

Faith in the Home

Palm/Passion Sunday. John 12:20-43, "Prophesies, Proclamations, Donkeys and Kings."

Palm Sunday traditionally kicks off Holy Week. The imagery of Jesus riding on a donkey with palm branches and shouts of "Hosannas" ringing fill our minds, and quickly turn to imagery of what Christ would endure with nails and a cross that Friday that followed his entry into Jerusalem.

Today we are going to look specifically at the significance of the meaning of the donkey. Here are some take aways:

1. Beasts of burden or animals of peace? In Numbers a donkey, saved Balaam, a mischievous (to put it lightly) prophet from walking into the God's angel of death.
2. Prophecy. Not only is the Bible filled with eye witness accounts of events that took place, including many that were supernatural. It is also filled with inspired predictions that were written down some hundreds to thousands of years before they fulfilled and seen by witnesses. One these prophecies is from the prophet Zechariah, "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" This was first prophesied by Zechariah, in Zechariah 9:9. This prophecy was made roughly about 550 years before Christ sat on a young donkey that had not previously been ridden. When God speaks, He fulfills promises.
3. Proclamation and foreshadowing. In 1 Kings chapter one David is an old man. His plan was to have his son, Solomon rule as king after him. However, Adonijah, one of David's other sons was getting ready to proclaim himself as king and even had many of David's servant's support. David had Solomon ride a donkey throughout Jerusalem to be proclaimed as the new king. The donkey's significance was one of peaceful transfer of the king's authority. The people held Solomon to be King. This foreshadowed another king coming to His people in "peace."
4. Fulfillment of Promises. Jesus riding in on a donkey throughout the streets of Jerusalem with shouts of "Hosanna's (save us)" and hailing Him as king is significant, because Jesus came to bring us peace with God. Our sins earn God's wrath, but Jesus became our sin on the cross. He took our place. He reconciled us to God. He is our King of Peace.

How can we apply this to our own lives and witness at home and in the world?

1. Throughout history the "Evil One," has sown his lies and discord, and murderous hatred to tear apart God's creation. We hear of evil in the news, and even experience evil being done to us. We long for God to bring evil to justice. What we must remember is John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He sent His only Begotten Son, that whoever shall believe in Him will have eternal life." God sent His Son to reconcile evil sinners to Him. We are those sinners who have been reconciled. We stand in the truth of God to proclaim this Gospel of reconciliation to all.
2. God is just, and His wrath was poured out on His Son. That does not mean that unreconciled evil goes unpunished. Solomon rode in peace in front of the people of Jerusalem, but David later instructed him to deal harshly with those who threatened his authority. That foreshadows Revelation where Jesus will not come riding as the King of Kings on a donkey, but as the King of Kings riding a horse. A king on horse is significant because He is coming to do battle. Jesus will have His final victorious battle and will bring evil to final judgement and end.
3. So we can teach our children that while there is evil in the world, no one gets away with it. People need to be called to repentance and changed by the Gospel, but if not, they will have their day in righteous judgement before God.