

From Hero to Villain

April 5, 2020 ~ DCC remote from Vista ~ Matthew 21.1-11, 27.15-26

Overview of Texts

- ❖ “In the brief span of 4 days, both of these very public events occurred
 - ✧ Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem as royalty, with great fanfare, by thousands of people.
 - ✧ Yet within 4 days He was brutally murdered by the Roman governor at the insistence of Jerusalem’s religious leaders, the high priest and the Sanhedrin.
 - ✧ He who was welcomed a Hero, practically given the keys of the city, was despised as a Villain (*a common criminal*). He who had taught openly and healed miraculously for 3 years was mocked and spat upon while walking to His own execution.”
- ❖ “To all appearances, He died a Victim
 - ✧ The high hopes of the great multitudes that welcomed Him into Jerusalem died with Him.
 - ✧ For 3 days despair filled His disciples. What was to have been the joyful annual celebration of Passover, filled with hope, light, and life, became instead a nightmare from which they couldn’t awaken, filled with despair, darkness, and death.
 - ✧ Yet everything changed the following Sunday morning. Word spread that the tomb was empty – that Jesus had risen from the dead.”
- ❖ “His resurrection inaugurated a new reality – a reality no longer dominated by fear of death. Death had been swallowed up by life. A man had risen from the dead holding the keys to Hades, revealing Himself to be Death’s conqueror and the Savior of all mankind.”

Overview of “Passion Week” Series

- ❖ The Gospels consist of 89 chapters of the Bible
 - ✧ 26 of those chapters (*roughly 30%*) cover this final week
- ❖ We can’t cover all that happened in that week
 - ✧ But we can highlight aspects of the week in two parts
 - Today -> “**From Hero to Villain**” ~ Palm Sunday to Condemnation
 - Easter -> “**From Victim to Savior**” ~ Crucifixion to Resurrection

We’ll Cover 3 Distinct Perspectives Today

1. Contrast the multitudes present at each event
2. Contrast those engaged with Jesus at each event
3. Contrast Peter and Judas Iscariot’s actions and experiences
 - With each we get increasingly personal – closer to Jesus

Xition: Let’s look at the Triumphant Entry . . .

1. Multitudes at Each Event

Multitudes at the Triumphal Entry

- ❖ **v1** ~ Jesus entered Jerusalem from the east with disciples
 - ✧ At same time Pilate entering from the west (*from Ceasarea*)
 - ✧ Visitors to Jerusalem could choose to witness either arrival
- ❖ **v6** ~ Disciples got the donkey and colt as instructed
 - ✧ Jesus had travelled for 3 years – but seemingly always walked
 - ✧ Unless crossing water, and even then He sometimes walked
 - ✧ Yet here He directed His disciples to bring donkey and colt
 - He specified a detailed fulfillment of **Zech 9.9**
 - Riding a donkey is a symbol of royalty / meekness / humility / peace
- ❖ **v7** ~ They placed their clothes on the animal under Jesus / deference to King
- ❖ **v8a** ~ A great multitude spread their clothes on the road
 - ✧ Symbolized honor and loyalty towards the King and willing service
 - ✧ Jehu's men did this for him when anointed king (**2 Kings 9.13**)
 - Makeshift throne ~ “Then each man hastened to take his garment and put it under him on the top of the steps; and they blew trumpets, saying, ‘Jehu is king!’”
 - They willingly embraced him as their leader – they demonstrated fealty
- ❖ **v8b** ~ Others spread palm branches on the road
 - ✧ Again this was a demonstration of honor and respect
 - ✧ The branches would have lined Jesus' path – not blocked it
 - ✧ The clothes would have paved the road between the branches
- ❖ **v9** ~ Multitudes before and behind called “Hosanna to the Son of David”
 - ✧ With this shout they declared Jesus to be the long-awaited Messiah
- ❖ Parallel passage: Luke 19.38 ~ “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.”
 - ✧ **v39** ~ Pharisees called out “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”
 - ✧ **v40** ~ Jesus replied “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”
- ❖ **v10** ~ “All the city was moved.” / “**shaken**”

Xition: Let's look at Christ's Condemnation before Pilate and Religious Leaders

Multitudes before Pilate at Feast

- ❖ We read of Jesus before Pilate in **Matthew 27.15-ff**
 - ✧ Every Gospel has an account of Jesus before Pilate (*later*)
- ❖ After talking with Jesus, Pilate “called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people.” (**Luke 23.13**)
 - ✧ There was a custom of releasing a prisoner as a gift to Jews at Passover
 - ✧ Pilate had already sent Jesus to Herod and had Him returned
 - ✧ Pilate wanted to release Jesus, but sensed the Pharisees envied Him
- ❖ Pilate said, “I will chastise Him and release Him.” (**Lk 23.16**)
 - ✧ But they shouted, “Away with this Man, release to us Barabbas.”
 - ✧ Pilate again interceded but the crowd shouted “Crucify Him, crucify him!”
 - ✧ Pilate knew Jesus didn’t deserve to die – Yet he feared a spontaneous uprising
 - ✧ He washed his hands / But Jesus was crucified under Pilate’s authority

2. Those Close to Christ at Each Event

Disciples at Triumphal Entry

- ❖ Evening before he’d dined with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in Bethany
 - ✧ Mary had anointed Him with oil - Judas (*the thief*) complained (**Jn 12**)
- ❖ Apostles led Jesus into Jerusalem the next day
 - ✧ After getting donkey and colt, Jesus laments over Jerusalem
 - Closing with “you did not know the time of your visitation” (**Lk 19.44**)
- ❖ A multitude from Jerusalem heard of His approach
 - ✧ Many who’d heard of Lazarus’ resurrection from the dead came out
 - ✧ Pharisees scoffed – **John 12.37** tells us, “although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him”
 - They’d already hatched plan to kill Jesus and Lazarus
- ❖ Jesus had thousands of people before Him and behind Him
 - ✧ Only later would all of this become clear to Apostles – God opens their minds
- ❖ Note the references to branches and clothing
 - ✧ Branches ornament His path into Jerusalem
 - ✧ Personal clothing paves the road before Him

Xition: Let’s look at Christ’s before Pilate

Jesus Before Pilate at Feast

- ❖ We read of Jesus before Pilate in **Matthew 27.15ff**
 - ✧ Every Gospel has an account of Jesus before Pilate
 - ✧ Synoptics Pilate asks, “Are you the King of the Jews?” / Jesus “It is as you say”
- ❖ But John’s account gives us far more detail
 - ✧ There we see much more - **Read John 18.33-38** ~ “Then Pilate .. at all”

Jesus Before Herod

- ❖ Luke alone relates that Pilate sent Jesus to Herod because he was Galilean
- ❖ **Read Luke 23.6-12** ~ “When Pilate heard .. enmity with each other”
 - ✧ Jesus said nothing before Herod – infuriated him (*magicians should perform*)
 - ✧ Christ’s accusers came and vehemently denounced Him
 - ✧ Herod and soldiers mocked Him and placed gorgeous robe on Him
 - ✧ Pilate and Herod became friends that day

Jesus Before Roman Soldiers

- ❖ Matthew, Mark, and John describe Christ’s mistreatment by soldiers
- ❖ **Read Mat 27.27-31** ~ “Then the soldiers .. to be crucified.”
 - ✧ Crown of thorns is woven and pressed down on his head
 - ✧ They placed a reed / pretend scepter in His right hand
- ❖ Note we again have clothes and branches / robe, thorns, and reed
 - ✧ Robe, staff, crown, and pretend worship were to mock Him

3. Peter and Judas

Judas Iscariot

- ❖ Judas is mentioned at 6 critical points of narrative
 1. Apostles introduced **Mat 10.1-4** – Peter first and Judas last
 - **v4b** ~ “and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him”
 2. When Mary anointed Jesus for burial – He and others were upset (**Mt 26.6-13**)
 3. Judas goes to chief priests for blood money (**Mt 26.14-16**)
 4. At meal before Lord’s Supper (**Mt 26.20-25**) Jesus accuses Judas
 5. In Garden of Gethsemane – **Read John 18.3-6** “Then Judas .. fell to the ground”
 6. Suicide in **Mat 27.3-5** ~ “Then Judas .. hanged himself”

Xition: Let’s look at Peter now (as compared to Judas)

Peter

- ❖ Peter was one of the 3 apostles closest to Jesus – James and John
 - ✧ These 3 witnessed the transfiguration
 - ✧ They went further with Jesus in Garden of Gethsemane
- ❖ Peter alone
 - ✧ Walked on the water to Jesus (**Mt 14.29**)
 - ✧ Told Jesus, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (**Mt 16.16**)
 - ✧ Rebuked Jesus when foretelling His coming death (**Mt 16.22**)
 - But is castigated by Jesus (**Mt 16.23** ~ “Get behind me Satan”)
- ❖ Peter and Judas were both influenced by Satan
 - ✧ Satan entered Judas leading him to betray Jesus (**John 13.27**)
 - ✧ Pastor Kayser had great sermon comparing Peter to Judas
- ❖ When Jesus foretold their abandoning him Peter (and others) denied it
 - ✧ Jesus said Peter would deny Him 3 times before the rooster crowed
 - ✧ This occurred in the courtyard of the high priest
 - **Read Luke 22.59-62** ~ “Then after about an hour .. wept bitterly”
- ❖ But we know it doesn't end here
 - ✧ Unlike Judas who in his remorse went and hanged himself
 - ✧ Peter suffered with his denial until Jesus painfully restored him
- ❖ We've considered what I'd said we would
 - ✧ 1) the multitudes, 2) those closest to Jesus, 3) Peter and Judas
 - ✧ But we can't end here – we must visit one more perspective

Xition: Let's look at this from Jesus' own perspective . . .

Closing

- ❖ That Palm Sunday when looking out over Jerusalem
 - ✧ Only Jesus knew what exactly was coming
 - ✧ Pharisees were plotting
 - Judas already contacted them (*had money*) after the ointment incident
 - But they couldn't be assured of success
 - ❖ Only Jesus knew He was going to die on a cross in 4 days
 - ✧ He prayed in earnest the night before to be released from this
 - This clearly illustrates Christ's human nature
 - ✧ Yet He said, "Not My will, but Yours be done."
 - ❖ The writer of Hebrews tells us why Jesus did this
 - ✧ **Heb 12.2** "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."
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- We are not to fear death – we are not to fear anything
 - We are to absorb the scorn of the world without being embittered by it
 - We are to endure the abuse and mistreatment as Christ's body on earth
 - Jesus not only saved us
 - He modeled for us - obedience unto death
 - Just like Jesus did that Sunday long ago, let us not focus on any near-term suffering
 - Instead, let us do what Jesus did
 - Look beyond the sufferings (*and the pleasures*) of this world
 - ✧ to the glory that is ours in Christ

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
To God our Savior, who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.
Amen ***pause*** Go in peace . . .

From Hero to Villain

April 5, 2020 ~ Sermon Outline ~ Matthew 21.1-11, 27.15-26

- ❖ **Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem as royalty then unjustly executed as a criminal**
 - He was welcomed a Hero then executed as a Villain
 - He appeared to be a Victim but rose to be revealed as the Savior
- ❖ **The last week of Christ's earthly life accounts for 30% of the Gospel chapters**
- ❖ **Viewing Triumphal Entry from 3 perspectives**
 - The multitudes present in both instances
 - Those closest to Jesus during both events
 - Peter and Judas who'd spent the prior 3 years with Jesus
- ❖ **Jesus entered Jerusalem amidst multitudes proclaiming Him Messiah**
 - They lined the road with branches and paved it with clothes
- ❖ **Jesus stood before Pilate with multitudes crying out "Crucify Him!"**
 - They mock worshipped Jesus attired in royal robe with reed for scepter
- ❖ **Judas Iscariot was upset at "waste" of ointment on Jesus by Mary**
 - He betrayed Jesus yet in selfish remorse killed himself after the arrest
- ❖ **Peter, though so close a friend, was rebuked by Jesus for lacking faith**
 - Though he denied knowing Jesus his sincere remorse led to restoration
- ❖ **Only Jesus knew what was coming as He entered Jerusalem**
 - But for the joy set before Him, He endured the shame and triumphed

From Hero to Villain

April 5, 2020 ~ Sermon Handout ~ Matthew 21.1-11, 27.15-26

1. Who entered Jerusalem on the west side the same day as Jesus? _____
2. How were clothes and wood used differently at Triumphal Entry vs. Condemnation?
clothes _____
wood _____
3. Why did Jesus refuse to speak in Herod's presence? _____
4. Who became friends through Jesus' crucifixion? _____ and _____
5. Connect words (left and right) that best serve as opposites: (Do this especially if you're bored during sermon... :-)

admire

applaud

embrace

hero

honor

idolize

laud

love

praise

respect

revere

worship

abandon

criticize

demonize

despise

detest

dishonor

disrespect

hate

jeer

mock

scorn

villain