

# The Triumph of The Triumphal Entry

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Preacher: Pastor Cal Morrison

- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     One of the things that I'll be focusing on this morning is misunderstanding the triumph of his entry.! What does that mean? Well, let's look at the passage.
- ! I'm going to be reading just verses 12 to 16 of John chapter 12. John chapter 12.
- Jesus and his disciples are in Bethany, and then they begin to head toward Jerusalem. The next day, the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.
- So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.
- And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion. Behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt.
- [ 1 : 3 4 ]     His disciples did not understand these things at first. But when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.
- Amen. This is God's word, and we pray he blesses the reading of it. Well, I wonder, if you were given the task of writing one of the four Gospels, just imagine that this is your job, that you are back then and you're writing one of the four Gospels, what would you include?
- We know from the end of John's Gospel that there are more things Jesus said and did that are not recorded because John says if they were to be recorded, there's not enough books in the world to record all that Jesus said and did.
- And so Jesus did many more things. All the books in the world couldn't contain them. So if you were writing one of the four Gospel accounts, what things would you choose to include, knowing very well that it's just a wee smidge of what he really did and said?
- What if you were writing an account and you knew that other accounts had been written? What if you were like John, you were like the last of the four, and you thought, what am I going to include?
- [ 3 : 0 0 ]     And all these other ones, there's so many things they've already included. So what will I include? What should I say about Jesus? What do you repeat?
- What do you not repeat? How many things do you think all the four Gospels record? And so quiz question, how many of the things that Jesus did do you reckon is mentioned in all four Gospels?
- And you've probably heard of a Gospel harmony where they try and harmonize the four Gospels and you see what's said in some and another. And occasionally, there's something that's mentioned in all four Gospels.
- Every writer thought this was something worth mentioning. And so quiz question, how many things do you think are mentioned in all four Gospels? What do you reckon?
- You don't need to shout out. Now, John starts his Gospel from the beginning of time. Mark starts his Gospel from John the Baptist coming on the scene.

[ 4 : 11 ] Matthew, Luke, they start from the birth of Christ. And so there's quite a span there. Let me just give you a hint.

When you get to the last week of Jesus' life, there are more things recorded in all four Gospels than there are for the 33 years prior to that.

But for 33 years prior to his last week, how many things do you think are recorded in all four Gospels? What do you reckon? One.

One thing. Isn't that crazy? Very surprising. The only really major event that is recorded in all four Gospels prior to the last week of his life on earth is the feeding of the 5,000.

Recorded in all four Gospels. Some things are recorded by two Gospels. Some things are recorded by three. But before Jesus entered Jerusalem in the last week of his life, on a donkey, the only one big thing that all four of the Gospels include is the feeding of the 5,000.

[ 5 : 25 ] However, in Jesus' last week, his Passion Week, there begins to be multiple things that every single Gospel records. And the interesting thing is they all begin with Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey.

this is the first event in his final week that all Gospels want to tell you. Why is that? Why do you think that is?

Now, if you were John the Apostle, or if you were sitting next to John the Apostle, and he's writing his Gospel, and he's asking you, what do you think about this? What do you think about that?

And you say to John, well, why is it important for you to include this? Because all the other Gospels, the other three ones, include this.

Why is it important, John, that you rehash the same stuff? The last week of Jesus' life, and he's like, I think I want to include the bit where Jesus came in on a donkey.

[ 6 : 26 ] And you think, why? What is it about that that makes that important? What do you think John would say? Do you have an answer? Do you know?

Do you have it figured out? I don't really have it figured out. Interestingly, we know a little bit about what John would say if you asked him that question.

Because in our passage, if you look at verse 16, it says, well, and he's including himself, he says, his disciples didn't understand these things at first.

But, when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. Now, I want you to imagine that God is sending you back in time to this moment when Jesus comes in on a donkey and God is sending you on a mission because he knows the disciples don't understand what is going on.

And he says, okay, here's your mission. You're going to tell these 12 disciples what is going on. Let me ask you, do you feel confident that you'd be able to tell them what's going on?

[ 7 : 39 ] What would you say to them? Well, I want you to consider a couple of things, right? A couple of things that you should know and then we're going to explore this question. Firstly, what the crowds are shouting when he comes in, Hosanna, blessed be he who comes in the name of the Lord.

What they are shouting comes from Psalm 118, as we've said. And this psalm was regularly recited as part of a group of psalms sung during the Passover festival.

So every year, at different festivals, they would sing different psalms in anticipation. And this was one of the psalms that they would sing in the hope and anticipation of God's Messiah finally coming.

And so, they're singing this. It wouldn't be unusual to hear these words, yet while every other year they would recite them in hope of the Messiah coming, this time, they are shouting these words about a person that is right there in their midst.

they are celebrating this person called Jesus with this messianic psalm. And so that's one thing to remember that when Jesus comes in, it's not unusual to hear these words, but it is unusual for these words to be sung about a person that's in their midst.

[ 8 : 51 ] And they think he's here. He's finally here. The second thing that we should notice is that what Jesus is doing is written in Zechariah 9, you're probably familiar with that.

And John quotes it here, but he didn't think about it when it happened. He quotes it years later. No one realized while this was happening that it was Zechariah 9.

No one. In the moment, even the disciples didn't understand that this prophecy was being fulfilled. And so have you ever heard the saying, you can finish the saying, hindsight is, yeah, many different versions, 20-20 vision, a great thing, whatever.

There would be various points after this which they might look back and think, how did we not know? However, I think there would be various points after this event in which it just wouldn't seem like Zechariah 9.

So I want you to just think about the week that happens after Jesus rides in on a donkey and think, would any of the disciples be thinking that that's Zechariah 9? I don't know if they would.

[ 10 : 07 ] And so let me just flip back to Zechariah 9 and just give us a flavor of why or why not they would think that this was actually happening. So Zechariah 9 from verse 9 says, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king is coming to you, righteous and having salvation as he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem and the battle bow shall be cut off and he, that is the Messiah, the king, he shall speak peace to the nations.

His rule shall be from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. Now, Passion Week, does that look like Passion Week?

And so would any of them be thinking, oh, that was Zechariah 9. And so the two things we should know is that Psalm 118 would have been familiar, but the difference is they're now saying it about a person in their midst.

[ 11 : 13 ] And secondly, this is Zechariah 9 happening, but nobody on the ground realizes that Zechariah 9 is happening. And so here's the question, where is the triumph of the triumphal entry?

Now, maybe we're familiar with this, when we get to Good Friday we ask the question, why is this called Good Friday? So the triumphal entry, what is so triumphant about it?

Is it simply because people are shouting and waving palm branches? What is the triumph? Where is the triumph of the triumphal entry? We've read Zechariah 9.

How will this king speak peace to the nations? Where is his rule from the river to the ends of the earth? I think if you were to ask, if you were to go back in time and say to one of the disciples, by the way, this is Zechariah 9.

Get with it, disciples. Can you not see this is Zechariah 9? I think the disciples would say, well, where's the peace? Well, where is his rule from sea to sea? What's going to happen? How come we're not rising up in revolution?

[ 12 : 26 ] I wonder if we wouldn't convince them that it was Zechariah 9 and I wonder if they would actually convince us of their expectations of the Messiah. I wonder if we would be whipped up into expectation of what Jesus is going to do.

Hindsight is 20-20 vision, but even some things require more than just hindsight. And I think your passage hints to us, and John's gospel hints to us, that two things are particularly needed, more than just hindsight.

Firstly, as John said in our passage, Jesus must be glorified. It's not just a matter of with enough time you'll look back and connect the dots. No, Jesus must be glorified for anyone to connect that with Zechariah 9.

Until then, his disciples won't understand. Secondly, as John goes on to say in the next few chapters of his gospel, the Spirit must come and illuminate these things to his disciples.

So understanding won't come until the Spirit comes, and the Spirit cannot come until Jesus is glorified, and until Jesus is glorified, the picture is incomplete.

[ 13 : 43 ] You think about the prophecy in Zechariah, it's incomplete until Jesus is glorified. And until the Spirit comes, the people will not have eyes to see the picture until it's complete.

And so see, if you went back in time to that day and told the disciples what was going on, they just would not see it. People often don't know in the moment that something is being fulfilled.

They're just in the moment. And I imagine there was such a buzz about Jesus entering Jerusalem like this that his disciples would have thought, you know, you remember that time at the Transfiguration, and Peter's like, yeah, let's set up some tents, let's stay in this moment.

And I wonder if at the end of the day they would have thought, hey, that was a pretty good day. Jesus going in on a donkey and everyone's shouting and screaming and waving palm branches. Let's book a donkey for tomorrow.

Wouldn't you just want to repeat that? You just keep the celebrations going. Come on, we're on the cusp of revolution. And it doesn't happen. It didn't go the way they thought that it would go.

[ 14 : 51 ] This is the crazy thing about Palm Sunday. All this excitement, and then it just does not go the way that you think it's going to go. And so does that mean that Palm Sunday was a failure?

Was it not triumphant? Where is the triumph? It didn't go the way they thought it went. But Jesus was not in the least surprised.

He was not surprised. Although people shouted the words of Psalm 118, Jesus knew that this would not be a national response. And we know this because he said as much back in Luke chapter 13.

He laments over Jerusalem and he says, you will not see me again until the day that you cry out, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. And he's not talking about Palm Sunday.

He's talking about a national response to the Messiah. And so what he's saying is, I know what you're going to say when I come into town. And most people are not going to see it. And if nobody says it, the stones will cry out.

[ 15 : 54 ] But at my first coming the nation's just not going to see it. And so Jesus said as much. He's not surprised the way that it goes after he rides in a donkey.

He is not surprised. He knows that it's not at his first coming that the nation will cry that out. So he wasn't surprised. Now why did he orchestrate this? Because Jesus actually orchestrated this.

He sent his disciples to get a donkey and it was not, it was not the usual behavior of Jesus. Jesus never went around requiring donkeys to enter Jerusalem.

And it wasn't the usual behavior of Jesus to do something that would encourage such public praise and acclamation. For his entire ministry he shied away from that.

He didn't want this kind of attention for the wrong reason. But at this moment he says, guys get me a donkey. And he welcomes it. And when he has an opportunity to clarify what's going on when the Pharisees say in another gospel they say, listen to what the people are saying.

[ 16 : 58 ] You need to keep them quiet. You need to correct them and rebuke them, Jesus. And Jesus says, no, let them sing. Because if they didn't the rocks would cry out.

Jesus is really for this moment. And so there's only two options I can see. There's only two options. The first option that this is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Jesus, some guy, is just really trying to work out this prophetic timeline in his own life to acclaim himself as king. He knows, although his disciples can't remember this prophecy in Zechariah, Jesus knows about this.

And he's either self-fulfilling a prophecy, guys get me a donkey and I'm going to make it out as I'm the king. Because that's Zechariah 9. So he's either knowingly trying to imitate Zechariah 9.9 to make himself out to be the king or he is the king and he's just doing what's written about him.

I think that's the only two options. And the problem with either option, there's a problem with either option, the problem is that Zechariah 9 is difficult to square with the rest of the week.

[ 18 : 13 ] This first moment, yeah, it's okay, but the rest of the week doesn't square with Zechariah 9. And so things can only make sense if and when this king who comes on a donkey, the rest of the week can only make sense if and when this person is glorified.

The person needs to be glorified for any of Zechariah 9 to make sense in this moment. Whoever wants to try and fulfill Zechariah 9.9 must be glorified or no one will believe it.

And so what followed this triumphal entry didn't seem triumphant or glorious until Jesus was glorified.

And so verse 16, if you look at verse 16 again, verse 16 is absolutely key to understanding the triumphal entry. His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.

So even if the disciples, the closest followers and students of Jesus did not know in the moment that Jesus was fulfilling a very important prophecy, as unusual as it was for Jesus to do this, it was the only time.

[ 19 : 33 ] Never before had they seen Jesus do this. They didn't understand that when he was doing it, this was a one-time event that was very specific to a divine prophetic timeline.

And only when Jesus is glorified and the spirit of truth came and helped them remember and understand, only then would they see the significance and the triumphal, and the triumph of his entry.

Only when he's glorified and the spirit comes can they see the triumph of this moment. Because without Jesus being glorified and without the spirit of truth giving any of us understanding, hindsight is not enough to see the triumph.

And I can say that very confidently. And the reason I can say that very confidently, that hindsight's not enough, is because our world is full of people with 2,000 years of hindsight and yet they still cannot understand or see the triumph of it.

Is that not true? And me, at one time in my life, could not see it. On top of that, even for believers, when we are believing, we might think that his entry on a donkey was supposed to do something different than what happened the rest of the week.

[ 20 : 51 ] We can sometimes think about this moment in time like Jesus was hoping that he would be received as a king and the nation disappointed him and lo and behold he had to go to the cross.

We can think that something different was supposed to happen and certainly all the people on the ground thought that something different was supposed to happen and the only person who was not surprised at what happened after that moment was Jesus.

And so we might look at Zechariah 9.9 we might map it onto Palm Sunday and we might think that this moment riding in on a donkey should never have led to the cross.

It doesn't look like this is going to lead to a cross. And we might think that it's purely a failure of Israel to recognise and welcome their king.

Certainly if we love Jesus which I'm confident many people here do if we love Jesus we might think Palm Sunday should never have led to Good Friday.

[ 21 : 58 ] We should be welcoming and praising Jesus this should never lead to Good Friday. We might think that Palm Sunday wasn't ultimately a success because they rejected and crucified him.

But if we think like that then we are like the disciples who do not understand these things. Now praise God if you understand them right now.

When I was studying this I was bending my mind over this question. What is it the disciples don't understand? And what is it I don't understand? I don't know if you ever feel that way that Palm Sunday how on earth could that have led to the cross?

How could people be shouting one day to acclaim him as king and then a week later a bunch of people are shouting to crucify him? Now it may not have been the same people but how does it lead to that?

And what does that mean? Why is it called the triumphal entry? It doesn't seem very triumphant. And so Paul says we only know in part.

[ 23 : 13 ] Now we see in a mirror dimly. But I want to pose five reasons why Palm Sunday was a success.

I want to give you five reasons that Palm Sunday was triumphant. and there may be more. You can let me know if there's a six and a seven.

I was trying to get the perfect number but here's five and we're just about to end. For Jesus right maybe on the ground for the disciples or for other people it didn't seem like a success.

For Jesus Palm Sunday did exactly what he wanted it to do. And Palm Sunday did exactly what he expected it to do. And for Jesus Palm Sunday was successful and him riding in on a donkey in Jerusalem was very successful for what Jesus intended for it to do.

And let me tell you why and let me map on Zechariah 9 onto Palm Sunday to see why this ultimately for Jesus is a great triumph. First reason his entry marked the starting point of a significant fulfillment of prophecy that would be continued to this very day.

[ 24 : 31 ] This prophecy in Zechariah 9 is still happening today. This is an incredible thing and I'll tell you more on that in a minute but this was a marker. If you get a prophetic timeline this moment put a marker on that timeline and because that fulfilled the start of a prophecy that's a success.

That's a success right there. Jesus intended to fulfill a prophecy and it happened and it has been happening to this day and so his entry successfully put a marker in the divine prophetic timeline.

Secondly his entry and this might surprise us and it might not surprise us but I think Jesus was not surprised by this. I think Jesus was very intentional about this.

His entry sufficiently provoked the authorities and forced them to kill him and it was a success and I think Jesus meant that and he expected that and they wouldn't have wanted that.

As much as they wanted to kill him they wouldn't have wanted to do it when thousands of Jews were in they wouldn't have wanted to do it in the midst of a great festival but he forced them he forced their hand now he didn't make them do evil but it's like when Yahweh came into Egypt with Moses he squeezed Pharaoh and Bear Grylls has got a saying you never really know what someone's made of until you squeeze them and so Pharaoh already had a hard heart and God just pressed them and it made his heart harder and Jesus provoked the authorities enough for what was in their heart to finally come out and follow the divine timeline that he would be offered during Passover as the sacrificial Passover Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world he forced their hand it was a success if he didn't enter the I mean think about it no other time did he do something so public but later on in

[ 26 : 35 ] John chapter 12 he says the hour has come for the son of man to be glorified and so success third reason the way Zechariah 9 talks about peace to the nations and the only way the only way to secure this messianic peace spoken about by Zechariah was only through the cross it was the only way this peace was going to happen if the triumphal entry led Jesus to being crowned in a revolution against Rome the kind of peace that we need would never happen the kind of peace spoken about in Zechariah would not have been won because our enemies are not just on the outside we don't fight against flesh and blood but Jesus came to destroy Satan sin and death and only then could we have peace with God it's not just peace among each other the kind of peace that we have among each other is feeble and we know it because we've lived in a time of peace and still sin is rampant and death has a hundred percent track record and so the kind of peace that

Jesus is going to bring the Messiah and Zechariah nine can only happen through the cross and so his Zechariah nine entry into Jerusalem Jesus fully expected to lead to a cross in order for him foreshadowed the extent of his salvation and the extent of his rule Zechariah nine nine speaks of the nations peace to the nations and his rule to the ends of the earth and the interesting thing is John chapter 19 John 12 verse 19 we see the Pharisees saying look the world has gone after him and they inadvertently speak about what actually will happen for Jesus that the world will go after him not just Israel but the whole world and interestingly if you look at the next verse who is it that starts to seek Jesus but Greeks and so we see a foreshadow in his triumphal entry of the

Zechariah nine extent of his salvation and rule this is wonderful and when you see in acts that they will be witnesses!

to the ends of the earth that's what Jesus says to his disciples Zechariah nine says that this king will speak peace to the nations how does he speak peace to the nations well it is not as Joseph Smith and the mormons say that Jesus had a secret trip to America Jesus speaks peace to the nations through his gospel and through his gospel witnesses!

who became witnesses to the ends of the earth through the word and through the gospel to reach us and think about Zechariah nine the prophecy is happening to us that his salvation and rule is reaching the extents of Bell's Hill and our lives and finally fifthly the Christ must suffer before entering glory Luke 24 26 Jesus said that to the disciples on the road to Emmaus he says foolish ones did you not realize that the Christ must suffer these things and then enter his glory and so Zechariah nine this is what it goes on to say in Zechariah nine it says rejoice shout aloud behold your king is coming to you humble and mounted on a donkey he will speak peace to the nations his rule shall be from sea to sea and verse 11 it says and for you also because of the blood of my covenant with you

[ 30 : 38 ] I will set your prisoners free because of the blood of my covenant what's that all about we're going to be looking at that in a moment with communion but there's something about this Messiah that there's the blood of his covenant and how can that happen unless he goes to the cross and how can he go into glory unless he goes via suffering and he did suffer and he was crucified and he was raised on the third day and he did ascend to the right hand of God in power and he is glorified he is glorified and because of that his disciples saw and understood and if you read Acts chapter 2 Acts chapter 3 and on and on you will see how the disciples now understand the fulfillment of prophecy and I'm not going to spend time reading it just now but if you go into that you'll see the way that they use the prophets and how they now understand the triumph of

Christ who is now glorified and so finally how do we understand these years later with all this hindsight it's not because John the apostle spells it out for us he quotes Zechariah 9 and says by the way did you know that Jesus coming into Jerusalem on a donkey was Zechariah 9 because there's so many people in our world today that can read those words and still not understand it how is it that we can understand well two things helps us understand and number two when the spirit comes and brings light into our hearts to understand these things so that we can see the triumph of his road to glory via the cross the triumph of salvation when the people are crying out psalm 118 save us save us save us hosanna and

Jesus is like well how am I going to do that you don't know it yet I'm going to do it on a cross it could be no other way and so Palm Sunday had to go via suffering and then to glory and so folks be encouraged there's going to be loads of things that we do not understand as his disciples things we may never understand until we see him in glory but look at the disciples after Jesus is glorified not only do they understand how suffering and rejection did not get in the way of Jesus fulfilling prophecy listen to this this I found a great encouragement for me and I hope this morning it's a great encouragement for you I hope you see the triumph in this fact that not only do the disciples now understand that Jesus is in glory now understand that suffering and rejection did not stand in the way of him fulfilling prophecy but they now also look at suffering and death for themselves as being no hindrance to

Jesus fulfilling his promises in them suffering and death is no hindrance to Jesus fulfilling his promises to us and suffering and death is no hindrance for Jesus giving us entry into his kingdom so folks may we have the same confidence by looking to the glorified Christ and learning from his spirit to understand these things because only when we see that he is now glorified will we see that our entry into his kingdom is only because of his triumphal entry through suffering and into glory amen amen let me pray heavenly father these things are often beyond us and we we see dimly we only know in part but we thank you so much that we have your word recorded and we thank you that you sent your spirit into your chosen apostles not just to write these things down but to understand

Jesus what he is doing and who he is and for us to have that example and not just that example for us to have the same hope that we too can understand and see that Jesus is glorified and we too can have your spirit to illuminate these things in our heart and give us the hope of glory in Christ and so please would you encourage us this morning to see how triumphant Jesus is now that he has suffered and now that he is in glory we pray in his wonderful victorious name Amen!

[ 35 : 44 ] voy voy!  
voy! voy!