

Luke 19:28-44

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Preacher: David Helm

[0 : 00] and may be found on page 973 of the White Bibles. At this time, the children from age 3 through 2nd grade may be dismissed out these back doors for the children's program. They can be picked up after the service down the hallway.

There's also a nursery for those under the age of 3 down the hallway. Again, today's scripture reading is Luke 19, verses 28 through 44, page 973 in the White Bible.

Please remain standing for the reading of God's Word. And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, saying, 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. If anyone asks you, Why are you untying it? You shall say this, The Lord has need of it. So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them.

And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, Why are you untying the colt? And they said, The Lord has need of it. And they brought it to Jesus. And throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it.

[1 : 17] And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. And as 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, saying, Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord.

Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, Teacher, rebuke your disciples. He answered, I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.

And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace, but now they are hidden from your eyes.

For 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 and 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. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. You may be seated.

[2 : 35] Well, good morning and welcome to you on this Palm Sunday.

I am glad that you have come. In a little over a week's time, I will be in Memphis with two dear friends of mine, Pastor Charlie Dates of Progressive Baptist of Chicago and K. Edward Copeland of Mount Zion in Rockford.

And we are gathering with a number of others to commemorate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. There was a march once in Memphis, 1968.

Sanitary workers in need of relief from professional duress. Yesterday, there was a march in Washington, D.C.

The context of this was the need for reform related to violence that continues to mark our country, particularly through the use of guns.

[3 : 59] In our text today, there is a march as well. The need for marches seems to march on.

Did you know that Jesus himself led a march? Here in the text, it's termed his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

I want to look at that march today in its movements along three lines, particularly interested in those who are wondering whether you ought to go up with Jesus.

If so, what would it mean for you to draw near to him? And then finally, how can you know that you have come to know him?

That is the movement of the text which was read to you this morning. Three movements on the demonstration, the march that Jesus led.

[5 : 11] You see him there in verse 28 going up to Jerusalem. And that will carry his movement all the way through verse 36.

And then in verse 37, there will be a shift. As Luke will let you know, verse 37, he was drawing near to Jerusalem.

And then at verse 41, he will actually come within sight of Jerusalem. That's the movement of the text and the movement of the message.

Jesus is going up to Jerusalem. Jesus is drawing near to Jerusalem. Jesus is coming to Jerusalem. And I ask us today, what would it mean for you to go up with him? And do you know what he intends for those of us who would draw near to him?

[6 : 19] And how can we be assured that we have actually come to know him? There he is, verse 28, leading his march.

With obvious intention on this thought. He planned it. He planned it. And when he had said these things, he went on ahead going up to Jerusalem.

This has been in his mind for some time. It is not a half-hearted attempt, a spur-of-the-moment movement.

The entire gospel of Luke, from chapter 9 and verse 51, has demonstrated that he has a plan to make a march on Jerusalem.

9.51, when the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. In other words, the entire movement of the gospel has been framed on the moment at which we find him today.

[7 : 25] You can see his concerted effort to lead on this day in chapter 13 and verse 22 as well. He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem.

In fact, he will say in the same chapter, verse 34, When you begin to look at his ministry then, all the way into chapter 17 and verse 11, his face is set on the day of his march.

Chapter 17, verse 11, On the way to Jerusalem. It is the guiding principle of the entire unit of Luke's thought.

Chapter 18, and in verse 31, And taking the twelve, he said to them, See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.

He is intent on leading a march on the city of Jerusalem. He planned it. Not only did he plan it according to the literary context, which we have just looked at, but the narrative itself indicates his plan.

[8 : 59] Verse 29, He sent two of his disciples. He's now not only planning the day, he's appointing the means and the method by which he will come.

He sends them, and then there's this wonderful but ambiguous moment when he tells them to enter the city, to find the cult, to untie it and bring it here.

But verse 31, interests every reader. If anyone asks of you, Why are you untying it? You shall say, The Lord has need of it. So those who were sent went, and those who went found.

And as they found, the owners asked, Why are you untying the cult? And they said, The Lord has need of it. What could this possibly mean, other than that he has pre-ordered all things on this day? Not merely that he knew, or somehow had talked to someone about taking the cult. No, that he wanted his disciples long afterwards to know, I have orchestrated everything regarding this day.

[10 : 13] It is as if Luke is proving to the readers, the essence of everything went down, here it is, just as he said it would.

That's the point. That's the point. He led a march. He planned it. He intended it.

And it all went absolutely in accordance with his wishes for it. And then there's that odd little moment in the text where he actually makes use of the cult surrounding it.

The choice of the cult is intriguing. Particularly because everyone in that era that would march on Rome as a result of warring conquest would have come in a very different way.

This is a fascinating subject when one considers that Rome that ruled the world for the better part of a thousand years certainly had no fewer than 300 occasions when generals, warriors, conquerors would return to the city and wait outside the gate until the Senate would approve the magnificence of their accomplishments and therefore demonstrate that the warrior was worthy of his own march,

his own triumph.

[12:03] Cicero speaks of this. If you want it in novel form, you'll never find anyone better than Robert Robert Harris in his trilogy on that same life.

Dio Cassius writes of this. Josephus puts it to pen. Plutarch in his lives on Roman leaders provides perhaps the most fascinating description of what it was like for a victorious conquering warrior to be approved and to begin his march.

He appeals in written form to Lucius Amarelius who in around 191 BC conquered Macedonia and he recounts for the reader the glory and the splendor of those days after having been approved for his own triumph.

It says that there were many days given to the entrance of the victor. The first day according to Plutarch all the temples would have been opened.

Laurels and garland and flowers filling the city and all people would have been preparing for that day. When the first day of the march then would arrive you would find all of the the weaponry all of the military garb on display no fewer than 3,000 soldiers bringing in all that we have conquered.

[13:43] All the money wagon upon wagon with silver and streets lined with that. By the time of the third day the slaves which had been captured would have been led in through the gate of Rome followed by the leader himself this vanquished king and his children in tow.

And he actually indicates that he was bewildered and dumbfounded having been beaten on the battlefield and now on his way to death. And then Amarelius himself in a chariot which Plutarch describes as being magnificently adorned riding behind the white horse conquering hero for all to see.

That's the way the world marches because we want to get in line go up with those who have proven success have great wealth have great opportunity to make a difference in the world.

Let me put it to you this way right where we all can get it. Jesus was no JB and Jesus was no Mr. Rauner. He may be a billionaire from on high come as a pauper but he did not enter Jerusalem like the victorious warrior and conqueror.

The entire movement of his march is echoing a counter ambiance of the day in which he lived. In other words if you want to go up with Jesus you want in on his demonstration it will be the most humble perhaps humiliating walks of your life.

[15:49] Here he comes on the cult with this Greco-Roman context sitting on top of it by way of contrast as well as this Judaistic inscripturated prophecy running alongside it by way of illusion.

TJ mentioned this morning in his call to worship the prophet Zechariah who speaks of God coming to deliver Israel in chapter 9 as a victorious conquering king coming from the north defeating all of Israel's enemies and arriving at Jerusalem's gate.

And then it indicates that the surprise of the narrative that the God who has come is marked by the humility of one who rules via a way very different than the world.

You want to go up with Jesus? Here's the point. Jesus is making a claim in his march to kingship but it is a kingship unlike the ones that we prefer.

He moves notice Luke as he was drawing near verse 37 already on the way down. In other words in a literary level the going up to Jerusalem is giving way to a drawing near and what we see here as he draws near we will learn what it is that we are drawing near to.

[17:37] Words of rejoicing words of resistance and words of rebuke.

Notice the words of rejoicing. The whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen saying blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

The first half of that last verse is a direct citation not an allusion a direct citation to the sixth psalm psalm 118.

Did you know that this very week in our own neighborhoods as we prepare for Passover and beyond within a Jewish neighborhood there will be many people who will actually be reciting this psalm in the coming days psalm 118.

On the second night before the dinner is served they will read psalm 113 and 114 these songs of praise hallel hallelujah praise the Lord blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord will be recited and sung around tables all through this neighborhood.

[19:00] These are the words of those who raise their voices as a consequence of him drawing near.

What would it mean for you to draw near to Jesus? Not only that you would embrace a way of humility but that you would begin to lift your voice in praise.

He not only claims to be a king he desires your allegiance. your voice your call upon it.

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. I looked earlier this week back at Psalm 118. It's the same psalm that indicates a stone being rejected.

But it's the same psalm that after verse 26 which is where this citation comes from there is a praise for a festal sacrifice that finds its way to the horns of the altar.

[20 : 16] Think of it. This is the psalm that Jewish individuals would sing annually as they came to Jerusalem for the Passover. They would sing this one of six psalms on their way.

And they would say blessed be the king who comes in the name of the Lord. They would want the gates of righteousness to open and they would be looking for the festal sacrifice that is the Passover lamb that was going to be sacrificed as a means by which God would save them.

For indeed Passover celebrates God's deliverance of his people from Egypt. And as they reflected on that year by year, he delivered us from our enemies.

He delivered us from our enemies. How? Through the sacrificial offering of the lamb. And here comes Jesus through those same gates in the most humble of means and notice he is willing to receive the praises and blessings of his kingship.

You'll look at verse 39. Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, Teacher, rebuke your disciples because the words of rejoicing were met by words of resistance!

[21 : 34] Why? It's not that they were opposed to the singing of Psalm 118 on the way to the city because that was done every year. they could see in what was unfolding that Jesus was making all too much of the moment.

That he was taking unto himself the ordinary psalm that was going up to God. And so they indicate to him, whoa, this is wrong.

You are not to receive the praises of Psalm 118 as though you were a king coming in conquering garb. Words of rejoicing, what it means to draw near.

But it's met with words of resistance. But notice the final words of rebuke put down by Jesus. Verse 40, I tell you if these were silent the very stones would cry out.

What he's saying is part one I'm going up to Jerusalem to make a claim on king. Part two as he drew near to Jerusalem I rightfully receive all blessings and honors that are given to me as king.

[22 : 58] And if you will not praise him he says to those then the stones themselves would lift up a voice that heretofore had never been given to them.

Are you ready to draw near to Jesus? Are you ready to cry out blessed approved worthy is the Nazarene in all of his humility to receive the following of my own allegiance?

Put it differently are you willing to join him in his march?! How can you know for sure that you are with him?

The last movement of the text moves from him going up to Jerusalem drawing near to Jerusalem but now he is within sight he has come to Jerusalem and when he drew near and saw the city he wept over it I've been thinking of this text even early this morning under the banner of its movement he's going up to Jerusalem and he sent he draws near to Jerusalem and they said he comes to Jerusalem and he wept he wept he wept why because he did not think that they understood the import of the day he says would that even you had known had known a phrase repeated at the end of the same unit of thought verse 44 because you did not know would that you had known on this day the things that make for peace what kind of peace is he bringing the gospel of Luke indicates that the peace they desired which was completely horizontal was not the peace that he was offering that the kingship that they wanted was not the kingship that he was bringing that the blessings bestowed upon him were that of a sacrificial lamb given for them the peace that he's bringing is peace with God relational peace with God now this is a march of a different order the man is on a mission that in his own ministry he and he alone would fulfill all that's needed for a world to be at peace with

[26 : 44] God but they did not know it they did not know it it had been hidden from them and he says oh that you would have known all the things that bring for peace notice the last phrase you did not know the time of your visitation which goes all the way back to the first and second chapters of Luke the visitation of John the Baptist in his birth the visitation of the angels offering peace on earth with those whom he is well pleased it's a visitation that's connected to salvation so there it is Palm Sunday put differently what do you want out of Jesus what do you want do you know why you would

go up with him yes because he makes claims of kingship do you know what is required to draw near him yes blessings for his laying down of his life do you know what it means to come to him seeking! seeking him for salvation rather than anything else or above anything else that he would offer this week we we enter into the most solemn of weeks and those are the three things I want you to walk through the week with I want you to arrive here Friday night at seven o'clock ready to receive communion in the darkness of the hour where we reflect in a concerted way on the festal sacrifice that saves and then I want you to arrive on Sunday morning certainly with Valois I couldn't do Easter without Valois well that's a little overstatement I hope but I want you to arrive at 10 a.m. ready to see the conquering risen lamb but most of all I want you to experience this week peace with God peace Jesus is peace a peace that is unlike anything this world can offer imagine the astonishing joy of being made right with your maker imagine sins committed atoned for by his death astounding the new life that is given to you oh that everyone here would join in this march our heavenly father we give ourselves to you today through this most ironic of demonstrations! nations and we ask that for many here this morning they would want to go up with Jesus they would for themselves draw near to Jesus that they would know the salvation and peace that comes from Jesus and so even as we sing today help us to give our lives to Jesus in whose name we pray amen