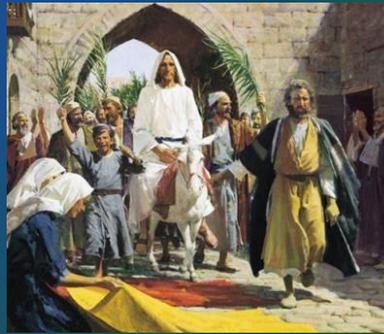


## The Ticker Tape Parade – Mark 11: 1 – 11

Who can ever remember seeing a ticker tape parade, either in real life or on TV or something?

### Message - The Ticker Tape Parade



...  Knowing Christ and making Him known

It was on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 1886, with the dedication of the Statue of Liberty, in New York city, that the first ever recorded Ticker Tape parade happened.

That day people in tall buildings began to spontaneously tear the paper ribbons from their ticker tape machines and threw the ticker tape out their windows. Even business professionals on Wall Street joined in on the celebrations for the dedication of the Statue that day.

Well, since then the practice of “Ticker Tape” parades in the US has become more formalised as they’re planned in advance.

Today when they officially hold ticker tape parades, they mostly use confetti, or the like, and they blow it from special machines on the tops of buildings. Most offices now have sealed windows and people can’t just chuck their paper off-cuts out the window.

...

The spontaneity is gone!

But the first one ... the first ticker tape parade ... just happened as people were caught up in the emotion of the moment.

...

Well today, as we know, is Palm Sunday. The day we remember our Lord's, for the want of a better term, Ticker Tape parade.

There was no open top Cadillac and confetti wasn't being sprayed on to the streets. But the King was there! Branches were being torn from trees and clothes, the outer garments of many, were strewn in His pathway as a sort of "red-carpet" as He rode on into the city where He should have been most welcome.

He was coming into town just as the prophet had said He would.

It was the prophet Zechariah in the mid 500's before the birth of our Lord, who prophesied these words,

*Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

...

Our text tells us that Jesus ensured ... that things would go as planned. He sent two of His disciples ahead to arrange for His mode of transport. He told them to *"Go to the village ahead of [them], and just as [they were] to enter it, [they would] find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden.* He instructed them to *"Untie it and bring it [to Him. And He said that].<sup>3</sup> If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' [they were to] say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly."*

Things were made ready! The time was right!

It was to be now!

Our Lord and His disciples had been going around to the Jews in Judah and the other local Roman provinces proclaiming the Good News in the villages and in the synagogues for several years.

He who had been sent to His own, had gone to His own.

By His actions He had proven He was the servant who was to come and yet also the God who was there to save.

We must never lose sight of the fact that our Lord is both 100% human and yet also, 100% God.

...

As He moved around the countryside from village to village, by His own authority ... He taught!

The phrase He so often used was, "*But I say to you!*". He also healed the sick, He raised the dead, He cast out demons and showed He had absolute authority over nature. And yet not everyone who saw what He did or heard what He said ... were throwing themselves before Him with a repentant faith.

The crowds were great ... but the number of followers was small.



I don't know how many of you have ever been to Jerusalem before, but if Jesus was coming from Bethphage through Bethany on to the Mt of Olives, this is the view that would greet our Lord today.

There's no temple, there's no olive trees on the Mt of Olives. Josephus tells us the Romans burned the olive trees as firewood to keep warm as they besieged Jerusalem prior to finishing its destruction in September of 70 A.D.

The big bluish building with the gold dome on it there, that's called the Dome of the Rock. It's a Muslim holy site which has been built on the platform where the temple once stood.

The wall you see ... in the foreground ... it's not a Jewish or Christian relic it was built at the command of a Muslim conqueror, Suleiman the Magnificent.

All that's left of what was one of the so-called wonders of the ancient world, the Herodian temple, is just the platform it stood on. Not one stone of the temple is left standing on another.

Most of you have probably heard of the Jewish wailing wall. It's just the western wall of the platform on which the temple was constructed.

It's all changed!

What was there in our Lord's day, is all gone!

The sight that was before our Lord that day was different – there was a man-made structure covered partly in gold. And to the disciples ... it was a sight to behold, a magnificent edifice!

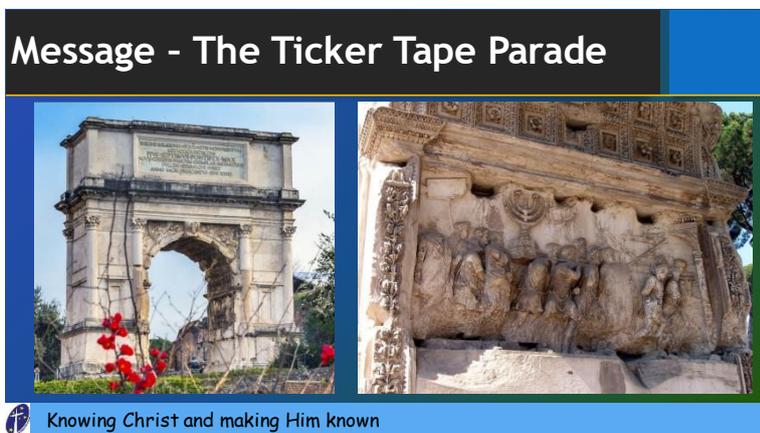
But to our Lord?

...

In Luke's gospel, at c19, our Lord's reaction just prior to His descent down the hillside to cross the Kidron valley before going up to Jerusalem and the temple, is recorded. Luke tells us that,

<sup>41</sup> As [Jesus] approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it  
<sup>42</sup> and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would  
bring you peace—but now it’s hidden from your eyes. <sup>43</sup> The days will  
come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against  
you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. <sup>44</sup> They will dash  
you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will  
not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the  
time of God’s coming to you.”

The Romans were there to destroy Jerusalem, and frankly they made a good job of it.



The conquest of the city was a blood bath and perhaps one of the best records available, in the public domain, to see the outcome, is the Triumphal Arch of Titus, the son of Emperor Vespasian, who ordered the “final solution” to end the so-called Jewish wars of the first century.

Some say more than one million people died. Many were taken as slaves and the booty from the temple included the Menorah, the gold lampstand that adorned the Holy Place in the Temple. If you look closely you can see it carved into what’s left of the arch there in Rome.

...

But it was on that day, less than one week before our Lord and Saviour was to surrender His life, that the adoring crowds were shouting, “*Hosanna*” or “Save” or “Save us!”

## Message - The Ticker Tape Parade



 Knowing Christ and making Him known

Listen again to their cries as recorded in v10 of our text.

*<sup>10</sup> “Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!”*

These were wonderful words. Hopeful words. Words that in voice, if not in heart, honoured the Lord ... from the lips of many.

...

But then Mark finishes the account in v11.

...

There is no flourish.

The welcome was great ... initially ... as He entered the city!

But the crowds did nothing more.

Mark simply says,

*<sup>11</sup> Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, He went out to Bethany with the Twelve.*

...

And that was the day!

...

If you were to compare each of the other gospel accounts of this day, they all bring out different aspects of what went on. Each of the writers under the Spirit's guidance show different perspectives and highlight additional facts not included by Mark as they review the event in the light of what they want to illustrate.

- Matthew's purpose, for example, was clearly to draw out the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy and to highlight some of the excited questioning this event created.
- Luke points to the self-evident nature of what was happening when he says out that if the disciples didn't cry out, well then the very stones would.
- And John highlights that even though the disciples participated in the events of the day, it wasn't until later that they understood the significance of what went on.

But Mark's account ... well it seems to be a real anti-climax, doesn't it!

...

Now, why? What was the point Mark was making?

Yes, Mark as a gospel writer is noted for his short, almost terse recounting of stories, but why just say that He went into the temple courts, checked the place out, and then because it was late, basically, He packed up and went back to Bethany, presumably to Lazarus' house, together with the twelve?

Why the fizzle away to nothing?

...

Well, the simple reason why the account fizzled away was because the welcome fizzled away ... to nothing. Although on the outskirts of Jerusalem the cheering crowd claimed to recognise Jesus as their King, the one who is of the royal line of David, well they didn't recognise Him for who He really is!

Also, when He arrived at the temple, there was no grand welcome by the high priest at the entrance to the Holy Place. There was no invitation to enter the Holiest of Holies. There was no invitation for the Son of God to enter what should have been His rightful place, in the very presence of God – that's what the Holiest of Holies signified.

Our Lord had gone to His own ... and they didn't recognise, or they chose not to, recognise Him.

They didn't recognise what His purpose, His real purpose, was in being there.

What should have been a day of triumph before the people as the King came to town ... fizzled into nothing.

The King they, in their sin, wanted was not the King who came to them.

Yes, He did come to save them. Hosanna was a good and right call. And He did come as a Saviour. But they wanted temporal salvation, not the eternal peace with God, that He was there to realise for them.

They, who had seen much and heard much, couldn't see who was standing before them or in some cases, worse still, could ... but deliberately rejected Him, as they found their personal power bases threatened.

In John's gospel at c3 it was Nicodemus the teacher of Israel, who later came to be a disciple of our Lord, but when he was speaking of the Jewish hierarchy, said, "*We know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.*"

The sheer number of miracles our Lord performed, spoke volumes! The type of miracles: raising the dead, healing leprosy ... and in fact every other form of illness. And the authority He exercised in the humblest of ways ...

When looked at dispassionately, with no personal bias it was obvious really.

But the truth in the saying, "*That there is none so blind as he who can see*", was proven yet again.

...

Now what does this mean for us? What lessons are in this account today? And what can you tell your non-Christian friends and neighbours as you pray that they will hear the truth that is found in Jesus Christ?

...

Well, my first point is that the Saviour came not dressed in mighty armour riding a magnificent stallion like Alexander the Great would have done hundreds of years beforehand. It wasn't like the closing scenes in the old Lone Ranger TV shows of the 1950's and 60's where the stallion rears up the Lone Ranger says, "Hi ho Silver!"

No, although the Messiah came to them in fulfillment of Scripture, and many recognised that; what the people didn't understand, was that this humble entry ... was in reality ... just that – humble!

Our Lord in His earthly sojourn was there to serve and not to be served. Riding a tiny donkey's colt was what He was really about.

I remember being in Israel, in the countryside in January 2019, seeing a young man riding a donkey with a bag of some grain or something on its back. Everyone else was driving cars and trucks, but this young man was just tapping his donkey along, egging it on to get to where he was going. It was a humble state of affairs.

Our Lord, that day, was about being the God/Man who was there to save – but the people didn't recognise what He was there to save them from!

He was there to save them ... from the wrath of God.

He was there to reconcile the lost through His own blood ... to God.

He was about laying down His life for His own, as I'm sure you'll hear in this next week.

Peace with God for faithful repentant sinners is why He was about to surrender His life.

He who had sought the lost, or those given to Him by the Father, in fulfilling prophecy, was saying by His action that day, "*I'm the One*".

He was the one who was the living fulfillment of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Psalm. It was Him who in just a few short days, who would cry, "*My God, my God why have you forsaken me?*"

He was the one about whom the people would mockingly say,

*"He trusts in the LORD," ... "let the LORD rescue Him. Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him."*

What the people expected from their fallen sinful viewpoint was not what they needed. But Jesus ... was there to do what was needed.

If you were to ask the average Jew by the end of that day, was Jesus the Nazarene the one they were expecting? I suspect they would have said disappointedly, *“No, we were expecting God to do great things now ... and ... He didn’t!”*

...

For you, is the Christ revealed here in Scripture, the one you’re expecting? Because He certainly is the one you need.

Welcome Him into your heart, if you haven’t already done so, because He’s there knocking at its door!

...

But then there’s a second point of application here and it’s about our Lord’s reaction when there was no welcome at the temple. Mark puts it this way,

*He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, He went out to Bethany with the Twelve.*

Jesus left!

Yes, Jesus came to His own and yes, they didn’t recognise who He really was or is. But when nobody was there ... He left.

...

Y’know, Alison and I have a front doorbell on our house and to use it, you have to push it the right way. It’s amazing how many people push it and when it doesn’t sound and we don’t go to the door, they begin to walk off.

Well sometimes I’m in my study and I’ll see them walk past the window and so I dive out of my chair and rush to the door and call them back.

It's like that with Jesus. Don't let Him just walk off in your life. Go out and chase Him. Call Him back. Welcome Him into your hearts. But also, for those of you who are Christian, with your friends and neighbours who don't know Christ, if they think it's too late and that Jesus has walked away. Tell them to chase Him! Tell them to call Him back!

The reality is of course, He's near to them.

With Christ alive in your hearts, as those born again of the Spirit, you and I are Christ's mouthpiece. As sinners we are His chosen means of telling people, who think He's left them, to call Him back. You are the mouthpiece to tell them, *"It's all right, Christ hasn't left you ... yet! But you need to repent and believe."*

Tell them to seek the Lord while He may yet be found. Tell them to hunger and thirst for the righteousness that is found in Christ alone, because again, it was our Lord who said of those who hunger and thirst in that way, that *"They will be filled!"*

A sincere, believing, repentant prayer for righteousness is always answered with Yes and Amen!

Why?

Because sincerity means the words spoken, or thought, are a reflection of a new heart.

What was it that the Apostle Paul said in Romans 10: 9?

*<sup>9</sup> If you declare with your mouth that "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

...

V9 there is the gospel! It's Good News! It's the best news! Its short and sweet.

And vs 10 and 11 that follow are there to give you confidence and assurance of the justification or the “rightness” you have with God through faith.

Let me read those to you!

*<sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. <sup>11</sup> As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in Him will never be put to shame.”*

...

Jesus left the temple, He left Jerusalem. No one had welcomed Him at the temple, which was supposed to God’s dwelling place on earth as the Tabernacle was in the wilderness. No one chased after Him. The twelve alone, accompanied Him back to Bethany.

The Ticker Tape parade, the palm branches and cloths on the road, they were all for show with a wrong expectancy in the hearts of the people.

Yet even so, Christ responded to the cries of “Hosanna!” or to “Save”, by doing all that was necessary, to save, within just the next seven days.

He died! He propitiated or satisfied the wrath of His Father in His death. And then in proving the success of His mission, He rose – never to die again.

...

Don’t let Jesus leave!

Grab desperately for Him!

Let your personal ticker tape parade lead Him to a grand, warm, welcome into your heart!

Amen