

Reflection



- Showing love
- Giving hope
- Bringing peace

The Church of St John & St Leonard

Mark 11: 1-10

Palm Sunday, Sunday 5th April 2020

Jesus Comes to Jerusalem as King

¹¹ As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ² saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"

⁴ They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵ some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" ⁶ They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. ⁷ When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna!^[a]"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"^[b]

¹⁰ "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Bible Gateway - New International Version

Today, Palm Sunday, is the beginning of the week that changed everything! It's a day of celebration as we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, riding on a young donkey, surrounded by crowds shouting praise and waving palm branches, the day when Jesus receives the honour He deserves. Yet Sunday seems little more than a memory as the week progresses; celebration turns to resentment and hatred, culminating in betrayal and crucifixion, transformed again by resurrection hope – a week that changed everything.

Verses 1-6 tell us about getting the donkey. They are important because they show us more about who Jesus is. He knows where that young donkey is, that it has never been ridden and that the response 'the Lord needs it' will be all the authority that is needed. These verses show us that he is the Lord, that he has authority, that he is in control. Jesus chose to involve his disciples in this – they weren't just lookers-on, they had a role and a responsibility and they were obedient, doing what he asked without questioning or complaining. So, at the beginning of the week that changed everything, Jesus fulfilled Zechariah's prophecy and entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey's colt, honoured by the crowds who threw their cloaks on the ground, spread branches they had cut in the fields or waved them in celebration. They shouted 'Hosanna', which means 'Save us', welcoming Jesus as the Messiah, the one who would save them from the Romans, the king of David's line coming into the city of his

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ancestor, Israel's capital, to free them at last. It was a joyful start to the week that changed everything.

The crowds that day honoured Jesus. Why? They honoured him because they thought he would save them in the way they expected. Only 5 days later this crowd that shouted 'Hosanna' would be shouting 'Crucify him' as Jesus failed to meet their expectations and to do what they wanted.

We are living in times that have changed beyond recognition. We may be feeling tired and uncertain as we experience grief and loss – grief for what is happening, for the fact that we cannot meet together in person; life has changed and the future is uncertain. Yet Jesus is still with us, the baby born as Immanuel and celebrated today as the king and Messiah remains with us by his Spirit. Will you choose today – and keep on choosing in the days and weeks ahead- to give your worship and praise and honour to Jesus, because he is, in and of himself, worthy of our honour and praise?

This is the beginning of the week that changed everything. Why does it start like this? So we might realise who Jesus is, recognise his worth, realise the honour that is due to him. If the week that changed everything is going to change you and me, then it has to start here, with a right view of Jesus, with a vision of what ought to be. So today, and in the days ahead, as we choose to worship and love Jesus with everything that is in us, as we love one another and love our neighbours, maybe we will see that Jesus is with us in our homes, watching over us in the darkest depths of the night, we will see that He sits beside us as we go out in our cars and vans and as we learn and teach and work in our virtual classrooms and offices, we will see that He walks with us in our streets, and through our supermarkets, pharmacies, prisons and hospitals. And maybe, just maybe, a world that is waiting and watching will see Him too.

Questions

What can I change or add to my daily routine this week to help me to focus on worshipping God? Be creative! Share your ideas with someone else.

Jesus chose to involve his disciples in this day, to give them a role and responsibility and encourage them to join in with the celebration and praise. Today, this week, what is Jesus asking of me?

Later on in this week, Jesus asked his disciples to 'Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation'. Who is Jesus calling me to pray for this week?

Sue Williams

Rector: The Revd Vicki Bryson



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