

March 24, 2024
 KIBC Sunday Worship Service (Palm Sunday Worship)
 Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda
 Title of the Message : “Hosanna! Blessed is He!”
 —Jesus’ Triumphal Entry to Jerusalem —

Text: John 12:12-19

12:12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

12:13 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!”

12:14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

12:15 “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.

12:16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

12:17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.

12:18 Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him.

12:19 So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!

Introduction

1. Good morning, everyone.
2. Passion Week begins this week. This Friday is Good Friday, and we commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on that day. We will have the Passion Worship Service this evening at KIBC. And we celebrate “Easter” His Resurrection next week. Therefore, we are having a very important week now.
3. By the way, it is Palm Sunday today. Jesus Christ entered the city of Jerusalem on a donkey’s colt.

The Bible says:

12:12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

12:13 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 crowd came to welcome Jesus by shouting “Hosanna” **Hosanna means “please save us now” in Hebrew.** People took palm branches to welcome Jesus. We commemorate Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem as Palm Sunday.

- Then, what does Jesus' entry to Jerusalem mean? Why did He enter Jerusalem? Why did the crowd hail him? I would like to study these "whys" by exploring the following 3 points.

Main Subjects

1. Why did Jesus Enter Jerusalem?

1) The tenth day of the month of Nissan

• Jesus entered Jerusalem on the day of Nissan 10 of the Jewish calendar. It has very significant meaning because on that day they chose lambs that were slaughtered for "the Passover." The lambs were examined until Nissan 14 to see if they had any defects.

- Exodus writes about "the Passover" in Chapter 12.

12:5 The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats

12:6 Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight.

- Jesus entered Jerusalem on the day of Nissan 10.

⇒ It means that Jesus was chosen as "the Passover Lamb."

2) Jesus Christ, the Passover Lamb

• Jews had always slaughtered lambs to commemorate "the Passover". The lambs must have been year-old males. ⇒ Jesus Christ was the true lamb of "the Passover".

- John the Baptist, who was the greatest and the last prophet, said:

The Gospel according to John

1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

- Paul said in, **1 Corinthians**

5:7 Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

Therefore Jesus had to enter Jerusalem at the Passover. "Jesus' time" (the Passion) was to begin, where he would be slaughtered. Jesus was often almost arrested by the social leaders at that time, but he wasn't.

The Bible says,

The Gospel according to John

7:30 At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.

My dear friends, "The time of Jesus" has come.

⇒ It begins with His entry to Jerusalem and starts the Passion Week.

2. Why did Jesus enter Jerusalem riding on a donkey's colt?

1) He Who Sits on a Donkey's Colt

12:15 “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”

- This word of overwhelming joy is written in Zechariah, in the Old Testament.
- 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
- “The sign” of the second coming of the Messiah was riding on “a donkey’s colt”.
 “A donkey” was used for carrying loads and especially for fieldwork. A horse was used for riding, but a donkey wasn’t, so it worked in the field wearing a yoke. No person of noble blood used it for riding.
 ⇒ It is just right for Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
- “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming,” 12:15
 What a blessed word of encouragement. Kings at that time were almost like dictators today. When King Herod, for example, came to know that Jesus was born, he gave the order to kill all the boys who were two years old and under.
- Therefore, people feared kings. However, Jesus the King of Peace is different. God says, “Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!”
 Zion is a hill in Jerusalem, so they mean the same place.
- Isaiah the prophet praised:
 40:9 You who bring good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good news to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid;!
- The Bible gave the prophecy that the King of Israel would come riding on a donkey’s colt, not on a white horse. It was “the sign.”

2) The Sign of the King

- My friends, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.
 John writes in chapter 12 as below:
 12:17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.
 12:18 Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him.
- “Sign” is *semeion* in Greek.
 ⇒ “The sign” means “a secret” (a miracle) which has a spiritual meaning, showing God’s great testimony and God’s finger.
- The Jews asked Jesus for “a sign”.

The Gospel According to Mark

- 8:11 The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven.
- Jesus said in the Gospel according to John chapter 10.
 10:38 But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in

me, and I in the Father.

They could see a true sign if they examined His works.

- When Jesus entered Jerusalem, He was seated on “a donkey’s colt” as Zechariah had prophesized. The savior of the world didn’t appear from a palace. He was from Nazareth; “Can anything good from there?” That was God’s “sign” (semeion), by which people all over the world receive God’s grace.
How thankful we are!
- He who is **the King of the Israelites** is **righteous (justice)** and **gentle (humble)**, coming to give salvation. His “sign” is true ⇒ **“riding on a colt.”**
- Therefore, Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem riding on “a colt” was a very significant thing.

3. Why was Jesus hailed with “the branches of palm trees”?

- The crowd took “the branches of palm trees” and met Jesus. There are many palm trees in Israel still now. (Photo)

1) The Branches of the Palm Trees

- **“Palm tree” : *flonikas* in Greek ⇒**
 - **Its leaf shapes a bird feather.**
 - **It bears much fruit and the fruit is used as dried preservative food.**
 - **Its leaf is shaped round and used at festivals.**
- A certain book writes that the Israelites took “the branches of palm trees” to celebrate national festivities since about the second century B.C. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowd welcomed Him with the branches of palm trees. It means ⇒ He who saves Israel is the One (Jesus).

2) “Feast of Tabernacles”

- Taking “the branches of palm trees” has another important meaning. It was a custom of the “Feast of Tabernacles,” not a custom of “the Passover”. “Feast of Tabernacles” is also one of three great festivals of the Jews.
- The “Feast of Tabernacles” begins on the 15th day of the month of Tishri (September to October) and continues for 7 days. They have holy meetings on both the beginning and the last day. They celebrated the end of the year and also the Israelites wandering in the desert after the Exodus. This feast is still celebrated now. They celebrate the feast in a booth made of tree branches. (Leviticus 23:39-43, Numbers 29:12-38)
- The crowd shouted “Hosanna!”. This is the prayer of “the Feast of Tabernacles.” **Hosanna!** ⇒ **“Save us now!”**

What can we learn from Palm Sunday

?

⇒ the authority and reliability of the Bible

- The Messiah the Old Testament points to is Jesus Christ.
The Bible : The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever. (Isaiah 40:8)
- The Scripture is worthy enough to believe. The crowds hailed Jesus on Palm Sunday.
12:16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.
- They have come to an understanding of its meaning after the resurrection of Jesus and the Pentecost. (Acts, Chapter 2)
- By the way, **people generally want to see only what they want to see want to hear only what they want to hear, and want to know only what to know.**

What did the crowd expect?

What did the disciples expect?

What were they interested in?

The Israelites who had sought the earthly “kingdom” had abandoned Jesus and left Him, What were they seeking and focusing on?

⇒ The disciples understood the real meaning of Palm Sunday after Jesus was resurrected (Pentecost).

- My dear friends, we are looking back on this fact in the past. What are we looking at? What are our hearts looking at? Do we trust in the “reliability of the Bible” and are looking at it?
- Today, what response do we give to God in the Bible?
 The response of the Israelites? “Hosanna! Blessed is He!”
 How should we respond?

Conclusion

Title of the Message : “Hosanna. Blessed is He!”

—Jesus’ Triumphal Entry to Jerusalem —

The crowd welcomed Jesus shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is He!” Why did they do it? They probably didn’t think about the special meaning of it. We have learned three important signs of Jesus’s mission.

1. His entry to Jerusalem
2. His riding on a donkey’s colt.
3. His welcome with “the branches of palm trees”

We have Palm Sunday today. To what should be cast our eyes upon?

* God bless you!