

“Enemies, Disciples, and Tears” (Luke 19:11-44)(4.10.22)

LET US PRAY.

Luke 19:28–40 (NIV84) *The Triumphal Entry*

²⁸ After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.²⁹ As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,³⁰ “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.³¹ If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it.’ ”

³² Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them.³³ As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?”

³⁴ They replied, “The Lord needs it.”

³⁵ They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.³⁶ As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

³⁷ When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

³⁸ “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

³⁹ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

⁴⁰ “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

So...this, or the parallel passages in the other Gospels, are the normal Palm Sunday scriptures for pretty obvious reasons. Palm Sunday starts Holy week, when Jesus enters Jerusalem to consummate God the Father’s plan of salvation. But, there is a problem whenever you limit your view of the scriptures. You want to make sure you are examining God’s word in the proper context.

Let me give you a clear illustration. We have these beautiful windows here in the sanctuary. Imagine if your view of the outside world was limited to looking through one pane instead of all the panes. You can easily discern that you are only getting a limited view of reality.

It is the same with scripture. Each pane is the equivalent of a portion of the Bible. When you try to see the full meaning, you need to look at the context. You need to look through several panes,

several adjacent portions of the scripture. You do not want to have a limited view because it will distort the meaning, the message.

Before we examine this traditional Palm Sunday pane of scripture, let us look at the panes on either side. This will give us a proper perspective. We will gain insight by taking a step or two backwards to gain a wider view. We will see a depth and richness not otherwise possible.

Luke 19:11–27 (NIV84) *The Parable of the Ten Minas*

¹¹ While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. ¹² He said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. ¹³ So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.'

¹⁴ "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

¹⁵ "He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he

had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.

¹⁶“The first one came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned ten more.’

¹⁷“‘Well done, my good servant!’ his master replied. ‘Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.’

¹⁸“The second came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned five more.’

¹⁹“His master answered, ‘You take charge of five cities.’

²⁰“Then another servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth.²¹ I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.’

²²“His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow?²³ Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’

²⁴“Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’

²⁵“‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’

²⁶“He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away.’²⁷ But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’ ”

Luke 19:41–44 (NIV84)

⁴¹As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it⁴² 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.⁴³ The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side.⁴⁴ They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”

The word of God for the people of God.

Title: **“Enemies, Disciples, and Tears”**

INTRODUCTION:

It seems to me that when you look through these three panes of scripture, it is difficult to call Palm Sunday a Triumphant Entry. Sure there is a parade. A large crowd has formed and is celebrating the fulfillment of scripture:

Zechariah 9:9 (NIV84) *The Coming of Zion's King*

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 people are projecting their expectations upon their current circumstances. They are only seeing what they want to see. They do not have the big picture.

When I was in the Coast Guard, I was on three different deployments as part of a helicopter crew on Coast Guard cutters. On several occasions, we flew into Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for repairs and logistics. The US Base is on two sides of the bay. The "air support" side is pretty bare and spartan.

We had a small building from which we operated there on the Navy airstrip. Inside this nondescript building, there was a wall with a mural. There were scenes of various Coast Guard operations all over this wall. The title for the mural was "The Big Picture." This is pretty ironic to think we could find some special insight in a very obscure place. But, it is not an uncommon human perspective to presume knowledge in our ignorance.

Let me point out another deficiency or limitation in our understanding. We tend to look back through the telescope of time with a provincial viewpoint. We have a certain sense of superiority over the people and places of the past. Without a comprehensive understanding of context, we skew our view.

For instance, there is another windowpane connected to this triumphant entrance that is often mentioned by preachers and commentators. Of course, I am referring to Good Friday. Many times, the crowd at the Palm Parade is associated with the crowd that cried out, crucify him, in front of Pontius Pilate. The idea is to point out the fickleness of human nature.

A close reading of the scriptures offers no support of that hypothesis. Looking back, we underestimate the size and scope of Jerusalem. We

miss the cultural significance of the Passover Feast. The Roman historian Tacitus and the Roman-Jewish historian Josephus estimated that when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, there were at least 600,000 people killed. No, it is very unlikely that there were very many of the same people at these two vastly different venues – the Palm Parade and Pilate’s Court.

BODY:

Jesus knew the hearts and minds of the people. He knew they misunderstood His mission and His methods. {How about us? How often do we go wrong using our limited lens?} “The people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.” The parable that Jesus tells to dispel this notion is a little confusing. There are two groups of people described. The man of noble birth who was to be made king is Jesus Himself. And, it is clear that there is a time of waiting for the king’s return.

The first group refused to have Jesus rule over them. Jesus says that they hated Him and He calls them enemies. Anyone who refuses Jesus as Lord of ALL aspects of their life is His enemy. What is their fate? Death and destruction. Everyone must make this choice between eternal life and eternal death. We see these enemies in the political and

religious leadership of Jerusalem. They only recognized Jesus' divine authority by the mocking sign hung over Him on the Calvary Cross – Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.

The second group is called servants of the king. It is commonly understood that each of the ten servants received the same amount, one mina each, for a total of ten minas. They were explicitly told to put the money to work until the king's return. Notice that all three of the servants acknowledge that the mina belongs to the king. The first two acknowledge that it is the king's mina that earned more.

The first servant, with a ten-fold increase, is highly commended and called trustworthy. He is given charge over ten cities in the king's kingdom. The second servant, with a five-fold increase, is not commended. He is given charge over five cities in the king's kingdom.

The third servant is a problem. Is he a liar? Is he self-deceived? Is he a hypocrite? Apparently, he does not rightly know the king. The excuse he gave for not putting the king's mina to work made no sense – it actually condemns him. The king calls him a wicked servant and takes away his mina. Then in the next verse the king declares judgment against His enemies.

Some preachers have made a convincing argument that the mina represents the gospel message. Jesus' servants have been given the good news about the Son of God. John 1:29 (NIV84) The next day John [the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" There will be a day of accounting. What will we have to show for the king's mina?

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 (ESV) **4** This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.² Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (NIV84) Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

One commentator made this observation about the third servant: "The unfaithful servant did nothing, absolutely nothing with what Christ had given him. He had no vision of what could be done. He had no sense of responsibility to the Lord. He had no concern for the growth of the Lord's kingdom and property. He felt the gift given him did not matter that much and was not needed that much. He did not look for the blessed moment of his Lord's

return. He had a *false [sense of] security*, believing the Lord would accept him and understand even if he did fail to use the gifts.”

[pause] WE STAND WARNED. [pause]

Now, let us look at the third windowpane - the Lord's lament over Jerusalem. Jesus' weeping was a deep heartfelt sorry. It was not a couple of tears running down His cheeks. Several days before He had wept at Lazarus' tomb, even though He knew He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead. But this time, Jesus' weeping is quite different.

Jesus is coming down the Mount of Olives. There is a festive parade where His disciples are jubilant and call Him king. The Pharisees are indignant. They call Jesus Rabbi or teacher and want Jesus' disciples to be silenced. Jesus refuses.

In fact, Jesus intentionally chose to signal the message of His kingship by riding the donkey into Jerusalem. It is recorded in all four Gospels. This was a declaration by Jesus and His disciples; but, it was much more. In effect, Jesus is saying this is a cosmic event. If the disciples were quieted, even the inanimate stones would come to life and cry out this truth.

Coming down that Mount, the panoramic view of Jerusalem comes into sight. In all the joy of the

moment by which Jesus is surrounded, Jesus sees the coming annihilation of the capitol of Israel. He breaks down, broken hearted. There will be a rebellion, but Rome ruthlessly surrounds and suffocates the city, putting them to the sword. There is a river of blood and starvation.

This could have been avoided. If only Israel had not rebelled against the rule of Christ, they would have had peace. They made their choice, and that choice led to their destruction. Earlier in Jesus' ministry, He quoted Isaiah in a pronouncement against the stiff-necked people that repeatedly rebelled against the LORD:

Matthew 13:15 (NIV84) "For this people's heart has become calloused;

they hardly hear with their ears,

and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,

hear with their ears,

understand with their hearts

and turn, and I would heal them."

Jesus laments that now it is too late. Their window of opportunity has passed. John 1:11-13 (NIV84)

¹¹ He [Jesus] came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

What is true for Israel, is true for the whole world. Everyone must decide for themselves whether to submit to the Lord Jesus or to be an enemy of Jesus. There may come a time when that opportunity will be withdrawn. The Lord may turn them over to the hardness of their own hearts. Isaiah 55:6 (NIV84) Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

CONCLUSION:

Those of us in the Church profess to be children of God. We profess to be servants of the Most High King. We have been given our Mina from the Messiah – the good news of Jesus. Will we hear the commendation? "Well done, my good servant! Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities."

One crucial way we must do this, is to reach the next generation of children. Each of our hymns today speaks about children following Jesus. In two weeks, we will relaunch our children's ministries. I encourage you to contact Samantha to volunteer

to help in some capacity. Please be praying for this ministry.

Jesus' parable set the stage for His Triumphant Palm Parade into the beloved city of Jerusalem. It gives us some context. In the midst of the celebration, Jesus is brought to tears over those that have rejected Him and chosen their fate of destruction. Do we weep with Jesus?

General Booth was the founder of the Salvation Army. He was a great man. One of the leaders, a superintendent, wrote General Booth a letter and said, "You've got to help us here. We are praying; we're teaching; we're witnessing; but we're not having revival. We're doing everything we know to do, but we're not having revival. What should we do?" After they wrote the old general, they waited. He sent back a telegram—just two words: "Try tears."

I pray your view through the windowpanes has been enlarged; that you see the big picture. Do you see Jesus any better? Do you see the kingdom of God any better? Do you see yourself any better?

Amen and amen. Let us pray.