

## WHAT IS PALM SUNDAY?

Matthew 21:1-9

2017

INTRO: We have come to another Palm Sunday day. By the next Palm Sunday we may be raptured to heaven. Our message this morning comes in the form of a question. It is this: Just what is Palm Sunday? To answer that, I will seek to answer these questions: What day of the week did this actually happen? You see, I did a message some years ago on the day we call Good Friday, and I said it wasn't good and it wasn't Friday. What day did the day we call Palm Sunday actually happen? Second, how did Palm Sunday get its name? And last, and certainly not least, what is significant about this day?

Well, by way of introduction, let me back up a few days before Palm Sunday. It is, in my reckoning, Nisan the 7<sup>th</sup>. You see Palm Sunday, in the Jewish calendar would fall either in the month of Nisan, or the month before which was Adar II, depending if it was a year with 12 or 13 months. Now the calendar is very complicated. The Jews had a religious year and a sacred year. Because there are 365 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  days in a year, they had some years with 13 months and some with 12 to make up for the  $\frac{1}{4}$  day each year. The months were reckoned from a lunar perspective of 29 or 30 days. That is because of the lunar cycles. Then some Jews, I understand, went by the solar year, and that caused further complications.

And so, in my reckoning, in the year that Christ died, on Nisan the 7<sup>th</sup> Jesus was making His way to Jerusalem, approaching it from the far side of the Jordan River, which meant He would need to go through Jericho. For these feast days roads, such as they were, were repaired and readied for a hundreds of thousands of travelers. Friends who traveled from far away would stay at friends places and from there travel together to Jerusalem. John 11:55 says this, "And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves."

These feast were festive and joyous times. This happened three times a year. Passover was the first of the three festive

seasons, the time we are entering right now in the Church calendar. The second was Pentecost, and the last was the feast of booths. These feasts were all prophetic. Four feasts fell in the grain harvest time and give us the bread we will share at communion on the day we call Good Friday. The last three fell in the grape harvest, and will give us the wine, or grape juice of communion.

Well, Jesus has come on the seventh of Nisan as far as Zachaius' place in Jericho, where He stayed night. The next day they began the ascent to Jerusalem. They went from close to 1300 feet below sea level to some 2600 feet above sea level. It was a taxing day of 8-10 hours of walking.

And when they arrived in Bethany, which is just over the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem, there Jesus stayed with Mary, Martha and Lazarus. I believe He arrived on Thursday evening. Some think He arrived on Friday but I don't think that gives room for the community Shabat meal they celebrated together with Jesus. So having arrived Thursday, Friday would have been a leisurely day. I expect discussions were held as to where the meal would take place and who would bring what. The decision was to have the meal at Simon the leper's house. And I am of the firm persuasion that this was a Simon who had been a leper and he had been healed by Christ. And then Friday at Sundown the Sabbath would begin. So they will have spent a wonderful time together at Simon the leper's house.

Well, the next day would be the Sabbath, so they would have rested on the Sabbath day.

#### I. WHAT DAY DID IT HAPPEN? DID PALM SUNDAY HAPPEN ON SUNDAY?

Our first question then is, did Palm Sunday happen on Sunday? Well, that question is raised because I do not believe that Jesus died on Friday, the day that it has been historically held. You see, from Friday evening until Sunday morning is not three days and three nights. If you are interested in that subject, you might listen to our message on sermonaudio called, "It Wasn't Good, and it wasn't Friday." I have no doubt Jesus died on Wednesday evening. So that raises the question whether Palm Sunday actually happened on Sunday.

I will not seek to explain the complexities of the Passover week. I deal with that in the message I mentioned. Here is the major question in the Passover complexity that must be answered if it is to be maintained that the Bible does not have contradictions: How could Jesus commemorate the Passover one evening, then die when the Passover lambs died the next evening, and both evenings were the same Passover? After hundreds of hours of research, I believe the answer is that some of the Jews followed a lunar calendar, and others a solar calendar, so that Judaism satisfied both camps by allowing them to keep the Passover on the day they believed was right. There is some historical ground for that. If that is of interest, you might listen to the message I mentioned already.

With Jesus commemorating the Passover the evening before others, who held to the other calendar, He would have entered Jerusalem on Sunday and I will mention later how that can be determined. So, Palm Sunday, as I see it, took place on Sunday.

Now let me just say that this day is a very, very significant day and we will see this as we go along. But tell me now on what day of the week creation began? Well, it began on Sunday. That is why Sunday is the first day of the week. And the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey, Palm Sunday, would very seldom happen on Sunday, as a study of the calendar will show. But the year Jesus died, it did. Why is that significant? Sunday is the first day of the week, but also the eighth day. So it is always a new beginning. And this particular Sunday should have been a brand new beginning for Israel. Jesus should have been accepted as their king. But Israel had to make a choice, and in their choice they failed to receive their King on this most crucial day, and we'll see what happened as we go along.

## II. HOW DID PALM SUNDAY GET ITS NAME?

So we ask next, how did Palm Sunday get its name? Turn to Matthew 21. The phrase 'Palm Sunday' has two words, and both are significant. We have mentioned Sunday already, and

will look at it again later. But what of the Palm's of Palm Sunday? We begin in verse 1:

*1 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,*

*2 saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me.*

*3 "And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."*

*4 All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:*

*5 "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'"*

*6 So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them.*

*7 They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them.*

*8 And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road.*

*9 Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' Hosanna in the highest!"*

Now Matthew does not tell us they were palm branches, but John chapter 12 does. And it is because of these palm branches that it became called "Palm Sunday".

Turn now to Revelation 7. Let me quote from a message I did many years ago on heaven. When I gave that message I spoke of the white-robed throng of this chapter. We have recently considered the significance of these white robes, but look now at something else. Look at verse 9: "After this I

beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands..."

What is significant about Palm branches? Here is the quote from the heaven messages:

*So we have seen that they are dressed in white and now we have a second task before us. It is to determine the meaning of the palm branches in their hands. This is not information added for color. I believe what we have is something very significant and our question is, what do these palm branches signify?*

*Well, hardly a commentator who is familiar with the OT fails to mention the feast of tabernacles in connection with the palm branches. You will understand by now that Israel commemorated seven feasts. In our day, four of those seven have been fulfilled. Three still await fulfillment. These are the feast of trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the feast of booths or Tabernacles.*

*At three of these feasts all Jewish males were required to appear. These were Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. Now God gave these seven feasts to Israel because they were prophetic of what would happen in the future. Every year thousands upon thousands of Jewish people came from all over the world to keep the first, the middle and the last feast. The first 3 feasts that came close together began with a display of palm branches. The last feast also began with a display of palm branches.*

*Let me quote to you from a message I did many years ago on a day we call 'Palm' Sunday. "Now the feast of Passover starts the feast of Unleavened bread. And at Passover and at the feast of Tabernacles, when the Jewish pilgrims came it was customary to sing the Hallel Psalms. The Hallel or praise Psalms are Psalm 113-118.*

*"In Psalm 118:26 we have words of welcome and Ellicott says, "These words of welcome are probably spoken by the Levite in charge, to the procession approaching the gates.*

*According to Rabbinical writings, pilgrim caravans were thus welcomed on their arrival to Jerusalem.*

*"Now turn to Psalm 118:22-29. This entire Psalm has a messianic ring to it. Notice verse 22 is a reference to Christ. Then in verse 25 we have the words from which we get the word hosanna. It says, "Save now, I pray, O Lord; O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity." The word hosanna comes from two Hebrew words in this passage. Let me give you the Hebrew, "Ana, Adonai, hosheja na ana..." Ana means I beg, I beseech, I pray. Hosheja means to save or salvation. You see, the writer of the OT book Hosea is called Hosheja. His name means salvation. So if you put these words together with hosheja first and na last you have hoshejana, hosiana or hosanna. In Psalm 118:25 the words mean, I pray Lord, save now ...*

*"Historically, at the feast of Passover and the feast of Tabernacles the Jews would cut down branches and wave them as they chanted the Hallel Psalms. These branches were called hosannas. The people of Jerusalem would welcome those who came to the feasts with these hosannas. When they neared the temple, the priests too would welcome the pilgrims with the words, 'I pray Lord, save now, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'" end quote.*

*I do not know if the world took its significance of the palm branch from the Bible, but the Wikipedia says, and I quote, "The palm branch is a symbol of victory, triumph, peace and eternal life originating in the ancient Near East and Mediterranean world." Jesus entry to Jerusalem here has been called the triumphal entry.*

*Well, the three festive occasions were joyful occasions. The roads were prepared ahead of time for thousands of travelers. People with relatives along the way probably stayed night with them and then traveled on to Jerusalem together. They left in the same way, and that is likely how Jesus' parents left Jerusalem without Jesus when He was 12 years old. Well, when they got to Jerusalem, they stayed with relatives and friends and wherever room might be found. Jerusalem had an influx of about a million people on these occasions.*

*And as they neared Jerusalem, they would sing the Hallel Psalms. And local people from Jerusalem would welcome them and wave palm branches. And when Jesus entered Jerusalem on*

this 10<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan, that is what happened as well. No doubt this Sunday is called Palm Sunday because the Messiah was welcomed like this.

With that, we want to now consider the significance of this day, and it is truly significant.

## II. WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT ABOUT THIS DAY?

### A. The Testing Of The King

Now let me tell you the first thing that is significant about this day. We go to Exodus 12. We'll read verses 1-7.

1 ¶ Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

2 "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

3 "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

4 'And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.

5 'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

6 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

7 'And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

Well, on that first Passover, when the death angel passed through the land, every house where the blood was not placed on the doorpost, the eldest son in the family died. This was the tenth and final plague, and Pharaoh, because God had demonstrated that He was superior to all the Egyptian gods, let Israel go.

But what I want you to notice is that they took the lamb in on the tenth of Nisan. Here is the first significant thing. Now let me give you a bit of history. Once Israel had built the temple, from now on the lambs were slain at the temple. And Jews came from all over the known world to commemorate the Passover. And so special Passover lambs were raised by specially trained shepherds. This took place in the area of Bethlehem.

And on the tenth of Nisan, the lambs would begin to come down the path from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, down the slopes of the Mount of Olives, enter Jerusalem through the Sheep Gate and be taken to the temple. Here they were inspected by specially trained priests who checked them for blemishes. Only unblemished lambs were allowed, because the unblemished lamb was a picture of the perfect sacrifice, and of course, pictured Jesus Christ.

For four days Jesus went to Jerusalem and was inspected. The fourth day He was tried before Annas, Kaiaphas, Pilate, and Herod. Pilate had to make the final judgment, and four or five times he said, "I find no fault in Him." As lambs without blemish were killed, so Christ, who was without blemish, was killed!

Now, for the next four days these lambs will be coming, and be inspected. And on Palm Sunday, the first of those four days, Jesus began coming to Jerusalem to teach, and each evening He went back to Mary and Martha's house. So let me tell you what I see. Jesus Christ was born when the sacrificial lambs were born. Beginning on Palm Sunday He traveled to Jerusalem on the trail the lambs were taken on to Jerusalem. He entered the gate the lambs entered. He was inspected by

the Jews during those four days, as the lambs were inspected.

He was found to be without fault by both Pilate and Herod, but He was condemned to die by the Jews through Pilate, just as the lambs died without blemish. And last, He died when the sacrificial lambs died. Four or five times Pilate told the Jews he found no fault in Christ, and he also added that Herod hadn't found fault in him either. And so He was crucified.

#### B. The Presentation of the King

Intro: We want to consider now the presentation of the King of Israel. Turn now to Matthew 21, where we will begin as we consider a few more significant things about this day. We will go through the events of this Palm Sunday in the Gospels as they unfold. Earlier we followed Him to the Sabbath day in which I believe Jesus would have rested at Bethany with His close friends. It is the day before Palm Sunday. And now, as I piece the story together, the Sabbath is over. Sunday morning has come. In just four days Jesus will die. For three days He leaves Mary and Martha's and goes to Jerusalem and each evening He returns there. The fourth day, on His way back, He only gets as far as the Garden of Gethsemene, and here He is taken captive.

##### 1. Matthew 21:1-5

We'll read Matthew 21 now, verses 1-5:

*1 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,*

*2 saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me.*

*3 "And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."*

4 *All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:*

5 *"Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'"*

We begin with the fulfillment of a prophecy. Zechariah 9:9 says, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! 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." I won't belabor a point I have made in the past, how Alexander the Great came to Jerusalem, seeking vengeance; and how he met a throng of white-robed priests. And instead of dealing with the High Priest, with whom he was upset, he bowed before him. And then how he came to Jerusalem, and how they showed him the book of Daniel, and how he recognized that he himself, was the fulfillment of a certain part of Daniel's prophecy.

The contrast between Alexander the Great's arrival on either a great white charger, or on his beloved black beauty, Bucephalus; and the arrival of Jesus on a donkey is a picture we need to remember this morning. Picture in your mind this One, riding on the donkey; just some clothing for a saddle, no sword, no shield, no armor bearer; does He look like a king to you? He looks anything but like Alexander the Great on his huge steed! But this One on the donkey is the one that is truly Great. Here is a divine principle. God's strength is made perfect in weakness. It is a principle easy to forget, and one that makes no sense, humanly speaking.

But there is another picture we might consider. Turn to 1 Kings 1. You will remember when King David was old that one day Adonijah, his son by a woman named Haggith, declared himself to be king. But he invited neither Nathan the prophet, the mighty men, nor Solomon. So Nathan the prophet conferred with Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, and they agreed how they might get David to declare Solomon king, instead of Adonijah. We begin in verse 24:

24 And Nathan said, "My lord, O king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne'?"

25 "For he has gone down today, and has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons, and the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest; and look! They are eating and drinking before him; and they say, 'Long live King Adonijah!'"

26 "But he has not invited me — me your servant — nor Zadok the priest, nor Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, nor your servant Solomon.

27 "Has this thing been done by my lord the king, and you have not told your servant who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

28 Then King David answered and said, "Call Bathsheba to me." So she came into the king's presence and stood before the king.

29 And the king took an oath and said, "As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress,

30 "just as I swore to you by the LORD God of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so I certainly will do this day."

31 Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and paid homage to the king, and said, "Let my lord King David live forever!"

32 ¶ And King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king.

Now note these next two verses:

33 The king also said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon.

34 *"There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'"*

Now notice that David said that they were to have Solomon ride on his own mule and bring him down to anoint him as king. Here we have the presentation of another king riding on King David's own donkey. There is a similarity to our passage. Jesus is also David's son, entering to be the king of Israel. Here is the great, great, great and a few more, Grandson of David, entering Jerusalem on a donkey.

2. Mark 11:4-10

We go now to Mark 11 as he adds some things to the events of this day, which come next in order. We begin in verse 4:

4 *So they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door outside on the street, and they loosed it.*

5 *But some of those who stood there said to them, "What are you doing, loosing the colt?"*

6 *And they spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So they let them go.*

7 *Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it.*

8 *And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road.*

9 *Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"*

10 *Blessed is the kingdom of our father David That comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"*

It was customary for pilgrims coming to Jerusalem for the feasts to sing, what is called the Hallel, or

praise Psalms. These are Psalms 113 to 118. That is what is happening in this passage.

### 3. John 12:14-19

We go now to John 12. Very seldom does John add to what the others have already said, but he does so here in chapter 12. We begin in verse 14:

*14 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written:*

*15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt."*

*16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.*

*17 Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness.*

*18 For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.*

*19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!"*

That Jesus is coming to the feast now becomes known to the Pharisees. Look at verses 9-11:

*9 Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.*

*10 But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also,*

*11 because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.*

The plans were already under way to kill both Jesus and Lazarus. And so verse 19 says: The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, 'You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!'" Well, something has to be done about that!

#### 4. Luke 19:39-44

We go now to Luke 19, who adds a little information as to what happened at this time. We begin in verse 39. It says:

*39 And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."*

*40 But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."*

It is held by some commentaries that Jesus' saying that the stones would cry out if the disciples held their peace, is a proverb; a saying. Let me say this: This is a huge moment in history! On this day, the course of history hinges. If the Jews had accepted Jesus as their Messiah, surely everything would have been changed. But instead on this most crucial day, they rejected the King! He came, as had been prophesied, and He was being rejected by His own nation, as we can see even here.

We go on in verse 41:

*41 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,*

*42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes."*

When you come to the top of the Mount of Olives, or are on the slopes which go down into the Kidron Valley, you have one of the most beautiful sites of Jerusalem to be had. It is from here that you see most pictures taken of Jerusalem. When the temple was still standing, this would have been a breathtaking view.

But it had a different affect on Jesus. Seeing this majestic city with its beautified temple, and knowing what would soon take place because His kingship was being rejected, it caused Him to weep. Now notice that He said, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace!" The words, 'this your day' are most meaningful! Whose day? Jerusalem's day! By the way, Putin, leader of Russia acknowledged to Benjamin Netanjahu, West Jerusalem as Israel's capital this past week. I fail to understand Putin, but this is very significant. But what Jesus saw, when He looked over Jerusalem on this day, is what would happen 40 years from the day He entered Jerusalem. He saw the city on fire. He saw the dead piled up in the streets so you could hardly pass through them. He saw merciless killing, and Jews dying by the hundreds of thousands. He saw this city lie in waste for 1900 years! And He wept. He said, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace!"

You see, as He looked over the city, according to Sir Robert Anderson, who calculated this over 100 years ago to be the day Daniel's 69<sup>th</sup> week ran out. It was over. He saw Himself in Gethsemene. He saw Himself, beaten, and bruised and bleeding. He saw Himself thrown backwards over the cross and his hands and feet nailed to the cross. It was over. When the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd and said, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples", the picture was clear.

Seeing what now lay before Him He says in verses 43-44:

43 *"For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side,*

44 *"and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."*

You see, they had the prophets. Daniel had carefully laid the future out for them. And in this, Jerusalem's crucial day, they were blind to the Scriptures. They did not recognize the time of their visitation! Oh, blind unbelief. Oh treacherous sin!

5. Matthew 21:10-17

For the next events in chronological order, we go to Matthew 21 again as he gives us a little more information of this day. We begin in verse 10:

*10 And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?"*

*11 So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."*

*12 Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.*

*13 And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"*

*14 Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.*

*15 But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant*

*16 and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?"*

Let us stop there a moment. The chief priests and the scribes, these are the religious elite, said to Jesus, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And the question pertains more to them than to Jesus. Did they hear what they were saying? And the answer is no, they did not. They just heard words. Words that filled them with envy and anger. But here is how the verse goes on:

*And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise'?"*

Turn to Acts 4. I do not know what is meant by babes and sucklings. But Jesus is speaking to the religious elite. And I think what he may be saying is, "It is not the highly trained professionals that for the most part bring the greatest glory or praise to God, but the commoners." Here once more is the principle we noted earlier. Look at verses 1-13:

*1 Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,*

*2 being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.*

*3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.*

*4 However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.*

*5 And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes,*

*6 as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.*

*7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?"*

*8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:*

*9 "If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well,*

10 *"let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.*

11 *"This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'*

To the Jewish leaders, Jesus was the despised One. To God He was the great one. We go on:

12 *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

13 *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.*

Here were these, that might be viewed as babes and sucklings by the trained religious elite. But when anyone has been with Christ, they are the ones that bring glory to God!

Now Matthew 21:17 closes Palm Sunday like this:

17 *Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.*

So, Palm Sunday is over, but let me read just two more verses in Matthew 21. These are verses 18-19 which say:

18 *Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry.*

19 *And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away.*

As I said, Palm Sunday was a very crucial day in the history of Israel. Because of what happened that day, and that they rejected the Messiah, the next day Jesus showed in picture form what would now happen. The fig

tree is representative of Israel. If you wish more information on that, you could listen to our messages on the latter parables of Jesus where this is covered in great detail. But because of Israel's devastating decision on Palm Sunday, to this very day they do not have their temple, although their country has been restored to them, at least in part.

CONCL: So we conclude. Palm Sunday, a make it or break it day. For Israel it was a break it day. The failure of the Jewish leaders, on this, their day; it was a day of greatest failure. But it began now a whole new scheme of things. Seven days after this day, Christ would rise from the dead. That would be the feast of first-fruits. Then, forty days after that, He would ascend to heaven and sit down at the right hand of God. In just another 10 days, the Church would begin. God's plan was not thwarted, though His people failed Him.

And when Jesus stopped on the Mount of Olives, and overlooked the scene below Him, he wept. He knew what would happen forty years later. He knew that for at least 2,000 years, the beautiful temple would never be rebuilt. He knew what the Jew would endure.

And so we now, this week, wait to commemorate the day Jesus died. Then on Sunday we will commemorate one of the most beautiful days, if not the most beautiful day in all of man's history. Jesus Christ arose from the dead!