

Approaching Easter

A Devotional Series: Week of March 20

"The King Has Come" (Luke 19:28-48)



Day 1 | Luke 19: 28-40

Appetizer

Consider an occasion where you traveled far - or paid a considerable price - to experience an event? How did the event captivate your attention? What made it so meaningful and worth the effort to attend?

Big Idea

This “Palm Sunday” passage is fascinating for many reasons. First, we see Jesus’ ministry intensify in what we know to be the final week of His earthly ministry and the culmination of His purpose on earth. Having already drawn a crowd nearby by His raising of Lazarus from the dead (see **John 12:1-8**), he presents himself in Jerusalem at the beginning of the very crowded Passover week celebration. Second, we see God’s astounding faithfulness in fulfilling prophecy in accurate detail (e.g. **Daniel 9:24-27** (timing of Jesus’ birth), and **Zechariah 9:9-17** (riding a colt). Third, we see Jesus’s unconventional entrance; hardly the conquering warrior on a white horse that the people may have expected from the Messiah! Finally, Jesus challenges the offended religious leaders. Upon their insistence that he silence the crowd’s shouts, He instead insists that “even the rocks” would shout out affirmation of Who He was.

Main Course

1. The crowds shout “blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord”. What do you think they were hoping to see happen as the result of Jesus’ coming?
2. What is the significance of Jesus’ triumphal entry - and inevitable death - occurring during the observation of Passover?

Dessert

God makes promises throughout His scripture. For example, He promises to forgive our sins when we repent and trust in Him. He promises to provide for our needs. He promises steadfast love to His children. He even promises to bring profound meaning and purpose through life’s hardships. How have you seen God’s promises in scripture fulfilled in your life already? Make a point to share these “God at Work” stories with your friends, co-workers or family this week.

Luke 19: 28-40

Day 2 | Luke 19: 41-44

Appetizer

Have you ever offered someone your counsel but you could tell they “just didn’t get it”? Was it because the information was difficult? Or because they were distracted with other things?

Big Idea

In the previous passage (vs **28-40**) we read that the people rightly rejoiced in recognizing Jesus as their promised Messiah, but they greatly misunderstood the purpose of His coming. Previously - and on numerous occasions - we read that Jesus had warned His disciples and the crowds about his coming death (e.g. **Luke 17:25**), but they simply did not understand. Focused only on their immediate context, they were looking for a Messiah who would lead them in an ‘exodus’ away from Roman oppression. Sadly, we know that within a week, the crowd’s shouts of “blessed is He who comes” would become the demand to “crucify Him!” In this passage Jesus laments over this, weeping over Jerusalem’s lack of understanding of what He came to accomplish.

Main Course

1. Have the pressures you’ve experienced in life ever drawn you away from following the Lord? In what ways?
2. Because of their lack of understanding and unbelief (vs **43**), Jesus laments of the coming destruction for Jerusalem (70 A.D.). How can lack of belief - or misunderstanding God’s ways - bring destruction in our lives?
3. Jesus says that His followers did not understand that His unfolding plan was for “peace”. What peace does He speak of?

Dessert

Consider the prayers you’ve prayed, asking the Lord work through different issues you face. Are you holding these requests with open hands? Even if He never answered them the way you were specifically praying, could you still trust Him? Would you still follow Him?

Luke 19: 41-44

Day 3 | Read Luke 19: 45-48

Appetizer

From time to time, we all are guilty of substituting our devotion to God with our own personal desires and ambition. Have you caught yourself doing this recently? How so?

Big Idea

In this passage, Jesus first drives out the merchants from the temple, then committing to daily teaching there. In this dramatic scene, we see Jesus' righteous anger over the ways that man replaces the righteous worship of God with the prideful exaltation of self. Despite the observation of Passover, we see how God's people failed to rightly understand their need for a Savior. They did not understand that Jesus would not simply waive the penalty for their sin, but that He would fulfill that sentence by becoming the actual "unblemished" sacrifice that Passover called for. Additionally, we see the intensified plot of the religious leaders to sentence Jesus to death.

Main Course

1. Historical accounts indicate that the selling of goods in the temple was often a specific merchant trade that minimized 'inconvenience' for Jewish travelers transporting animals long distance to make sacrifice. How is prayer and worship seemingly "inconvenient" for us at times? How should we rightly view this instead?
2. Read and consider **John 4:23-24**. This scripture supports one of our 4 "pillars" at Harvest Bible Chapel; the pillar of Unashamed Adoration. How can the descriptives 'spirit and truth' inform our worship in ways that honor God rightly? How can it keep us from engaging in the false worship that results in the exaltation of ourselves?

Dessert

What are the distractions that try to hinder your focused expression of worship when we assemble together weekly at Harvest? How can you address these distractions? Could doing so maximize your personal capacity for "unashamed adoration" in the coming weeks leading up to our joyful Easter Sunday celebration?

Luke 19: 45-48