

## God Moves In A Mysterious Way

### *The Lesson of Palm Sunday*

Luke 19:28-40

April 13th, 2025

#### I. Introduction: “We Had Hoped. . .”

Palm Sunday commemorates our Lord’s approach to Jerusalem. The King of Glory has arrived, and He comes to the doors of *His* city, the city of Jerusalem, which is Zion, the City of David. For Jesus is the promised Son of David. When we come to this passage, *we* know how it’s all going to play out. But at the time, everybody except our Lord had no idea that things were going to unfold the way they did. They had much different expectations. They were surprised and even disappointed with how it all would go. This was not because they were naive or given to wishful thinking. It was a mistake in interpretation. They thought they knew their Bibles, when in reality, they only knew half of their Bibles. They only grasped half of what God was up to. And as a result, they were scattered and disappointed. They were left saying, as the disciples on the road to Emmaus, “We had hoped . . .” They *had* hoped, implying that they were now left hopeless.

#### II. The Text — Luke 19:28-40

*28 When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples, 30 saying, “Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. 31 And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’” . . .*

#### III. The Coming Showdown

The disciples were expecting a storm. They were expecting a showdown. They were not surprised that Jesus had enemies. In fact, their Bibles told them that this King would have enemies. They knew Jerusalem was infested. They didn’t imagine Jesus would march right in and be enthroned by all. But they were expecting Him to \_\_\_\_\_.

**Parable of the Minas (Luke 19:11-27)** — They were expecting a showdown because Jesus Himself said there would be a showdown. He said this right before our passage in a parable. A parable that ends with a newly minted king slaying his \_\_\_\_\_. So Jesus told his disciples this parable, and then He went up to Jerusalem. If you’re a disciple seeing all of this, you’d expect a showdown and a \_\_\_\_\_.

**The Triumphant King (Zechariah 9:10)** — The prophecy in Zechariah which Jesus is in the process of fulfilling would also lead the disciples to think they were all in for a battle. They were expecting King Jesus to go in and judge His rebellious people, and take over, cutting off the chariot, cutting off the horse. The King would take control of the homeland, and then proceed to take over the rest of the region, speaking peace to the nations, taking dominion from sea to sea, from the River to the ends of the earth.

**Cleansing of the Temple (Luke 19:45-46)** — Moreover, when the disciples witnessed Jesus go in and cleans the \_\_\_\_\_ out, they would have been perfectly reasonable in seeing this as the first step in the conquest foretold.

From Jesus' parable, from scriptural prophecy, from Jesus' own action, the disciples surveyed the scene and saw all things coming together. Jesus the King rides in on the donkey. He's hailed and worshiped. Zion is rejoicing. His enemies are making a stink. The temple is cleansed—and next up, the entire city. But that's not how the story goes. Instead, Jesus' enemies triumph over Him. He dies by crucifixion. By the end of Luke, the \_\_\_\_\_ are scattered, disappointed, confused, and scared.

#### **IV. What Manner of Spirit**

Now, the disciples were not wrong about their King. Jesus' parable wasn't a lie. Zechariah wasn't a mistake. Jesus *would* \_\_\_\_\_ Jerusalem. The Roman army, as Jesus predicted, would encamp around them, level them to the ground, including their children. And this was the judgment of God, the sign of "the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory..." (Luke 21:27; cf. Dan 7). But they were wrong about the timing, and more importantly they were wrong about the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_. It was not at the top of His list to destroy His enemies. That was, very likely, at the top of His disciples' lists (Lk. 9:54). But they mistook their Lord for having these same priorities; they thought He was one like themselves, being of their spirit—rather than learning from Him and seeking to follow in His footsteps. In one instance Jesus responded to James and John in their misguided zeal, saying that they did not "know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to \_\_\_\_\_ them" (Lk. 9:55-56). They did not know what kind of Kingdom the Lord was inaugurating. They did not know what kind of King they had.

#### **V. The Lesson of Palm Sunday**

Our Lord's ways are inscrutable. Our God moves in a mysterious way, so that there was a level of surprise, and of disappointment among His disciples. But it ended up being very good news. Good news for the Jewish leaders, since Jesus' death meant their salvation—salvation for those whose hearts would be pierced, whose eyes would be opened, who would finally come to understand the mercy of God in the crucified Christ (cf. Acts 2). And it was good news for His disciples. For His death meant life everlasting. It meant forgiveness for them, too. And it is good news for us and for the entire world. For the death of Christ is our death—a death we no longer have to die because He died for us.

God's ways are great, and they are inscrutable, but not in a foreboding and ominous sort of way. His ways are great and inscrutable in the surpassing richness of His \_\_\_\_\_. God is always more merciful than we think. His goodness is more abundant, more glorious, and more life-giving. So that as we come to know God better, we find that He is even \_\_\_\_\_ than we thought. This is the lesson of Palm Sunday. We are to patiently trust in our Lord, even when things don't play out how we had hoped—even when it doesn't make sense to us, so that we're tempted to disappointment and despair. The Lord doesn't change. He is yesterday, today, and forever "the Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..." And He is this, more than we can know.

#### **VI. Come & Welcome to Jesus Christ**