

Palm Sunday

## Recognizing the Day of Visitation

April 2, 2023

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Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.



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**“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!  
Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!  
Behold, your King is coming to you;  
He is just and having salvation,  
Lowly and riding on a donkey,  
A colt, the foal of a donkey. Zechariah 9:9 NKJV**

Have you every prayed and prayed for the Living God to intervene and do something, something BIG? Have you mulled over how God might use His working power, His mega power, to pull it off?

Israel had prophecies. They were looking and hoping for the Messiah to come and figured that would mean deliverance from the oppressive Roman rule over them. They had been told to rejoice, shout, and behold for their King IS coming. And then the time came.

**A Stirring.** There was a stirring; excitement filled the air. Something was going on, that something BIG. It was happening in Jerusalem. But what?

Jesus Christ unfolds a drama enactment of a living parable. He is the King coming to you, Jerusalem. He is just and having salvation. He is declaring His absolute authority over you, Jerusalem. How will you know? He is lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.

So Jesus drew near to Bethphage [BEH-th-fuh-dzhee] and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet. Bethphage is said to mean “house of figs, unripe figs.” We don’t know the absolute exact location, but we do know that the Mount of Olives looks down on the Temple Mount.

**A Surprise Timing.** Prophetic promises about the time of salvation were being fulfilled right then. The blind, the lame, and the good news had gone out into the villages. Jesus told two of His disciples to go into the village, most likely Bethphage since Jesus started from Bethany. They would find a donkey tied, and a colt tied with her. No one had ever sat on them. They were to bring them to Jesus.

Donkeys were held in high esteem. The sons of the judges used them, and David’s mule was used at the coronation of Solomon. Also, no one had ever sat on this colt, otherwise it would have been unfit for sacred purposes (Numbers 19:2; Deuteronomy 21:3; 1 Samuel 6:7). If anyone might ask why they were loosing them, the disciples were to say, “The Lord has need of them.” They will comply readily.

**Symbols.** “Daughter of Zion” is the poetic name for the city of Jerusalem. As the prophecy is told in the NT, it is a combination of Zechariah 9:9-11 and Isaiah 62:11. This

is the only instance in which Jesus rode. He entered in meekness. The horse is a symbol of war (Job 39:19-25), but the donkey is a symbol of peace.

The disciples obeyed as appointed by Jesus. It all unfolded just as Jesus had said. To give Jesus royal honor, they put their garments on both animals. Jesus sat upon the colt and set Himself to enter Jerusalem.

**The Appointed Time.** This event was non-militaristic. Jesus was not calling the city to war. He enters Jerusalem as the Victor of Salvation, not only over Jerusalem and outlying villages, but over the nations, creation, and the enemies of God. Jesus declared by His actions that this was the appointed time of salvation and He is the Victor of salvation.

**Spontaneous Praise.** A great multitude had come to the Feast of Passover. Stirred by the Spirit of God, the people began moving, taking branches of the palm tree. The palm branch symbolizes triumph and victory. (Leviticus 23:40; Revelation 7:9). The crowd broke out: **Hosanna, blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord, even the King of Israel.** This spontaneous praise and all that was happening didn't register with the disciples at the moment. They didn't understand that a heavenly coronation was underway. The multitude that was with Jesus when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised Lazarus from the dead, went around telling everyone. It was for that reason, they reasoned, that the multitude went and met Jesus as He entered Jerusalem.

Jesus is the Just One. Sin must be punished, but here Jesus, God Incarnate, is the King bringing salvation. This is a Triumphal Entry. He is a Man of War, but first He offers the scepter of peace.

Josephus estimated that the number present at one Passover was three million, about ½ the population of Judea and Galilee. The Pharisees confessed that they prevail nothing; the world is gone after Him, Jesus. The Sadducees did not participate in this despair. The people, however, spread their garments in the way and spread branches and waved them. They rejoiced and praised God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen and heard about, especially the raising of Lazarus.

So a multitude approached Jerusalem following Jesus and another great multitude came out of the city to meet Him. The shout "Hosanna" was customarily used at the Feast of Tabernacles and other festivals. It is a shout of exaltation: Save now. Save. Hosanna to the Son of David. **Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord [Psalm 118:26 ]**; blessed is the King that comes in the name of the Lord:

**The Spoiler.** Now some of the Pharisees from the multitude wanted Jesus to rebuke His disciples. They called Jesus, Teacher. **Jesus answered, I tell you that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.** If people withheld their praises, inanimate nature would immediately cry out in praise.

Think that is absurd? Remember that when Satan challenged Jesus in the wilderness with "Since You are the Son of God, turn these stones into bread." Jesus, however, would not misuse His power for personal comfort. Satan was not Jesus' lord. Satan did not control Jesus' destiny.

**Worship.** This is all about worship. The Father seeks worshipers who will worship Him in Spirit and in truth. Creation is to worship and serve the Creator. Jesus Christ was

sent to save a people who will be living stones in the temple built without hands. They will be living stones of a building of which Jesus is both Cornerstone and Capstone. Jesus builds His house upon the Rock; He is that Rock, the Rock of Salvation. These living stones will worship and serve the Creator/Redeemer. Jesus is the Living Bread who feeds and nourishes, Manna from Heaven, the Word made flesh.

**Jesus is the Righteous One.** He is the Righteous Branch. He is the Just One, who by the faith and faithfulness of God, shall live. He is the Just One entering Jerusalem in triumph over every enemy, the One who will offer Himself as the sacrifice for sin, the Lamb of God, the Passover Lamb. In a great spectacle, Jesus will spoil principalities and powers, and those justified in Him will live by faith.

**The Prophet Responds.** Jesus is known as a Teacher and Prophet, and so He responds as such next.

**And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, If thou had known in this day, even you, the things which belong unto peace! but now they are hid from your eyes. Luke 19:41, 42.**

Jesus knew what His coming meant. Jesus lamented over Jerusalem for the hatred and violence on one hand contrasted with the love of the Father in sending the Son as Savior. The desire of God is to bless, to grant peace, to forgive, but the decree will mean judgment, wrath, and destruction coming upon Jerusalem. Jesus gave strong motive for repentance, but no, their eyes were blind. So Jesus declares the judgment as He stood looking over the city.

**For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast a trench about you, and compass you about, and keep thee in on every side and shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knew not the time of thy visitation. Luke 19:43, 44.**

This happened in 70 A.D. The people were praising but Jesus with the prophetic eye saw and heard the judgments coming upon Jerusalem. Jesus came in a visitation of grace, but with that coming there comes also the visitation of judgment.

Who will believe in Jesus? Who will believe Jesus? A remnant would be spared this judgment, but it falls out on one thing: **And this is the testimony that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 1 John 5:11, 12**

Remember, when Jesus entered Jerusalem all the city was stirred. Who is this? People said, This is the Prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee. That's what they knew of Jesus.

Then Jesus entered into the temple of God. Note that Matthew puts this cleansing of the temple here, an event which evidently occurred the next day, on Monday.

What we want to note is that the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple; and He healed them. It took courage for these folks to come into the temple, for they were considered as outcasts. Jesus transforms lives. They couldn't see and they had

difficulty walking, but they came to Jesus, and He healed them. However many of them they were, their lives would never be the same.

**Totally rejoicing or totally displeased.** But when those chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things and heard the children shouting “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they were totally displeased.

**“Do you hear what these say?” And Jesus says unto them, Yea; did ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and [nursing] infants You have perfected praise?”** Jesus quotes Psalm 8:2 from the LXX. We are left with that thought.

Jesus looked round about, upon all things. It was eventide, meaning the time covering before and after sunset. Jesus left and went forth out of the city unto Bethany with the Twelve and lodged there.

**Final thoughts.** Whenever Jesus comes to us, we should rejoice. When we know that we have Him and He has us, we should rejoice and praise and extol Him. An infant looks up with expectant eyes, totally dependent on others to care for it. That infant has entered a totally different environment and one of the very first things that happens to him or her is that spunk. Lungs open and out comes the bellow. The baby is alive. The LORD reigns and rules.

**What can we say?** Jesus believes in His mission. He was sent by the Father to save. He believes in the fulfillment of Scripture. The day after the dinner at Lazarus’ house, Jesus begins this dramatic enactment of prophecy, from Zechariah 9:9-11 and Isaiah 62:11. He is King. He calls Himself “Lord.” As Lord, He has authority over all creation. He declares Himself Victor. He will bring salvation. He accepts the praises of the people. The people recognize Jesus as King, but His kingdom is not of this world.

Yes, Jesus is Teacher and Prophet and Master. He enters Jerusalem and prophesies of the destruction of Jerusalem. He declares that certain things are hid from their eyes.

**“because you knew not the time of your visitation.” (Luke 19:44)**

Do we know the time of our visitation? How will we respond? Will we know a visitation of grace or will we receive a visitation of judgment?

Jesus believes in truth. He doesn’t change, no matter the praise or the pressure. He is not deceived. Amidst the praise, He weeps over the city. People start asking, “Who is this?” We should be asking the same question. As a missionary to Angola, Ron Mueller, said of the USA, “Too many of us have the Jesus we want, not the Jesus who is.”

Palm Sunday reminds us of the dramatic Coronation of the King of kings entering His city Jerusalem. God says, the Land is Mine. The city is Mine. But more is going on. Jesus discerns the time of His visitation. At this point, He left and went out of the city into Bethany; and He lodged there. He will go through arduous and agonizing days as He prepares His disciples for what will transpire and prays to His Father whom He has glorified and who has glorified Him. He will be crucified, dead, and buried; and on the Third Day rise again.

Jesus said, **“The prince of this world is coming; and He has nothing in Me.” John 14:30.** Amen.

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