



Avi Snyder - March 24, 2024

About 2,000 years people forget that all the first followers of Jesus were us Jews. People forget that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah as well as the savior of the world. People forget that all the first missionaries were us Jews and that's who and what we Jews for Jesus are, we are missionaries. We have a burning passion to make sure that all people, especially our own people, hear the good news that Jesus died for our sins, that he rose from the dead, that he offers us Redemption, salvation, and eternal life when we repent and give our lives to him.

This morning, I want to talk with you about the significance of Palm Sunday. I've been invited to speak with you today about the events surrounding Yeshua Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. It's a very exciting passage of scripture. If you've got a Bible handy, open to Matthew chapter 21. Beginning in verse one.

Matthew 21:1–11 (NIV)

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

"Say to Daughter Zion,  
'See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.' "

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the

trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

What do we see in this text? First, we see the Lord making claims about himself, outlandish claims about himself. He claimed to be our King according to prophecy. This was the point of contention between us and Jesus. This is the point of contention between most people and Jesus.

Today people try to dismiss Jesus. They say, "Well he was a great teacher, he was a rabbi, he was a wonderful person..." He was more and he claimed to be more and that's what the problem has always been. We didn't have a problem with his miracles, we didn't have a problem with his teaching, we had a problem with the authority that he claimed for himself and the remarkable claims that he made about himself. Think about it for a minute, he said he's greater than the Sabbath, he's greater than the king, he's greater than the prophets, he's greater than the temple.

Do you remember in John where he heals a man who was born blind? How did he heal him? He made living tissue out of clay. Who makes living tissue out of the ground? All the prophets would always quote the Lord. They would say, "Thus says the Lord." Jesus didn't do that. Jesus said, "I say to you." Who did he think he was, God? Yes, that's exactly who he thought he was. That's exactly who he thinks he is, that's exactly who he is, he's God in the Flesh.

What we see here is the people's explosive response to his entry into Jerusalem. In verse 8 most of the crowds were spreading their coats in the road and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. The crowds going ahead of him and those followed were shouting, "Hosana to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosana in the highest!" They were spreading their garments, and they were cutting down branches. That's where we get the term "Palm Sunday." They were cutting down palm branches. Do you know why this is very interesting? They were actually beginning to celebrate a different holiday out of season. It was leading up to Passover, but they started celebrating the holiday that we call "sukkot" - Tabernacles.

During Tabernacles we cut down palm branches and we wave them as an offering. We build booths and we live in these booths for seven days and we put the palm branches on the roofs. Why do we do that? The significance of Tabernacles it was the final harvest of the year. It commemorated the final in gathering of the harvest, but it pointed to something much greater. It always pointed us forward to the day when the king, the Messiah would come. When he would finish his redemptive work on earth. When he would establish his reign and when he would rule forever over all creation. We recognize Yeshua, we recognized Jesus, and we started to celebrate tabernacles thinking that it was the end of the age.

Do you remember earlier in Matthew chapter 16, Peter and James and John are with Yeshua, with Jesus on the mount and suddenly they see Jesus transformed and transfigured, clothed in his Kingdom Glory. What does Peter instinctively blurt out, "let's build booths!" He was ready to celebrate Tabernacles. He thought it was the end of the age.

What's going on here, the people are rejoicing. They thought it's the end of the age. They thought it was all over and we see their piercing question in verse 10. When he had entered Jerusalem all the city was stirred saying, "who is this?" In other words, "could it be? could it be?" Then we see the people's emphatic declarations. They're almost afraid to say the real words on their mind verse 11. The crowds were saying this is the prophet, Jesus of Nazareth but they knew he was much more than the prophet, he was the Divine King. Yet a week later the crowds have abandoned him and the apostles are cowering in fear.

How could the people herald him at the start of the week and then abandon him at the end of the week? They had an understanding of who he is, but they didn't have an understanding of why he had come, and as a result their hopes and their expectations were violated even though he had done what needed to be done for us. Even though he had done precisely what the scriptures said that he would do for us. He'd accomplished the most important work that could ever be done for us, he had died for our sins, he had risen from the dead just as the prophets declared.

The Hebrew scriptures give us two portraits of the Messiah, a king who will vanquish our foes and a servant who will be scorned, rejected, misunderstood, and who will suffer and die. In fact, by Jesus's time we had two names for these two Messianic portraits. Many of us even thought that there would be two different Messiahs, one name was Messiah son of David, and that's what he's called here as he's coming into

Jerusalem. They're crying out, "Hosana to the king, the son of David." The king who would vanquish our foes and rule from David's throne. This is how we heralded him in verse 9. But we had another name for the other Messianic portrait, Messiah son of Joseph. A messiah who, like Joseph, would be rejected by his brethren, scorned misunderstood, and suffer. Why would the Messiah have to fulfill both portraits? Why would the Messiah have to suffer and die, not just come and reign?

This brings us to the gospel, to the good news. The gospel is also bad news, did you ever think of that? What do you want to hear first the good news or the bad news? The good news is that God loves each one of us so passionately that he's provided a way for us to be forgiven of our sins and brought into an everlasting vibrant personal relationship with him. The bad news is the only thing that we deserve from God is his judgment and his wrath. Why? Because we're sinful. That's not a popular word but that's the truth. We're transgressors, we're born with a rebellious nature, and we practice that rebellion all our lives. That's why we're never satisfied. You know we set goals, and we pursue goals, but nothing ever really satisfies us because we're cut off from the only one who has a genuine plan for us. We're cut off because of our rebellion from the only one who can really say, "Well done, well done."

That's why our relationships don't work. That's why we lie to each other. That's why we fear each other. That's why we're jealous of each other. That's why we betray each other, even as believers. This relationship is broken, so every other relationship that we have is corrupted and if we don't get this problem solved before we die then we enter an eternity with a broken relationship separated from God forever. Even if we want to fix it ourselves, we can't, we're enslaved to this nature that causes us to rebel. We need to be rescued; we need to be freed from the slavery to our rebellion. We need to be rescued from the Judgment that we deserve. That's why Messiah son of Joseph came, that's why Jesus came the first time.

When Jesus died for our sins, he took upon himself the judgment of God that I deserve, that you deserve. You know he screamed from the cross? Did you ever think of that? He screamed, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Why those words? He was quoting Psalm 22; it was his way of letting us know that it's all happening according to prophecy. But there was another reason. Jesus the man was experiencing in that moment the agony, the horror of being eternally forsaken by the Father. That's what hell is, to be totally cut off, and he screamed. That was supposed to be my scream and that was supposed to be your scream. But he loves us so passionately that he willingly endured that agony for us so that we would never have to know that agony and never have to utter that scream. He rose from the dead so that he can forgive us.

Corpses can't forgive. Jesus isn't dead, he's alive and when we come to him with repentant hearts and say, "forgive me for rebelling against you," P then our hearts hear the most wonderful words that could ever be spoken. He says, "My son, my daughter your sins are forgiven. Now follow me." That's the gospel, that's the good news. That's why he rode into Jerusalem, so that he could pay the price for our sins and rise from the dead. We didn't understand that and so we see here the people's desperate expectations. We longed for our reigning King. We needed to be looking for our redeeming Savior.