

Jesus' Triumphal Entry

Sunday – a Day of Messianic PRESENTATION

Background: Three events which culminated in the Triumphal Entry

1a. A promise made by Jesus to Pharisees re: His reception in Jerusalem (Lk 13.31-34)

Sum: Jesus had fled to Perea to escape the murderous anger of the Pharisees (Jn 10.40), knowing that He would be in far less danger in Perea, which was the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas. Some Pharisees tried to lure Jesus back to Judea where they could get the Roman authorities to kill Him. Jesus sees through their plot, assures them He would not fall prey to their trick and that He would come when the time was full.

He then wept over the city (from afar) and made the stunning promise that they – the city which they controlled – would not see Him until they welcomed Him as Messiah (i.e., until they cry, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord” – Ps 118.25).

To the folk who heard this, it was doubtless unthinkable that this should happen. And yet it did happen. By carefully tracing the events which preceded the Triumphal Entry, it is possible to reconstruct the very deliberate steps Jesus took to fulfill that bottomlessly unlikely promise.

2a. Jesus' raises Lazarus from the dead (Jn 11)

John identifies three specific ways in which the raising of Lazarus set the stage for Jesus' triumphal entry:

- ① Jesus was now a fugitive; an “APB” had been issued for His arrest (11.53, 57).
- ② The already burgeoning city was abuzz with the question, “Will the Nazarene come to the Feast this year” (11.55, 56).
- ③ Jesus took the 12 to the little village of Ephraim on the border b/w Judea & Samaria, tarried there until He set out for the Passover feast in Jerusalem.

3a. Jesus' very carefully planned journey to Jerusalem for the Passover

- 1b. Jesus and His disciples pass through Samaria and Galilee, intending to join the pilgrims traveling down the eastern side of the Jordan River, heading for Jerusalem to observe Passover (Lk 17:11)
- 2b. Jesus and His disciples fall in with a band of Pilgrims, travels with that multitude down the Jordan Rift toward Jerusalem; Jesus does much teaching and works some miracles along the way (Lk 17:20 – 19:28; Mk 10:1-52; Mt 19:1 – 20:34)



Friday/Saturday – A quiet weekend at Bethany, in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus

1a. Jesus arrives in Bethany on FRIDAY amidst an air of great excitement re: His coming to Jerusalem (Jn 11:55-12:1)

Note: Because the Sabbath began at sundown on Friday, the multitude of pilgrims with whom Jesus had been traveling could not stop at Bethany; they had to go on into Jerusalem to find lodging. As they went into the city, they bore a very timely two-fold message to the masses gathering there:

- 1.)
- 2.)

Note: concerning the location and strategic importance of the village of Bethany-

2a. Jesus is served a feast by the people of Bethany; Mary anoints Jesus and is rebuked by Judas, but Jesus defends Mary and scolds Judas (Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9; Jn 12:2-8)

3a. Because of that rebuke, Judas devises a sinister plot (Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10,11; Lk 22:3-6)

Sunday: A Day of Messianic Presentation

1a. The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem as the promised and awaited Messiah
(Mt 21:1-11; Mk 11:1-11; Lk 19:29-44; Jn 12:9-19)

1.) Old Testament prophets clearly foretold this event

a.) Zechariah 9:9 - the *manner* of the King's presentation had been foretold

b.) Daniel 9:25,26 - the *moment* of the King's presentation had been foretold

c.) Psalm 118:21-29 - the *meaning* of the King's presentation had been foretold

2.) Jesus Himself had clearly foretold this event. Just several weeks earlier, after Jesus had fled from Judea because of the murderous designs of the Pharisees, when some of those Pharisees came to Perea to entice Jesus back to Judea that they might take Him, Jesus had clearly stated that the citizens of Jerusalem would "...not see me until the time come that ye shall say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord'" (Lk 13:31-35).

3.) By traveling along the way to Jerusalem with a band of Jewish pilgrims, and by working miracles and rebuking the Pharisees along that way, and then by stopping in Bethany and allowing the pilgrims to precede Him into Jerusalem, Jesus had accomplished two very strategic victories:

a.) He had heightened the excitement and fascination of the people, laying the groundwork for their behavior at the TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.

b.) He had effectively frustrated the murderous intent of the Sanhedrinists (cp. Jn 11:47-48, 53, 57; Lk 19:47-48; 20:19); those leaders of Judaism were anxious to arrest and execute Jesus, but could not because of His popularity with the multitudes. This speaks to the legitimate issue: How did Jesus get away with this?

Note: that popularity was, to be sure, only superficial and self-serving, but it nonetheless had the effect of protecting Jesus from the Sanhedrinists, and Jesus utilized that reality again and again.

2a. The praises of the pilgrims as Jesus approaches the city

3a. The Pharisees object to Jesus and He rebukes them (Lk 19:39-44)

4a. Jesus made His way all the way to the temple, looked in briefly, and then returned quietly to Bethany (Mt 21:17; Mk 11:11)

NOTE:

1.) The decision as to what to do with Jesus now rests with the leaders of the Jews; He has made clear for all to see the substance of His claims concerning Himself and the proof of those claims.

2.) It would have been easy for *us* to be deceived and to accept as genuine the words of acceptance offered by this multitude! However, subsequent events demonstrated the superficial - yea, the hypocritical character of those words.

3.) A legitimate question: Given Sunday, why Friday?

Simple answer: Monday & Tuesday!

Fuller answer: On Tuesday afternoon Jesus drove the city to a telling choice b/w Him and the Pharisees (Mt 23). The people had about 3 days to ponder that choice. On Friday morning, when Pilate asked them, "Who would you have me release, Jesus or Barabbas?", the multitude announced their verdict.

4) Sum:

The message of Sunday: "Jesus is the long-awaited Deliverer Messiah, come to offer forgiveness and salvation!"

The message of Mon/Tue: "You don't take Jesus on your terms! You take Him on His terms."