

Luke 19:28 After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 30 “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 31 If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it.’” 32 Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” 34 They replied, “The Lord needs it.” 35 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. 36 As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. 37 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: 38 “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!” 40 “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

How's your praise doing? Today is Palm Sunday, a day we celebrate praising God. An Episcopal priest, Ian David Mitchell, wrote a folk song worship service. It included this Sanctus – the Sanctus in our liturgy is composed of Isaiah 6 and the words of welcome into Jerusalem by the people as recorded in the four Gospels. It starts off slow in reverence and moves into celebration. *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory, Glory be to Thee O Lord most high! Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord, hosanna in the highest!*

This is a wonderful song of praise that we sing when we have Communion. I hope if you won't sing, you will say the words as others sing. Praise isn't listening. It is participation. How's your praise doing? Is it a source of inspiration, encouragement, and closeness to God for you?

We will look at the Palm Sunday Gospel as our text. The other side of this day is called Passion Sunday, but we will look at that complete text on Good Friday.

But we don't want to lose the significance of Palm Sunday. All four Gospels include this account on Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. John 12 includes the prophecy as well. He writes: *13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!" 14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, 15 "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."*

How did people react to Jesus' entrance into the city? (vv 36f) They may have remembered Zechariah's words (14:3-5) that it was from the Mount of Olives that God will commence the final judgment of Israel's enemies. Some may have remembered Zechariah's prophecy (9:9), that the messianic king would come, riding on a donkey's colt, not as a warrior king riding a war horse. For the people to spread their cloaks was a gesture of respect given to kings. If the disciples were silenced from praising God, then the rocks themselves would break forth in praise as in Habakkuk 2:11.

Why did all of the disciples begin to praise God? (v.37) *the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen* John (12) elaborates on this: *9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom He*

had raised from the dead. 10 So, the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, 11 for on account of him, many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in Him.

In what ways were the words of the disciples' praises significant? (v.38) Psalm 118 (26) says: *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless you.* The Psalm has been called a Psalm of Thanksgiving. Instead of *blessed is he*, they say, *'Blessed is the king!'* Jesus is King over all. Paul praised God in many of his letters. In 1 Timothy 1, he says: *17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

How can you voice your praise to the Lord today? In worship services, on recordings you can listen to at home or in the car. One such song of praise comes from Hillsong Church in Sydney, Australia. It is "Glory to God" The words go:

Your love O Lord is like the ocean, deeper than endless seas.
Your faithfulness is like a mountain, and Your Word never fails.

Chorus: Glory to God, let every heart sing. Glory to God to the highest
Glory to God, let every heart sing. Glory to God to the highest

Ask yourself: what has the Lord done for you recently that causes you to praise Him? Secondly, when do we tend to neglect to praise the Lord as He deserves?

Let's look at the place of praise in our lives. It costs nothing but energy to praise God. If you are embarrassed about your singing voice, sing in the shower or in the car, but sing! An paraphrase of our text says: (Message, 19:36) As Jesus rode, the people gave him a grand welcome, throwing their coats on the street. 37 Right at the crest, where Mount Olives begins its descent, the whole crowd of disciples burst into enthusiastic praise over all the mighty works they had witnessed: 38 Blessed is he who comes, the king in God's name! All's well in heaven! Glory in the high places!

The Psalmist teaches us to praise saying, (146:1) *Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. 2 I will praise the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. OR (148:1) Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD from the heavens, praise him in the heights above. 2 Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his heavenly hosts. 3 Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars. 4 Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies. OR Psalm 103(1-5) Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. 2 Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits-- 3 who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, 5 who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

Let me conclude this message with your help. Turn to Psalm 150, on p. 289 in your hymnal and let's say it, praising God in unison. (*At the end, Amen*)