



Celebration of the Lamb ~ April 14, 2019

OPEN

This Palm Sunday we remember the crowds who shouted “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! (Psalm 118:26). Can you imagine what it would have been like to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem!?”

However, the triumphal entry seems “out of sync” because the adoring crowd would be shouting “crucify Him” a week later.

Jesus had **compassion** for Jerusalem (see Matthew 23:37) but the crowd had **confusion** about why He was actually there. Their shout of “Hosanna” or “save now” had a temporary, political objective. But Jesus had come to Jerusalem to suffer and die for our sins.

DIG

Read **Matthew 21:1-11**. Consider three important questions about this event.

ONE: In what way did the crowd misunderstand the mission of Jesus?

What was Jesus’ mission? In Matthew 4:17 “*from that time on*” marked a turning point from preparation to proclamation. Matthew 16:21 was a turning point from proclamation to His passion. Jesus explained to his disciples that He must suffer, die, and be raised on the third day. (see Matthew 20:18-19)

Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem did not signal a campaign for **moral influence** nor **military action**. The triumphal entry was the culmination of all that happened from Matthew 16:21 up to 20:34. Jesus came to rescue humanity from sin by death on the cross. How does **Galatians 4:4-5** describe a **pivotal point** in God’s plan of redemption.

TWO: In what way did the crowd have a fickle faith?

Why did the crowd celebrate Jesus? John 12:17-19 gives us the answer. They were looking for more miraculous signs. Because the crowd misunderstood the mission of Jesus, they had a fickle faith. A weak and insipid faith is the product of regarding Jesus as mere celebrity or V.I.P. if you will.

When we see Jesus only as a sensational celebrity, rather than suffering Savior, we are going to default to expecting Him to satisfy our expectations and whims. We cannot pick and choose how Jesus should work in our life!

The disciples didn’t comprehend the declaration of **Zechariah 9:9** concerning Jesus’ humility and suffering. “*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.*” But when Jesus was glorified, it became clear (see **John 12:16**).

THREE: In what way did the crowd have a pseudo celebration?

Jesus must be followed authentically – and celebrated meaningfully. Read the rebuke about this found in **I Samuel 15:22**. A. W. Tozer wrote, “Current evangelicalism has...laid the altar and divided the sacrifice into parts, but now seems satisfied to count the stones and rearrange the pieces with never a care that there is not a sign of fire upon the top of lofty Carmel.”

The crowd in Jerusalem celebrated...but it was hollow and empty because they wanted a Jesus that would fit their agenda. Even followers of Jesus can co-opt or corrupt the mission of Jesus. And when we do, we will not *enjoy* God – we’ll endure Him because we are relying on our own energy and performance.

REFLECT

What is God’s ongoing mission? We find it in Ephesians 3:8-11. You see, no matter what the cost, even if it hurts, God offers healing to this world **through the Church**. How are we as a Cornerstone family, living up to the role that God has given us to play?

What a difference when we set aside our agenda for Jesus, and by His grace, join what He is doing in this world. Here is freedom and joy. Then we can truly shout “**Hosanna in the highest!**”

Worship and Reflect

Read slowly and worshipfully through **Psalm 118**, especially noting the descriptions of God’s gift of salvation. How will you rejoice more deeply in the forgiveness that is found in Jesus Christ?

To think more about how faith can be fickle and weak...

Read the article [The One Giant Obstacle Causing Millennials To Reject Faith](#)

Listen to Christian apologist [Ravi Zacharias](#) speak about the challenge of tolerance and autonomy as it relates to our spiritual beliefs.