

UNDERSTANDING “PALM SUNDAY”

Every year, as we prepare to celebrate Resurrection Sunday, we rejoice in the fact that our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ,

rose again from the dead. Those of us who believe in all that Jesus did and who ultimately believe in Him as their own personal, Savior and Lord, rejoice on this very special day.

However, I would like to review from the Word of God, something very important for us all to grasp and understand. There is nothing in the Word of God that is just happenstance and when it is repeated not just twice, but three times or more, we must take note.

What I am referring to is the event that took place a few days before Jesus went to the cross, died and then three days later, rose from the dead. I am referring to is the event that took place on what we refer to as “Palm Sunday” when Jesus made His entrance into Jerusalem riding upon a colt.

We must recognize that this event and the things that happened are referred to and are spoken of in the Old Testament, in all the Gospel accounts, in the letters of the New Testament and it points to a specific time that is told to us in the Book of Revelation. Therefore, what we read in the Gospel accounts of Jesus entering Jerusalem at that time must be very, very important for us to see and to understand. So...let's see.

We begin in the Old Testament. As we read in 1Kings 1:1-4, we see an aging King David who is too sick and weak to even warm himself and it is clear to everyone that he will die very soon which means that there will a new king to take his place.

Because David had shed so much blood in his life, God had previously determined not to allow him to actually build the house, the Temple, that David desired to build for the Lord.. David could get all the materials for the building of the Temple but his son, Solomon, would actually have the task of building the Temple. (1Chronicles 22:1-29).

Unfortunately, David took his time in going forward with God's plan of making Solomon the next king of Israel. He waited about doing it. Unfortunately, the devil loves it when we are to

do something onto the Lord but we take our time and do not follow through with His plans in a timely way. It gives the enemy the time to try and usurp the plan and will of God, which, as we will see, tries to take place in this account.

One of David's sons, Adonijah, decides that he should to be king. He starts by forging two strategic relationships—one with the one time military leader of David, Joab, and one with the priestly leader, one of the High Priests at the time, Abiathar. If we know our Bible, we realize that both of these men were originally very close to David. However....

Concerning Joab, we see that he was with David in battle in the very beginning of David's career. However, we know that Joab lost his position in David's army but most importantly their relationship withered away. Joab constantly went behind David's back and did things his way. We know that he killed David's son, Absalom, as well as doing things his way and not David's way or God's way, in many other things. He ultimately, ran into disfavor with David. Therefore, we can see that this man, once a close friend with David, was now ready to usurp David and align himself with David's son, Adonijah who wanted to be king.

As we turn to Abiathar, we know that he was actually the High Priest along with Zadok at the time of David's rule. Zadok was the High Priest at the Tabernacle of Moses which was at Shiloh. Abiathar was the High Priest in Jerusalem where the Ark of the Covenant actually was. It was in a tent that David had set up for it when it returned back to Jerusalem from its capture by the Philistines. Abaiathar, had the privilege and was able to be in the very presence of the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of the presence of God.

However, we see again, an incorrect decision was made. Abiathar wanted to make sure that he did not lose his position as High Priest before the Ark in Jerusalem so he went and sided with – Adonijah. As we will see, it was the wrong decision. It was a wrong decision because it was all about him and not about what God truly desired.

These three men, Adonijah, Joab and Abiathar gathered themselves for a private "coronation party" of Adonijah. However, David was alerted of what was happening by his wife Bathsheba. Bathsheba alerts the clueless King David about what was happening in his kingdom (1 Kings 1:11–27). Bathsheba and the prophet Nathan, remind David of the oath he made onto the

Lord concerning making Solomon his successor. David needs to make Solomon the king of Israel before its too late.

We read that David finally goes through with the plan to crown Solomon as the new king of Israel (1Kings 1:28–37). He summons Nathan, a Godly prophet, Zadok, a Godly priest and Benaiah, a Godly adviser to assist him. These were men who truly served God and honored David as their king.

David then puts Solomon on a mule/colt and brings Solomon into Jerusalem by way of the road that led into Jerusalem from the Gihon Spring, where David anointed Solomon as king. They then cross the Kidron Valley and enter into Jerusalem. The people all witness this “coronation” of their new king.

Solomon was anointed and enthroned in public with a triumphant celebration by the people. This was no secret self-exaltation like Adonijah’s private party. God’s people publicly celebrated God’s king with a loud cheer. The private party for Adonijah dissolves as the cheers for Solomon drown out the reveling of the impostor’s coronation. The High Priest, Abiathar and the military leader, Joab are both exposed as phonies and impostors.

This Solomon, this king who rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, was the son of David. However, we must take note that Solomon was not the true spiritual “Son of David” nor was he the true “King of Israel.” As we all know, Solomon may have had wisdom but he did not use his wisdom or his position as king very wisely. Solomon’s life was literally a disaster which was full of adultery and sin. The true King was still to come!!!

We must take note that Solomon came into Jerusalem from the Gihon Spring across the Kidron Valley. This would be the same path that Jesus would take coming into Jerusalem upon a colt on that “Palm Sunday.” Just as the people witnessed Solomon coming into the city as their king, so did the people at the time of Jesus, witness their true King coming into Jerusalem – it would be the humble King Jesus.

Again, in the Old Testament, we see that in the Psalms we get a prophetic glimpse of what will take place when Jesus would enter Jerusalem on that original “Palm Sunday.” We read in

Psalm 118:19-26, “Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the Lord. ²⁰ This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter. ²¹ I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation. ²² The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; ²³ the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. ²⁴ The Lord has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad. ²⁵ Lord, save us! Lord, grant us success! ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you.” This is prophesying the time when of when Jesus would come into Jerusalem.

In these verses we see that this is prophetically speaking about the time when Jesus would enter Jerusalem on that first “Palm Sunday.” It states what the Jewish people would declare as He would come into Jerusalem. They would shout out, “*Lord, save us!*” (Hoshanna-Hebrew) This is exactly what they shouted out when Jesus entered Jerusalem that day. They shouted “*Hoshanna,*” come save us.

We also need to read another scripture in the Old Testament, Zechariah 9:9,10 - “*Rejoice 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.***” This would be the action of the true King of Israel. This was declared 500 years before it actually happened. It was fulfilled by the triumphal entry as Jesus rode into Jerusalem upon a donkey on that first Palm Sunday.

Jesus’ purpose in riding into Jerusalem was to make public His claim to be their Messiah and ultimately, the King of Israel in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. In Matthew we read that Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey/colt as a humble King who is hailed by the people as their only hope of salvation, They thought he came to “save” them from the Romans. However, it was really the fact that Jesus came to save us all from the real enemy - the devil and the affects of our sins.

Zechariah 9:10 goes on to tell us even more. It tells of the future coming of Jesus – His second coming. Rather than riding on a colt in peace, Jesus will return as the conquering King riding His white horse. Zechariah 9:10 is referring to a future time when the Jesus, will

come and defeat all the forces of darkness. He will then rule and reign on this earth for 1000 years. We read of this in Revelation 19:11-16.

Every “Palm Sunday,” we celebrate Jesus’ retracing Solomon’s path across the Kidron Valley and entering Jerusalem on a donkey/colt (Matthew 21:1–10). It is a picture of humility—entering on a donkey/colt instead of a war horse. As Jesus entered Jerusalem in this form of a “triumphal entry” as Solomon did, it expresses an even greater fact. He did not just come as our King, He came as a **humble** King who would choose to die for the sin of the world.

We see in the Gospel accounts that the scribes and Pharisees—the religious leaders who opposed him—were not the true leaders of the people. They were phony religious leaders misusing their position for their own gain just as Abiathar did. We also see that Rome with all its military might and power is not really in charge just as Joab, a military man, would never be in charge. No, this was Jesus, this humble King who came riding on a donkey who was going to change the world. He is the true “son of David.”

Jesus was and is the true “King of all kings.” Jesus was and is the one who was and is greater than Solomon and greater than David. Solomon led his people down a path that would lead them to ruin and ultimately into exile; Jesus was and is the path that will lead us to God and eternal life for Jesus is “*the way, the truth, and the life.*” (John 14:6) However, the scriptures are not finished with the account of the King being praised by His people with their worship and again, with palm branches.

Revelation 7:9-12 - *“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were **holding palm branches in their hands.** ¹⁰ And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” ¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying: “**Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!**”*

Yes!!! **Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power and strength be to God forever and ever!!!** We hear the word “Amen” declared twice in this same scripture. It is declaring “so be it...so be it!!!” God is all of these things. God the Father and Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, are all these wonderful and glorious things to His people. Wow!!!

We then read in Revelation 7:16-17, “*Never again will they hunger, and never will they thirst; nor will the sun beat down upon them, nor any scorching heat.*’ ¹⁷**For the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.**” Jesus is the Lamb of God and He is our Good Shepherd. He will care for His people, forever and ever and ever!!!

That is why we are to declare, no longer the Hebrew word “hoshanna,” come save us, but rather we now declare the Greek word, “**Hosanna,**” which declares that Jesus **has saved us** and we thank Him and worship Him for saving us and bringing us back into the Kingdom of the Living God. We have been taken out of the grips of spiritual death. We now have eternal life!!!

That is what we should declare and pronounce to the world on this coming “Palm Sunday” and every day. Yes, our Savior came 2000 years ago. However, He did not just come to save us from the evil things on this earth, although He certainly will protect us from all those evils. No, Jesus came to save us from the greatest danger of all – eternal damnation and separation from the true and living God. He came to save us from sin and its eternal affect in people’s lives. AND... Jesus will be coming again, very very soon!!! Thank you, Jesus!!!

That is what the true believer in Jesus must know and must believe, today. The things on this earth will all pass away. Our minds need to be “*on things that are above and not on this earth.*” (Colossians 3:2) Yes, we are to desire the best for ourselves. However, we must **first** desire to help others in coming to know Jesus.

We must never, never, ever, ever, never forget that all the things that are on this earth will all pass away. It is only the spirit and soul of every individual person that will last forever. Where they will spend eternity should be our priority. That must be the priority of every believer.

We are to live our lives unto and for the Living God, telling others about the Good News of salvation through Jesus. Oh, we may, and we will be persecuted... but great will be our reward in Heaven with our Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit!!!

All four Gospels contain the account of this momentous entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. (Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-34; and John 12:12-15) This means that they all realized, knew and wanted to tell all their readers of this most significant event. It tells us what did happen 2000 years ago.

I pray that we recognize that this day is a most significant day for all true believers in Jesus. It actually points to why Jesus went to the cross a few days later. However, it also, and more importantly, prophetically points us to what will take place in the very near future. All true believers will gather to worship and wave their palm branches, the symbol of true spiritual peace with our God, as well as, the symbol of true spiritual victory over spiritual death and the forces of darkness.

Yes, we will wave them to the true “King of kings and Lord of lords” – Jesus Christ.

Oh, what a time that will be!!! AMEN!!!