

Sermon for FBC March 25, 2018

Triumphant Entry to Terrible Ending

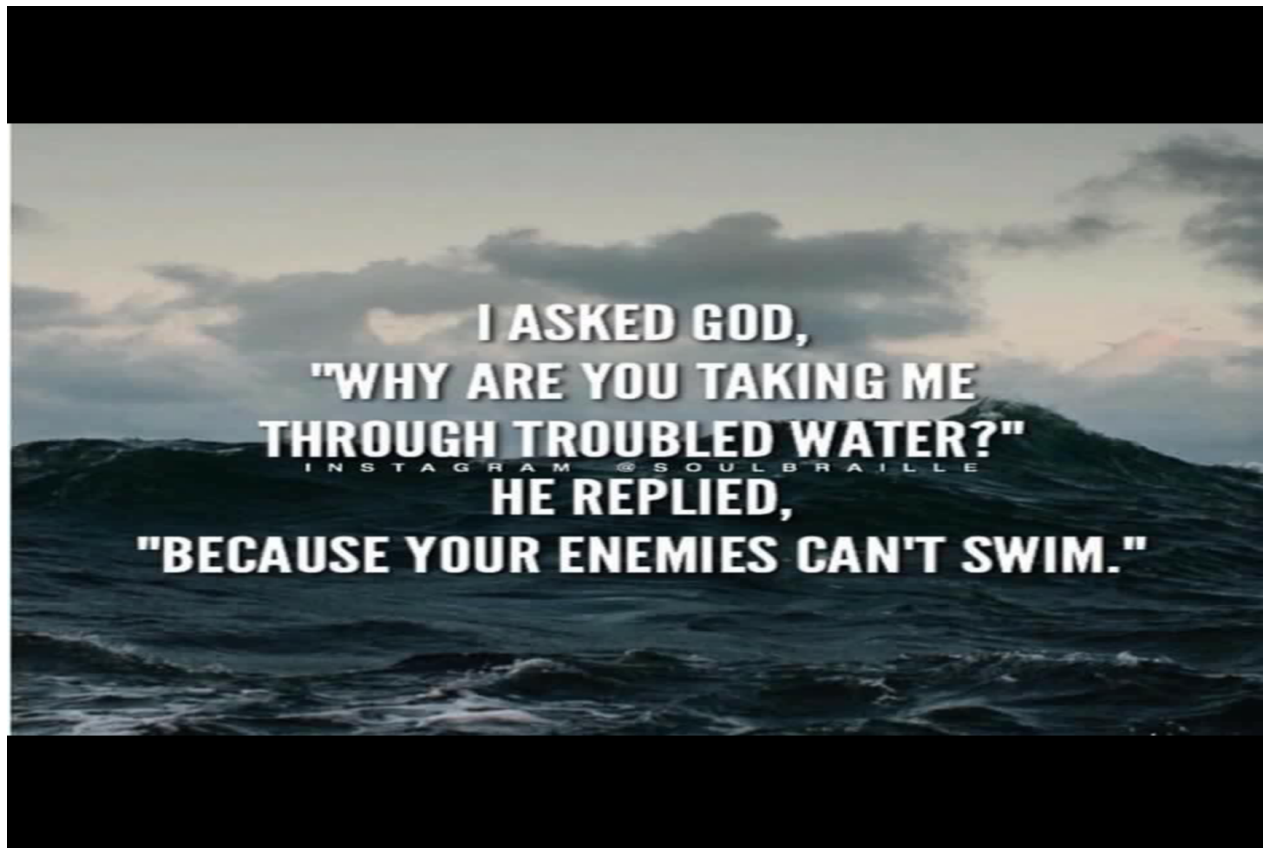
John 12:12-19

Matthew 27:32-40 & 45-54

Good morning!

Today my message is "Triumphant Entry to Terrible Ending"! We are going to look at Jesus's last week, from being praised as the king of the Jews to being despised and killed as that same king.

Last week we finished our look at Psalm 34 which I called "The Lord will look after You!" Here is a thoughtful picture that gives us one idea of what the Israelite people might have asked God that day they stood at the edge of the Red Sea with the Egyptian army coming up behind them. That story is found in Exodus 13 & 14 in the Old Testament of the Bible.



Now we head into Easter with today being Palm Sunday. This picture takes on even more meaning as this week unfolded in Jesus's time. The apostles were about to find out how God would get them through the most troubled time of their lives.

Now, back to the triumphant entry at the beginning of Jesus's last week before the cross. We pick up with Jesus as He is approaching Jerusalem from Lazarus's home in Bethany. This is the week of the festival of Passover.

John 12:12-13 NIV

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

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!"

A similar occurrence is found in the book of Revelations where a great multitude presented palm branches to Jesus.

Rev. 7:9-12 NIV

9 *After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.*

10 *And they cried out in a loud voice:*

*"Salvation belongs to our God,
who sits on the throne,
and to the Lamb."*

11 *All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,*

12 *saying: "Amen! Praise and glory
and wisdom and thanks and honor
and power and strength
be to our God for ever and ever.
Amen!"*

Back to this first week and the arrival of Jesus.

John 12:14-16 NIV

14 *Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written:*

15 *"Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion;
see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt." (Zech. 9:9)*

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 they had done these things to him.*

John 12:17-19 NIV

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.*

18 *Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him.*

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

The people were excited and talkative about this man Jesus! They were growing in numbers and noise. This caused local church leaders and the government to sit up and take notice and then react. Throughout this week are the events of Jesus's time with the Disciples, the Last Supper and then the arrest, trial and conviction of Jesus.

This leads us to our next Scripture passage and the "terrible ending" in my title. There is no way to make this nice or encouraging – it is total pain, loss and sacrifice of an innocent man – all because He loved us so much!

Matthew 27:32-40 & 45-54 NIV

The Crucifixion of Jesus

32 *As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross.*

33 *They came to a place called Golgotha (which means "The Place of the Skull").*

34 *There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it.*

35 *When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.*

36 *And sitting down, they kept watch over him there.*

37 *Above his head they placed the written charge against him: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.*

38 *Two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.*

39 *Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads*

40 *and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!"*

45 *From the sixth hour (noon) until the ninth hour (Three in the afternoon) darkness came over all the land.*

46 *About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?").*

47 *When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah."*

48 *Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink.*

49 *The rest said, "Now leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."*

50 *And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.*

51 *At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split.*

52 *The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.*

53 *They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.*

54 *When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!"*

On the back cover of Max Lucado's book "And the Angels were Silent", we read, "It's the final week. The players are nearing the stage. The props are being put into position. All of heaven watches. It is the long-awaited week. A week when no angel dared to sing.

A hush fell over heaven as the God-Man faced his final days. Note the firmness in his walk. Hear the conviction in his voice. Witness the courage of his deeds.

See his passion...the Savior who will not give up on his children until they are found.
Sense his power...the God who will not tolerate hollow religion.
Hear his promise...the Redeemer who would rather go to hell for you than to heaven without you!"

Romans 5:6-8 NIV

6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.

8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

We celebrate this day for what we know today – that our Lord Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to illustrate His plan for peace and salvation, that He is God and wants us to know and believe in Him.

His life on earth was a gift to us, a gift of living forever with Him. Just like the crowds in Jerusalem that day, we have the opportunity to celebrate with Jesus and the encouragement to accept the gift of life from Him.

The next celebration is Good Friday service at 11am at Bethel Church. Come and witness the sacrifice that Jesus made so we can be joyously alive with Him. Then on Easter Sunday we celebrate the risen Savior, who beat death and provided forever the way to salvation through Him.

Jesus is waiting to celebrate your triumphal entry into His eternal life. He will be shouting Hosanna when you decide to follow Him.

Jesus was here for you and He still is waiting – ask Him to show you how to know Him.

Bibliography:

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