The Road to the Hill – Pt 4. Jesus is Not Always What We Want Him to Be (Palm Sunday)

Mark 11:1-10

4/13/25

Traditionally, today is known as Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday commemorates the Sunday before Jesus' crucifixion. Jesus made His final leg on the Road to the Hill on this day. He knew this last leg of the road, this trip into Jerusalem would be the most difficult, but the reason the Road was given...You see the He knew on this Sunday, he would not leave Jerusalem again until He was killed, buried, and risen from the dead.

Let's go back to that Sunday by reading about it in the Bible.

* Mark 11:1-10

*As Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem, they came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany on the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of them on ahead.****2****“Go into that village over there,” he told them. “As soon as you enter it, you will see a young donkey tied there that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.****3****If anyone asks, ‘What are you doing?’ just say, ‘The Lord needs it and will return it soon.’”* ***4****The two disciples left and found the colt standing in the street, tied outside the front door.****5****As they were untying it, some bystanders demanded, “What are you doing, untying that colt?”****6****They said what Jesus had told them to say, and they were permitted to take it.****7****Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their garments over it, and he sat on it.* ***8****Many in the crowd spread their garments on the road ahead of him, and others spread leafy branches they had cut in the fields.****9****Jesus was in the center of the procession, and the people all around him were shouting, “Praise God! (Hosanna) Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!* ***10****Blessings on the coming Kingdom of our ancestor David! Praise God in highest heaven!”*

This seems strange to us that Jesus rode a donkey into town, but He had His reasons. You see, Jesus riding a donkey into Jerusalem was the fulfillment of an old prophecy about the Messiah.

Who is the Messiah? The Messiah was to be God's deliverer promised for centuries. One of the prophecies is found in the Old Testament book of Zechariah.

* **Zechariah 9:9**

***Rejoice, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey—***

***riding on a donkey’s colt.***

This was written 500 years before Palm Sunday. The Jewish people would be familiar with this prophecy. They knew about Jesus. They knew His claims. They had seen Him do miraculous things. Now they see Him riding a donkey into Jerusalem, just like they had been told about for 500 years. They understood what Jesus was claiming. He was saying He was the Messiah.

The crowd went nuts. They laid their tunics on the road for Jesus to ride across. They took branches and spread them on the road. They waved them in the air. They started chanting. "Praise God" – Hosanna. They anticipated Jesus setting up a new kingdom like David's. That all happened on Sunday.

But last fast forward on the Road to what that same crowd was saying Friday morning.

* Mark 15:9-15

*9 “Would you like me to release to you this ‘King of the Jews’?” Pilate asked. 10 (For he realized by now that the leading priests had arrested Jesus out of envy.) 11 But at this point the leading priests stirred up the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus. 12 Pilate asked them, “Then what should I do with this man you call the king of the Jews?” 13 They shouted back, “Crucify him!” 14 “Why?” Pilate demanded. “What crime has he committed?” But the mob roared even louder, “Crucify him!” 15 So to pacify the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.*

They went from “Hosana” to "Crucify Him! In 5 days! What happened in those 5 days that changed the mind of the crowd? Jesus was not who they wanted Him to be!

You see the Jewish people were oppressed and insulted to have the Romans occupying the land God had given them. They thought of the Romans as Gentile dogs. And from THEIR UNDERSTANDING The Messiah was supposed to, in their minds, set them free from Roman occupation.

But the Romans wouldn't even acknowledge who Jesus was. In fact, they were going to kill Him. That wouldn't happen to the real Messiah, would it? If He was the Messiah, He was a failure at it. And He was going to die on a cross! Knowing the scriptures of old, the Jews knew that anyone dying on a cross is cursed.

* Deuteronomy 21:23

*the body must not remain hanging from the tree overnight. You must bury the body that same day, for anyone who is hung is cursed in the sight of God. In this way, you will prevent the defilement of the land the Lord your God is giving you as your special possession.*

To them, not only was Jesus a failure, but He was also a cursed failure. There's no way they could see how Jesus could be the Messiah.

But see, it’s sad to say, they missed the Real Jesus, the Real Messiah. They missed it because Jesus was not who they wanted Him to be. Jesus was, and is, the Messiah. But they missed it because He didn't fit in their "Messiah box."

Here's the thing. Unfortunately, people today are still missing Jesus because He doesn't fit their box. Even some in church along with those outside still want Jesus to be who we want Him to be.

We want Jesus to be our problem solver.

We get ourselves into a mess. We try everything we can think of to get out of this mess. Which usually leads to a deeper mess with more messes created. And then we cry out to Jesus. “Get me out of this mess." "Solve all my problems that I brought on by myself."

We want our Messiah to clean up our messes.

We want Jesus to be our avenger. Someone has gotten on our bad side. We don't like the way they talk to us or ignore us. They may have done some really bad things. And we want them to get payback. And isn't that what Jesus does, pay back those who bother us? We want our Messiah to fight our fights.

We want Jesus to be our ATM.

Some of the messes we've created for ourselves involve money. So, we need a bailout. Or we've got our eye on that new shiny toy we don’t NEED. We really don't have the means to get those things. So, we beg Jesus to give us the money to get the stuff we want. We want our Messiah to be a loan shark.

We want Jesus to turn back time.

Some of our messes can't be easily cleaned up. We've really hurt someone in the past. So, we want our Messiah to wipe out minds.

We want Jesus to look the other way.

We've got some temptations that are pulling us in. There's some things we'd like to do that are not altogether right. Really, could it be that big a deal if I do (blank)? So, we want a Messiah who doesn't hold us accountable.

Closing:

Many times, that's what we want our Messiah to be just like the Jewish people in Jerusalem, we've got our own ideas of who the Messiah should be. And when He doesn't live up to our expectations, we are sorely disappointed.

But that's not who the Messiah is. Like the people on Palm Sunday, we need to get a grip on who Jesus is. Jesus didn’t choose to walk the Road to the Hill to be your genie in a bottle! Now please note, yes there are times when Jesus will step in and supernaturally intervene, but those times are not just for our benefit. *They're to show us who Jesus really is.* And when He decides not to intervene, that doesn't change who He is.

As the Messiah, this is who Jesus is.

* Jesus is God incarnate.
* He is God come to walk among His Creation.
* He is not somebody at our disposal

You want to know who God is and how He acts? Look to Jesus and know God.

As the Messiah, Jesus is the true World Changer. The entire history of the universe hinges on Him. The world has been totally transformed because the Messiah came. As Messiah, Jesus didn't come just to solve our problems, He came to save us from our problems. And our main problem is that we have rebelled against and sinned against the holy, magnificent God. All our problems stem from rebellion against God! And Jesus, our Messiah, came to save us from the consequences of our sin and rebellion.

That Friday, when they yelled, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him" they did just that...crucify Him. But His death was not for naught. It was His death that made us right with our holy, magnificent God. **He saved us from the primary problem we all have: SIN! Sin had us pegged for death and Hell forever, until Jesus chose to walk that Road to the Hill, for me, for you!** By His death on the cross, our Messiah has made a way for us to come to God.

**This morning, Is Jesus truly your Messiah, or have you tried to put Him into your personal “box” trying to make Him into what you want Him to be?**