

## Palm Sunday

### *John 12:1-15*

<sup>1</sup> Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup> Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. <sup>3</sup> Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

<sup>4</sup> But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, <sup>5</sup> "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." <sup>6</sup> He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

<sup>7</sup> "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. <sup>8</sup> You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. <sup>10</sup> So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, <sup>11</sup> for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.

<sup>12</sup> The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

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

<sup>14</sup> Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written: <sup>15</sup> "Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."

### ***Why is Palm Sunday important to me and why do I celebrate it?***

When I think about Palm Sunday, I remember going into Church as a kid and making a cross out of palm leaves in Sunday School. The children would then enter the Sanctuary during the first song, walking down the aisles and waving large palm branches. As soon as we got home, my mom would pin the cross to the bulletin board in the kitchen. I remember seeing that cross every day until the next Palm Sunday. In the busyness of growing up, that Cross was always there. It was a constant in my life that I didn't even realize at the time.

Palm Sunday is the day Jesus made His triumphant entry to Jerusalem as king. It was the day Israel had been waiting for. The king made his entry...on a donkey? He could have ridden on a great horse. He could have ridden in on the clouds. He had the power to do so. He could have arrived in any way He chose to, yet He chose a donkey. While He could have arrived any other way, He fulfilled prophesy by arriving on a donkey.

He came humbly. He came obediently. He came, knowing what was going to happen 5 days later.

If we back up to the day before He arrives, He has dinner in Bethany. During that time, Mary anointed him with perfume. Judas questioned her actions and Jesus rebuked him saying, *"It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the*

*poor among you, but you will not always have me.*" He knew that she wouldn't need it for His burial as He would no longer be in the grave when she arrives to anoint His body.

Now, on to Sunday. Jesus arrived in Jerusalem to crowds of people shouting, "*Hosanna to the Son of David!*" "*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!*" "*Hosanna in the highest heaven!*" They got it! They understood the significance of who Jesus was and what He was there to do. Little did the crowd realize, that their positive shouts would be short lived and would turn to shouts of anger calling for Jesus to be crucified just 5 days later.

I would like to say that I don't understand how people could make such a drastic shift in their beliefs, especially in such a short amount of time, but we see it every day. There is a mob-mentality ingrained in man that urges us to follow the loudest voice at times. We are not immune to it, even as Christ-followers. We need to have our ears and heart tuned to hear the voice of Yahweh. His voice might not be the loudest in the moment, but it will always be the clearest.

Remember how the Lord appeared to Elijah.

### **1 Kings 19:9-13**

<sup>9</sup> There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" <sup>10</sup> He replied, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too." <sup>11</sup> The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. <sup>12</sup> After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. <sup>13</sup> When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

Yahweh appeared in a gentle whisper. Do I know the Lord's voice well enough to hear Him when the world is speaking louder than He is?

### **Zechariah 9:9**

<sup>9</sup> 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.

### **Challenge**

How will I approach Palm Sunday? How will I approach the rest of the week? Knowing what happened only 5 days later. This is the home stretch for Jesus and the start of the longest week in history. I need to tune out the world and tune in to the Word of God to be sure I hear His voice above the crowd.

***Prayer***

Heavenly Father, thank you for the beauty and humility of Jesus' arrival to Jerusalem as King. Thank you for the example He set before us. Thank you for speaking to us, directly and through others. Please tune my heart and ears to you as we enter Holy Week. Hosannah in the highest! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Please help me to be humble, like Christ. Please give me the strength to be obedient, like Christ. Thank you for saving me. Thank you for loving me. Thank you for being my King. Thank you for walking the road that only You could walk. In Jesus' name, Amen.