

Sunday, August 18, 2024 | Holy Week

Week 1 | Luke 19:28-40 | "Palm Sunday"

Today, we'll start a new series in our study of Luke's gospel: Holy Week. As the name implies, this series explores the week leading up to the cross and even goes a little beyond (Lu. 19:28-24:53). And though Jesus Christ will enter the gates of Jerusalem like a triumphant king at the beginning of the week, by the end of the week, he'll take a thorny crown, assuming his place on a rugged throne.

However, though the King of Kings will die, this is not contrary to God's will but in accordance with it. His death, a most gruesome one, will not be the end but the beginning. By his death, the Son of God will win humanity's freedom from the penalty of sin, fulfilling a promise made thousands of years before (cf. Gen. 3:15). And by his resurrection, the Son of Man will secure eternal life for every disciple.

Holy Week changed the trajectory of human history. From that point forward, all those who repent and turn to the Lord are given a new heritage. No longer heirs of the first Adam, such people are made new—a new nature, home, and calling—by the power of the Second Adam, Jesus Christ. Though they were unholy, because of Holy Week, every believer of every age can be made holy by the authority of the Holy One of God.

READ: Luke 19:28-48 (ESV)

²⁸ And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰ 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. ³¹ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'" ³² So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. ³³ And as they were untying **the colt**, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying **the colt**?" ³⁴ And they said, "The Lord has need of it." ³⁵ And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on **the colt**, **they set Jesus on it**.

³⁶ And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. ³⁷ 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, ³⁸ saying, "Blessed is **the King** who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace

in heaven and glory in the highest!”³⁹ And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.”⁴⁰ He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”

⁴¹ And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴² 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. ⁴³ 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 ⁴⁴ 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.”

⁴⁵ And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, ⁴⁶ saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of robbers.” ⁴⁷ And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him, ⁴⁸ but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.

In this passage, Jesus assumes three O.T. offices:

i. Vs. 28-40 - The Gentle King Astride His Colt

Jesus’ riding into Jerusalem on a donkey/colt is significant for two reasons:

First, it fulfilled a 500-year-old prophecy.

READ: Zechariah 9:9 (ESV)

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.

Interestingly, this O.T. allusion wasn’t apparent until after the resurrection (cf. Jn. 12:16).

Secondly, as Zech. 9:9 clarifies that a colt, as opposed to a war horse, represented humility, gentleness, and peace. The angels declared at Christ’s birth, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men” (Lu. 2:14). And Jesus said of himself, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is

condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” (Jn. 3:16-18).

The role of a king in the O.T. was to rule on behalf of God. Just as Jesus exerted his authority in obtaining the colt, he exhibited his sovereignty over Jerusalem by entering the city while riding the donkey/colt. There is no doubt. Here was Jerusalem’s King of Kings, sent by Yahweh to rule!

The disciples accepted Jesus as King: “They spread their cloaks on the road” (vs. 36), “to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice” (vs. 37), and quoting from Psalm 118:26, the disciple shouted, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest” (vs. 38). These were words used throughout Israel history to welcome the King back from some major victory;¹ but now they’re employed with reference to Jesus. Luke has alluded to Jesus’ kingship before (cf. 1:32; 18:38-39); here, the claim is made explicit.

However, the leadership rejected Jesus (vs. 39). They thought all this praise was unwarranted and inappropriate because they did not want Jesus as King. And they wanted the Lord to silence the crowd. Remarkably, the Lord replies, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.” Rocks were more intelligent than the Pharisees. They were indeed dumber than a box of rocks.

ii. Vs. 41-44 - The Weeping Prophet Outside His City

Jesus’ weeping outside the city of Jerusalem is significant for two reasons:

First, it shows that Jesus assumed the role of prophet. And a prophet’s function in the O.T. was to speak on behalf of God. In fact, Jesus was, as John’s prologue makes clear, the Word of God incarnate. And Lord himself declared,

READ: John 12:44-50 (ESV)

⁴⁴ And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. ⁴⁵ And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. ⁴⁶ I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. ⁴⁷ If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. ⁴⁸ The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. ⁴⁹ For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—

¹ Bock (1996), p. 1558.

what to say and what to speak. ⁵⁰ And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

Second, it likens Jesus to prophets like Elisha and Jeremiah. When God wants to make peace and yet is rejected, only Judgement remains. Like Jeremiah, Jesus foretold of Israel's destruction for rejecting him (cf. Jer. 6:6-21). And just as Elisha wept in 2 Kings 8:11 because of what was about to happen to Israel, Jesus was heartbroken over what was about to happen to Jerusalem. And if you'll recall, this wasn't the only time Jesus lamented over Jerusalem. In Luke 13:34, the Lord said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

When Jesus foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, he used **siege terminology**: “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...” (vs. 43-44).

This prophetic word was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when Rome sacked Jerusalem. Throughout a five-month siege, the Roman general Titus leveled the city. Titus waited until the city had ballooned due to Passover and then began what would become a five-month siege. He cut off supplies to the city, and the inhabitants resorted to cannibalism.

A Jewish historian, Josephus, describes the destruction of the temple:

“As the legions charged in, neither persuasion nor threat could check their impetuosity: passion alone was in command. Crowded together around the entrances many were trampled by their friends, many fell among the still hot and smoking ruins of the colonnades and died as miserably as the defeated. As they neared the Sanctuary they pretended not even to hear Caesar's commands and urged the men in front to throw in more firebrands. The partisans were no longer in a position to help; everywhere was slaughter and flight. Most of the victims were peaceful citizens, weak and unarmed, butchered wherever they were caught. Round the Altar the heaps of corpses grew higher and higher, while down the Sanctuary steps poured a river of blood and the bodies of those killed at the top slithered to the bottom.”

In total, somewhere between 600k to 1 million were killed, and over 90k were enslaved. About 40K survived.

Why did the Lord give a prophetic word of doom? Jesus said, “Because you did not know the time of your visitation.” The Jews had missed their opportunity for peace. Jesus’ words demonstrate how pained, frustrated, and hurt he was over his people’s rejection. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not” (Jn. 1:11). Death and destruction are all that is left for those who reject Jesus.

iii. Vs. 45-48 - The **High Priest** Inside His **Temple**

Jesus is our Great High Priest.

READ: 1 Timothy 2:5-6 (ESV)

⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

The role of a priest in the O.T. was **to mediate** between God and mankind. He ensured that those under his care were in accordance with God and that the Temple ran smoothly. And what do you find when Jesus enters the Temple? We see him trying to reform the place of worship, casting out the money changers, and calling the whole group to repent. Quoting Isaiah 56:7, Jesus says, “My house shall be a **house of prayer,**’ but you have made it a **den of robbers.**” Commercialism had replaced pietism. The Temple had become a place of business rather than a house of prayer. Instead of drawing close to God, religion became a means to get rich.

Acting as the overseer of his “Father’s House” (Lu. 2:49), Jesus, the Great High Priest, wanted to reform the Temple system. To be clear, it wasn’t a sin that they sold things within the Temple Precinct. Animals had to purchase for sacrifice. For instance, in A.D. 66, 255,600 lambs were sacrificed during Passover.² However, considering Jesus’ actions, the way this business was conducted was a sin. They had turned from worshipping God to worshipping money, and decisive action had to be taken. Just as the priest Phinehas took a spear and killed the worshippers of Baal (cf. Number 25), saving the Israelites from a plague, so the Lord overturned the money changers, attempting to save the Jews from their idolatry.

But the Jews would not listen. Luke tells us, “The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him...” They would not accept the authority of Jesus. So, rather than repenting, they began to plot. For them, it was time for Jesus to die.

So, what’s the takeaway?

² Edwards (2015), p. 555.

There is no King, Prophet, or Priest but Jesus Christ.

READ: Hebrews 1:1-4 (ESV)

¹ Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

The religious leaders resisted him during his triumphal procession and in the Temple. Jesus' lament outside the city indicates that though the people are "hanging on his every word," their sentiments will change, and they will hang Jesus on the Cross. Jesus will be rejected by all and executed by the end of Holy Week. Yet, despite this, he will rise and assume his rightful place at God's right hand.

Everyone was wrong about Jesus back then. What about now? What about you? Have you bent the knee to the King of Kings, the Last Prophet, and the Great High Priest?

Video Description:

Holy Week | Week 1 | “The Triumphal Entry” (Luke 19:28-40)

SPEAKER: Ben Hyrne, Pastor

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