

No Stone Unturned



SERMON NOTES APRIL 13, 2025

Palm Sunday

Scripture: Luke 19:28-40

LUKE 19:28-40 (THE MESSAGE)

²⁸⁻³¹ After saying these things, Jesus headed straight up to Jerusalem. When he got near Bethpage and Bethany at the mountain called Olives, he sent off two of the disciples with instructions: "Go to the village across from you. As soon as you enter, you'll find a colt tethered, one that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it. If anyone says anything, asks, 'What are you doing?' say, 'His Master needs him.'"

³²⁻³³ The two left and found it just as he said. As they were untying the colt, its owners said, "What are you doing untying the colt?"

³⁴ They said, "His Master needs him."

³⁵⁻³⁶ They brought the colt to Jesus. Then, throwing their coats on its back, they helped Jesus get on. As he rode, the people gave him a grand welcome, throwing their coats on the street.

³⁷⁻³⁸ Right at the crest, where Mount Olives begins its descent, the whole crowd of disciples burst into enthusiastic praise over all the mighty works they had witnessed: Blessed is he who comes, the king in God's name! All's well in heaven! Glory in the high places!

³⁹ Some Pharisees from the crowd told him, "Teacher, get your disciples under control!"

⁴⁰ But he said, "If they kept quiet, the stones would do it for them, shouting praise."

"Those who have witnessed and experienced God's redeeming love in Jesus respond with awe and service, revel with gratitude and praise, and tell of what God is doing!"

I. "IT'S TIME!"

- A. In Luke's Gospel we have been journeying with Jesus toward Jerusalem for some time (9:51-19:57). As He is nearing Jerusalem, he discerns that his disciples are expecting the Kingdom of God to come immediately (19:11).
- B. Jesus tells them a parable trying to help them understand the reality of his arrival in Jerusalem is not to be a crowning glory but the place where he will make the ultimate sacrifice.
- C. He is the Messiah, but he will not enter Jerusalem as a conquering hero, but as a humble, servant King as prophesied in Zechariah 9:9-10, "Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."
- D. As they are just a couple of miles from Jerusalem near the towns of Bethpage and Bethany, Jesus gives two of his disciples instructions as to literally where they are to find the donkey, what they are to say to its owners, "His Master needs him", and to bring the donkey to him!
- E. And everything is as Jesus has told them! Another not-so-subtle reminder to them of who he is and to listen to what he is telling them!

When have you come to understand Jesus differently than you expected?

II. "LOST IN WONDER, LOVE, AND PRAISE!"

- A. Luke's telling of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem is unique in that it is most poignantly the story of Jesus and his disciples. Disciples acquire the donkey, disciples place Jesus on the donkey, and disciples call him the King who comes in the name of the Lord!
- B. Jesus is honored and praised by his followers, not the fickle crowd as told by the other Gospels, who quickly abandon Jesus. It is Jesus' followers who have heard him preach, witnessed and experienced healing in his presence, and who at least for this moment, see clearly who Jesus is and celebrate!
- C. It is also Jesus' followers who spread their coats on the Donkey's back and on the roadway in his honor. There is also no mention by Luke of palm branches or Hosannas that were common to parades, festivals, and national celebrations. In Luke's telling, there is no place for such misguided expressions of political or militaristic fervor.
- D. There is also no mention of Jesus in the same breath as King David. "King" is mentioned in their praises but only in relation to "Peace!" Blessed is he who comes, the king in God's name! All's well in heaven! Glory in the high places!
- E. It's interesting that their shouts of praise are reminiscent of the Angel's chorus at Jesus' birth, again heralding who Jesus is and that he is about to accomplish his mission which was foretold so many years before.

How is Jesus calling you to respond to his gifts of forgiveness and salvation?

III. "AND SO, IT BEGINS..."

- A. As Jesus is making his way down from the Mount of Olives opposite the city of Jerusalem his followers, "Burst into enthusiastic praise over all the mighty works they had witnessed!" This unbridled enthusiasm is not received well by some Pharisees who are also making their way down the road toward Jerusalem, and they implore Jesus to, "Get your disciples under control!"
 - B. Luke doesn't give us a clear reason for the Pharisee's displeasure. Perhaps they feared this procession might upset the Romans and cause them to tighten their iron fists around the Jews. Or, they could have been concerned for Jesus' safety? After all, some Pharisees had warned Jesus about Herod's death threats. Or, they may have just been upset that Jesus was being heralded as the Savior! Regardless of their reasons, Jesus answers their chiding with the same force with which he had earlier spoken to Judas when Mary anointed his feet with the expensive oil. "If they kept quiet, the stones would do it for them, shouting praise!"
 - C. Jesus' words echo the prophet Habakkuk's words of judgment: "Alas for you who get evil gain for your houses...by cutting off many peoples; you have forfeited your life. The very stones will cry out from the wall...(Hab 2:9-11)."
 - D. His words also echo John the Baptist's warning that, "God can raise from these stones children of Abraham (Lk 3:8) and foreshadows his announcement that, "one stone will not be left upon another (referring to the temple) because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God (Lk 19:44)."
- If God's people do not cry out in praise, God can raise up others to fulfill God's purposes—even the stones!!!

How will you celebrate Jesus' passion and love?