

Good Morning Class! ... .. Now... (just like the last time I addressed you like Dr. David Jeremiah sometimes addresses his congregation)... I have a reason for calling you “class.” ... The reason is because I am going to begin with a history lesson.

I was reminded this week of the importance of our knowing history... through a discussion that I had with a highly intelligent man (a fellow professor at the college where I teach.) He knew history... but in the constant barrage of our society’s effort to re-write history for it to fit more convenient with it’s ever-changing ideology... I think he had forgotten some essential elements. ... He is a Political Science professor who I enjoy talking with.

He kept thanking me (with genuine humility and gratitude) for our discussions. All I did was remind him of established historical facts about Israel and their ongoing struggle with the descendants of Abraham’s OTHER son (Ishmael.) ... He needed to be reminded of things such as when Israel became a nation and how that came about... why their particular land is so important to them... and why they struggle with their neighbors... how the name “Palestine” came into existence (as well as when and why)...

Thought-shapers of our day run rough-shod over history and establish cultural attitudes that they would have much more difficulty in doing if people knew history. History is vital for us to understand what is happening in the world today... because so much of the world’s focus is on Israel right now. ... But (perhaps) even more important... we need some understanding of history... in order to fully understand various passages of the Bible. (And) our passage today in Luke 19 is definitely one of those.

We come (today) to the Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem.

Why is He on a donkey? ... Is He tired of walking? ... Why do the people wave palm branches? ... What do their shouts mean? ... (AND)... why is there such hostility between Jesus and the religious leaders...? ... ..

There is such great impact on us that we can have from our passage... with a little knowledge of history. (So... “class”... let’s get started!...)

By the time Jesus set out to lay kingly claim to Jerusalem as the Messiah... the capital city had served as a seat of **pagan corruption** for centuries.

After Jerusalem fell to Babylon in 586 BC... the city remained the property of one world empire or another... for more than four hundred years... (all the way until the Seleucid king - Antiochus Epiphanes - pushed the Jewish people too far.)

175 years before Jesus came to earth... Antiochus Epiphanes banned all Jewish sacrifices in the temple and outlawed all Jewish rituals and festivals everywhere else in Israel. He then required all Jews to worship **Greek** deities... and then he killed any priest who refused to conduct pagan sacrifices.

Then... 167 years Before Christ... a priest named Mattathias... from a small Jewish town called “Modein”... refused to compromise - even when threatened with death. ... When one of the residents of Modein stepped forward to sacrifice to another god... this priest (Mattathias) drew his sword... killed his fellow Jewish man... and then killed the Roman General who ordered the sacrifice. His uncompromising dedication sparked what is now known as the Maccabean Revolt.

About a year into the revolution... the courageous Mattathias called his sons around his deathbed and charged them:

*Arrogance and scorn have now become strong; it is a time of ruin and furious anger. Now, my children, show zeal for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of our ancestors... And so observe, from generation to generation, that none of those who put their trust in [the Lord] will lack strength. Do not fear the words of sinners, for their splendor will turn into dung and worms. Today they will be exalted, but tomorrow they will not be found, because they will have returned to the dust, and their plans will have perished. My children, be courageous and grow strong in the law, for by it you will gain honor. (1 Macc. 2:49–50, 61–64)*

After Mattathias' death... his son Judas Maccabeus (also known as Judah "the Hammer") led Israel to several victories over the Seleucid armies and retook control of Jerusalem.

When the priests entered the temple to restore the sacrifices and to light the giant lampstand... they found that all of the sacred oil had been defiled except for one container... and it only contained enough oil to burn for one day. ... But in faith... they lit the lamp as the Lord had commanded... and it burned for **eight** days! ... This gave enough time for the priests to prepare more oil for the temple. ... Jews celebrate this miracle to this day. It is called "Hanukkah."

After Judah "*the Hammer*" died in battle... his brother Jonathan led the nation. ... Jonathan led Israel into corruption. He deviated from the devotion of his father (Mattathias)... and his brother (Judah.) Rather than trust God to help him keep the Seleucids out of Jerusalem... Jonathan made a treaty with a Seleucid general... in exchange for this Gentile authority to confirm him as high priest. (In other words... Jonathan was not

selected by the established Jewish process in the Law of Moses... but rather... he was appointed by Gentile authority.)

This proved to be a crucial turning point in Israel's history. ... Never again would the High Priesthood be without political corruption. It became normal for religious leaders to assume the role of high priest on the authority of a Gentile ruler - rather than by divine authority.

After Jonathan's death... the next brother (Simon) took his place. ... And... like Jonathan... Simon ruled as high priest by the authority of Gentile rulers - the Seleucid king.

To safeguard his hold on power... Simon betrayed his Seleucid backer by seeking the protection of the rising world power - Rome - in 139 BC. ... The Romans ensured that he could remain High Priest... but it cost the nation of Israel (dearly). Simon opened the door to increasing Roman control. ... Rome came in without a fight... and (now) they not only selected the High Priest for Israel... but also their King. Israel now had Caesar's puppet priests ruling the sanctuary of the Almighty.

From their lofty positions (backed by Rome's military and political might) these religious rulers of Jerusalem felt secure. ... But they had to keep a lid on popular unrest – no Jewish uprisings or riots were allowed! ... Ah... what could go wrong? ... Oh wait! ... Jerusalem had millions of Pilgrims who had travelled to the city to celebrate a holiday (the Feast of Passover) that inspired rebellion... because it partied over the Jews overcoming their Egyptian oppressors. ... Furthermore – someone was about to come (with thousands of revelers thinking He would overthrow Rome. He was about to announce Himself as the King of all Kings.

(Now)... to our passage...

### **Luke 19:28**

After a sumptuous banquet... the remarkable conversion of Zaccheus... a final lesson on the use of money in the kingdom... and perhaps a good night's rest... Jesus and His followers began their ascent from Jericho to Jerusalem (a 17-mile hike nearly 3,000 feet uphill.)

Expectations were running high. Earlier he had raised Lazarus from the dead (according to John 11)... and the sensational news of that event had spread around Jerusalem many times. ... The numbers of those watching his entourage had greatly enlarged. ... Throngs of Jews were coming out of Jerusalem to see Jesus... and also to see Lazarus. ... And the religious leaders were counseling together as to how they might kill the Lord... because many were believing in Him (We read this in Mark 14:10, 11; John 12:9–11).

Would Jesus make a move? ... If so... when? ... And what would the authorities do then?

Verse 28 reads: *“And when he had said these things... He went on ahead...”* ... After carefully correcting His followers as to the true nature of His kingdom and His mission... Jesus heads steadfastly into Jerusalem.

*“He went ahead”*... Knowing full well what awaited Him... knowing that He must endure the cross before receiving the kingdom... Jesus went ahead. He knew exactly what He was getting into. John 11:57 makes it clear that there was a price on Jesus' head (an “all-points-bulletin”) was put out for His arrest. Yet... He came into Jerusalem in the most public way possible. He incited His Own death... making it happen by His Own manner.

As we read about the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem... please notice the following:

1. By means of it... Jesus deliberately evokes a demonstration. He fully realizes that... as a result... the enthusiasm of the masses will enrage the hostile leaders at Jerusalem... so that they will desire more than ever to carry out their plot against Him.

2. Jesus forces the members of the Sanhedrin to change their timetable... so that it will harmonize with His (and the Father's) timetable. In Matthew 26:3-5... we read that the Jewish leaders were planning to arrest Jesus AFTER the Passover. But God had ordained that His Son would be slain ON PASSOVER as the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world.

Every previous attempt to arrest Jesus had failed... because His hour had not yet come. (You can read about some of these attempts in John 7:30... John 8:20... John 13:1... and John 17:1.) ... But now... Under Jesus' timing and control... the enthusiasm of the crowds will bring about the crisis.

3. By means of this triumphal entry Jesus fulfils the Messianic prophecy of Zech. 9:9... (which we will look at in a few minutes.)

4. Jesus will show the crowds what kind of a Messiah He is. He is not the Messiah of Israel's earthly dreams (the One Who will wage war against their Roman oppressors)... but the One Who came to promote and establish the things that make for TRUE peace – reconciliation between man and God. (He shows this by riding on a donkey.)

## Luke 19:29-30

At that point He stopped until the way could be prepared so that when He entered the city people would know He was presenting Himself as the Messiah.

Jesus was familiar with Bethany. This was the place where Lazarus was resurrected from the dead. It was also the home of Mary and Martha and Simon the leper.

What we see here on Jesus' part is MORE of His careful premeditation. He was carefully coordinating ***everything!*** Not only was the timing precise... so was the mode of His entry... A previously unriden donkey was carefully chosen. ... Never before had Jesus done anything to promote a public demonstration. ... In fact... He had repeatedly withdrawn from the crowds if there was any hint of such a thing. ... But now He invited attention.

More than 500 years earlier... Zechariah had prophesied that the Messiah would come riding on the foal of a donkey:

### **Zechariah 9:9 (ESV)**

*<sup>9</sup> 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.*

Never before had Jesus done anything to promote a public demonstration. ... In fact... He had repeatedly withdrawn from the crowds if there was any hint of such a thing. ... But now He invited attention. Jesus was unequivocally identifying Himself as the Messiah.

The choice of the donkey revealed His life and ministry in two ways. First... it identified Him with kings in the royal line of David... and especially with David himself... because the donkey was regarded as a royal animal before and during David's reign. ... (After David... the Hebrew kings and warriors switched to horses... and the donkey was considered unsuited to the dignity of kings.) ... But Jesus' identification with the emblem and with the specific prophecy was exact and it perfectly revealed His position.

Secondly... the use of a donkey speaks of Jesus' inner spirit. As Zechariah (who lived long after David) said: Jesus was "gentle and riding on a donkey."

This was Christ's intrinsic attitude in life. As Paul wrote to the Philippians: "*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped*" (Philippians 2:5, 6).

Jesus was unlike any other king who ever lived. As Clarence Macartney so beautifully described it:

*How strange a contrast to the triumphal entry of ancient warriors and conquerors into the cities which they had taken! This time no wall broken down for entry; this time no garlanded hero standing in his war chariot, driving down the lane of cheering subjects past smoking altars, and followed by captive kings and princes in chains. Instead of that, just a meek and lowly man riding upon the foal of a donkey.*

### **Luke 19:31-34**

From this we are able to conclude that the owners were friends of Jesus. They must have been people who recognized Jesus as their Lord.



Therefore... by giving the two disciples these instructions... Jesus has taken care that they will not experience any difficulty in obtaining the colt.

The owners of the donkey and the colt were disciples of the Lord and had everything ready for Him. The plan was executed quietly because the Jewish leaders had let it be known that anyone confessing Christ would be excommunicated (John 9:22). ... The fact that the rulers planned to kill Jesus made it even more important that the owners be protected.

It is possible that the person is a friend or that the expression would be sufficient to allow them to take the animal. In either case... the remark demonstrates Jesus' control over events. He plans for all contingencies. Jesus exhibits total knowledge here: (1) the beast's location... (2) its tied-up state... (3) its "unridden" history... and (4) how to acquire it from its owners.

The two men found everything exactly as Jesus had predicted. As they started to unhitch the colt... the owners understandably protested. They asked: "*Why are you untying the colt?*" But when (in accordance with Christ's instruction)... the disciples said: "*The Lord needs it*"... objections quickly vanished. The mere mention of the fact that Jesus needed the colt was enough to secure immediate and unqualified assent... as if it had been pre-arranged with them (and I believe that it had.)

### **Luke 19:36**

They were giving Jesus the "red-carpet treatment"... an act intended to note a dignitary's presence. They flung their garments to the ground as a gesture of reverence and indicating their willingness for Him to take everything they had.

*\* By covering the road with their clothes, they acknowledged that Christ was more important than their possessions.*

*\* By covering the road with their clothes, they were honoring him with behavior that was fit only for a wonderful king.*

*\* By covering the road with their clothes, they were making their possessions available to the Lord if He had need of them.*

*\* By covering the road with their clothes, they laid before Christ their source of security, shelter from the cold, and sound health, for these were some of the functions of the outer cloak.*

Good questions to ask (right here) is: “Do you have the same attitude as these folks?... Is Jesus more important to you than your possessions? ... Do you honor Him with what you have? ... Have you made the blessings that He has given to you available to Him? ... Have you trusted Him with the cares of your security... shelter... and health?”

### **Luke 19:37-38**

In addition to praising God for all the miracles they had seen... the people kept repeating: “*Blessed is **the king** who comes in the name of the Lord!*” This is a line from the Hallel Psalms (Psalms 113–118)... which were chanted at the end of the Passover Supper... and at the Feast of Tabernacles. ... BUT...This particular line (from Psalm 118:26) had been changed for this occasion. In Psalm 118 it reads: “*Blessed is **he** who comes in the name of the LORD.*” ... It was a beatitude addressed to the king as he approached the temple. But on this day - at Christ’s triumphal entrance - the crowd modified it and shouted: “*Blessed is **the king** who comes in the name of the Lord!*”

And then... to this shout they added: “*Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!*” ...which naturally reminds us of another song of another

multitude... the great host of angels who announced Christ's birth in Luke 2:14: "*Glory to God in the highest... and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.*"

The heavenly chorus sang of peace on earth... while the earthly throng now sang of peace in Heaven. ... They may have not known the significance... but peace on earth is dependent on peace in Heaven. It comes down from above. ... It is only when man finds peace with God that there is peace on earth.

The other Gospel accounts add to Luke's picture of joy. ... John 12:13 tells us: "*They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, 'Hosanna!' 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' 'Blessed is the King of Israel!' "* ... The palm branches represented their nationalistic desire to be delivered... for the palm had been the symbol on the coin of the second Maccabean revolt. "... Hosanna" was an anticipatory cry that literally meant "Save" or "Save us" or perhaps "Lord, save him," similar to "God save the Queen." The people viewed Jesus as their deliverer. And indeed He was. But not in the way they thought.

The day of the Lord's arrival into Jerusalem was a special day. It was the 10<sup>th</sup> of Aviv. The theme of this day in Jewish life was sanctification or being set apart for the holy purpose of serving God. In fact, this was the same day that the nation of Israel finally crossed into the Promised Land. The theme of that day was sanctification in doing the will of God.

**Joshua 4:19 (ESV)**

*<sup>19</sup> The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.*

The 10<sup>th</sup> day of Aviv or Nissan (March-April)... was the first day of a four-day inspection for the lamb that would be sacrificed for the Passover feast. It was on this day that the procession of the national Passover lamb for the entire nation of Israel took place. ... For four days... this Passover lamb was kept in public view for everyone to examine to make sure that it was perfect and without defects. ... Four days later... on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Aviv... the lamb was led into the city from the east. ... This lamb was met by crowds of people waving palm branches and joyously singing Psalm 118 as they remembered God's miraculous delivery of their ancestors from the clutches of the Egyptian Pharaoh. ... Meeting the criteria of perfection... it was slain at the brazen altar in the temple area.

On this occasion... I believe the 10<sup>th</sup> of Aviv fell on a Sunday... also known as Palm Sunday to us. ... Four days later (on Thursday, the 14<sup>th</sup> of Aviv)... the Passover lamb was slain. This was the same day that Jesus was crucified on the cross. .... At the same time the Passover lamb was being slain... around 3:00 in the afternoon... Jesus died on the cross.

Our Lord was in control of every detail... and he was making a statement. This was His moment — a moment set before the foundations of the world. ... and against all of this... the Pharisees predictably responded.

### **Luke 19:39-40**

Jesus responded that there must be some proclamation that He is the Messiah. **If** not... even inanimate objects (**stones**) would be called on to testify for Him. All history had pointed toward this single... spectacular event when the Messiah publicly presented Himself to the nation... and God desired that this fact be acknowledged.

## Luke 19:41-44

These are the tears of one who knows that the people have already turned their backs on God's messenger. Much like a parent watching a child make a foolish decision... Jesus mourns a city sealing its fate

Jesus has reached a spot from which the city (its magnificent temple... many peaceful dwellings... etc.) are clearly visible. With the panorama of Jerusalem before his eyes... the Savior began to weep — not with quiet tears as when he wept at the grave of Lazarus... whom He was going to resurrect... but with loud and deep lamentation. It is from the word ***klaio*** {*klah'-yo*} which means "to bewail; to mourn or to weep in pain and grief." This was a loud cry with intense emotion and weeping. The Lord looked at Jerusalem and broke down in tears from a broken heart.

There in the middle of the road (with the great city in full view) the stunned multitude heard the Savior of the world wail over Jerusalem! ... We must fix this picture in our eyes and hearts... for it will do us great good. This was a new kind of king.

Bursting into tears Jesus laments, "Would that on this day you, even you, had known the things that pertain to peace!" ... The truth was concealed from them... because they chose not to accept it. They did not know because they chose to ignore God's message and God's messengers. The opportunity was there for learning but they did not want to learn. They despised God's truth... so God hid His truth from them so they could not know... and therefore would not correct their ways to avoid judgment. The result would be suffering for the nation of Israel.

Was this prophecy of Jesus fulfilled? Did these tragic events take place? The answer is “Yes”... almost 40 years after Jesus spoke these words. The Jews revolted against Rome in 66 A.D. ... Conflict ensued for four years because Jerusalem was difficult to conquer. It sat upon a hill and was surrounded by difficult terrain.

But after three years of ineffective progress... the 10<sup>th</sup> Legion of Rome (under the command of General Titus) surrounded Jerusalem... hemming in the city... not letting anyone come or go. ... Famine... disease... betrayal... rebellion... murder... hatred... and robbery among themselves took its toll on all the panicked people in Jerusalem. ... It was a *dog-eat-dog* mentality in the city. Those who were alive walked around with sunken eyes and swollen bodies from starvation. The Jewish historian Josephus stated that some resorted to cannibalism. Josephus also stated that the streets and the houses were filled with dead rotting bodies everywhere... and of course... disease and multitudes of flies.

In 70 A.D.... the Romans entered the weakened city and burned it after the 143-day siege. The Roman soldiers set fire to the Jewish temple and the homes in Jerusalem. Anyone who was still alive was carted by the Romans away from Israel as slaves throughout the Empire. Over one million Jews died... and 97,000 were taken away as captives.

In AD 135... Emperor Hadrian brought a crushing and final end to the nation of Israel... even attempting to eradicate Judaism and permanently erase their very existence from history. ... He changed the name of their homeland from “Israel” to “Palestine” – which it is still called today. (Those who do not know history... believe that the Jews of today have stolen land

that was not theirs from the Palestinians.) Nope! God has brought them back to their land - after a long absence.

But all of this suffering is what Jesus loudly cried over. He saw it was coming. ... **[ P A U S E ]** ...

In Luke 19:28–44... Jesus approaches Jerusalem publicly and in control of events. He tells the disciples how to acquire an animal for Him. He enters the city to the cheers of His followers... who praise God's power manifested through Him and who confess that Jesus comes as king in the name of the Lord. ... Their action pictures fulfillment of the national desire for salvation... usually expressed at the Feast of Tabernacles. ... It is a glorious entry... but it is all a charade because of what is about to happen. Those who orchestrate this reversal stand on the sidelines and complain to Jesus about the messianic praise He receives. But Jesus sides with His followers and notes that if they did not speak... inanimate creation would take up the refrain of praise.

The rejection is of catastrophic importance... and it causes Jesus to weep over the fate of the city He loves. ... Jesus (speaking for God) said He longed to gather the nation's capital under His wing (a picture of care and protection.) ... Instead... the nation chose to go it alone. In light of this choice... the nation will suffer total defeat. The price for missing the Messiah's visitation is always devastating. It costs to reject Jesus.

And the disciples of Jesus were about to find out the cost of not bothering to match their expectations with God's expectations. ... .. Have you rejected Jesus OR His plan for your life...? Are you trying to impose your

own plans ...thinking that your own way is best. It isn't. Submit to this King  
Who cries over our needless suffering.