

Hymns: 38 Fairest Lord Jesus 70 Praise Him! Praise Him!
 11 How Great Thou Art 91 Crown Him with Many Crowns
Psalm 118: 19-29

Good Morning! It's official. This weekend spring finally arrived. Don't you just love this time of year? The cold blast of winter is finally gone. The trees and flowers bloom and new leaves unfold to reveal their fresh green color. Birds sing and attend to their nests.

Did you hear this past week that **Israel** had an important election? Benjamin Netanyahu won a decisive victory to cement his power as prime minister of Israel. His opponents refer to their duly elected **prime** minister disdainfully as **king** based on his tenure in office.

Last time we got together, we explored a portion of the great **love song** of a *real* King of Israel – King Solomon. We took a trip into the theater of the mind. I told you then that today I would give you the answer to the question that ended that segment. The answer is “Yes.” The question was: “Is that Solomon approaching?”

King Solomon was one of the great kings of Israel and the study of his love story is both beautiful and enriching. But today we want to preempt that study, due to the calendar, to look at a love story of a different sort and into the life of a far greater king. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords -- Jesus Christ.

I checked randomly on line and pulled up a calendar. It listed thirty-five holidays – including Good Friday, Easter, and Christmas. Other holidays it listed around this time of year include:

- St. Patrick's Day
- Earth Day
- Cinco de Mayo

But today was not listed. Can anyone tell us what holiday it is? You know, it's the one that precedes Good Friday and celebrates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The people laid palm branches on the ground as he passed. Given that this story appears in all four Gospels, we need to pay close attention to it. Next time (April 12th) we'll resume our study of Solomon's song.

Jesus' Ministry

Let's set the stage for today with a brief review of Jesus' ministry. You may recall, Jesus Christ, started his ministry about three years earlier being baptized by John the Baptist. At that time, John declared Him to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and God the Father spoke saying that He was His beloved Son.

Jesus then went into the wilderness to be tested by Satan. After Jesus refuted Satan with the sword of the Word of God, He chose His disciples and then went to a wedding feast at Cana. There, He performed His first miracle – turning water into wine.

Jesus proceeded to teach his disciples and teach the people – often using parables. Jesus, the Creator of the universe, had no possessions and no home – only the clothes on His back. He healed the sick, cast out demons, walked on water, gave the blind vision and the deaf hearing, stilled the waves, and fed thousands.

He stood up to the religious leaders, rebuked them, disrupted their corrupt merchandising, and refuted their every challenge. He became very popular among the people. The Bible says that they thronged Him – usually in response to His miracles.

One of the families that loved and supported Him were two sisters and a brother. Their names were Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Lazarus became very sick. His sisters sent word to Jesus to come and heal him. Jesus intentionally waited until after Lazarus had died. When He returned, He went to Lazarus' tomb and ordered the dead man to come out. Lazarus obeyed the order of the Lord (he had no choice), stood up, and walked out of his tomb – still bound head-to-foot in grave clothes.

Jesus did this miracle of raising Lazarus public ally. Many had gathered at Lazarus' tomb to mourn and comfort his sisters. There was no denying that miracle. In fact as we shall see, the Pharisees considered even killing Lazarus while they also plotted to kill Jesus.

That's where we will launch into our story. The only other comment we need to make is to note that this exact day (Palm Sunday) was predicted in Daniel 9:25 **over** 500 years earlier. Also, Jesus knew exactly what He was doing. This event set in motion what some term as *Passion Week* so identified to indicate Jesus' passion to go to the cross to redeem sinful man.

The Gospel of John has **by far** the most complete picture of the events surrounding Jesus' Triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We will use that account as our road map and supplement it to fill in unique details given in the other gospels. We pick it up in John 11 just after Lazarus had died:

John 11

[18] Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

That's just under two miles. Bethany is over the Mount of Olives and to the southeast of Jerusalem. Jerusalem sits at the edge of the Mount of Olives.

*[19] And **many of the Jews** came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.*

We dropped back to pick up those two verses just to give you the context. Jesus then came and raised Lazarus from the dead.

[45] Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

I guess so! He just raised a dead man. Maybe they ought to pay attention to Him.

*[46] But some of them went their way [] to the Pharisees, and told **them** what things Jesus had done.*

[47] Then [] the chief priests and the Pharisees [gathered] a council, and said, What [shall we] do []? for this man doe[s] **many miracles.**

[48] **If we let him [] alone,
all men will believe on him: and
the Romans shall come and take away both
our place and
nation.**

Notice these people were concerned with power and politics. Religion was a business for them.

Then Caiaphas the high priest, not knowing what he was saying, prophesied **in that** famous passage that Jesus would die for his people.

[53] Then **from that day** forth they took counsel together [] to put him to death.

Note that this miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead was the last straw. Of course, Jesus was completely aware of this.

[54] Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went [from there into] a country near [] the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim,

Ephraim was perhaps 10 miles north of Jerusalem

and there continued with his disciples.

[55] And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

[56] Then [] they [sought] Jesus, and sp[o]ke among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, [will] he [] come to the feast?

[57] Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew [his location], he should [tell them], that they might take him.

All eyes were on Jesus as the plot thickens.

John 12

[1] Then **Jesus**[,] six days before the passover[,]
Bible scholars say that this was Saturday

came to Bethany, where Lazarus was ..., whom he raised from the dead.

[2] There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

Wouldn't you have loved to sit at that supper table. Just think! You could have talked to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus who was dead and came back to life. Perhaps you could have learned how that experience went. Then of course there was Jesus who had seen heaven and been in the presence of God.

[3] Then [] Mary [took] a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

[9] [Many] of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

This little gathering had turned into quite an event.

[10] But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

These guys were heartless murderers. Lazarus too was a marked man.

[11] Because that by reason of **him** many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

[12] On the next day...

Sunday

Matthew 21

[1] ...when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, **then** sent Jesus two disciples,

[2] Saying unto them, Go into the village [ahead of] you, and [immediately] ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her

[Mark 11:2 adds: whereon never man sat]:

loose them, and bring them unto me.

[3] And if any man [questions what you are doing], ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

[4] All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,
This is Zechariah 9:9

[5] Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek,
and sitting upon an ass,
and a colt the foal of an ass.

[6] And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

Mark 11

[4] ... and found the colt tied by the door [outside] in a place where two ways met; and they loose[d] him.

[5] And certain of them that stood there [Luke 19:33 adds that they were the owners of the animals] said unto them, What [are you doing], loosing the colt?

[6] And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

Jesus was popular and He had become well-known. No wonder they didn't object.

Matthew 21

[7] And [they] brought the ass, and the colt, and put **on them** their clothes, and they **set him** [that is Jesus] thereon.

[8] And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.

[and]

John 12

[12][many] people that [came] to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

[13] Took branches of palm trees,

Hence, palm Sunday

*and went forth to meet him, and cried, **Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.***

This should sound familiar as they chanted from Psalm 118:25-26 which was read earlier today.

Matthew 21

*[9] And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, **Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.***

Mark 11

*[9] ...[and they] cried, saying, **Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:***

*[10] Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: **Hosanna in the highest.***

Luke 19

[37] And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

*[38] Saying, **Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.***

[39] And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

*[40] And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, **the stones would immediately cry out.***

[41] And when he [came] near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

Matthew 21

*[10] And when he [came] into Jerusalem, **all the city was moved,** saying, Who is this?*

[11] And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

As if Jesus hadn't done enough already to anger the religious leaders, look what he did next:

[12] And Jesus

*went into the temple of God,
and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple,
and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers,
and the seats of them that sold doves,*

[13] And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

*[14] And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple;
and he healed them.*

*[15] And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, **Hosanna to the Son of David**; they were **sore displeased**,*

I think we are safe to say that was an understatement. Jesus had shown them up as hypocrites and fools. He made mincemeat out of them at their own game. And he went on their turf and made a mockery of them. Gnashing of teeth better describes how they likely felt.

*[16] And [they] said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and infants thou hast perfected praise?
He's quoting Psalm 8:2.*

There he did it again. These guys spent their whole lives being the authorities on the scripture and Jesus replies to them “have ye never read?”

*[17] And **he** left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and **he** lodged there.*

John 12

[17] The people therefore that [were] with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

[18] For this cause the people also met him, for [] they heard that he had done this miracle.

[19] The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, [our efforts have failed]

behold, the world is gone after him.

Despite their dismay, the religious leaders kept at it and succeeded in turning the mobs against Jesus and seeing Him killed. Jesus' offer to His people to be their king was rejected. But three days later, the religious leaders saw their apparent victory **dashed to pieces** by their nemesis as Jesus Christ **conquered the grave and rose from the dead.**

Application

We started off today rejoicing in spring, mentioning a king, and recalling a love story. Spring is all about new life. Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, went to the cross to die for our sins; because He loved us and to give us new life. As we saw today, He made that trip intentionally. He orchestrated it.

Today and this coming week we have a chance to reflect on what our Savior did for us. Those of us

who have put our faith in His finished work can be thankful and rejoice that as the grave could not hold Him, neither will our death prevent us from eternal life with Him in glory.

If you haven't trusted in Jesus Christ as your Savior, I can think of no better time and no better season than right now. Will you trust Him? I trust you will make that **all** important decision right now.

Benediction

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (I Timothy 1:17)

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