

BIBLE READING DAY 33, THURSDAY: MARCH 31

Holy Week, Palm Sunday: Jesus Acclaimed by the Crowds

Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:10–11; Luke 19:29–44; John 12:19

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying, “Go into the village just ahead, and you will immediately find a young donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and he will send them at once.”

Now all this happened in fulfillment of the word of the prophet,

***Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you
— meek, and riding upon a donkey, and upon a colt, the foal of a donkey.***

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them and brought the ass and the colt and spread their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. And a great crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the palm trees and spread them on the road. And marching along in front of Jesus and following along behind him, the crowds shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”

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

“I say to you,” replied Jesus, “if these were to hold their peace, the very stones themselves would shout.”

The Pharisees said among themselves, “You see? There is nothing you can do. Look! the whole world is running after him.”

When Jesus drew near and beheld the city, he began to weep over it, saying, “If only you knew, today, the things on which peace depends! But now they are hidden from your sight. For the days are coming when your enemies will cast a rampart about you and surround you on every side. And they will dash you and your children to the ground and will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?”

“This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee,” the crowds replied.

Jesus entered the temple. And when he had observed everything, he went out to Bethany with the twelve, for it was already late in the day.

Holy Week, Monday: Cursing the Fig Tree

Matthew 21:18–19; Mark 11:12–14

On the following day, when they came from Bethany, Jesus was hungry, and seeing in the distance a fig tree already in leaf, he went to see if he could find any fruit on it. But when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. And he said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit of you again.” And his disciples heard it.

The Temple Cleansed Again

Matthew 21:12–17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-49

And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the benches of those who sold doves. He would not allow anyone to carry a vessel through the temple, saying, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers!"

And the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy him; for they feared him, because all of the people were amazed at His teaching.

All that week, Jesus would teach daily in the temple. The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things he was doing and heard the children shouting in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were filled with indignation and said to him, "Do you hear what they are saying?"

"Yes!" replied Jesus. "Have you never read,

'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants you have brought forth perfect praise?'

And when evening came, Jesus left them, and went out from the city to Bethany and lodged there.

Approximate Timeline of Jesus's Public Ministry

EARLY LIFE	EARLY MINISTRY	FIRST PASS- OVER	SUMMER	FIRST BOOTHS	WINTER	SECOND PASS- OVER	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	FINAL PASS- OVER
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DEVOTIONAL DAY 33 (THURSDAY MARCH 31)

When Victory and Defeat Meet Together!

Based on Matthew 21:1–19; Mark 11:10-19; Luke 19:29–49; John 12:19

This week I watched with great anticipation the favored American skier who was expected to win Gold in the Winter Olympics. She barreled out of the gate for what was presumed to be her triumphal race on an icy, steep, and winding course, conditions in which she in previous years excelled.

But, as many of you saw, perhaps even in tears, she fell not only once but twice on two separate days in what is truly could be said as an agony of defeat.

I felt compassion for Mikeala Shiffrin as she sat for what was reported to be about twenty minutes beside the red safety fence in freezing conditions as the competition continued and others skied by. She was clearly crying and apparently inconsolable as several teammates came to encourage and get her down.

She later took questions from the media about her disappointed entry, including a question on whether she “second-guessed” herself. “Pretty much everything makes me second-guess, like, the last 15 years, everything I thought I knew about my own skiing and slalom and racing mentality.”

I am not necessarily a big fan of snow skiing, but I knew of her path which had led her to be at one of the greatest stages as an athlete. She’s won two Olympic golds and 47 World Cup slalom races, but not this time. She is of course human.

Jesus’s path, to get to Jerusalem and soon to the cross has taken Him on an unlikely course. Beginning from what has been thought to be a humble journey to Bethlehem on a donkey while still in His mother’s womb, to now this scene of triumph in Matthew 21:1-11 as Jesus enters humbly on a simple donkey to Jerusalem.

This is a fulfilled prophecy, coming from Zachariah 9:9

***“Behold, your King is coming to you;
He is just and having salvation,
Lowly and riding on a donkey,
A colt, the foal of a donkey”***

This expressed great humility as the crowd greeted Him with palm leaves and shouts of “*Hosanna to the Son of David*”.

Notice how the city responded. Who is this? With confidence, the crowd responded, “*This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee!*” Despite His glorious reception, Jesus was well aware what soon awaited Him. In the middle of the cheers and victory, Jesus wept over Jerusalem.

One of my favorite lines from a hymn is “He had no tears for His own griefs, but sweat drops of blood for mine.” These tears were not for Himself but for Jerusalem and ultimately all of humanity who would reject Him and His sacrifice throughout all of history.

Reflect on a time that you were humbled:

What led to it and how were you changed by this experience?

Can you say with confidence who Jesus is to you?

Father, how marvelous! How wonderful! Is my Savior’s love for me! Please help me from being so focused on my own triumphs and defeats that I fail to see the needs of those around me.

--By Melissa McKeown

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT YOU HAVE READ:

WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ME?

PRAYER: WHAT DID I SAY TO GOD?

ACTS OF PRAYER: ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION (How God Can Supply Needs)

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