

The Hosanna Road

Zechariah 9:9, 14:1-5, Revelation 19:11-16

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2000 years ago, the Sadducees had a tradition in which they believed the Messiah would show up four days before Passover.

In fact, they'd keep the gates of the Temple open so He could walk into His rightful place. Because of this, Jewish nationalistic fervor was at its peak on this particular day.

The Romans would have had all their troops activated and on alert, fearing the Jews would try another revolt under some religiously crazed radical as had happened in the past. Tensions were high.

This was also the very day Jesus chose to enter Jerusalem on a donkey fulfilling Zechariah's prophecy.

Zechariah 9:9, "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."

Today, if you come from Bethlehem, through Bethany, the road climbs over a ridge and, as you reach the crest, spread out before you, on the other side of the Kidron Valley, is the beautiful city of Jerusalem.

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The dominant feature of Jerusalem is the Dome of the Rock, standing where the Temple once stood.

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Inside the Dome of the Rock, Jewish tradition says, lies the stone that was located beneath the Ark of the Covenant.

It's supposed to still have the footings of the Holy of Holies in the dimensions recorded in God's word.

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That ridge, from where you view the city, was once called the Mount of Olives.

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Two-thirds of the way down that hill, into the Kidron Valley, is the Church of All Nations and the Garden of Gethsemane.

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Jesus went down that same road on a donkey; a donkey that had never been ridden.

The crowds that had witnessed Lazarus' resurrection shouted "Hosanna" or *Yasha anna* in Hebrew which means, "Save us now!" They were quoting a passage from Psalms 118.

Psalms 118:25-29, "Lord, save us! Lord, grant us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you. The Lord is God, and he has made his light shine on us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."

They were saying, "*Jehovah (LORD) save us!*" and to come "*in the name of the LORD*" is to come in God's authority.

The New International Version of the Bible is more accurate in translation here as it represents a clearer understanding of the original language, predicting the crowd will be waving branches (*boughs*) before Him as He proceeds to the altar in the Temple.

Then verse 28 they shouted, "*You are my God!*" If only they would've heeded their own prophecies that they had memorized so faithfully.

And verse 29 is incredible, "*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.*" This is what was sung when the Presence of God filled the first Temple built by Solomon.

As the people sang this in Solomon's day, and I believe they sang it more than 2 or 3 times, the Presence of the Lord so filled the Temple that everyone had stay outside.

2 Chronicles 7, "*The priests could not enter the temple of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled it. When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the Lord above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, "He is good; his love endures forever."*

It was on this first Palm Sunday, right there in Jerusalem, that the presence of God was about to walk into the Temple!

Today, God wants us for a Temple of the Holy Spirit. He wants to fill us, so that it's no more you that live but Christ that lives in you.

We need to be shouting, *"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."* until we're filled to overflowing with the presence of the King.

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But, as a Temple, do we really welcome His presence into us? Are our doors open and waiting? Would we even recognize Him when He comes?

Sometimes we think it's just a passage of Scripture, just an event in an ordinary day, but it's the King! The Jews sang Psalms about a generation that sought the face of God.

Psalms 24:7, "Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in."

We should always be ready for King Jesus to come in ways we least expect. The welcoming crowd shouted in Luke 19:38, *"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!"*
"Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

Now, this was a very dangerous thing to be expressing at that particular moment in time. The Pharisees knew about that verse in Zechariah, about the King coming on a donkey.

They were also aware of the watchful eyes of Rome. It wasn't helping the tense situation to shout about a king on this particular day.

The Pharisees even asked Jesus to rebuke His disciples, but Jesus told them if the disciples were quiet the stones would cry out.

Jesus was familiar with that prophecy, too. He knew about that verse of scripture from Zechariah commanding the "*Daughter Jerusalem,*" meaning Jerusalem's inhabitants, to shout, knowing it would be fulfilled with or without people.

Today, our culture is fascinated with prophecies. One of the ways I like to get a dose of humor is to look at YouTube or those wild social media headlines.

There's always someone talking about some hidden prophecy that's just been discovered or some secret code that has been unveiled to reveal what an ancient prophet predicted.

What's amazing is even when they're in error, year after year, people still will watch or read them, but the Bible has never been wrong.

Its prophecies are accurate in every detail. It tells us what's coming in detail and yet most people never pick up their Bible, if they even own one!

This prophecy about Jesus entering Jerusalem is amazingly detailed. Zechariah 9:9 speaks of everyone in Jerusalem rejoicing greatly and shouting.

In ancient Israel a shout would be lifted up as an army went into battle.

Here, on this day, a little rag tag army is entering Jerusalem to conquer, but they have come led by the Prince of Peace on a donkey.

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Now, Jesus came to Jerusalem on that faithful day as the Righteous One.

How many people can be said to have entered Jerusalem in righteousness? Jesus came offering them peace with God. He came in peace to give the people peace.

But they preferred salvation from taxation instead of salvation of their souls. In fact, in a few days they would prefer Barabbas to be freed instead of Jesus.

Jesus could see what was coming, and so in the midst of this praise, with people waving palm branches like a national flag, Jesus wept.

Luke 19:41-42 (NIV) *"As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it 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."*

This peace wasn't to be caused by a new king that would war against Rome. It was the King of kings who was offering them peace with God.

Jesus could see that their desire to have an earthly king would be their destruction.

If they had received the salvation that Jesus offered, they wouldn't have revolted against Rome and been destroyed, crucified by the thousands.

Now, the Romans weren't too concerned. After all, there were no swords.

When the ancient kings of Judah, from whom Joseph and Mary were descended, came into a town on a donkey it meant that they came in peace.

The town could relax and prepare to welcome them, but if they came on a war-horse, it meant a battle was about to ensue.

The time for Jesus to humbly, and in gentleness, offer Himself to man is drawing to an end. Just as this prophecy and Psalm 118 have been fulfilled in amazing detail, so the other prophecies will soon come to pass.

Zechariah 14:2-4, "I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south."

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The day's coming when armies will surround Jerusalem. At that time Jerusalem will fall and half the people will be removed. But then the LORD Himself will fight against those nations that have taken Jerusalem.

Revelation 19:11-16 , "I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

At this time, the King of Judah will come on a war-horse. No more gentle-Jesus for the time for justice has come.

Think about it. What kind of God would He be if He never called man to account, if He never executed justice on the wicked?

Man cries out now when a Hitler or Putin is allowed to go on killing and making war. "*Where is God?*" they ask, when tyrants kill the innocent.

All rebellion against God will be required to face justice when that day comes. No one is going to ask at that time, "*Where is God?*" for every eye shall see Him.

Of course, at that time, the wicked will be asking, "*Where is the God of love?*" He's right here, right now on the donkey, gently asking you to realize that the route you're on leads to death.

The Day of the Lord is coming and when it arrives, it'll be too late for those who have ignored His pleading all their life.

As the armies of the world loot Jerusalem, He'll descend from heaven on His war-stallion with the saints of God, the redeemed, following Him into battle.

Apparently, He'll dismount upon the Mount of Olives, as Zechariah predicted, and execute justice on the earth, for He is Faithful and True.

He wouldn't be faithful or true if He didn't punish the wicked that refuse to turn from their rebellion against God. It's in total justice that He judges and makes war. He's the Word of God.

John received this revelation, and it was John who had written in John 1:14a, "*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.*"

At that time, the reign of the Messiah as a ruler of the earth will begin. It was what the religious leaders were hoping for at the first coming, at least in a limited form that included them in some position of power.

But it's not the powerful that'll reign at His side. No, it's the meek who'll inherit the earth.

At the second Triumphal Entry every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. At that time, everyone will know that He is the King of kings and Lord of all lords.

Jesus told the Pharisees that they too would utter the words of Psalm 118, "*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.*"

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Conclusion

Let us jump back to Zechariah and read from Zechariah 14:5b-9

"Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. On that day there will be no light, no cold or frost. It will be a unique day, without daytime or nighttime--a day known to the LORD. When evening comes, there will be light. On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea and half to the western sea, in summer and in winter. The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name."

Just as the first prophecy has been fulfilled, so the second one will be fulfilled in detail. Jesus will reign as King over the earth and execute justice and judgement upon it.

I'd like us to consider the path the majority of the Israelites chose. They wanted a fulfillment to prophecy that met their personal desires for power and position.

They wanted a messiah of their own making and for their own purposes. The real Messiah never made His triumphal entry into their hearts.

Gentle-Jesus still offers salvation to those who've chosen their own messiahs, but He'll not take second place. He continues to offer Himself and waits for you to offer yourself to Him. One day it'll be too late.

The focus of the world is turning to Jerusalem even this very day. Peace will come but it'll suddenly be broken and Jerusalem will be taken.

At that time, the Lord will come and all the holy ones with Him. Will you be with Him when He returns, or will you be wishing you didn't let false messiahs of pleasure and worldly satisfaction keep you from letting the King reign in your life?

Palm Sunday! The ones that shouted, "*Save us now!*" will be shouting, "*Crucify Him!*" in just a few days, because He didn't do what they wanted Him to do.

They wanted Him to fulfill their expectations, not be LORD of their life.

So, where do you stand, total surrender to the Lordship of Christ, or are you expecting Him to fulfill your expectations?

Yasha anna, save us now, not from Rome, but from our own misguided desires.

Where will you be at the Second Triumphal Entry? It all depends if you have allowed Jesus' triumphal entry into your heart!