

Text: John 12:12-16 (Palm Sunday)
Date: April 9, 2006
Location: Zion Lutheran Church- North Battleford, SK.
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Note: This sermon is meant to be preached in a “first-person-narrative-style”.

Grace and peace be unto you from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

Hello and welcome to my humble home. My name is Nathaniel. Pardon me if I look distracted but I have had quite an interesting day. If you have a minute, I will tell you about it...

It all started this morning while I was in the market picking up a few things for my good wife so that she could get to work on preparing our Passover feast. You know, your average stuff: some flour, some wine, horseradish, and maybe even a little lamb if I could find a good deal. Of course, as you know, with every person in Israel eating lamb this week, well, the prices have gone through the roof. I think the shepherds and the butchers are price fixing.

Anyways, I am getting myself of track... As I was standing at the fish monger's table, I over heard two people talking about someone important that would be coming to our city today.

Now normally, like you, I don't pay much attention to the people who visit here. After all, this is Jerusalem- we have visiting dignitaries and nobility visiting our city all the time. But this time, things sounded different.

You see this was no ordinary visitor that was coming to our great city. The person that was coming to Jerusalem goes by the name of Jesus.

Now you might be asking yourself, “Who is this Jesus?” And to be honest, I myself am not really sure. You see I have only heard stories- and you know how those can be!

By all accounts, this “Jesus” person sounds like quite a person. I have heard that he has healed people, that he has cast out demons, that he has walked on water, that he has fed thousands, and I have even heard a few people use the word “Messiah” in the same sentence as his name.

Needless to say, that when I heard that this Jesus character was coming to Jerusalem this afternoon, well, I had to see him with my own eyes.

So after lunch, I went to the edge of town. Now, when I arrived at the main road, I could hardly believe my own eyes. Apparently a few people had the same idea I had because when I arrived at the outskirts of town I was greeted by thousands of people. Obviously other people are curious too about this Jesus guy.

Now as we were waiting for Jesus, people came around handing out palm branches. To me this was strange; after all we use these to greet kings- not wandering prophets. Anyways, I took one just in case...

Something else that I noticed I thought was odd: gathered with us on the roadside were the Temple priests and teachers. Now knowing these guys, I thought they were probably there to take a donation of some sort. Because you know how they can be...They always seem to have their hand in your pocket looking for some kind of offering or tribute.

But this time they looked different. They looked to be concerned or agitated. I am not sure exactly what, but something about this event appeared to have them quite agitated. In fact they were telling people to go home. I overheard them saying that this “Jesus of Nazareth” person was a fraud and a criminal. But in the end, the crowd was just too large and most people appeared to ignore them.

Now, after a bit of waiting, a rumor started to spread through the crowd that this Jesus was soon approaching. I could feel the excitement in the air. All of a sudden people started shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of Lord—the King of Israel!”

Hold on! I thought... “The King of Israel?” Are people really thinking that about this “Jesus”? Who was his father? Who was his mother? What has he done that could make people hail him as a king?

And just then, in the distance, I saw a group of people coming. "It's Jesus! It's Jesus!", people began shouting. At this point, I worked my way through the large crowd to the roadside so that I could get a better look at this "king".

Slowly the group began to approach. Though they were off in the distance, I could still make out that they were a small group- maybe only 15 or 20 people. Now I thought to myself, "What kind of king or noble person only travels with 15 or 20 people?" Strange.

As the group moved closer people started to wave their palm branches frantically as they continued to cheer and heap praise on this "king".

Now what I am going to say next will most likely cause you to think that I am a liar, but I swear to all mighty YHWH that it is the truth. As this great "King Jesus" approached, he was seated on a donkey. A DONKEY! I am not making this up. This "king" was on a donkey.

But you know what? Nobody seemed to care in the slightest. In fact just the opposite. As Jesus rode into the crowd, people ran onto the road carrying their sick children and friends for healing and prayer. At this, Jesus stopped and talked with them, prayed with them, and I swear to you- Jesus healed some of them.

Excitement and joy were in the air. I cannot put my finger on it, but there is something different about this Jesus character. Whether or not he is a king, well I don't know. I suppose time will tell.

In fact it will be interesting to see what happens to Jesus during this week that he is in Jerusalem for Passover. Just judging by the looks on the faces of the Temple Priests, I would say that Jesus is not very welcome here.

I wonder what will happen?

Amen