

The Triumphant Entry

(Scripture: John 12:12-19)

“On the next day the great multitude who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet Him, and began to cry out, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.’ And Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, ‘Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King comes sitting on a donkey’s colt.’ These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him. And so the multitude who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from the dead, were bearing Him witness. For this cause also the multitude went and met Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign. The Pharisees therefore said to one another, ‘You see that you are not doing any good; look, the world has gone after Him’” (12:12–19).

The triumphant entry of Jesus to Jerusalem is a familiar and popular event in the life of Christ.

Jesus is now on His way into Jerusalem in order to accomplish the scheme of redemption for man that was in the mind of God before the creation of the world.

Basically, Jesus came to Jerusalem to die.

The triumphant entry is recorded in all four Gospel accounts (Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19).

It all happened on a Sunday.

It records the only time Jesus enters Jerusalem since He started His ministry.

The entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem is a symbol like that of a king riding triumphantly in his return home after a victorious battle.

Those who have known the works and teachings of Jesus accompany Him on this triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

In this multitude are His disciples and many others who had accepted Him as the Messiah.

A few hours from this event, however, the religious leaders would stir many in the multitudes to have Jesus crucified.

I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES

Hostility between Jesus and the Pharisees was “so thick you can cut it with a knife.”

Lazarus had been raised from the dead.

This was the “trigger” for the cross.

People were abuzz: “Will He or will He not come to the feast?” (11:56).

But now “the hour” had come.

Prudence before would find Jesus in retreat to Galilee, the wilderness.

But not now.

He was in command. (He was determined)

This was the will of God.

Jesus, previously, had shunned publicity.

He now comes with spotlights and the “bands playing” in the “big city” (Jerusalem).

Jesus had never had a “praise welcome.”

He chose to have one here.

He got on a donkey and rode into town as the King of the Jews.

It was the fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9 that Jesus proceed with the victory march into Jerusalem. *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.”*

The acquisition of a donkey for Jesus’ plan to triumphantly enter the city of Jerusalem was for the purpose of symbolizing the victory return of a conquering king.

Jesus also allowed the triumphal entry in order to provide the opportunity for the religious leaders of Jerusalem to manifest their envious hearts.

Once their envy was stimulated, it would drive them to nail Him to the cross.

In doing so, He forced people to make a decision about Him.

“Accept Me or kill Me!” He was saying.

He carefully planned His “Triumphal Entry.”

Josephus said that over two million Jews were there; 265,000 lambs were slain! (Feast of the Passover)

He now was at the point of no return.

Jesus took over.

He allowed recognition, praise, and honor to come to Him.

Jesus experienced the triumphant entry in praise and peace.

The clothes, the palm tree branches was the multitudes giving Jesus a royal procession of a king.

And the people shouted, “Hosanna.”

This simply means “Save us now.”

Two groups were at the cross that week.

The “triumphant entry” found the country people, those from Galilee.

These were the followers of Jesus.

Later in the week we find the Judean, the Pharisee, the sectarian, shouting, “Crucify Him.”

There were two distinct groups.

The religious (political) authorities said to themselves, “The whole world is gone after Him.”

With that in mind, the plot to crucify Jesus began.

II. THE CONSEQUENCES

Not only did the enemies misjudge the parade, the apostles also did.

The apostles still wanted an earthly king on David's throne in Jerusalem.

The triumphant entry, to them, offered victory, not the cross.

The apostles never understood the cross until after the resurrection.

They totally misjudged the triumphal entry.

Jesus was in command.

He forced them to make a decision.

They had to repent or crucify Him.

They chose to do the latter.

“The hour” had come.

CONCLUSION

At this point one has a panoramic view of Jerusalem.

The triumphant entry was a blessing.

But it, too, was part of the cross (“the hour”).

Parades are always two-sided—the joy and the sorrow.

God's people, the Jews, were hopelessly blinded.

One must read about the lost in John 12:

But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him; that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, "He has blinded their eyes, and He hardened their heart; lest they see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and be converted, and I heal them." These things Isaiah said, because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him. Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God (12:37-43).

Those who "would not believe" now "could not believe."

The people had their chance time and time again.

The chances had run out.

Jesus was not ecstatic; He cried! (Luke 19:41)

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.

The Savior was heartbroken over an impenitent nation.