

## Palm Sunday

We find ourselves at the conclusion of Lent and the start of Holy Week. This is the last week of our Lord's Earthly life and it is steeped with prophetic irony. Mathew 13-16:17 "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear, for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see and did not see it and to hear what you hear and did not hear it." We see the events of this coming week with perfect hindsight vision.

Our Lord is in Bethany, which in Hebrew means house of the poor, miserable or figs. Sorry to those named Bethany. Ironically it is the poor who have supported, followed and listened to Jesus for the entire time of His ministry. It is the poor and common folk who will fill the streets of Jerusalem and hail Him as their King. Misery is what will unfold on Friday at the end of this amazing week. Yet it has to be that way.

Our Lord is in Bethany to raise His friend Lazarus from the sleep of death. This too is an ironic forerunner of events that will take place in a week. Lazarus was raised by the Son of God and in a week the Son of God will be raised by God the Father.

The average working person throwing branches before Jesus this morning may not have been aware of the prophesy of Zechariah. He wrote about Palm Sunday and its events four hundred years before. Zech 9:9 "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion; shout O Daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee, He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon the colt the foal of an ass". The King is coming to Jerusalem and Zachariah is very clear about this. In Mark's gospel this is the only time Jesus came to Jerusalem. In John's gospel, Jesus visits Jerusalem at least three times.

The Herodians, Pharisees, and Sadducees all knew that Jesus was a just man and treated people in a just fashion. Mathew 23: 16 "And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the ways of God in truth, for you do not regard the person of men." Our Lord treated everyone equally regardless of their position in life.

Look to the manger where Our Lord was born. The animals in it were a donkey. The beast of burden that would carry Him into Jerusalem. The donkey is also a symbol of peace. Jesus comes on a donkey as a Messiah of peace. Not on a chariot or a war horse. The ox in the

manger represented the animal of sacrifice in the temple in Jerusalem. Christ would be handed over to death by the temple officials. Not realizing that He would be the sacrifice for humanity.

The crowds welcome Jesus into Jerusalem with shouts and acclamations from Psalms 118:25 and 148:1, "Spreading their cloaks and palms before Him". To continue the irony, I often thought that Pussy Willows would make more sense in a Post Resurrection Canadian Church. Pussy willows are white and are the colour of purity and resurrection. While cut from the tree, they are not dead. If you stick them back into the ground they will continue to grow again. We are kind of like this. We will be replanted back into our churches after this and we will continue to regrow. We need not, now or ever, be deprived of Christ, for neither death nor life, both things present nor things to come can ever, "separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:39.

God Bless, Pastor D