

Warrington A Day of Triumph
4/11/50

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Scripture Lesson: - Mark 11: 1-11.

Text: - Mark 11: 9.

Introduction: - This day of triumph is the extraordinary progress of Jesus from Nazareth to Jerusalem. He had been spending two eventful days at Bethany with friends. Now he is enroute to Jerusalem, where he will engage in the Passover feast, and conclude his ministry. For days people have been swarming from every corner of Palestine to the Holy City to purify themselves in preparation for this greatest of the Jewish festivals. Among most, yea perhaps I should say, among many, the most frequent inquiry has been whether he would come to the feast in view of the command issued to arrest him the moment his whereabouts were discovered.

The Master had set this question at rest by making an open pilgrimage, attended by his disciples, and a constantly increasing throng of travelers from Perea, beyond Jordan, on the highway through Jerico. He conferred his blessing on some and spoke some of his most significant messages to others.

It was near Bethpage, the sight of which city is lost in the dust of antiquity, that he sent two of his disciples into an adjacent city with instructions to secure for him a colt, tied by the roadside. No one has ever mounted this animal. When asked to explain their conduct in taking the animal without permission, they responded with the words, "The Lord hath need of him". The unusual character of this transaction arrested the attention of some of the bystanders. They had come up to the feast, and they now expected Jesus himself to make his way to the city. He mounted the colt, but not before the disciples had laid their ^{upper} garments on him. They then stretch their robes as a carpet for his royal progress. Many in the crowd do likewise and those who could not tear branches from the palm trees and strew them on the way. They do not realize its significance. They simply fall into the spirit of times, and confer honor upon the Master. The crowd, led by the Master, moves slowly toward

the city. Suddenly, there are those who look upon Christ, riding on the back of the colt, are reminded that he looks like a king, even with his serene and royal dignity. They at once begin to shout, "Hosanna, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel." The shout swells into a cry, a cry of the torrent of acclimation, a cry of religious emphasis, when they catch the first sight of the Holy City. Then the host begins to rejoice and praise God for the wondrous works they have seen at the hands of this meek but mighty Prince, exclaiming, "Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven and glory in the highest."

This brought a stab of pain to the Pharisees. This popular enthusiasm is a misguided and profane adulation. They appeal to Christ and ask him to silence. He refuses, and says, "I tell you that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out." Then the Pharisees turn disconsolately to their fellows and cry, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing. Behold the world is gone after Him!"

Now, as they come within sight of the Holy City, as they round a shoulder of Mt. Olivet, this sight of the Holy City lying in splendor, make a profound impression upon the sensitive souls, and it rouses in Jesus an unusual tumult of emotions. As He gazes upon the magnificent panorama of towers, temple, walls, which crown the hills of the ancient capital of His people, he breaks forth into loud lamentations. His whole frame shaken by the stress of His feelings. He knows that the Jews will let it lie in its sinful condition, to their highest spiritual interest. Jesus according to Luke, wept over it, and said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes!"

The procession moves on. It crosses the valley of Jehosephat, the brook Kidron and swarms through the city gates. Some one raises thy cry, "Who is this?" "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the Prophet of Galilee!" He dismounts, enters the temple, and gazes on everything. He is silent. At length, when the evening shadows fall, he withdraws to the quiet rest of Bethany.

I.

Was the day and its incidents accidental? We would say no. It was not accidental. The Lord did not fall into the mood of the passover celebrants. It was a plan to assert his divine right over against the city of Jerusalem.

1. He foresaw the triumph which would follow his spectacular entry of Jerusalem and the dread consequences to his life. It was his right to enter the Holy City as a King. He was of royal blood and the government of the people was upon his shoulders. It was divinely fit that he should move onto the capital in the manner he chose, for he was a king, not by martial conquest, but by reason of his sovereignty *a king* over the souls of men.

The animal on which he rode was significant. The horse would have been too closely identified in popular thought with war-like demonstration. The colt he rode would convey no such misleading suggestions. Humility and dignity were blended in the choice of the colt on which Jesus rode into Jerusalem. He was the Prince of Peace, and he came to the City of Peace with lowly grandeur.

II.

Genuine royalty flash forth from the behavior of Jesus on Palm Sunday. He makes but one response when the owners of the colt make their disapproval known. "The Lord hath need of him".

His possession of the temple. He entered as the ruler of God's house. The city was his, the company was his which flocked the streets, the temple was his property. Today he is quietly looking at things; tomorrow he will throw out those who have defiled the temple. "My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer. But ye have made it a den of thieves".

III.

Valor is a kingly attribute. Jesus displayed supe

superb courage in his conduct on Palm Sunday. He knows that his enemies want to kill him. He knows that in a few days he will be arrested. He knows that in a few days the cruel scourge will cutting his flesh. What does he do? He goes forth joyously to meet his end; sustained by the sublimity of his mission and cheered on by the applause of those in whose interest he was about to die.

What did he mean when he said to his disciples, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life for the ransom of many." It was toward the end of this divine enterprise that he was moving with as great a rapidity as circumstances would permit. To give his life a ransom for many.

When Overbeck, the German painter, began his study for his famous picture of "Christ's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem" he was far from acknowledging the divinity of Jesus. "O God forgive." He from that hour became a devout worshiper of the Son of Man.

Jesus was fully aware that the applause of the multitude on this day was only a temporary ovation. He knew that "Hosanna" would soon change to "Crucify Him". The crowd would yield Him but the brief sovereignty of a day. He knew the day was coming when "every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord".

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He knew that the same is true in our day. Multitudes follow him on this day with great adoration but on the following day they forget him. They do not know that the nations and individuals that forget Christ will go down in confusion and ruin, and that those who reject the Christ will suffer a glorious overthrow. But the love of the King will shine forth over all the sorrow which sin inflicts upon mankind.

Today we are making again the short pilgrimage from Bethany to Jerusalem in company with Jesus. How can any man refuse to bow in penitence before him, and cry out with the whole heart, "My Lord, and my God".