



“The Triumphal Entry”

Luke 19: 28 - 44

April 14, 2019

We will be in Luke Chapter 19 this morning with the triumphal entry of Jesus. Reflecting on this passage, I was brought back to a day in May several years ago. It was a lovely afternoon as I took a trip over to the Costco in Lakewood where I was scouting a few things out for a church event that we were having here at Bethel Grace.

I was entering the hustle and bustle of Costco with lots of people milling around. I smelled the fresh pizza, along with their wonderful hot dogs. All of that was in the atmosphere when I noticed that I had a voice mail message from my dad on my phone. I had not heard it ring because I had the phone silenced. I listened to the voice mail message and there was a gravity in my Dad’s voice. He told me that I needed to call him as soon as I could. I called him back and he informed me that somebody that was dear to me for all my years had taken his own life.

I remember being at the entrance to Costco, a very public place, and my heart was filled with grief and pain. There was deep, deep sorrow inside of me. Like sorrow does, it does not stay inside but tends to come out the tear ducts. I looked around and I saw a little crevice in the building. I went and stood facing into that crevice and I wept. My heart was filled with such sorrow, but I pulled myself together because we don’t like to be out in public weeping, do we? After I pulled myself together, I made a beeline to the van and went to the place where there were people that I loved gathered in their grief.

Sorrow and grief are so very difficult when we are in a public place and it all comes welling up. That is something serious, brothers and sisters. Why do I bring all this up now? I want for our hearts to be tuned into our Lord and our Savior and our Messiah.

This morning we are celebrating Palm Sunday and the so-called triumphal entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem. Today we remember how Jesus deliberately presented Himself as Messiah to Israel and those gathered in Jerusalem.

However, whenever I come to Palm Sunday, I become a little bit conflicted. I don’t know where to categorize this holiday. Does it belong with the celebration and the excitement of Easter or does it belong with the gravity and the sorrow of Good Friday?

On the surface, it was a joyful event and exuberant scene that was there on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Here was Jesus renowned for His miracles and for His authoritative teaching, entering the holy city at the time of a great Jewish holiday with so many people present. He was being showered in their praise and it was an awesome and a beautiful scene in that way.

But then taking a closer look at Jesus, we catch His expression through the details that come forth in the text before us and we do not see a bubbly and happy Messiah at that time. Instead what we see is a Man of sorrows. As Jesus drew close to Jerusalem, He burst forth in tears. He wept and He wept publicly.

Like I found a place to hide myself, Jesus did not have a place Himself. He was right there on the trail in front of everyone. The language that is used in the original Greek does not indicate a quiet and polite kind of weeping, but sobbing. Jesus was sobbing as Man of sorrows.

While I went ahead and titled this morning's message *The Triumphal Entry* because that is how we know this event, and there was an element of triumph to it. I almost titled this message *The Tearful Entry*, because that would indicate the countenance of Jesus as it all took place.

Let's read our text and see what happened, zeroing in on the Messiah. Let's pray that our hearts will be engaged with His as we do so. Luke Chapter 19 and Verses 28 through 44:

²⁸And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.
**²⁹When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰saying, "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. ³¹If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: "The Lord has need of it." ³²So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. ³³And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴And they said, "The Lord has need of it." ³⁵And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. ³⁶And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. ³⁷As 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, ³⁸saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" ³⁹And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." ⁴⁰He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."
⁴¹And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴²saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side ⁴⁴and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."**

In 1859 a novel was released, and that novel might have one of the most famous opening lines in all of literature. It is a book called *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens. The opening lines are:

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.

When Dickens wrote those lines, he was describing the French Revolution, but he might as well have been describing the events surrounding Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem. As Jesus was getting to that home stretch and He was about to enter the city, there was an eruption of praise that took place.

According to the text here in Luke, Jesus' disciples were the ones that were leading it based on everything that they had seen Him do. Taking all the details that are given to us in Matthew and Mark and Luke and John, they were crying out, *Hosanna to the Son of David. Save now! Save now!* They cut off palm fronds from the trees and were waving them. It must have been such an amazing sight to behold.

Yet, we see Jesus carrying gravity within Himself. When Jesus finally saw Jerusalem, He broke down and He sobbed as He spoke the words that we just read in Verses 41 through 44. He was sobbing and grieving.

There was genuine praise that began with His disciples, but then it surely spread among the multitudes that were there. Jesus knew that so many of these same people that were crying *Hosanna* would be crying *crucify* Him later.

Jesus knew what was ahead of Him in that week. He knew what was ahead of Jerusalem as well as they were rejecting Him in the end. All this came and Jesus was sobbing and weeping as He made His entrance into Jerusalem. It is an amazing picture that we see here.

I remember back in the mid90s when I was part of the young adult ministry here at Bethel Grace. I was just cutting my teeth in the teaching ministry, just getting started. One of the first passages that, by God's grace, I was able to teach was this very account out of the Gospel of Luke of the triumphal entry of Jesus.

I was able dig up some of the notes that I had prepared for that time of teaching. As I was reading through them, I was being refreshed in some things. It was kind of like the twenty-five-year-old Jeff ministering to the forty-five-year-old Jeff as I looked at all the thoughts that I had forgotten about.

There was one point that really gripped me as I was reading those old notes. As a younger man, I wrote down: Who are we that we, creatures made from the voice of God from dirt, can bring this kind of grief to the heart of the holy, loving, perfect and pure Son of the Living God?

How is it the case that Heaven's King can be affected by human beings like this? But there is such heaving grief that comes forth from Him. Continuing in what I had written, I concluded that if human beings can cause this kind of grief into the heart of the Messiah, then it follows that human beings can also bring joy to the heart of the Messiah.

As a twenty-five-year old man, I said that I want to be one of the human beings, by God's grace, who brings joy to the heart of the Messiah in view of all that He has done for me, in view of the greatness of who He is.

If there is a whole world of people bringing Him grief through the way that they mock and blaspheme Him and, in the end, reject Him, I want to be one of those who brings Him joy as the Spirit fills my life in worship.

Reading those old notes, those things were rising up in my heart again. We read in Romans 12:1:

¹...present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God

Let's be those filled with the Spirit who worship Jesus the King and bring joy to His heart through the lives that we live and the praises that we give.

I want to begin this morning by taking a close look at what Jesus did in this portion of Scripture. Let's see how Jesus orchestrated this event and presented Himself as Messiah. What we read here is so very different from everything else that we have read preceding this in the Gospel accounts, because up to this point, Jesus kept saying that His time had not yet come. He did miracles and charged people to silence.

Now Jesus brought all this out into the open. His time had come, and He was saying that the Messiah is here. And we need to take a close look at just how Jesus did this and the measures He took and the purgatives that He carried out on that occasion. Let's be attune with our Messiah that we might worship Him and praise His holy Name.

I want us to look at this passage and see three ways in which Jesus presented Himself as Messiah to Israel and to everybody else who reads this account about that occasion. First, Jesus presented Himself as Messiah as:

1. He deliberately fulfills prophecy (19:28-35)

Verses 28 through 35 place a big emphasis on how the Lord procured the colt, the young colt of a donkey on which to ride into Jerusalem. Understand that He did not do this because on His final entry into Jerusalem His physical conditioning had failed Him due to all the foot travel and the hundreds of miles that He walked going back and forth all throughout Israel.

He did not then say that they were close to Jerusalem, but He would need an animal to get Him there. That is not why Jesus got the colt. Rather, Jesus was very determined to present Himself in keeping with a Messianic prophecy that had come hundreds of years earlier through Zechariah.

This is what is says in Zechariah Chapter 9 and Verse 9:

**⁹Rejoice 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.**

The Old Testament prophecy was looking forward to the day when the unique anointed King of Israel would present Himself to Israel and enter into Jerusalem, not on a war horse, but peacefully riding on a colt.

Knowing this prophecy and knowing that the people of Israel would know the prophecy, Jesus orchestrated His entry into Jerusalem to present Himself as the Messiah. Jesus presented Himself as such.

He did so blatantly in a way to draw the greatest exposure possible. He chose the most intentional way of putting Himself forth as Messiah. He did so in direct fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9. Jesus chose the most opportune time to put Himself forth as Messiah, when all the people of Israel were converging upon Jerusalem for the great Passover Feast—the greatest of all their feasts.

Jesus also chose the most populated place, the very path that led from the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem, a place of great exposure when there were more and more people that were gathering together. Jesus was determined to say at that time, *I am the one. I am the anointed King. I am the one sent into the world from Heaven.* This is such a wonderful picture.

We as followers of Jesus who desire to bring joy to the heart of our Messiah understand that Jesus would have us continue in that direction being those who make His great Name known. By spreading His grace, truth, love, and His good news is one way that we can bring joy to our Lord.

Somewhere else along the line, somebody made an application while they were teaching about this event and how Jesus rode on the donkey. That person said to the people listening to him, *Be a donkey for Jesus. Be the vehicle by which Jesus enters in to certain situations. Are you willing to be a donkey for Jesus?*

I appreciate the heart and sentiment of that statement and to a certain extent it works for me, but when I think about our relationship with Jesus, the idea of bearing Him up is one thing but typically it is Him bearing us up.

Brothers and sisters, like that donkey we are to be Christ-bearers. We carry Him in our heart, and we take His Spirit and love and His truth everywhere we go. Jesus was very determined to make Himself known as the Messiah at that point and now He calls us to do the same as we follow Him.

Where is Jesus leading you this week? Where do you go tomorrow? Where do you go this afternoon? Where do you go Tuesday night? Where do you go Thursday afternoon? Jesus goes with you and the calling upon your life is to make His goodness and His grace known.

So the way that Jesus presents Himself as Messiah is that He deliberately fulfilled this prophecy. Second, another way that He presented Himself as Messiah is that:

2. He unabashedly received praise (19:36-40)

We continue looking at what is in Verses 36 through 40:

³⁶And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road.

That was their way of laying out the red carpet. Verse 37:

³⁷As 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, ³⁸saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” ³⁹And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.” ⁴⁰He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”

There was this upwelling praise on the street that entered into Jerusalem. The disciples initiated it, doing so based on everything that they had seen Jesus do—all His miracles and healings. They were declaring the greatness of His Name.

Then more and more people were caught up in it. The Pharisees did not like it. They said to silence it and quite to the contrary, Jesus said, *No, this is not going to be silent. If the people don't cry out, the rocks will.*

I read this and began thinking about Brother Joseph Jacobson, Jr. who was leading worship as a pastor here in our church for a decade. On so many occasions, he would come up here and say something that we even heard this morning. He would say, *Jesus said if we don't praise Him, the rocks will cry out. I don't want to be replaced by a rock, so let's praise the Lord.*

I heard Keith the same thing this morning with other words. That is just a great way of putting it. Jesus said that if praise did not take place on that occasion, that meant that an inanimate creation was more attune of what He is worthy of. Jesus was receiving praise at this point.

How many of you have heard that phrase, *He is dumber than a box of rocks?* As tempted as we might be to apply that phrase to this situation, I don't think that it works because those Pharisees were brilliant. I think a better way to put it would be that their hearts were harder than a box of rocks.

They had seen all the evidences of God's power working through the Messiah and instead of praising Him, they blasphemed Him. But all of history had been leading up to that moment when Jesus presented Himself as the Christ to the people and God desired that it be acknowledged, so this praise was fitting.

To a certain extent, I think that we can understand that some of their expectations were misguided. The Gospel of Luke tells us that the disciples started this praise, and looking forward I think that they were still swept up in that political fervor that Jesus would then conquer Rome.

This section begins in Verse 28 by saying:

²⁸And when he had said these things...

What things did He say? This takes us back to the Parable of the Ten Minas which He said because so many of His people were expecting that He would establish his visible Kingdom immediately.

Jesus told the Parable of the Ten Minas to tell them no, that He was going away for awhile and the needed to be productive until He returned. So, it was not going to be an immediate kingdom, but His disciples were still thinking it would be.

There was some of that thinking, but what this text is specifying is that the disciple's hearts were sparked up as they recalled everything that Jesus had done, and they were praising Him and giving Him glory and honor for those things.

Brothers and sisters, we need to have eyes to see what Jesus has done for us. We need to be those who praise His Holy Name. Are you walking and living your life attune with all that God has done for you in creation and in redemption?

It honors the Lord when we walk in a way that worships Him, walking with the Lord and praising Him for who He is. This is the pattern of life. We have our antennas up and are looking for the goodness of God all around us, returning praise to His Name.

Last night I was thinking about this morning's sermon and the gravity of it all began rising up in my heart, so I needed to get out for a little while. It was around sunset, and I took Lidy-Lou out on her leash for a nice slow stroll. I was looking at the sky and its beauty with clouds that were glimmering with the sun. In my heart I was thinking that Jesus is so awesome to create that.

I'm very comfortable with what I'm about to tell you in all my masculinity. I'm a guy who likes to stop and smell the roses. I was looking at all the Spring blossoms that were everywhere and, in my heart, I told Jesus that He made this. He made it all! I gave Him the praise He is due and because I am a person designed by God to commune with Him, it was doing my heart good to give Him praise.

We need to be those who lift up praise to the Lord. This is the life that we live. We do so for the things that he has made, and we do so for the things that He has done, especially His work on the cross dying for our sins that we might be declared sinless and holy in the sight of God through faith in His great Name.

There is one last way in which Jesus presents Himself as Messiah here in this text. First, He deliberately fulfills prophecies. Second, He unabashedly receives praise. Then finally, we see how:

3. He tearfully pronounces judgment (19:41-44)

The Pharisees wanted all the voices of the expanding multitudes to be silenced, but the voices of the citizens of Jerusalem would increase and change as they came to realize that Jesus was not going to overthrow Caesar at that time. The tide turned and they came against Jesus as instigated by the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the Chief Priests. They came against the Lord and they were condemning Him.

Now we see that because Israel rejected its Messiah the judgment of God would come. Jesus spoke this in Verses 41 through 44:

⁴¹And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴²saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³For the days will come you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side ⁴⁴and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”

These are stunning words of prophetic judgment upon the city of Jerusalem. They are rich with predictive prophecy. Jesus looked into the future and He declared what was to come upon Jerusalem. He did so with detail.

What we read here took place just about forty-years later when the Roman Emperor Titus unleashed his troops upon the city of Jerusalem. There are five parts of what Jesus described here. All those things took place on the invasion of Rome as overseen by Titus the Emperor.

First, Verse 43 says:

⁴³...your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you

They put up this barricade, a structure around the city. In ancient times when an army wanted to overtake a city, they would start by building a barricade entirely around the city itself. Can you imagine that?

A fierce army would come, and a structure was built enclosing the citizens within the city. No one could get out and nobody could get in. The idea was that all the crops and produce and all items coming from the surrounding agrarian region would be cut off, and the people within the city would become weakened through hunger.

That is where it began. It began with a barricade being built. Then Jesus said that the very people would surround them. Verse 43 again:

⁴³...your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you

The barricade is the physical structure. Then the note about being surrounded, that indicates the human presence. If anybody tried to escape, they would be killed.

Then third, Jesus continued and said that they will:

⁴³...hem you in on every side.

That indicates the increasing pressure that the Roman army would be asserting. They would be escalating it and would be pressing in as they sought to breach the defenses of the city.

Fourth, Jesus said that eventually the army was going to break through, and they would trample down all the inhabitants of the city. That is exactly what happened in AD70 when this Roman army conquered Jerusalem.

Jesus went on to say that not one stone would be left on top of another. The army totally flattened the city. Jesus went on to remind the people of the reason why this would happen. The Lord concluded by stating the reason for the judgment to come at the end of Verse 44. It says:

⁴⁴...because you did not know the time of your visitation.

The day of visitation is an Old Testament phrase used by Isaiah and Jeremiah and other Old Testament writers referring to the coming presence of God drawing near to His people. A visitation of God could be a visitation of blessing or it could be a visitation of judgment because, yes, sin is serious in the eyes of the holiness of the Living God.

The visitation that Jesus was speaking of when He said that they did not recognize it, this was a visitation of untold grace. Here is the Holy One of Heaven and as John the Apostle described it, He came overflowing with grace and truth, and healing, and teaching, and delivering, and pleading. Yet in the end, He was met with blasphemy, slander, spit, and with hatred, and judgment came upon Jerusalem because of it. It happened just as Christ described it.

This is a stunning word of prophecy and in my mind, the only thing that is more stunning about the content of this prophecy is the manner with which it was delivered. Picture Jesus heaving with sorrow, weeping, and crying. A thirty-three-year-old rouged man, a carpenter by trade all His life, pouring out with tears because of the hard-heartedness that He had met in Jerusalem.

Here in this text, when we see Jesus, we see the spirit of Ezekiel 33:11 manifested, where it says:

¹¹...As I live, declares the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live, turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

That prophecy is embodied in Christ at this time. We need to look at this and those words of judgment and understand that God is a Judge. I praise God that He is my Abba. I praise God for His tender care, but looking through the pages of Scripture beginning to end, we will see that God reveals Himself as Judge.

The holiness of His heart cannot tolerate wickedness to go unjudged. We look at this judgment and think it is crazy, but understand there is place called hell and sin will be judged for eternity, unless the sinner repents and flees to the Messiah Jesus for salvation.

There was a great point of irony that I saw in this text as I was studying it throughout the week. It is found in praises that were coming forth from the disciples. The disciples said in Verse 38:

³⁸...“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

Peace in heaven, the disciples said. We appreciate the spirit of what they said. However, the irony that I see is that they said this as the greatest turmoil of Heaven was about to draw near—that moment when the very Son of God was crucified on that rugged Roman cross—and the communion between the triune God was momentarily ruptured as God the Father poured out wave after wave after wave of judgment on His Son, who had taken into Himself the sin of people like you and me and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Whenever we see this language of God’s judgment and realize that it is serious, our hearts need to go straight to the cross of Jesus Christ where the very Messiah took our sin upon Him in His grace and in His love and satisfied the justice and the righteousness of God by paying the price for our sin.

We need to thank God and shout *hallelujah, blessed is the King who comes in the Name of the Lord* because as the disciples were lauding this King, little did they know that they were selecting their Sacrificial Lamb that was going to be slaughtered on their behalf on the very Friday that was ahead of them.

We praise God. We praise Jesus for what He has done by going to the cross and, *hallelujah*, let there be great glory because He conquered death and He rose on the third day. That resurrection being the very seal of approval of the sacrifice that was made on the cross for us. There is deliverance, and that deliverance is to be found in the Name of Jesus Christ. Trust in Jesus.

If you are here this morning and you are a guest or visitor, I call you to faith in Jesus. He died for your sin. The very King of Heaven is the only one who could do that, that you might have your sin taken away, that you might be clothed in His goodness and righteousness, that you would be pure and holy in God’s sight as a gift through faith.

Then understand, He wants to rework you from the inside out. Not only are you justified, but you get to be born again when have faith in Christ. He is going to give you His Spirit, and He is going to start changing you from the inside out. Come to faith in Jesus. If you are here and you are not certain of your relationship with Christ, please talk with me or Pastor Keith after the service. We would love to chat with you. If you are here and you are a Christian, rejoice in the King. Rejoice in Him!

At the frontend of this time, I said that I don’t know where Palm Sunday belongs. Is it Good Friday, or is it Resurrection Sunday? We see these praises of the King and they are so awesome.

We like that, don't we? Yet, we see the sorrow that He carried because of all the judgment that was to come.

My conclusion is that it is kind of belongs to both because isn't that just the Christian life? There is gravity as we understand that sin is serious and Jesus paid an immeasurable price, an unthinkable price.

But, oh, the joy to know that this King that was being praised here in this text, He is going to be established right smack dab in the center of the New Jerusalem where He is going to be receiving the honor that He is due forevermore by people who have gladness in their hearts and joy unspeakable as they do so.

We are looking forward to Good Friday. I hope you will be here as we gaze upon the cross. We are looking forward to Resurrection Sunday when we celebrate the victory. Jesus is a Risen Lord and He is good to us.

May the Lord bless you. May the Lord fill you with His Spirit and His praise as you walk with Him through this week. You are a Christ-bearer. You carry Jesus with you wherever you go. Let's pray.