

13th April, 2025

The paper-version Service



To Begin: Find a Bible and a comfortable place. If safe, light a candle and read prayerfully through the service. If you have access to worship music, choose a song and listen to it as you begin or read, or even sing, the song from this Sunday's

Service.

Opening Prayer: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn:

Ride on, ride on in majesty!
Hear all the tribes hosanna cry;
O Saviour meek, pursue Your road
with palms and scattered garments
strowed.

Ride on, ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die.
O Christ, Your triumphs now begin
o'er captive death and conquered
sin.

Ride on, ride on in majesty!
The host of angels in the sky
look down with sad and wondering
eyes
to see the approaching Sacrifice.

Ride on, ride on in majesty!
Your last and fiercest strife is nigh.
The Father on His sapphire throne
awaits His own anointed Son.

Ride on, ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die,
bow Your meek head to mortal
pain,
then take, O Christ, Your power and
reign.

The Sermon by Andy Walters

Read Isaiah 9:6-7, Mark 11:1-11 – Being King

Here, we see prophecies coming to fulfillment, which seems to me to be misunderstood.

The people wanted desperately a King to conquer the oppression of the Romans. They have seen Jesus raise the dead and drive out demons. The blind seeing and the lame walking.

The messiah they want to believe is coming, and it goes back through the line of King David to Jacob.

The Lion of Judah. From the blessing of his son Judah by Jacob Genesis 49:9.

This is the King they believe is going to overthrow the Roman oppression.

First, he has to be a Lamb. see Isaiah 53. Which describes a suffering servant who is led like a lamb to be slaughtered and whose death atones for the sin of humanity.

Then in Revelation 5:5 we see the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and the seven seals.

I'm wondering if they were so worried for their immediate concerns that they thought the lion and the lamb were two different people. Not the one lamb which comes now at the cross and the lion at the second coming of Jesus. They want their fortunes restored and believe that means the oppressors out.

The pharisees and teachers have their own distorted view of Jesus. Like Peter, following at a distance into the courtyard, he was exposed to the devil's influences. Who distorted his view of Jesus (Mark 1:11).

Here they are stood on Mount Olive, about three miles from Jerusalem and some 300 feet higher. They have climbed from Jericho, 850 feet below sea level. Jesus is the Lord that is returning. The temple would have looked magnificent with its gold panels and white stone shining gloriously in the distance.

Now, ever since the rebuild all is not the same. The Lord God has yet to return (Ezekiel 8:6). However, since the reconstruction of Solomon's temple (made bigger and better by Herod, all is not the same. The pharisees would be familiar with Ezekiel 37:24 - "my Servant David will be King over them" and 37:26-27 - "I will put my sanctuary amongst them, then I will be their god and they will be my people." Ezekiel tells us in 43, there is a vision of the lord returning from the East. Excuse me!- this is about to occur (Jesus). Malachi 3:1, Zacharia 2:10 Isaiah 52:8 all speak of the same, the returning of our Lord.

There he is, Jesus our Lord, standing on the spot where the glory of the Lord was last seen over Mount Olive, on the day of destruction and the beginning of the

exile a couple of centuries earlier (see Ezekiel 27:3). More fulfillment of messianic prophecy.

Here Jesus (verse 2) said to two of them, go into the village ahead of you and just as you enter it you will find the donkey's colt tied. He tells them if anyone asks that they should say (verse 3), tell them the Lord needs it and they will send it back shortly. They bring the colt back and lay cloaks over it and Jesus sat on it. With crowds singing and shouting Hosannah (meaning 'save us please'). I find this very revealing as to who Jesus is. God is not confined to time and space as we are, and he could predict what to expect and how to answer. And, furthermore, a young colt that has not been ridden before, with a loud crowd waving branches, singing and shouting- if you or I tried this a colt would buck, kick and ride into the distance back to where it came from. Not just whether it can be controlled, he also loved the donkey too which was obedient.

The palm branches and cloaks that they laid out for the King to travel on is not an uncommon occurrence for conquering kings to ride donkeys with their armies singing and shouting. Even Alexander the Great made such an entrance into Jerusalem but our King is now entering (see Zacharia 9:9) - "rejoice greatly o daughter of Zion! Shout, o daughter of Jerusalem. See your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation. Gentle, and riding on a donkey- a colt, a foal of a donkey."

The parallels are clear enough. Jesus entered with his army, singing praises and messianic hymns. Mark opens his gospel with- "Prepare the way for the lord. Make straight paths for him." which is a quote from Malachi. Isaiah 62:10-12- "The lord has returned to Zion, the king has returned." The glory of the Lord glimmers as at the transfiguration. Coming from the east, mount olive as foreseen by Zacharia. This was the fulfillment of much hope. But not seen by the leaders or the people in the end.

There is that hope for us as we read these accounts with the full picture of the events of the resurrection. I have been reading Hosea- chapter one, Hosea is told by God, take yourself, an adulterous wife and children of unfaithfulness, because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery and departing from the Lord. So he does, and has children. All is going well. I know that this is about Israel worshipping other Gods and moving away from God, as we see his wife goes again back to her old adulterous ways. Hosea is asked by God to go find her again and bring her home. Hosea must've been exasperated. He buys her back for 15 shekels of silver and some barley. If we change another time and place and a few different names, our stories are the same one. We can change Hosea's name by looking through the lens of Jesus our Lord as we look at chapter 3, the lord our God and David their king, they will come trembling to the Lord and receive his blessings in the last days, This is Jesus reaching out again and again, such generous grace. Making us new

and taking out our hearts of stone that lust and putting in a heart of flesh and giving a spirit that will move us to follow him (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

God formed us, sin deforms us and the bible informs us, but Jesus transforms us. You can never work hard enough to change your deeds but we can trust Jesus to change our desires.

A prayer for Palm Sunday:

True and humble held by the crowd as messiah; grant us the faith to know and love you that we may be found besides you on the way of the cross, which is the path of glory. In your precious name, Jesus, amen.

Palm Sunday: Almighty and everlasting God, who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross: grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer: *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.*

At the Church of the Good Shepherd

- Tea and Chat and Bowls: April 16th and May 21st at 2pm in Church Hall & Church.
- Coffee and Questions: April 23rd at 10.30am in Church Hall.
- The Community Cupboard, 2:45pm every Thursday in Church.

For Further information:

This paper and all parish details are on the website at <https://www.pariahofmedsteadandfourmarks.co.uk>