

Palm Sunday

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 24 March 2024

Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 0 0] But if we could, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling this morning, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read, Mark chapter 11.

Mark chapter 11, page 847 in the church Bible. And we're going to look at the whole passage that we read, just verses 1 to 11.

But if we read again in verse 8. Mark 11 at verse 8. And many, that's the crowds, they spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields.

And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David.

Hosanna in the highest. And so on. Do you know, I think that the older I'm getting, the more often I'm saying that there's nothing in a week.

[1 : 0 7] There's absolutely nothing in a week, because from one Sunday to the next, time seems to pass so quickly. It doesn't even seem that long since we were all gathered here last Sunday.

But you know, at the beginning of a new week, we often make plans and we make preparations for the week that lies ahead. And there's nothing wrong with that, unless you're doing it this morning when you're sitting in church.

But as you know, there are many things that we don't plan. There are many things that we can't plan for, because, well, we don't know the future. We don't know what the future holds. We don't know what's around the corner. As we often say, we don't know what a day nor an hour will bring in our lives.

And yet we see it so often, don't we? Whether in our own lives or even in the lives of others, we see that a lot can change from one Sunday to the next. A lot can change from one Sunday to the next.

But you know, that's not only true in our experience. It was also true in the experience of Jesus. Because when we come to Mark chapter 11, it's Sunday. Mark 11 is a Sunday.

[2 : 1 6] It's Sunday morning. It's a particular Sunday. As we're saying to the children, it's a Sunday in our calendars known as Palm Sunday. And it was the first day of a new week, a week that many now call Passion Week, which was an important and integral week in the life and ministry of Jesus, because it was going to be the last week in the life and ministry of Jesus.

And from one Sunday to the next, everything would change. From one Sunday to the next, everything would change, not only for Jesus, but for the entire world. Because the events of this one week, from one Sunday to the next, from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, through it all, as you know, Jesus would secure salvation for a fallen world.

And you know, I want us to think about these two Sundays. These two Sundays, Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. I want us to think about these two Sundays, both this Sunday and, God willing, next Sunday.

I want us to think about Palm Sunday today and Easter Sunday next Sunday. Because all that Jesus did between these two Sundays is what secured salvation for our fallen world.

And so because today is Palm Sunday, I want us to think about Palm Sunday. And I want us to learn three lessons. Three lessons from Jesus on Palm Sunday.

[3 : 37] Three lessons from Jesus on Palm Sunday. We can learn lessons, first of all, from the command Jesus gave, the colt Jesus sat on, and the crowd who followed Jesus.

Three lessons from the command, the colt, and the crowd. Three lessons from the command, the colt, and the crowd. There are three headings this morning.

So first of all, our first lesson is from the command, the command Jesus gave. Look at verse 1 of chapter 11. Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat.

Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, Why are you doing this? Say, The Lord has need of it, and will send it back here immediately.

So here Mark, the gospel writer, he sets the scene for us, and he tells us that Jesus and his disciples, they are near the city of Jerusalem. And we know that they're near the city of Jerusalem because Mark mentions two particular villages.

[4 : 52] These villages, they were situated just a couple of miles on the outskirts of the city of Jerusalem. They've already passed through the village, the first village of Bethphage, and now they're walking towards the second village, which is closer to Jerusalem.

The village of Bethany. Now we know the reason that Jesus was going to Jerusalem. We all know why Jesus was going there. He was going to die. In fact, he said that in the previous chapter.

Jesus said that the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. So Jesus knows that he's going to Jerusalem to die.

But that wasn't the reason everyone else was going to Jerusalem. Everyone else was going to Jerusalem, because of the Passover. Because during the Passover, as you know, Jews, they would come from all over the nation of Israel.

They would travel, and they would ascend, and then assemble in the city of Jerusalem. In fact, that's what we were singing about in Psalm 122, our opening item of praise.

[5 : 55] Psalm 122, it's one of the songs of ascent. It's part of a group of 15 psalms that were always sung by the Jews as they ascended and even assembled in the city of Jerusalem for the Passover.

And you know, it must have been amazing to see, to see this sight, because there would be friends and family, and there would be neighbors, and there would be this huge crowd of people. Everyone. You imagine the whole of Barvis assembling together at the Barvis Hall, and then walking towards Stornoway.

That's what it would have been like. People would have come from their different villages, friends and family and neighbors, and there would be this huge crowd of people, all gathering, walking one single road towards the city of Jerusalem.

But what's amazing is that just before they would set off from their journey, so they would all congregate in their village community area, and they would, before they set off on their journey towards Jerusalem, someone would shout from within the crowd, let us go up.

Let us go up. And then the crowd would all respond and shout, we will go up. We will go up. That's what we're singing in Psalm 122.

[7 : 11] I joyed when to the house of God. Go up, they said to me. Jerusalem within thy gates, our feet shall standing be.

And now with Jerusalem in the distance, it's only a couple of miles away, Jesus and his disciples, they're ascending towards the city, and they're assembling with this great crowd. Jesus then, we're told there, he takes the opportunity to command two of his disciples to do something very specific.

Verse 2. Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find a cold tide, on which no one has ever sat.

Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, why are you doing this? Say, the Lord has need of it, and we'll send it back here immediately. Now, it might seem strange to us that Jesus knew that there was a colt in the next village.

It might even seem more strange that Jesus knew that this specific colt in the next village was tied, even more so that it had never been ridden. But of course, when you stop and think about who this is that's speaking, it's not strange when we remember that Jesus, he's both God and man.

[8 : 29] Therefore, he knows everything. He knows everything that's going on in this world today. He knows everything that's going on in our lives today. He knows everything that's going on in our heart this morning as we sit in church.

Jesus knows everything, and he knew everything about this colt or this donkey and where the disciples would find it. But you know, one commentator, he made this very interesting point.

He said that Jesus' knowledge of this colt indicates that Jesus saw it beforehand. Jesus' knowledge of the colt indicates that Jesus saw it beforehand.

Not that Jesus had passed through the village of Bethany and seen the colt tied there beforehand. No, the point he was making was that Jesus has seen everything beforehand.

Jesus has seen everything beforehand. And I want to linger here and labor this lesson because the command of Jesus here should be the greatest comfort to us.

[9 : 34] The command of Jesus should be the greatest comfort to us because the lesson which the disciples were going to learn was a lesson that we all need to learn and keep on learning. It's the lesson to trust the Lord of Providence.

It's a hard lesson to learn. To trust the Lord of Providence. And I say that because, as you know, the word providence, it means seen beforehand.

The word providence means seen beforehand. And that's what this commentator was highlighting. Jesus issued the command because he saw it all beforehand. Jesus issued the command because he saw it beforehand.

And the disciples, they were to obey the command of Jesus. They were to go in faith. They were to go trusting the Lord of Providence. The Lord who had seen it all beforehand.

And you know, my friend, I've probably said this to you before. It's good to read the Bible. I hope you read your Bible because it's good to read the Bible.

[10 : 40] There's no better book in all the world to read than the Bible. The Bible, as you know, it's the only rule to direct us on how we may glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

And as you know, the beautiful thing about the Bible is that it's able to speak into every and any situation and circumstance that we encounter and experience in life. The Bible, as you know, it's full of commands, but it's also full of comfort.

And so it's good to read the Bible. But there's also another book which we must always read alongside the Bible. And that's the book of Providence. We need to read the book of Providence.

And you know, when you read the book of Providence, the book of your Providence in your life, you know, we're encouraged and we're enabled to see that our lives, they are not some random result of luck or chance or fate or fortune or karma.

No, the people we meet and the places we go and the places we live and the problems we face, it's all appointed and it's all according to the perfect plan and providence of the Lord who has seen it all beforehand.

[11 : 51] Do you know, someone once said, even our disappointments are His appointments. And sometimes that's hard to understand. Even our disappointments are His appointments.

And you know, my friend, maybe for you, your particular book of Providence, Providence, it's a hard read. It's a hard read because there are painful providences that have been written into the story of your life and there are chapters there that if you were honest, you wish they weren't written at all.

And even now, as every page turns in your life, you wonder maybe or even worry, what's coming next? You've been through so much already, what's coming now? You've encountered and experienced so much that you don't know the twists and the turns that have been written into the storyline of your life.

And yet, you know, you come to this passage and we are reminded that the wonder of wonders is He knows. This Jesus knows. He knows what you're going through.

He knows what's ahead of you this coming week. Whatever this week holds for you, Jesus knows what you need. And that's why you need to trust the Lord of Providence.

[13 : 05] Because the Lord of Providence, He's the author of the story. He's the director in the drama. He has written the storyline of your life. That's why we are called and commanded to trust Him.

And it's hard to trust Him. It's hard to trust Him in the darkness. It's hard to trust Him when we don't know what the future holds. But we are called and commanded in Scripture and even taught here.

we need to trust the Lord of Providence. The Lord who has seen it all beforehand. Trust the Lord of Providence.

That's the first lesson we learn from the command of Jesus. Trust the Lord of Providence. The second lesson we learn is from the colt. So the command and then the colt.

The colt. Look at verse 7. They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it and He sat on it. They brought the colt to Jesus.

[14 : 05] They threw their cloaks on it and He sat on it. You know, looking at this passage, of all the commands which Jesus gave to the disciples over His three-year ministry, the command to go and find a colt was probably a new one.

And yet when Jesus issued the command, you see that the disciples, they didn't ignore the command. They didn't insist, no, no, we'll do something else, Jesus. They didn't even ask for more information.

What do you mean a colt in the next village? Instead, we just read that they went, they followed the command and they found the colt. They followed the command and they found the colt.

But the lesson we learn from the colt, the lesson is that more often than not, we act like a colt rather than a Christian.

We act like a donkey rather than a disciple. More often than not, we act like a colt rather than a Christian and we act like a donkey rather than a disciple.

[15 : 12] And I say that not to call you all donkeys or even myself, a donkey. But you know, a Christian, as you know, the Bible teaches us that a Christian is a follower of Christ. A Christian is someone who has confessed their sin and committed their life to Jesus Christ.

A Christian is someone who has submitted and surrendered their life to Jesus. A Christian is someone who confesses that Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone is Lord over their life.

More than that, a disciple. So if you're a Christian, you're a disciple. A disciple is a learner. That's what the word disciple means. It means learner. We're all disciples if we're Christians.

We're all learning. We're all wanting and willing to learn to be more and more like Jesus. And so a Christian is a follower and a disciple is a learner.

A Christian is a follower, a disciple is a learner. but a colt. A colt is a young male donkey which had not yet been ridden.

[16 : 17] Which is how this colt is described in the passage. What's more is that this colt was tied, highlighting that it's not tame. It needs to be taught.

It hasn't been trained yet. It's a wild animal. It's stubborn. It's selfish. It's a ferocious and feral animal that was unwilling to learn and unwilling to listen.

And so you see the similarities between the colt and the Christian. Between the donkey and the disciple. Because sad to say, more often than not, we act like a feral colt instead of a following Christian.

We act like a stubborn donkey rather than a submissive disciple. because our heart tells us we want our way, not God's way.

We want to follow our plans, not God's plan. We want to do as we please rather than what God pleases. And sometimes we act like a colt rather than a Christian.

[17 : 26] Sometimes we act like a donkey rather than a disciple. It's a hard lesson to learn. But you know, that's what the Lord was teaching David in Psalm 32, which we were also singing earlier.

David, as we said, he had come to know the provision of having his sins cleansed, his sins cleansed and covered by the blood of Jesus. And he pleads for the Lord to lead him, to instruct him, to teach him.

He wants to be a Christian. He wants to be a disciple. He wants to keep on learning. And the Lord promises David, he says, I will instruct thee and thee teach the way that thou shalt go.

And with mine eye upon thee set, I will direction show. But with that promise came the pronouncement. Then be not like the horse or mule, the donkey, which do not understand, whose mouth lest they come near to thee, a bridal must command.

You know, the Lord was saying to David and to us, don't be stubborn. Don't be selfish. Don't be unwilling to learn and unwilling to listen. Don't be a cult. Be a Christian.

[18 : 34] Don't be a donkey. Be a disciple. Because the Lord promises to teach us and to train us. We need to have a teachable spirit. Because the Lord promises to instruct us and inform us.

He promises to educate us and encourage us. but only if we are willing to learn and willing to listen and willing to love the Lord.

And so the lesson of the cult, it's quite a hard lesson. Don't be a cult. Be a Christian. Don't be a donkey. Be a disciple. Because a Christian follows Christ and a disciple is devoted to King Jesus.

Don't be a cult. Be a Christian. Don't be a donkey. Be a disciple. Because a Christian follows Christ and a disciple is devoted to King Jesus. And you know, as you follow this passage, it's King Jesus who has been revealed here.

He's been revered in this passage. You'd never think it, reading it, that when Jesus enters Jerusalem, He's not there with this entourage around Him.

[19 : 45] Jesus didn't appear with all the pomp and ceremony of a king. There's no chariot. There's no royal chariot with all the king's horses and all the king's men. No, King Jesus, He appears and He arrives in Jerusalem sitting on a coat, saddled on cloaks.

But you know, the question Mark wants us to answer, the question Mark wants you to answer is what do you see? What do you see in this passage? That's a question Mark is asking us throughout his whole gospel.

That's why I love Christianity Explored. It goes through Mark's gospel. And all the time Mark is asking us the question throughout his gospel, what do you see? What do you see here?

And here in this passage, Mark 11, Mark is asking us here, do you see Jesus as king and that He needs to be king over your life? Do you see Jesus as king and that He needs to be king over your life?

Because that's the last lesson and it's the lesson the crowd learned. Because on Palm Sunday, there were three lessons to learn. The first lesson was from the command of Jesus, trust the Lord of Providence.

[21 : 00] The second lesson was from the colt, don't be a colt, be a Christian, don't be a donkey, be a disciple. And the last lesson is from the crowd. That's the last lesson.

The command, the colt, and then the crowd. The crowd. Look at verse 8. Many, the crowd, spread their cloaks on the road and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields.

And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David. Hosanna in the highest.

So as this crowd, as they ascended towards Jerusalem and as they assembled in the city of Jerusalem, the city of King David, what they recognize is they recognize Jesus as royalty.

They recognize Jesus as royalty because as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt, the crowd immediately recognized that Jesus was fulfilling the prophetic words of the prophet Zechariah.

[22 : 04] Zechariah chapter 9, verse 9. You can read it when you go home. It says there, this prophetic word, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem.

See your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

And when the crowd there, when they recognize Jesus as royalty, they begin to display and demonstrate this reverence and respect for Jesus because they, as we're saying to the children, they start laying palm branches on the ground.

They start spreading their garments on the ground. More than that, they begin to praise. They begin to sing as Zechariah prophesied because we read there in verse 9, those who went before, those who followed were shouting, they were singing, Hosanna.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David. Hosanna in the highest. They were singing. They were singing a psalm.

[23 : 14] They were singing Psalm 118, one of the great Hallel Psalms. A psalm, or you could even say it's a hymn that praises the Lord, that gives the hallelujah to the Lord for his salvation.

And like all the Hallel Psalms, Psalm 118, it's a beautiful psalm. We'll sing it in a moment. It praises the Lord. It gives the hallelujah to the Lord.

It's a beautiful psalm with beautiful words that emphasizes and explains that Jesus Christ is our Savior and our salvation. We'll sing shortly these verses that it says there in Psalm 118, that stone, Jesus, is made head cornerstone, which the builders did despise.

This is the doing of the Lord and wondrous in our eyes. This is the day God made in it will joy triumphantly. Save now, he says, which is the word Hosanna.

Hosanna, now I pray thee, Lord, I pray, send now prosperity. For blessed is he in God's great name that cometh us to save. We from the house which to the Lord pertains you, blessed have.

[24 : 26] And that's what they were singing there in verses 9 and 10. They were singing Psalm 118. They're singing this great Hallel Psalm, singing the songs of salvation to the Lord, giving their hallelujah to God as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey.

It was a triumphal entry. That's what the title of the passage says, the triumphal entry. But it wasn't the triumph the crowd thought it would be.

It was the triumphal entry, but it wasn't the triumph the crowd thought it would be. Because the crowd here, they thought that Jesus' royalty was all because he was a descendant of King David.

They thought that because he was from the line and lineage of King David, that entering the city of King David, he was going to be this conquering king like King David.

The crowd all thought that Jesus was the Messiah to overthrow all the opposition and all the oppression of the Romans. They thought that Jesus had come to take command and take control of the nation of Israel again.

[25 : 41] But as you know, that's not why Jesus came. Jesus came to bring peace, not a sword. That's why he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey.

It symbolizes peace. If Jesus had entered Jerusalem riding on a horse, it would have symbolized war. That's why in the book of Revelation you have Jesus riding on a white horse.

It's the war to end all wars at the day of judgment. But here Jesus is entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey as a symbol of peace.

And so when you see the king of peace entering Jerusalem, which is called the city of peace, he's riding on a donkey symbolizing peace. He's coming to bring peace and the promise of salvation to undying souls.

peace. And you know, my friend, and with this I'll conclude, you look at this passage and you see that from one Sunday to the next everything would change.

[26 : 50] From one Sunday to the next everything would change. Because in Mark 11 on Sunday morning the crowd are all singing and they're singing Hosanna. Hosanna to Jesus.

Hosanna blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. On Sunday morning they're singing Hosanna. By Friday morning they're all shouting crucify him.

Crucify him. Away with him. Crucify him. And you see, my friend, when the crowd recognized Jesus as royalty they thought that he was going to be a conquering king.

But when they discovered during that week that Jesus wasn't the king they wanted, what did they do with him? They made their conquering king to be a crucified king.

And that's the point. Jesus wasn't the king they wanted. Jesus wasn't the king they wanted. And so many people view Jesus in the same or in a similar way because they want Jesus the way they want him.

[27 : 56] They want their Jesus to be soft on sin. They want their Jesus to be loose on the law. They want their Jesus to be casual with all the commandments. They want their Jesus to be happy but not holy.

They want Jesus to be sovereign but not strict. Not superior in their life. Not supreme over all. They want Jesus to be their safety net when they die.

But not their salvation when they live. And you know so many people they're happy to sing about Jesus on Sunday but not on Friday.

They're happy to speak about Jesus or speak to Jesus in prayer on Sunday but not on Friday. They're happy to search for Jesus in the Bible and open the Bible and find Jesus on the pages of Scripture on Sunday but not on Friday.

We want Jesus on Sunday morning but not on Friday morning. But my friend Jesus isn't just for Sunday. Jesus isn't Lord just for the Lord's day.

[29 : 06] He's Lord over every day of your life. And He needs to be Lord over your life. He needs to be Lord of your Lord's day but He also needs to be Lord of your Monday and your Tuesday and your Wednesday and your Thursday and your Friday and your Saturday and your following Sunday.

Jesus needs to be Lord over all. Because as it's often said if Jesus is not Lord over all then He's not Lord at all.

If Jesus is not Lord of all then He's not Lord at all. My friend this passage is showing us that a lot can happen from one Sunday to the next.

From Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. And I hope and pray that by next Sunday we'll have learned the lessons of this passage. Because on Palm Sunday there were three lessons to learn.

The first lesson was from the command of Jesus. Trust the Lord of Providence. Trust that He knows what He's doing. Second lesson is from the cult.

[30 : 22] Don't be a cult. Be a Christian. Don't be a donkey. Be a disciple. And the last lesson from the crowd. If Jesus is not Lord of all then He's not Lord at all.

And my friend you know Jesus needs to be Lord of all. you know that Jesus you need to submit and surrender your life to King Jesus.

You need to bow the knee to King Jesus confessing that He and He alone is Lord over your life. Because if He's not Lord of all then He's not Lord at all.

So on Palm Sunday let's learn these three lessons from the Lord. Three lessons on Palm Sunday that emphasize that Jesus is Lord.

May the Lord bless these thoughts to us and let us pray. O Lord our gracious God we give thanks that when we come to the Bible it is a book that speaks and it speaks more powerfully than any man.

[31 : 41] It speaks more passionately than any human and it speaks with such power Lord we pray that we would know it we would experience it that we would enjoy it and that we would know that the Lord is in this place and that it is good for us to be here.

Lord teach us we pray teach us to be more like Jesus teach us to submit and surrender our lives to follow Him that we might pray even like the psalmist teach me thy way and in thy truth O Lord then walk will I unite my heart that I thy name may fear continually.

Lord bless thy truth to us we pray that it would bear fruit to thine own glory and Lord bless us even in the week that lies ahead a week that is unknown to any of us but Lord we commit and we commend ourselves into thy care and keeping do us good we ask for we ask it in Jesus name and for his sake Amen we're going to bring our service to a conclusion by singing the words of Psalm 118 and that's Psalm they were singing on Palm Sunday Psalm 118 we're singing from verse 19 so it's in the Scottish Psalter page 399 page 399 in the blue psalm book Psalm 118 singing from verse 19 down to the verse 26 a song all about the salvation of the

Lord a song that gives its hallelujah to God Psalm 118 and verse 19 in verse 24 this is the day God made in it we'll joy triumphantly save now or Hosanna I pray thee Lord I pray send now prosperity blessed is he in God's great name that cometh us to save we from the house which to the Lord pertains you blessed have so these verses of Psalm 118 from verse 19 to 26 and we'll stand to sing if you're able to God's praise O set ye open unto me the gates of righteousness then will I enter into them and I the

Lord will bless this is the gate of God the the just shall enter in thee will I praise for the me earth and has my safety been the stone is made and cornerstone which builders did despise this is the doing of the

[35 : 47] Lord and wondrous in our eyes this is the day God made in it will joy triumph and flee save thou I pray thee Lord I pray send thou prosperity blessed is he in God's great name that come with us to save we from the house which to the

Lord pertains you blessed house the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen■■■ on Este■■■■ a mirror of lighthop a verde corazón é own it .

Éjust E■■ être