A Week in the Life of Jesus

Today is a very important day from a Christian’s perspective. What day is it? Yes, today is Palm Sunday…the day that Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem as the Messiah, the King of the Israel. It is also the final Sunday of Lent (observed by the Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox Churches); it marks the beginning of Passion Week or Holy Week, and it was also the last week of Jesus life prior to His crucifixion. Unfortunately, we won’t be having a Good Friday service and some people wouldn’t be able attend if we did. It is a day that some people don’t even recognize but it is the saddest day in all of history…the death of our Savior. As we walk through this week, let us remember that this is a Holy time: Palm Sunday, Passover 4/10-4/180, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter. What a week, especially in the life of Jesus!

For the sake of time, let’s get right to it. Let’s read the scripture associated with this first account about Palm Sunday found in Matthew 21:1. Please stand with me to honor God as we read His inerrant Word.

[***1***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-1.htm)*As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage (Baith-fah-gay) on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples,* [***2***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-2.htm)*saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me.* [***3***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-3.htm)*If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”*

[***4***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-4.htm)*This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:* [***5***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-5.htm)*“Say to Daughter Zion,*

*‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’ ”*[*a*](http://biblehub.com/niv/matthew/21.htm#footnotes)

[***6***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-6.htm)*The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them.* [***7***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-7.htm)*They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on.* [***8***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-8.htm)*A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.* [***9***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-9.htm)*The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,*

*“Hosanna*[*b*](http://biblehub.com/niv/matthew/21.htm#footnotes) *to the Son of David!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”*[*c*](http://biblehub.com/niv/matthew/21.htm#footnotes)

*“Hosanna*[*d*](http://biblehub.com/niv/matthew/21.htm#footnotes) *in the highest heaven!”* [***10***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-10.htm)*When Jesus entered Jer`usalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”* [***11***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/21-11.htm)*The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”*

Pray

Hosanna!

The word “Hosanna” was used in 3 out of 4 accounts in the Gospels (Matthew, Mark and John).

This is a Hebrew word, not New Testament Greek. Its literal translation is "lead us!" Naturally this held political implications in the mind of both the crowds and the authorities, causing a rather tense situation. Upon entrance to the Temple, which was closely monitored by the Roman garrison to the north, the children were the only ones shouting "lead us!" As it turns out, children could not be arrested and tried under Roman law. It is a perfectly reasonable request of the Lord, as is His command to His disciples found elsewhere: "Follow Me!"

Palm Branches as well had two significances:

As it turns out, palm branches were only mentioned in John’s account. No other gospel even mentions palm branches. People from all over the region were in attendance and some brought branches from their specific region so there were branches of many kinds laid in Jesus’ pathway. But palm branches specifically were a national symbol of independence for about a century from the time the Maccabeans drove the Greeks out until the rise of Roman power. In Jesus' day they continued to be an emblem of nationalism and anti-Roman fervor, and it is not uncommon to find a palm leaf stamped over the portrait of Caesar on coins from Jerusalem from that time period.

The second meaning of the Palm, and most likely the reason it was such a powerful national emblem from the time of the restoration of the Temple, is suggested even in its modern name: phoenix dactyliferous. Even in ancient times this was referred to as the phoenix tree because of the shape of the leaf and its ability to grow new foliage even after being burnt. The idea of rising from death was meaningful for the nation to be sure, and far more significant to early Christians who continued to use the phoenix (plant and legendary bird) as a symbol of the resurrection. On the occasion of Jesus' entry to the city, He was the only one who fully realized how significant this was...

This event, Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey, was prophesied long ago by a profit named Zechariah. This is further proof and evidence that every prophesy made in God’s Word is true and accurate and reliable. Please turn with me to Zechariah 9:9. This text was written some 480 years before Jesus walked upon the Earth!

[***9***](http://biblehub.com/zechariah/9-9.htm)*Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

The use of the foal of a donkey held two historical significances:

All four Gospels record Jesus entering the city on a donkey. First, there was a current debate among Rabbis and scholars as to how far one could carry the bread of the Passover without violating the laws against working on the Sabbath. One school of thought insisted it could only be within your house; another held that it could be within the city walls; and the third allowed it to be carried anywhere within the city limits so long as it was on a beast of burden. Bethany being right on the city limits, Jesus implied by His actions that He in fact was the bread of the Passover - a theme re-asserted in the Lord's Supper only a few nights later.

Secondly, it was tradition in the Ancient Near East for a conquering leader to ride into a defeated city on a horse. A returning monarch entering his recaptured and rescued city however, rode in on a donkey. Again by His action Jesus identified Himself as a rightful King, returning to reclaim what was His own.

The next account of this event was recorded in Mark 11:1

[***1***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-1.htm)*As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples,* [***2***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-2.htm)*saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.* [***3***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-3.htm)*If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’ ”*

[***4***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-4.htm)*They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it,* [***5***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-5.htm)*some people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?”* [***6***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-6.htm)*They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go.* [***7***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-7.htm)*When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it.* [***8***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-8.htm)*Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields.* [***9***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-9.htm)*Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,*

*“Hosanna!*[*a*](http://biblehub.com/niv/mark/11.htm#footnotes) *” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”*[*b*](http://biblehub.com/niv/mark/11.htm#footnotes)[***10***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-10.htm)*“Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!”*

[***11***](http://biblehub.com/mark/11-11.htm)*Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.*

Our next account is found in Luke 19:28

As we read Dr. Luke’s account, notice the differences between his account and the others. Dr. Luke was a very detailed man, but more detailed about what Jesus said and did rather than focusing on what others did or said. Here, there is not mention of palm branches, or even the word “Hosanna”. But, what we do find is what Jesus was feeling at the time. There is more “red letters” in Luke’s account than any others. Listen and read closely to the text.

[***28***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-28.htm)*After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.* [***29***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-29.htm)*As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,* [***30***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-30.htm)*“Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.* [***31***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-31.htm)*If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’ ”*

[***32***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-32.htm)*Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them.* [***33***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-33.htm)*As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?”*

[***34***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-34.htm)*They replied, “The Lord needs it.”*

[***35***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-35.htm)*They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.* [***36***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-36.htm)*As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.*

[***37***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-37.htm)*When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:*

[***38***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-38.htm)*“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!”*[*b*](http://biblehub.com/niv/luke/19.htm#footnotes)

*“Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”*

[***39***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-39.htm)*Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”*

[***40***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-40.htm)*“I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”*

[***41***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-41.htm)*As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it* [***42***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-42.htm)*and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.* [***43***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-43.htm)*The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side.* [***44***](http://biblehub.com/luke/19-44.htm)*They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”*

Luke’s account reveals another twist in the story. On a day of celebration by the people of Israel who are finally claiming Jesus as King, Jesus himself is saddened by what was happening. This was the first time that Jesus every allowed anyone to call him King and here, all Israel is calling him King. But, as we look at verse 41 again, as He approached Jerusalem “He wept over it”. He already knew that the very people who are calling him King would shout “crucify Him, crucify Him” only 5 days later. What a tragedy! How many times in your life have you failed to take advantage of a situation when it was presented and later you said to yourself, “If I only knew then what I know now”? That is precisely what Jesus was saying to the city of Jerusalem. They were spiritually blinded and only believed what they wanted to believe and when the time came, they ended up crucifying Him!

If they only knew that He was and is the only one who could save them from their sins!

If they only knew that He was and is the only way into the Kingdom of Heaven!

If they only knew that He was and is the only True Son of the Living God!

If they only knew that He was God in the flesh!

If they only knew…

You see, they were just caught up in the moment, not in the lasting effects of the age. They failed to see the urgency of the times in which they were living. And you know what friends; we are failing at it as well. They failed to recognize the prophecy that was spoken by Jesus that would come about some 37 years later in that the temple would be destroyed. Look again at verse 44, *They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”*. In 70 AD, the temple was destroyed and not one stone was left on another. If they only knew!

Jesus speaks of this event in Matthew 24:1. Let’s turn there together.

[***1***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-1.htm)*Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings.* [***2***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-2.htm)*“Do you see all these things?” he asked. “Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”*

[***3***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-3.htm)*As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”*

[***4***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-4.htm)*Jesus answered: “Watch out that no one deceives you.* [***5***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-5.htm)*For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many.* [***6***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-6.htm)*You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.* [***7***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-7.htm)*Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.* [***8***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-8.htm)*All these are the beginning of birth pains.*

[***9***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-9.htm)*“Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me.* [***10***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-10.htm)*At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other,* [***11***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-11.htm)*and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.* [***12***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-12.htm)*Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold,* [***13***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-13.htm)*but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.* [***14***](http://biblehub.com/matthew/24-14.htm)*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*

I was all about them, the public, and what they wanted to see, what they wanted to hear, and what they would get as a result. It’s very similar to our church culture today, wouldn’t you agree?

People attend church for many reasons. Some attend:

1. It’s a weekly tradition.
2. It’s a monthly fix.
3. It’s their annual fix. They are CEO’s. Do you know what a CEO is? Christmas and Easter only!
4. Some attend to be entertained.
5. Some attend for the free motivational speech.
6. Some attend out of guilt.
7. Some attend for social reasons.
8. Some attend because they are hurting and once they feel better about themselves, they stop attending.

In all of these situations, they get caught up in the moment. They aren’t concerned about the long-term effects. These kinds of people simply don’t believe nor do they have the capacity to do so unless they take a life-saving step…surrender! They get a glimpse of the cost one has to pay to be a disciple of Jesus and they start back-tracking. They attend only to please themselves and receive praise from others.

Listen very closely to me friends…we are living at a crossroads of time. If Jesus doesn’t return soon, future generations are going to look back on this time that we are now living in and think that we lived in a time that was critical, that vital decisions were made to shape the future. We don’t want to be saying to ourselves, if we only knew! Now is the time to recognize the need for the truth. Now is the time that we make a decision for Jesus and enter into an eternal relationship with Him. Now is the time and now is the place where we pick up our cross and follow Him daily! Now is that time!

And the last account of this event is found in John 12:12

[***12***](http://biblehub.com/john/12-12.htm)*The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.* [***13***](http://biblehub.com/john/12-13.htm)*They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,*

*“Hosanna!*[*d*](http://biblehub.com/niv/john/12.htm#footnotes) *” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”*[*e*](http://biblehub.com/niv/john/12.htm#footnotes) *“Blessed is the king of Israel!”*

[***14***](http://biblehub.com/john/12-14.htm)*Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:* [***15***](http://biblehub.com/john/12-15.htm)*“Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”*[*f*](http://biblehub.com/niv/john/12.htm#footnotes)

[***16***](http://biblehub.com/john/12-16.htm)*At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.*

[***17***](http://biblehub.com/john/12-17.htm)*Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.* [***18***](http://biblehub.com/john/12-18.htm)*Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him.* [***19***](http://biblehub.com/john/12-19.htm)*So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”*

The Pharisees were scared that they would lose everything they had worked for because of this man named Jesus. They were afraid that He would take away and eliminate their positions and their identity and they had to do something about it…they had to kill him! Public opinion was on His side. You know what friends? Public opinion is the single most dangerous thing we have to contend with today. What about God’s opinion? Does it even matter anymore? The public is very fickle. They could love and exalt you one day and crucify you the next. If you don’t give public opinion what they want, they will crucify you. That was why Jesus wept when he looked over the city. The public expected certain things from Him that He could deliver on…not yet at least. They wanted an earthly King that would liberate them from Rome and restore the city to its former glory, but that was not God’s will nor was it Jesus’. But the public gets what the public wants…it’s their way or no way. But God’s opinion is so radically different. His ways are certainly not our ways. He doesn’t focus on the here and now. He focuses on future things, eternal things like living out an eternity with the people He loves. He focuses on giving us a hope and a future. He focuses his attention on providing us with everything we need and giving a Jesus that we can rely on, a Jesus that will never leave us or forsake us. He focuses on our relationship with Him that He deeply values and holds dear. Isn’t that the kind of God you want to serve?

As we contemplate what this week is all about, I want to issue a challenge. It’s the same challenge I gave my daughter Taylor last Wednesday after our Bible study. If you are a change-agent for Christ, I challenge to you utilize this acronym as you pray this week. Let the focus of our prayers be on God’s will.

P-Praise

Adoration

Celebrate God's glorious being

Offering the sacrifice of praise

Releasing your faith

R-Repent

Confession

Looking inward with Him

Cleansing His Temple

Overcoming temptation

A-Ask

Petition

Telling God Your Needs

Claiming God's Answers

Delighting in God's Will

Y-Yield

Intercession

Seeking God's Kingdom

Challenging Strongholds of Evil

Seeking Great & Mighty Things

As I wrap up this message, I want to remind you all of the times we live in, right here and right now. Turn with me to our last set of scripture found in 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

[***7***](http://biblehub.com/2_thessalonians/2-7.htm)*For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.*

What we must recognize is that we live in a time where we are under God’s protection. He shields us from all sorts of evil that would otherwise devour us. He, the Holy Spirit, will only do so until the rapture which will occur in a blink of an eye…one millisecond. After that, we are fair game for Satan. Not just in this room, but our Mothers, Fathers, sisters, brothers, our sons and our daughters, our spouses and our friends. Everyone who has not made a commitment to become a follower of our Risen Savior is at risk. They should be with you right now hearing this message before it’s too late. You don’t want to be the one that says, “If I only knew that Jesus was coming back today! If I did, I would have spoken to them about Him.” And if you are setting in this room and haven’t made that commitment, now is the time and here is the place. Let’s get the process started today!