

LUKE 19:28-40

APRIL 14, 2019

“A SEASON OF CONTRASTS”

ON THIS THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF LENT, WE CONTINUE OUR WALK WITH JESUS AS HE APPROACHES BETHPHAGE AND BETHANY, AT THE PLACE CALLED MT OF OLIVES.

HERE HE SENDS TWO OF HIS DISCIPLES TO THE VILLAGE AHEAD.

HE INSTRUCTS THAT THEY WOULD FIND TIED, A COLT THAT HAS NEVER BEEN RIDDEN.

“UNTIE IT AND BRING IT HERE.”

HE FURTHER TOLD THEM, THAT IF ANYONE ASKS WHY THEY WERE UNTYING IT THEY WERE TO RESPOND, “THE LORD NEEDS IT.”

THESE INSTRUCTIONS AND THE FULFILLING OF THEM FULFILLED THE PROPHECY FOUND IN 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 ON A DONKEY, ON A COLT, THE FOLD OF A DONKEY."

THEY DID AS THEY WERE TOLD AND RETURNED WITH THE COLT TO JESUS. HAVING SPREAD THEIR COATS ON THE COLT, THEY SAT JESUS ON IT AND CONTINUED THE PATH.

AND AS THEY DID, PEOPLE KEPT SPREADING THEIR CLOAKS ON THE ROAD.

JERUSALEM IS NOT A LARGE CITY BUT DURING THIS TIME OF YEAR, IT HELD AS MANY AS 2 MILLION PEOPLE WHO PILGRIMAGED TO JOIN TOGETHER IN THE CELEBRATION OF PASSOVER.

THE JEWISH PASSOVER WAS AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE EXODUS FROM EGYPT. JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE TIME OF JESUS WERE UNDER THE DICTATORIAL POWER OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

IT IS PROBABLE THAT DURING THIS TIME THE JEWISH PEOPLE CAME WITH NATIONALISTIC FEELINGS RUNNING HIGH. THE JEWS BELIEVED THAT THE MESSIAH DOES NOT SUFFER BUT COMES TO CONQUER AND TO JUDGE.

THEY HOPED FOR: GOING FROM OPPRESSION TO FREEDOM, FROM CORRUPTION TO PURITY, FROM UNJUST VIOLENCE TO NON-VIOLENT JUDGEMENT.

THEY BELIEVED THAT THE MESSIAH WAS ON HIS WAY.

“NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM.”

ROMAN AUTHORITIES WOULD HAVE BEEN ON HIGH ALERT FOR POSSIBLE SIGNS OF AGITATION.

THE SWELLING OF THE POPULATION LIKELY BROUGHT FEAR OR AT LEAST A CAUTIONARY INCREASE IN ROMAN PRESENCE.

IT IS LIKELY THAT WHILE JESUS WAS ENTERING ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE CITY ON HIS COLT THAT ON THE WEST SIDE PILATE IS PARADING IN ON A WAR HORSE, ACCOMPANIED BY A SQUADRON OR TWO OF BATTLE-HARDENED ROMAN SOLDIERS.

IT IS ALSO LIKELY THAT HIS ENTRANCE IS BEING ACCLAIMED BY A CROWD.

TO HAVE NOT ACCLAIMED HIM WOULD HAVE BEEN A TREASONOUS ACT.

CLEARLY THERE ARE DIFFERENT APPROACHES AND VERY DIFFERENT MESSAGES BEING DELIVERED HERE.

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT PILATE UNDERSTANDS AND DELIVERS CLEARLY THE MESSAGE OF POWER AND MIGHT.

HE HAS NO HESITANCY IN DELIVERING WHAT ENFORCES HIS POSITION AND CONTROLS THE CROWDS THAT SURROUNDS HIM.

MANY OF THE JEWS ALSO HAD THEIR OWN PERSPECTIVE AND HELD FIRM TO THE BELIEF THAT A MILITARISTIC MESSIAH WAS IN THEIR FUTURE.

TO UNDERSTAND LUKE'S MESSAGE OF THESE EVENTS BEGINS WITH US NEEDING TO START WITH THE BEGINNING OF TODAY'S SCRIPTURE AND LOOKING BACKWARD TO FRAME THE CONTEXT OF WHERE WE BEGIN. OUR VERSE BEGINS WITH A REFERENCE TO SOMETHING WHICH HAD GONE ON BEFORE, "AFTER HE HAD SAID THIS...."

TO WHAT DOES THAT REFER?

**AND WHAT MEANING DOES IT HAVE TO OUR
UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTEXT?**

**IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE BEGINNING
OF OUR SCRIPTURE, TWO THINGS HAD
OCCURRED.**

**JESUS HAD ENCOUNTERED ZACCHAEUS, THE
CHIEF TAX COLLECTOR, A HATED AND
DESPISED MAN.**

**ZACCHAEUS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT JESUS
AND BEING SHORT CLIMBED IN A TREE TO
LISTEN.**

**JESUS NOT ONLY DISCOVERED HIM BUT
CALLED HIM DOWN AND INVITED HIMSELF
TO THE HOUSE OF ZACCHAEUS.**

**ZACCHAEUS OFFERS TO GIVE HALF OF HIS
POSSESSIONS TO THE POOR AND REPAY
ANYONE WHOM HE HAS CHEATED.**

JESUS RESPONDS, “TODAY SALVATION COMES TO THIS HOUSE BECAUSE THIS MAN, TOO, IS A SON OF ABRAHAM. FOR THE SON OF MAN HAS COME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE WHAT WAS LOST.”

JESUS RESPONDED WITH GRACE.

CLEARLY JESUS DECLARES THAT WE ARE SAVED AND FORGIVEN BY GOD’S ACT, NOT OURS.

JESUS FOLLOWS THIS WITH A PARABLE TO HIS DISCIPLES OF THE TEN SERVANTS AND TEN MINAS.

THE OWNER LEAVES FOR A DISTANT LAND AND LEAVES WITH EACH OF THE SERVANTS 10 MINAS.

ON HIS RETURN THE SERVANTS HAVE DONE VARIOUS THINGS WITH THE MINAS FROM DOUBLING IT TO PROTECTING IT.

THE OWNER REWARDS ACCORDING TO WHAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED, INCLUDING TAKING AWAY FROM THE ONE WHO DID NOT INCREASE HIS MINAS.

JESUS USES THIS STORY TO FORESHADOW THAT WHEN HE IS GONE THAT THE WORK OF THE KINGDOM WILL NEED TO BE CONTINUED THROUGH THE DISCIPLES AND THAT THOSE WHO CONTINUE THE WORK WILL BE BLESSED AND INCREASE THE NUMBERS.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THOSE WHO DO NOTHING WILL WITHER.

AND THUS, WE SEE THAT LUKE PLACES THE STORY OF PALM SUNDAY INTO THE CONTEXT OF WHO JESUS HAS ALWAYS BEEN AND THAT GOD'S MESSAGE ON EARTH IS THE SAME AS IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN.

**IN LUKE’S GOSPEL THERE ARE NO PALMS;
THERE ARE NO BRANCHES; NO CRIES OF
HOSANNA.**

**THIS IS NO HUGE CROWD EVENT. THE CROWD
IS THE MULTITUDE OF *DISCIPLES*.**

**THEY WERE THOSE WHO HAD FOLLOWED
HIM AND WITNESSED AND HEARD HIS
MESSAGES.**

**THE SHOUTS OF “BLESSED IS THE KING WHO
COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD,” WAS
NOT A DAVIDIC KING.**

**THESE DISCIPLES REFERENCED A KING WHO
HEALED AND RESURRECTED, WHO WAS A
PREACHER.**

**THESE DISCIPLES ARE WELCOMING THEIR
TEACHER.**

**ON THIS DAY IN JESUS LIFE, THIS IS THE
YEAR, AND THIS IS THE JERUSALEM.**

RIDING WITH JESUS WERE THE HOPES OF THE OPPRESSED AND EXPLOITED PEOPLES AND INDIVIDUALS.

JESUS MINISTRY HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT TO THIS POINT.

IN THE COMING WEEK JESUS WOULD CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE WHO HE WAS AND THAT IT WAS GOD'S MISSION.

WHEN THE PHARISEES TRIED TO STOP THE LOUD ADULATIONS OF THE DISCIPLES AS THEY WALKED TOWARD JERUSALEM, JESUS RESPONSE WAS, "I TELL YOU, IF THESE WERE SILENT, THE STONES WOULD SHOUT OUT."

JESUS MAKES IT CLEAR THAT THIS IS NOT BEING DIRECTED BY THE DISCIPLES, BUT GOD'S SPIRIT.

IT FORE TELLS OF THE STONE WHICH WILL BE MOVED AND WAS UNABLE TO STOP DEATH. OVER THE COURSE OF THE NEXT WEEK,

**JESUS WILL CONTINUE TO DEMONSTRATE
THE SUFFERING SERVANT AS HE LEADS THE
DISCIPLES IN THE FOOT WASHING, THE
PRAYER TIME, AND THE LAST SUPPER.**

**JESUS OBEDIENCE TO GOD CONTINUES UNTO
DEATH.**

**WALKING WITH JESUS INTO JERUSALEM IS
AN INCESSANT DRIVE.**

NOTHING DETERS JESUS.

IT IS HIS TIME TO BE IN JERUSALEM.

**AS WE GO FORWARD INTO HOLY WEEK ARE
THERE LESSONS OF LUKE'S PALM SUNDAY
THAT SERVE TO INFORM US AND WILL
ENHANCE OUR HOLY WEEK IN A WAY THAT
GIVES US NEW PERSPECTIVES?**

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11, MAY GIVE US A MODEL.

LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD:

**LET THE SAME MIND BE IN YOU THAT WAS^[A] IN
CHRIST JESUS,**

**⁶ WHO, THOUGH HE WAS IN THE FORM OF GOD,
DID NOT REGARD EQUALITY WITH GOD
AS SOMETHING TO BE EXPLOITED,**

**⁷ BUT EMPTIED HIMSELF,
TAKING THE FORM OF A SLAVE,
BEING BORN IN HUMAN LIKENESS.
AND BEING FOUND IN HUMAN FORM,**

**⁸ HE HUMBLLED HIMSELF
AND BECAME OBEDIENT TO THE POINT OF
DEATH—**

EVEN DEATH ON A CROSS.

**⁹ THEREFORE GOD ALSO HIGHLY EXALTED HIM
AND GAVE HIM THE NAME
THAT IS ABOVE EVERY NAME,**

**¹⁰ SO THAT AT THE NAME OF JESUS
EVERY KNEE SHOULD BEND,
IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH AND UNDER THE
EARTH,**

**¹¹ AND EVERY TONGUE SHOULD CONFESS
THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD,
TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.**

THIS SCRIPTURE IS THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN AN EARLY HYMN OR LITURGICAL TEXT.

IT BEGINS WITH THE END POINT WHICH IS THAT WE ARE TO BE OF THE SAME MIND AS CHRIST.

FROM THERE IT TRAVELS FROM PRE-BIRTH OF CHRIST WHERE HE EMPTIED HIMSELF AND BECAME OBEDIENT TO GOD.

HE WAS BORN INTO HUMAN FORM AND SPENT HIS WHOLE LIFE AS THE SUFFERING SERVANT.

HE BECAME HUMBLE AND OBEDIENT TO THE POINT OF DEATH ON THE CROSS.

FROM THERE HE WAS RISEN AND EXALTED BY GOD SO THAT ALL MIGHT RECOGNIZE HIM.

HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN WITH GOD.

**IN THIS THE UPCOMING HOLY WEEK OUR
SAME MIND CAN CHOOSE TO REPENT BY
EMPTYING OURSELVES. WE CAN GIVE OVER
TO THIS IMITATION OF CHRIST BY SEEING
AND TRUSTING GOD AS OUR LORD AND OUR
GUIDE. WE CAN EXAMINE OUR HEARTS AND
OUR MINDS AND DECLARE, “LORD, SHOW ME
THY WILL.” THE ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT
HAS GIVEN US EXAMPLES OF WHAT IT IS LIKE
TO HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST. WE KNOW
THAT HE CAME TO BRING HOPE TO A WORLD
THAT WAS HURTING. WE KNOW THAT HE
CAME TO BRING LOVE IN AND AMONGST US.
WE KNOW THAT HE DIED AND ROSE AGAIN
THAT OUR IMPERFECTIONS MIGHT BE
FORGIVEN BECAUSE GOD WISHED AN
ETERNAL RELATIONSHIP WITH US AND LIFE
EVERLASTING. CAN WE ALSO NOT SPEND
TIME SEEKING TO HAVE THE HEART OF**

**CHRIST THAT SEEKS TO SERVE? CAN WE
ALSO NOT DESIRE TO BE A PART OF THE
COMMUNITY OF HIS HANDS AND FEET? CAN
WE ALSO NOT DOUBLE OUR MINAS AND NOT
ONLY BE BLESSED BUT BLESS? I INVITE YOU
TO CONTINUE THIS LENTEN WALK WITH
JESUS DURING HOLY WEEK AND BE
PREPARED TO BE SURPRISED AS WHAT
OCCURS.**

AMEN

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