

# Notes for the Ekklesia Meeting

Sundays @ 10:00 a.m. Info: (651) 283-0568 Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc www.dtminc.org Today's Date: March 28, 2010

## Hosanna to the Son of David!

by Dan Trygg

"Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Beth-phage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, 'Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me.' <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once.' <sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, <sup>5</sup> 'Say to the daughter of Zion, "Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

Matthew 21:5

As they came up the road from Jericho, the pilgrims first came to Bethphage ("house of figs") and Bethany ("house of dates"), on the eastern side of the Mount of Olives. This event occurred six days before the Passover. Jesus lodged at the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary (Jn. 12:1-11). **This was the first Jewish feast since He had raised Lazarus from the dead (Jn. 11), and there were many pilgrims who had heard the reports of this miracle. They wished to catch a glimpse of Lazarus and Jesus.** The entire area around Jerusalem would have been *filled* with pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the feast. The resurrection of Lazarus had been well documented, and many had believed in Jesus as a result of this sign He had performed. **On the next day, Sunday, Jesus sent disciples into the nearby village to fetch a donkey and her colt, which had been tied up in the street.** This was most likely prearranged by the Lord, and the disciples were given what they were to say to the owners, so that they could borrow the animals.

**When they returned to Jesus, they placed their outer garments upon the colt, hoisted Jesus upon its back, and began a procession into Jerusalem, a distance of two miles.** Their pathway would have taken them up the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, down the western side, across the Kidron valley, and up the ascending roadway into the city itself, seated on Mt. Zion. **Some of the pilgrims** (a *very* large crowd – Matt. 21:8) **began placing their coats in the roadway in front of Jesus**, and picking them up after He had passed, adding a kind of "red carpet" dimension to the procession. **Others began to cut leafy branches from the trees and palm branches, and placed them in the roadway**, as well. When they began the descent of the western side of the Mount of Olives, **the multitudes, both behind and in front of Him, began shouting out "Hosanna to the Son of David!", "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!", "Blessed is the king of Israel!", "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!", "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!", "Hosanna!", "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!", and "Hosanna in the highest!"** **The noise was deafening. Thousands were shouting, praising God, and crying out for Jesus to "Save now!"** ("Hosanna!")

It was very clear what the crowds were expecting. They openly shouted out their wishes. **They were expecting Jesus to be the Son of David, who would deliver them from their Roman oppressors.** Their cries of "Save now!" must be understood from that perspective. They were cheering for the One whom God had sent, the Prophet Jesus from Nazareth, who obviously had the power of God on His side. **They were expecting Him to raise an army and lead a revolt, ...but that was not to be.** As He came down the Mount, the din increased and echoed across the valley. *Recognizing the potential danger of a noisy mob*, because the Romans may intervene, ...or *possibly even offended* that the pilgrims were shouting out phrases from the Hallel..., **the Pharisees protested at this unruly demonstration, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"** (The Hallel refers to a fifth section of Psalms, 107-150, characterized by praise. For example, "Hosanna" comes from 118: 25. The Hebrew, "*hoshiy'ah na*" came to be abbreviated over time to "*hosanna*" in common parlance.) **Jesus' response was, "I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."** This may simply be a declaration that this day was prophesied about, and therefore destined to occur. Or, it may also be a word of rebuke to the Pharisees, based upon Habbakuk 2:9-11, "Woe to him who builds his realm by unjust gain, to set his nest on high, to escape the clutches of ruin! You have plotted the ruin of many peoples, shaming your own house and forfeiting your life. *The stones of the wall will cry out, and the beams of the woodwork will echo it.*" **Jesus may be confronting their willingness to compromise for the sake of self-interest.** The time would soon come when their unjust plotting would bring about their own destruction. Their lavish houses, built by the fruits of injustice and compromise, cry out for judgment in the eyes of the living God, who sees all.

Immediately after this interchange, **as they approached the city, Jesus began to weep.** The Greek word indicates that **He burst into tears, weeping profusely and with great sobbing**, wailing and lamentation. He was **weeping over the city, grieving at their blindness to what God was really doing, ...the opportunity which was present for them to respond to His grace.** "If you recognized in this day, even you, the things leading to peace; but at this time it is hidden from your eyes." **Then, He prophesied the coming destruction that would come upon the city, leading to its utter ruin, because they did not recognize the time of God's coming to them.** The city will be surrounded.

Embankments will be built up against them. The city will be taken, the people killed. The destruction will be so complete that one stone will not be left upon another. **These words were fulfilled 40 years later**, as the Romans laid siege to the city. **Hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed, and the city was razed to the ground.**

**As He continued into the city, the furor of the crowd once again reached a *thunderous* intensity.** Matthew records that “all the city was *shaken* (as by an earthquake) at the noise, and asked, “*Who is this?*” The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.” Mark’s account records that **He came into the temple.** The incident recorded in John 12 must have taken place there. He began to say that the hour for the Son of Man to be glorified had come. He proclaimed, “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone by itself; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life ruins it; but he who disregards his life in this world will preserve it to life eternal. If anyone serves Me, let Him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant shall also be; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him” (Jn. 12:24-26). **The crowd was proclaiming Him as their King. Were they willing to give up their lives for Him? The Father will honor those who follow and serve Him.** Unbeknownst to the crowd, however, He was about to become like that grain of wheat. In order to fulfill the Father’s purpose, to liberate humankind from their spiritual oppressors and the bondage to sin, the underlying source of all human injustice, **it was necessary for Him to lay down His life on our behalf.** So, we see His thoughts turning to the great sacrifice which was only a few days away. “Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour?’ But *for this purpose I came to this hour.* Father, glorify Your name.” As He uttered this word, a voice came out of heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again” (12:27,28). The multitude who heard it was amazed. Some thought it thundered, while others said that an angel had spoken to Him.

“This voice has not come for *My* sake, but for *your* sakes. **Now judgment is upon this world, now the ruler of this world shall be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself**” (Jn. 12:30,31). The apostle comments that Jesus said this to indicate the manner of death He was about to die, suspended on a cross. **Jesus understood clearly the spiritual conflict which was coming to a head.** *He* was the seed of woman promised so long ago to Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:15). What He was about to endure *was planned* from before the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8). The serpent was going to bite Him, but, in so doing, would put himself under the heel of the Son of Man, who would crush his head. **The power base of the enemy would be stripped away, and the plundering of his house would begin in earnest.** Jesus would be the seed who would die and be buried, ...but much fruit will grow up as a result. **An entire army of followers would find freedom and life in Him, and would set about to liberate other lost souls through the message of Jesus’ victory.** The movement would spread like leaven to fill the entire world.

**Those listening did not, however, understand what kind of King Jesus was, or what His objective was. As a result, many missed what God was doing right under their noses.** For example, the fact that Jesus came to Jerusalem riding a colt was not understood. **He did not come riding a war horse. He came as a Man of peace.** The prophecy said, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zech. 9:9). The war horse was what a political/military Messiah might be expected to ride. Instead, Jesus came on a donkey, actually upon a colt that had never been ridden before. Such an animal would have neither the strength nor training to respond to a confrontation, should one arise. *Jesus would have been a sitting duck in any military encounter.* The colt had to be led down the road, probably following its mother, who was also being led. That is about as humble, powerless and non-provoking kind of ride that a person could imagine. **Although He was a king, ...THE King..., He came in meekness. He also came with salvation.** Not the political deliverance the crowds were looking for, but a salvation that was *much greater*, one that *would* strike at the very *root* of all social and political oppression, ...human sin and selfishness. **In less than a week, the very multitudes who were acclaiming Him this day would be calling for His crucifixion. Why? Because He was not delivering what they expected, or wanted.** He came to *destroy* self-interest, not to establish it. **He would be King only over those willing to follow His agenda, not theirs.**

He warned them that **they had only a limited opportunity to respond to the light that was with them, or the darkness would overtake them.** Those who walk in the darkness do not perceive where they are going. “While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you might become children of light” (Jn. 12:36). Whether we are considering following Him for the first time, or whether we are interested in going deeper with Him, this is the bottom line. **Respond to the light of revelation while you have the insight, because the shadows will come in again on those who put off obeying God.** “Behold, *now* is the acceptable time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation” (II Cor. 6:2).