

Fil-Am Community Church

Pastor David Bennett

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Key verse: Matthew 21:1-11, Luke 19: 29-35

## “Palm Sunday, Triumphant Entry ”

Good morning Fil-A, it is so good to see so many of you here this morning, here at Fil-Am we treat every day as a holiday, every meal as a feast, and every Sunday a Family reunion, however, we do not take your presence for granted, in fact turn to the person beside you and say Thank You for celebrating with us here today!

This morning I would like to go over a topic we go over every year at this time, with Jesus entry into Jerusalem, what we now call **Palm Sunday**.

We will start with the familiar verse and use it as the foundation from which to pull from.

### **Matthew 21:1-11 (NASB) the Triumphal Entry**

<sup>1</sup> “When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.” <sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup> “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold your King is coming to you, Gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.” <sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, <sup>7</sup> and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. <sup>8</sup> Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. <sup>9</sup> The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!” “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” <sup>10</sup> When He had entered Jerusalem, all the

*city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?"<sup>11</sup> And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."*

We can take the familiar verses above and try and look at it from different angles in order to try and emphasize many key elements we want you to take away today from today's visit with us here today.

We could look at the **differences** and **compare** and **contrast** the processions that rode into Jerusalem that day.

## **1. Processions that entered Jerusalem**

Remember that this was the beginning of the great 8-day Passover Festival.

This is a time when the Jews remembered God's deliverance of their ancestors from Egyptian **slavery**, therefore Jews from all over the world were gathering in Jerusalem to celebrate, & the city was filled to overflowing, with both Jews and Romans.

To say the **tension** was at a very high state would be an understatement.

We could try and emphasize...

- **Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor...**

Pontius Pilate, led a procession of **Roman Cavalry** and **Centurions** into the city of Jerusalem with a full complement of **Elite & Battle-Hardened** Roman soldiers that were more than ever ready & willing to suppress any attempted uprising against Roman rule that might occur.

We could also try and emphasize....

- **Herod Antipas, Tetrarch (King/Ruler)**

Herod also arrived with great pomp & ceremony, undoubtedly occupying the palace of his late father, **Herod the Great**. Remember Hero had also just beheaded **John the Baptists**, and I am sure this is on the minds of all the Jews that were gathering to celebrate the Passover.

Some Background information, the last major uprising, long before Pilate's reign, which happened shortly after the death of **Herod the Great** in 4 BC, that's Herod Antipas' father.

After putting down the rebellion there, the Romans marched on Jerusalem. After pacifying the city, they **crucified over 2,000** Jews who were accused of being part of the rebellion.

The Romans had made their intolerance for rebellion well-known throughout the area, again we could emphasize the tension in the area was like a **powder keg** ready to explode, and the events of that time would forever change the world as they and we know it.

We could also try and emphasize the significance of...

- **Jesus riding into the city on a Donkey**

Jesus chose to enter the city riding upon the donkey, rather than to walk into it as he had done numerous times before, he was riding the colt into the city as a public declaration that he was the **KING**.

Remember it was written some 500 years earlier by the prophet Zechariah that said...

**Zechariah 9:9**, *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, Shout, daughter of Jerusalem, see your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding a donkey, on a colt, the fowl of a donkey.”*

**We could also look at the procession and try and emphasize**

We could try and break down what each meant or symbolized to all those present, as well as us today.

One side representing military **might, power** and a show of **strength** and the other **humility** and **peace**.

One, leading Roman centurions, with battle hardened ready soldiers asserts the power and might of the empire of Rome which crushes all who oppose it.

You see, in times of war conquerors would ride in chariots or upon prancing stallions, however in times of peace, the king would ride a colt to symbolize that peace prevailed. So, for Jesus to ride into Jerusalem upon a colt is to declare that He is a **King proclaiming peace**.

Therefore, by Jesus, riding on a young donkey, embodies the peace and tranquility that God brings to His people.

Those line the roads who watch that day will make a choice. They will either serve the god of this world, might and power; or they will choose to serve the king of a very different kind of kingdom, the **kingdom of God**.

Saints we need to realize we will all have to make a choice, choose sides, figure out who we serve?

It says in **Matthew 10:32-33 NASB**

*<sup>32</sup> "Therefore everyone who confesses me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. <sup>33</sup> But whoever denies me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."*

**We could pause here and spend the time emphasizing the crowd**

## **2. The Crowd**

This same crowd that so easily shouted Hosanna, and worshiped him as he entered the city, would so easily shout crucify him less than a week later.

- There must have been many within the crowd that had **healed** by him
- There must have been many within the crowd that had been among the thousands He had **fed**.
- There must have been many within the crowd that had seen some of His **miracles**
- There must have been many within the crowd that had listened as "He **spoke** with **authority**."

- There must have been many within the crowd that had **listened**, & their lives had been **changed**.

Jesus rides toward the gate of the city...

Then Jesus looked over the Faces in the crowd, and when he did he must have seen the mixture of expressions on their faces.

- **There were faces in the crowd that loved Him**

Perhaps **Bartimaeus** was there, a man who had received his **sight**, no longer in his beggar's clothes.

Perhaps the **lepers** were there, their skin had been cleansed & now they were rejoicing for the **healing** that the Lord had given them.

Perhaps **Jairus'** daughter was there, after being brought **back to life** again after experiencing death.

Perhaps **Lazarus** & Mary & Martha & Mary Magdalene they were all there! Their lives reflected the love that was in their hearts for this man who had taught them, & **molded** them & **changed** them.

- **There were other faces there ones that looked Sinister**

There were faces within the crowd that had **squinty eyes**, waiting for Him to say one wrong word to make one mistake, always looking for a slip up or to catch him in a contradiction.

There were faces within the crowd of the **Sadducees & Pharisees**. They were supposed to be keepers of the law, the spiritual leaders. But Jesus had gained so much popularity that they felt threatened. So, full of jealousy, they watched Him.

There were faces within the crowd that were **Romans**, fearing **Revolt** & watching for any sign of **Rebellion** against Rome. They were ready & waiting to **crush** any uprising.

We could spend a little time pondering if Jesus were to come here **TODAY** and the city lined the streets what would he see?

- **What would he see in our Faces TODAY?**

Does he see people concerned about so many things?

- Worried about income taxes, the prices of **gasoline**
- Worried about job security, **immigration** or terrorists attacks
- Worried about their future, their **health**, or lack of it?

When He turns & looks into our lives, I wonder, will He **weep** once again because of what He sees?

We could look at all of those things and ponder what side of the street we would be on, however we are going to try and take another angle and see where it takes us.

### **Matthew 21:1-11, NASB**

<sup>1</sup> “When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.” <sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup> “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold your King is coming to you, Gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’” <sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, <sup>7</sup> and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. <sup>8</sup> Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. <sup>9</sup> The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!” “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” <sup>10</sup> When He had entered Jerusalem, all the

*city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?"<sup>11</sup> And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."*

In the account of the Triumphant Entry, we tend to focus on the things we have been discussing this morning and often overlook the donkey and his role in the whole process.

We are going to dig a little deeper so we are going to Luke's gospel and see what it says.

### **Luke 19:29-35 (NASB)**

*<sup>29</sup> When He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples, <sup>30</sup> saying, "Go into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup> If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say, 'The Lord has need of it.'" <sup>32</sup> So those who were sent went away and found it just as He had told them. <sup>33</sup> As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" <sup>34</sup> They said, "The Lord has need of it." <sup>35</sup> They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Jesus on it. <sup>36</sup>*

Here are a few things we can take away for the Palm Sunday entry, for starters....

## **3. The Donkey was God-given**

God Knew the donkey would be there, (Zechariah 9:9) (Matthew 21:4-5)

- He told of it
- He led Jesus to the city
- He chose donkey (sign of **humility**) over a horse (**conqueror**)

God knew from the start that this day would be necessary. He mapped it out through history to make sure the will He had to provide us a Savior would become reality!

Jesus knew the donkey would be there, (Matthew 21:1-3)

- He sent the disciples

- He told them exactly what they would see
- He knew the significance of fulfilling the prophecy and riding in on a donkey.

When we walk as close to God as Jesus did, we are in perfect harmony with all that He has in store for us, if you think about it we know even where our donkeys might be!

Saints we need to remember that God is in control and has a plan even if we don't see it or understand it.

The goal is to find that purpose and then walk in it.

Like the donkey that transported Jesus, we ask ourselves...

#### **4. Are we God Driven?**

**In our hearts...**

- Is Jesus our Lord and our Savior
- Is the Holy Spirit our guide
- Is God our one and only god?

If there is **anything else** that drives our hearts, it will prove to be useless in the realm of significance.

Only that which is motivated by a passion and love for God will endure for eternity!

**In our lives**

- Are we Obedient to His Word
- Are we Obedient to His Spirit
- Are we Obedient to his calling on our life?

The true test of where God ranks in our lives is how we allow him to **Rule** and **Reign** in everything we do, as it is all for him and not us.



## **In our Churches**

- Is God is the central focus
- Is it God's ways not our ways
- Is it God's will not ours

If it is our...

- Agenda,
- Desires,
- Preferences,
- Opinions,
- Perspectives,
- Comforts, etc.

If any of the above become more important than God's, then no matter how hard we try it **WILL FAIL!**

No ifs ands or buts about it, without God it **WILL FAIL!**

God has got to be our top priority and His will must be our desire!!!

## **We all have a Donkey**

Just like this donkey that was available was used by the Lord to escort Jesus into Jerusalem, each of us have **something** or things in our life that we could give that could help carry Jesus to another place

What is it that you can give?

- A song
- Hug, or shoulder to cry on
- Phone call or Email
- Assist teaching Sunday School
- Possibly just a little time

Whatever you have, that is **Your Donkey**

It could be that God wants to mount your donkey and...

- Use it to enter another city,

- Use it to enter another nation, or
- Use it to enter another heart

Do you let Him?

Do you give your Donkey?

Or do you hesitate?

Saints remember God can make something **majestic** out of our **ordinary**

God made something majestic out of this simple donkey, just think about what a “**HERO**” He could make out of **YOU**, if you would only yield your life to Him!

Mark tells us this colt had never been rode before, however, God can tame the wild in your life...

- He can calm the **troubled waters**
- He can handle the **raging storms** in your life
- He can manage all the **ISSUES** we get ourselves into

When **given** to God he can take the simple and use it in a masterful way...

- a wooden **manger**,
- a fisherman’s **boat**, and
- a **Rugged Cross**

All of these things were of little significance, however, when given to God, a mighty miracle followed.

Saints, what would happen if Christ were to ride in here today, what would you think he would see if...

- He were to look into our **faces**?
- He were to look into our **eyes**?
- He were to look into our **lives**?

Would he stop and weep for what he saw?

We could look to the Donkey that was available and was used by God and ask ourselves...

Are we God driven?

Does he have total control in...

- Our Hearts
- Our Lives
- Our Church

What does your donkey look like?

Are you willing to give it to the Lord today?

Today is the day, The Lord has a need are you willing to give it to him today?

**Let us Pray...**