Good morning,

This Sunday is Palm Sunday and so begins our journey with Jesus from Jerusalem’s entrance to Golgotha’s cross to the triumph of Easter. On Palm Sunday Jesus had the full picture in mind. He looked far beyond the present and thought about the world’s future. Therefore, this Palm Sunday we remember not just Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem in the past but also His entry into our future. William Carter once wrote, “God sent Jesus into the world to bring all back to God’s powerful love.” This is a beautiful summary and not only easy to remember but simple to share with those who invite us to share our faith as it relates to Palm Sunday.

Jesus had concluded His journey to Jerusalem. He had prepared Himself to enter the city. What’s interesting about the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples is that His message is usually fulfilled immediately. In this case He sent a couple of them into a nearby village. He says, “Find a colt that has never been ridden.” He goes further to say something to the effect of, if asked any questions say, “The Lord needs it.” What’s amazing is the events turn out exactly the way He said they would. This offers evidence that Jesus has a power to predict future events.

Now we come to the moment everyone was waiting for. The colt is presented to Jesus. His disciples place their cloaks on the back of the colt and then they place Jesus on the back of the colt. Now what’s interesting about a donkey or colt is that it often represents humility, endurance, focus and long-suffering. If Jesus had been a military king, He would have ridden into Jerusalem on a white stallion, but he chose the colt. A coincidence? No way. As He rides into the city the disciples are singing Psalm 118:26. “Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.” The parade has begun and there are shouts of joy and ecstatic expectations for peace. The pharisees asked Jesus to silence the crowd. Jesus quotes Habakkuk 2:11, “I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout.”

For Luke Jesus is a prophet in a two-fold sense. First, He fulfills what the prophets before Him have said. Secondly, Jesus’ actions and the events that surround His life fulfill what He has spoken. In other words, Jesus not only proclaims God’s word but is God’s word.

Did you know that the phrase, “The peace of the Lord be with you” dates back to the first Palm Sunday? The crowds are singing “peace in heaven”. The heavens seem to sing back their hopes for peace on earth. For Luke, it is the announcement of what God makes possible in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The scene is rather remarkable. Jesus is approaching from the Mount of Olives from the spot where tradition held that the Messiah would appear. The accompanying disciples are singing a song of deliverance and rescue, an age old promise that God will rescue His chosen people. Jesus does not ride high on His horse into Jerusalem but instead on a lowly colt. He enters into a life-threatening situation without body guards, armor or a sword. The entire event is a prophetic act and a sign of God’s love for humanity.

Let’s not forget the presence of the pharisees. They love tradition. They love the way things used to be and they panicked at the slightest indication that things might be different. Maybe they were thinking that this experience had political implications, or they simply disagreed with the crowd that Jesus was the Messiah.

What’s most interesting is that Jesus clearly had a moment. It was an emotional moment. From His vantage point He could see the city spread in front of Him. He knew the journey before Him. He knew the true cost of peace.

Palm Sunday is a day of joyful Hosannas but it’s also a day of contrasts; those being triumph and the coming crucifixion. Let’s not forget that Jesus, the King of humanity, the savior of the world is arriving on a borrowed colt. Perhaps it leads us to some questions. What are the things that make for peace? What factors hide these things from our eyes? How is it that the crowd that shouted in victory would be the same crowd that shouted for His demise? At least for a moment on Palm Sunday we try to celebrate the entry of the Messiah into Jerusalem and into our lives. Something to pray about.

Blessings

Stephen