sunday were not singing His praises when He was arrested and crucified on Friday.

They misunderstood what it meant to follow Jesus. They expected tangible, immediate victory over all without understanding that is a reality fully to come in the future. Yes, if you are in Christ then victory is yours, but not fully yet. Which means we still in ways walk the Calvary Road with Jesus.

“Here is a question put to every believer by this text [Luke 9]: does discipleship mean deploying God’s missiles against the enemy in righteous indignation? Or does discipleship mean following him on the Calvary road which leads to suffering and death? The answer of the whole New Testament is this: the surprise about Jesus the Messiah is that he came to live a life of sacrificial, dying service before he comes a second time to reign in glory. And the surprise about discipleship is that it demands a life of sacrificial, dying service before we can reign with Christ in glory.” - Piper

This why Jesus would say, *“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.”* And the great paradox, *“whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.”*

To follow Jesus is not merely inheriting the immeasurable riches found in Him but it is also inheriting a cross, one we are called to pick up and die on daily, not for payment for your sins (Christ has finished that work) but in identifying with Christ’s sufferings. Paradoxically, this is the way of abundant life.

We need to reflect on how we are embracing the paradox of Palm Sunday:

-Am I daily dying to self, laying down my desires and self interests for the glory of God and the good of others, that I might experience abundant life?

-Am I laying up treasures in heaven that I might have true riches?

-Am I being generous and thus being rich in good works?

-Am I considering trials and afflictions as blessings, knowing that they are working in me something far greater than I can see right now?

-Am I embracing the outcast identity of a follower of Jesus, knowing that I have gained an eternal family?

-Am I resting, joyfully resting, in my relationship with God, knowing that though I am sinful I am also justified, because Jesus has paid for all of my sins?

Have you embraced the paradox of the Christian life?

We are challenged in another way from this scene as well. **We are reminded that we need to be patient for the coming kingdom.**

We are in a season of needed patience aren't we? We are waiting at home in the midst of a disease ridden world. We are waiting for things to get better so we can go back to our normal lives, to gather as a church again, to go back to work like normal, to see our friends and families again, to have the freedom to travel the world. And each time the potential length of time for quarantine is lengthened we groan a bit. Surprisingly even my kids are looking forward to getting back to school, they miss their friends and teachers. It just feels weird the way things are right now. Things are not as they ought to be.

This time of waiting is in some ways a great picture of waiting for the coming kingdom. As Christians, as followers of the King, we wait, sometimes patiently sometimes not, we are eager for the release of our sense of captivity in a sin plagued world. And the longer we live, with each passing day sometimes, our hope for salvation and the renewal of all things grows. We know that things are not as they ought to be and so we are anxious for things to be made right. We are anxious for redemption. We are anxious for justice. We are anxious for healing. We are anxious to be with our Savior forever.

But in our moments of impatience, we might begin to wonder, If Jesus is king, if he really reigns sovereignly over all things, why is there still suffering? Why is there still sickness and disease? Why is there still death and brokenness? Why do I still struggle with relationships? Why do I feel discontent and unfulfilled? Again, we can begin to grow impatient while we await for the future promises of God to bring about complete redemption.

If you ever feel that let me remind you of a few things:

First, Jesus really does reign.

There is no suffering (both globally and personally) that is lost on him. It is not happening in a far away corner of his kingdom that he is unaware of. It is under the watchful eye of the One on the throne. There is no activity in this universe that is not under his

almighty, sovereign control. Jesus reigns as King of all kings and Lord of all lords. Renew your heart with this truth, Jesus reigns.

Second, desiring to reflect the One in whose image we were made, we are patient because God is patient.

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

We patiently await the kingdom of God in all of its glory, knowing that in the meantime God is doing a good work in drawing people into that kingdom from every tribe, nation, and tongue. And one day we will stand beside those people who, while we patiently endured the trials of this life, those people came to know Christ as their Savior and King. We ought to be patient because God is patient.

Third, be reminded that those things (suffering, sickness, death, brokenness, discontentment, various trials) will be put to death forever, but not yet...that day is coming. In the meantime those things work good in us...ex. We grow in our patience, we grow in our faith, we develop a greater longing for a better kingdom than the one we see around us each day.

Don't be discouraged. Don't become cynical. Don't become disillusioned or disenchanted while you wait for God to fulfill his promises. Patience is a fruit of the Spirit, so we wait for our coming king and his kingdom, and we do so joyfully knowing it is worth it.

In fact, the Bible teaches that there is coming another Palm Sunday, as it were...

Revelation 7:9-10

9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with **palm branches** in their hands, **10** and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

Yes, Jesus is King, whether acknowledged or not He reigns over not only the world, but the entire universe. And there will be a day when all of God's people will stand before His throne, victoriously waving palm branches, and shouting praises to our King. But... that day is not yet. It is coming, but not yet.

We live in between two Palm Sundays, as it were: the first (as we read about in the Gospels) and the ultimate Palm Sunday (when we praise our victorious King). But until the ultimate Palm Sunday, we patiently walk in the footsteps of Jesus who had to walk the Calvary Road.

The gospel is incredibly good news. But it might seem like a paradox. The King, had to die to redeem his people from the curse of their own sin. Now by repentance and faith in the finished work of Jesus, laying down our own righteousness we receive the righteousness of Christ. We must die so that we truly live. We must surrender that we might have victory.

As we look forward to this week, passion week, let's follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and join in His sufferings, joyfully and patiently, because next week we will remember that we will also join in His resurrection.

VERSES

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DISCUSSION

Palm Sunday is the day we commemorate the "Triumphal Entry of Jesus," that moment when Jesus arrives in Jerusalem at the start of his "Passion Week." This week would end with Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion, and burial. There are incredible lessons to learn from the arrival of King Jesus in Jerusalem that day.

I. Jesus was and is the Davidic King.

Jesus was the promised King who would come and take the throne of David and whose kingdom will never end (2 Sam. 7:12-13). As the true King, Jesus continues to reign whether he is acknowledged as King or not (as the Pharisees demonstrate).

What, then, did it signify that Jesus would arrive in Jerusalem on a donkey?
What did Jesus mean when he said, "if [his disciples] were silent, "the very stones would cry out"?

II. The paradox of Palm Sunday is that our King had to die before he reigned.

The people who gathered waving palm branches and shouting Hosanna were expecting the immediate arrival of the new kingdom of God. They did not understand that Jesus

had to die first and that the kingdom would be delayed. The paradox rings true for all of us, to save our life we must lose it and if we lose our lives we will find them.

What are some other examples of the paradoxical teachings of Jesus?

III. We must be patient for the coming kingdom.

It is easy to grow impatient with God's work in the world, especially as we see suffering in the world or experience it in our own lives. But we must trust that King Jesus is doing a good work until he comes again to fully bring his kingdom. On that day we will experience a new "Palm Sunday," as we shout his praises around his throne (Rev. 7:9-10).

Have you ever experienced impatience with God's work in the world? How so?
What encouragement can we find in Scripture to help us grow in patience?

As we look forward to this week, passion week, let's follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and join in His sufferings, joyfully and patiently, because next week we will remember that we will also join in His resurrection.