

The Week Before the Cross – Week 1 – Luke 19:28-40

Luke 19:28-40: *After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ³⁰ “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹ If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’”*

³² Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. ³³ As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?”

³⁴ They replied, “The Lord needs it.”

³⁵ They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. ³⁶ As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

³⁷ When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

³⁸ “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

³⁹ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

⁴⁰ “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

INTRO to Series “The Week Before the Cross”: When Jesus returned to Jerusalem the week before the Passover, He knew the road He was taking would soon lead Him to the cross. That final week before Jesus went to Calvary contained some of the Lord’s most important teaching, miracles, and moments. In the season leading up to Easter, we’ll journey day-by-day through Jesus’ last steps before He laid down His life willingly for the sins of the world.

I. Jesus sets His own course to the Cross (vs. 28-35)

-Throughout the final week leading up to the cross, as at all times, Jesus demonstrates His perfect knowledge and control over all that occurs. He knows exactly where the young donkey will be, that it would be tied up, that it had never been ridden, and what was needed to procure it.

-Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a colt that had never been ridden, and a few days later He would be placed inside a tomb in which no one had ever been laid to rest (**Luke 23:53**).

-Jesus had already made clear that He was taking this journey to lay down his life willingly for us, because of His great love! (see **John 10:17-18** below). Therefore, we are called to lay down our lives for each other. (see **1 John 3:16** and **Ephesians 5:25** below).

II. Jesus enters Jerusalem... (vs. 36-38)

-Jesus entering Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey – was prophesied generations before in Scripture as the arrival of God's chosen King who brings true peace and whose Kingdom realm extends to the ends of the earth. (see **Zechariah 9:9-10** below).

-Nevertheless, by entering Jerusalem in this manner, Jesus demonstrated meekness and humility.

-Several of Jesus' disciples and others seem to recognize the importance of the moment, as they lay their cloaks on the road, celebrate Him with palm branches, and sing out a pilgrim psalm: *"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"*

-It's of note, however, that within just a few days the crowds will move from calling out in celebration to yelling out, "Crucify Him!"

III. Jesus encounters opposition... (vs. 39-40)

-The Pharisees, the most prominent among the Jewish religious leaders of Jesus' day, were also His chief "hecklers."

-Though this scene is filled with the joy of the Lord, the Pharisees seem intent on dispelling this key moment. Nevertheless, nothing can take away the holy nature of this day.

-Jesus responds with a powerful statement clearly expressing His divinity – **vs. 40**: *"I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."* (see a similar statement from John the Baptist in **Luke 3:8**).

-The Pharisees either lack judgement, self-awareness, or they know exactly what they are doing. In any of these cases, they, though positioned as the key religious experts of the day, are out of step with the work of God. They are supposed to be the leaders of the people, and yet they cannot see what creation itself declares.

-After this, Jesus looked over the city of Jerusalem and wept over it because they were living "like sheep without a shepherd." Question: How would Jesus feel about the state of God's people in America today?

Other Scriptures Referenced:

Zechariah 9:9-10: *Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!*

Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!

See, your king comes to you,

*righteous and victorious,
lowly and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
10 I will take away the chariots from Ephraim
and the warhorses from Jerusalem,
and the battle bow will be broken.
He will proclaim peace to the nations.
His rule will extend from sea to sea
and from the River to the ends of the earth.*

John 10:17-18: *The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”*

1 John 3:16-18: *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.*

Ephesians 5:25: *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...*

Other Quotes/Resources:

-“If Jesus is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all.” –Hudson Taylor

-“The time was now calling Christ to the passion for the salvation of the whole world. He therefore goes up to Jerusalem to free the inhabitants of the earth from the tyranny of the enemy, to abolish death, and to destroy the sin of the world.” –Cyril of Alexandria