**Home Service Sheet For 24 March 2024 (Palm Sunday)**

**Call to Worship:**                  **Psalm 118:1-2**

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
    for his steadfast love endures forever!

Let Israel say,
    “His steadfast love endures forever.”

**Prayer**

Heavenly Father, today on this Palm Sunday, we remember the entry of Your Son, Jesus, into Jerusalem. We want to sing Your praises and join the shouts that rang out many years ago, proclaiming, “Hosanna to the Son of David.” Lord Jesus, You alone are the true King, the One who is truly greater than all others. Even so, in Your great mercy You chose to become like us, taking on flesh and living among us. As we celebrate and shout “Hosanna” today, O Lord, may we also remember what would soon follow on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Keep us faithful in word and deed and help us to love and serve You always. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen!

**Hymn**                       **All glory, laud and honour**by ***Theodulph of Orleans***

<https://youtu.be/fhbYS31TYbs?si=fnU0UAEt1QZWAygU>

***All glory, laud and honour, to Thee, Redeemer, King,
To Whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.***

1) Thou art the King of Israel, Thou David's royal Son,

Who in the Lord's Name comest, the King and Blessed One.

2) The company of angels are praising Thee on High,
And we with all creation in chorus make reply.

3) The people of the Hebrews with psalms before Thee went

Our prayer and praise and anthems before Thee we present.

4) To Thee, before Thy passion, they sang their hymns of praise;
To Thee, now high exalted, our melody we raise.

5) Thou didst accept their praises; accept the prayers we bring,

Who in all good delightest, Thou good and gracious King.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

**Bible Reading                                 Mark 11:1-11**

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesussent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.’” And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. And some of those standing there said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!”

And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

**Reflection**

During Lent, our main biblical focus has been upon the Gospels, and their accounts of the ministry of the Lord Jesus. Above all else, the Gospels seek to present to us the Gospel, or good news, of Jesus Christ. This good news answers the great sin problem of humanity with the death and resurrection of Jesus for our sins, but we’re not quite at that point in the message yet. This Sunday we focus on Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem at the beginning of Passover. Before we get to Mark’s account of this, though, we need to look at the context, and what that might tell us.

Before Jesus and the disciples entered Jerusalem, they stopped at Bethphage and Bethany. They stayed there from the Saturday through to the Monday, when they made their way into the city. During this time, they had a meal at the home of Simon the leper (Matthew 26:6-13), and spent time with Mary, Martha and Lazarus (John 12:9). So why did Jesus delay entering Jerusalem for two further days? One possible reason is that the Monday was the day on which the sacrificial lambs were chosen for Passover, and Jesus was God’s once for all sacrificial Lamb. Just as the literal young male sheep were selected, so Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, was also selected by His Heavenly Father.

Then we come to the arrangements for getting a colt (young donkey), on which Jesus would ride into Jerusalem. Some suggest that Jesus may have prearranged this, whereas others believe that this was simply God’s sovereign plan that He worked out providentially. Ultimately it doesn’t really matter as the key point is that this was done in fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. The way that the disciples were able to fetch the colt without trouble, in just the way Jesus has told them to, points towards Jesus being God, for whom nothing is impossible.

Finally, in verse 8, we are told how Jesus entered the city. Mark writes, “many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields.” We tend to think of this being the triumphal entry, but it really wasn’t. The temporary approval of the masses would all too soon change to rejection. Jesus deserved the pomp and ceremony, not to mention the praise that followed – “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” However, far from the people symbolically placing themselves under Jesus’ feet or authority (symbolised by the cloaks), they prioritised their own short-term physical safety by demanding His crucifixion within a few short days.

Mark ends this short passage with what seems like a throwaway line, “he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.” This was not a coronation of the rightful heir to the throne of David. Instead, Jesus announced that the pre-ordained time had come for Him to die for the sake of humanity. He had deliberately set Himself on a pre-determined collision course with the Jewish priests and the Roman officials. On a number of previous occasions, the time wasn’t right, and so Jesus slipped away through the crowd, but not this time. The sacrificial Lamb of God had been selected, and the time of the slaughter was set for Passover, four days later.

Most First Century Jews were looking for a military messiah who would free them from Roman rule and oppression, but this was not God’s way. Figures like Barabbas and Judas Maccabaeus offered the kind of false messianic hope the people wanted, and they attracted many followers in their respective times. Sadly, in the Church today, there are all too many false teachers offering a false hope of health, wealth and your best life now, not too dissimilar to this. Instead, we must listen to the Gospel message of true hope offered to us in Jesus Christ alone. He is the Lamb of God, slain for us at Calvary, whose blood was shed that we might be made clean. Are we looking to the true Messiah as we approach Easter, or are we relying on the false hopes of human pride or false teaching? My prayer is that we would all have our eyes fixed on the One who truly is the Author and Perfecter of our faith. Amen!

**Prayers of Intercession**

Gracious God, thank You for the truth of Your Word which tells us the end from the beginning. Thank You that Your promises to Israel still stand, despite their centuries of unbelief, and thank You that Your promises to us and to Your Church remain "yes" and "amen" in Christ Jesus. Heavenly Father, You have poured out Your grace and mercy upon us by sending Your only begotten Son to earth as the heavenly Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world. Thank You that Your plan of redemption does not exclude anyone, Jew or Gentile, and all who call on the name of the Lord in faith will be saved. Help us to play our part in the sharing of the Gospel message. This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, amen.

**Benediction**

Loving God, we praise You today as we celebrate Palm Sunday. Be with us throughout this Holy Week and help us to draw closer to You each day, even as You draw close to us. May we recall what the Lord Jesus suffered for us, even unto death, and yet may we remember the hope we have of eternal life through Him also. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen!

Attachments area

[Preview YouTube video All Glory, Laud and Honor](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhbYS31TYbs&authuser=0" \t "_blank)

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