

## **Trials to Triumph**

1 of 1 | Palm Sunday

### **SLIDE 1 Introduction**

On Palm Sunday it is always appropriate to review the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, marking the beginning of Passion Week.

Matthew covers this event in chapter 21. He then spends his time all the way up to chapter 26 reciting Jesus' parables. Mark recounts this event in chapter 11, verses 1 through 11. We see here Jesus leaving Jerusalem that evening and returning to Bethany. This is where Lazarus and Mary lived.

In the book of Luke, chapter 19, where we will land today, Luke emphasizes what Jesus had to say about what he was about to do. You have to step back several verses to read his teaching. And you know, we love to get the fuller context of the Bible by looking at the verses and stories others often skip over.

The actual Triumphal Entry account reads from verse 28 to verse 44. Again, if you read this full account you get a bigger picture than just the donkey and the palm leaves thrown in the road.

However, our focus is on what Jesus said leading up to the event and WHY he said it.

### **SLIDE 2 Jesus Returns**

Start with me in Luke 19:11, and let me give you a little backstory. Previously Jesus was run out of Jerusalem, and even all of Israel. They threatened his life and the life of his disciples when he made an appearance at one of the feasts at Jerusalem and declared himself "living water." He and his disciples retreated for a long time across the Jordan into an area called The Decapolis—that is, ten cities.

However, when his time fully came, he returned to the nation of Israel and trekked down the Jordan River in a straight line for Jerusalem. He said this earlier in Luke:

**SLIDE 3 Luke 13:31-33 (NIV)** *"<sup>31</sup> At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you." <sup>32</sup> He replied, "Go tell that fox, 'I will keep on driving out demons and healing people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' <sup>33</sup> In any case, **I must press on today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!**"*

Many of the stories of his greatest miracles are recorded on this last leg of Jesus' journey to the cross. The Bible says he "*set [his] face like flint*" (Isaiah 50:7) to be there on time, because he had a date with destiny on that particular Jewish Passover.

He got all the way to Jericho, on the banks of the Jordan, then turned up the hill to Jerusalem and the mount of God—the same place Abraham intended to sacrifice his son, Issac. In Jericho he ate with Zacchaeus, who repented and gave half his wealth to the poor. The next day he and his disciples made their way to Jerusalem for the Triumphal Entry. However that night while he stayed at Zacchaeus' house he told a parable. And the Bible tells us why:

**SLIDE 4a** **Luke 19:11 (NIV)** "*While they were listening to this* [what Jesus had to say about Zacchaeus], *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.*"

Yes, once again people had a total misconception of what Jesus was all about and what he was doing among us in the first place.

**SLIDE 4b** The King James version states, "*they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.*" Isn't it amazing how much faith we can place in a misconception.

### **SLIDE 5** Where's Your Faith Focused?

In the Bible we see most people's only concern was freedom from the Roman oppression they lived under. To them Roman's rule was the problem. So the Savior was to free them and give them their nation back. However, Jesus did not come to set up an earthly kingdom, because the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:21)

We also see that sometimes they tried to force Jesus to take sides and to make him king, whether he wanted to be one or not.

The reason he told this parable before he got to Jerusalem and sacrificed his life was so they would understand that nothing good happens in an instant. Good things take time.

So let's read what Jesus said at this critical time, right before his Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem.

**SLIDE 6 The Parable of the Minas**

Before we get into the verses, let me explain that a mina was a coin of money. It weighed about one and a quarter pounds or half a kilo. In that time it was equal to about 100 drachmas. A working man could make about one drachma a day, so a mina was over three months worth of work. A lot of money! The average wage in America is \$60,000.00 per year. So a mina today would be worth over \$15,000.00. Now if it was actual gold today, it would be worth more like \$30,000.00.

So let's read this parable:

**SLIDE 7 Luke 19:12-27 (NIV)** *"<sup>12</sup> He said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. <sup>13</sup> So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.' <sup>14</sup> "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.' "*

This relates to the Jewish people saying before Pilate, in spite of all this, that they had no king but Caesar. (John 19:15)

**SLIDE 8** *"<sup>15</sup> "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. <sup>16</sup> "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.' <sup>17</sup> " "Well done, my good servant!" his master replied. 'Because **you have been trustworthy in a very small matter**, take charge of ten cities.' "*

This is a kingdom principle that will evolve into the Millennial Reign of Christ. If God can trust you with what you have got now, he can trust you with even more then.

**SLIDE 9 Luke 16:10 (NIV)** *"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much."*

But what about the other guys in this parable?

**SLIDE 10** *"<sup>18</sup> "The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.' <sup>19</sup> "His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.' <sup>20</sup> "Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. <sup>21</sup> **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.' "*

The gift God has given us is meant to be shared. What you do not share dies within you. God knows the suffering that living for him will bring, but he also knows the rewards for those who do. Paul said:

**SLIDE 11 Romans 8:18 (NIV)** *"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."*

Now back to the parable:

**SLIDE 12** *"<sup>22</sup> 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?' <sup>23</sup> Why then didn't you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?' <sup>24</sup> Then he said to those standing by, 'Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.' <sup>25</sup> 'Sir,' they said, 'he already has ten!' "*

Ten minas is about \$150,000.00! Didn't this guy already have enough! You can't give too much to someone who is giving you a return on your investment. However, it comes with the price of being responsible with what you have been entrusted with.

Paul said in 1st Thessalonians 2:4 that WE have been *"entrusted with the gospel."*

God give some much, he gives some less, but he expects each of us to use it for the kingdom. It doesn't happen over night, but over a lifetime of service to God.

God doesn't care how much you have. What matters is, "What are you using it for?"

Finally he ends this parable with:

**SLIDE 13** *"<sup>26</sup> He replied, 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. <sup>27</sup> 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.' "*

The only thing worst than doing the things Jesus asks us to do is totally rejecting his lordship over our lives.

Now regarding those people who said to Pilate, "We have no king but Caesar," they will get what they have chosen. They will be shut out of the kingdom of heaven and the presence of the Lord.

## SLIDE 14 The Apostle Paul's Sufferings

Although many want to take the course of least resistance, those interested in investing in the kingdom of God suffer many trials and the progress is slow. Nevertheless, the victories are sure and the outcome is worth everything bit of the suffering.

The Apostle Paul was literally called to suffer for the sake of Jesus. Can you imagine how Barnabas and Saul felt at the commissioning of their first missionary journey—the excitement, the expectation? Yet we see that there were many trials on the way to triumph. As Paul and Barnabas were retracing their steps back to Antioch and encouraging all the new church plants they made, he shares with them this newfound wisdom:

**SLIDE 15 Acts 14:21, 22 (NIV)** *"<sup>21</sup> They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, <sup>22</sup> strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. **"We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,"** they said."*

## SLIDE 16 Altar Time

Nothing in your life is just going to *"immediately appear."* Nothing is easy. Much of it you have to work for and much of it will cause intense suffering as you move towards your goals.

Jesus could just as well stayed in The Decapolis. He was well received there among the Gentiles and his success was spreading far and wide. Nevertheless he knew what he was called to—to suffer and die on the cross for the sins of the world. He did it all so we could enter the kingdom of God and invest in God's kingdom here on earth, *"as it is in heaven."* Let us arm ourselves for triumph in the midst of trials with the same attitude Jesus possessed.