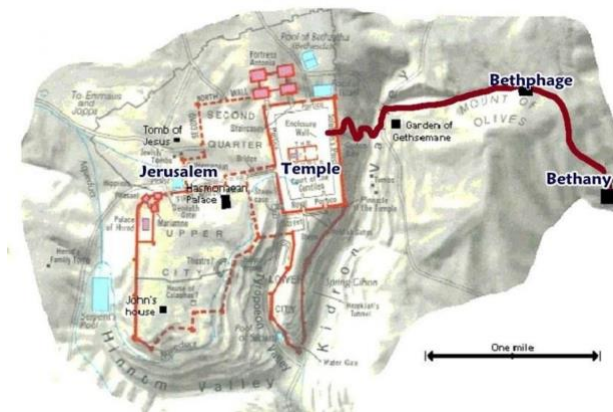




Palm Sunday is today. The Bible tells us that it was one week before Jesus triumphantly rose from the dead. This year Palm Sunday falls on March 25th in 2018 (which happens to be my 62 birthday). We hear of Holy Week always around this time of the year, but we really never stop to learn what happened during this week before Jesus went to the cross, and what it can mean to us in how we live out our lives.

The days of the week are found below in boxes showing the title of what happened on that day of the week, along with scripture references to the event. I have chosen one of these references to be read in the sanctuary for each day. A short commentary follows on what I believe are key events to learn from the passage, and thoughts on how to apply it to our lives.

NISAN 9 - Palm Sunday (March 25, 2018) - **Jesus' Triumphal Entrance** into Jerusalem - returns to Bethany to spend the night. Matt 21:1/Mark 11:1 /Luke 19:29/ John 12:12



Matt **21** As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.” ⁴This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

⁵ “Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’” ⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. ⁸A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!” ¹⁰When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” ¹¹The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.” (Mark 11:1 tells us in addition that ¹¹Jesus 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.) Luke Chapter 19 records that the Pharisees were infuriated by the hullabaloo being made over Jesus ³⁹Some 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.”

¹ Zechariah 9:9

1) **Prophecy** revealed this magnificent day. I could preach for several months on the events of this day alone. First, remember that this day of Messiah presenting Himself to the Jewish people and the world was prophesied to the day in the Book of Daniel. This calculation has led many Jewish people to a saving knowledge of Jesus as Messiah. You will remember that our own Rabbi Daniel Schnaider told us that he found Jesus in the Book of Daniel. Prophecy is sure and we as believers can rely on it.²

2) **Donkey** - Secondly, we see the prophecy of a King riding a donkey found in Zechariah 9:9. Many have wondered why the king mentioned in [Zechariah 9:9-10](#) would ride a donkey into Jerusalem rather than a warhorse. It seems an odd choice for royalty. Kings ride chargers, don't they? In the ancient Middle Eastern world, leaders rode horses if they rode to war, but donkeys if they came in peace. [First Kings 1:33](#) mentions Solomon riding a donkey on the day he was recognized as the new king of Israel. Other instances of leaders riding donkeys are [Judges 5:10](#); [10:4](#); [12:14](#); and [2 Samuel 16:2](#). The mention of a donkey in [Zechariah 9:9-10](#) fits the description of a king who would be "righteous and having salvation, gentle." Rather than riding to conquer, this king would enter in peace, and His rule would extend to all of the earth. That King is Jesus.

3) **Hosanna** is the word that describes the spiritual purpose of Jesus' arrival. Literally, *hosanna* means "I beg you to save!" or "please deliver us!" *Hosanna* is often thought of as a declaration of praise, similar to [hallelujah](#), but it is actually a plea for salvation. The Hebrew root words are found in [Psalm 118:25](#), which says, "Save us, we pray, O LORD!" (ESV). The Hebrew words *yasha* ("deliver, save") and *anna* ("beg, beseech") combine to form the word that, in English, is "hosanna." The people lined the streets and literally shouted, "Son of David, save us we pray!"

Nisan 10 - Monday March 26, 2018 Leaves Bethany - **Curses the fig tree** on the way into the city - Weeps over Jerusalem - Returns to Bethany to sleep. Matt 21:12/ Mark 11:22/ Luke 19:45



¹² The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. ¹³ Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it. ¹⁵ On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, ¹⁶ and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. ¹⁷ And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it 'a den of robbers.'"

¹⁸ The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

¹⁹ When evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

² <http://radicaltruth.net/index.php/learn/radical-truth-christianity/144-palm-sunday-prophecy-fulfilled>

²⁰ In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. ²¹ Peter remembered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!” (Mark 11:12-21 NIV).

The incident of the cursing of the unfruitful fig tree has several meanings. It symbolizes judgment and rejection. The fig tree in Jewish culture symbolized prosperity and blessing on the nation of Israel. The fig tree that Jesus saw had the appearance of having fruit and it did not. The "fig tree" of Israel no longer bore fruit, and Jesus was cursing that deadness. Israel's faith had been reduced down to spiritual deadness focused on outward religiosity, with its numerous ceremonies and sacrifices. With all of their "good deeds" the nation had become spiritually dead and now was committing the greatest spiritual blindness by failing to see the coming Messiah. This is a warning as well to all believers of God's displeasure and judgment on those who have no real spiritual fruit in their lives. Faith that is a living faith in Jesus will bring forth fruit. ("Faith without works is dead" James 2:26). We should never be confused that somehow doing enough good works will justify us for our sins, but likewise we must realize that our faith in Jesus must be accompanied by good works for us ever to experience anything but carnality as believers. The fruit of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer must be present or alarm bells should go off that, although perhaps saved, we are living carnal lives subject to the judgment of God.

Nisan 11 - Tuesday - Leaves Bethany - Finds fig tree withered - Teaches on faith - **Upturns the Temple** - Confounds and pronounces woe on His enemies - Leaves the city - Olivet Discourse on way back to Bethany - Judas bargains with the Sanhedrin to betray Jesus - Spends the night in Bethany. Matt 21:20/Mark 11:12-22/Luke 20:1-21:4



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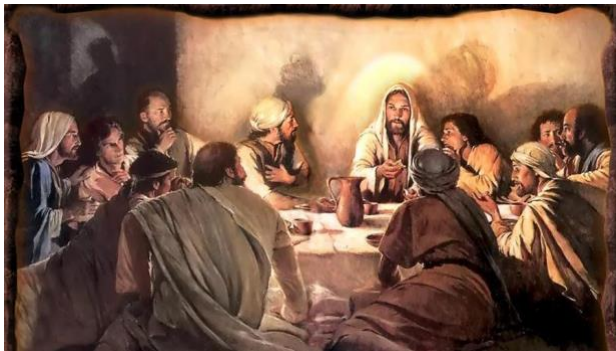
¹⁹ When evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

²⁰ In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. ²¹ Peter remembered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!” (Mark 11:15-21 NIV).

Jesus' act of cursing the unproductive fruit tree is immediately followed by his last visit to the temple and its operatives. He is sickened by the buying and selling and ripping off going on in the temple area. The "religion" had become a "business" that was offensive to the heart of God. He was now attacking their business, and the chief priests and rabbis had enough of this rebel Jesus. Jesus took physical action when he turned the money tables over. It was like he was saying "out with the old and in with the new."

Nisan 12 - Wednesday **Silent Day** - No record in the Gospels, but much activity as Jesus prepares for Last Supper and as Judas and Sanhedrin prepare for Jesus' arrest - Remains in Bethany throughout the day - Stays night.

Nisan 13 - Thursday called "Maundy Thursday" - Peter and John sent to make preparation for Passover meal after sunset - Eats meal with the twelve - Washes disciples' feet - Judas departs - Lord's Supper instituted - To Garden of Gethsemane - Jesus' agony - Betrayal by Judas - Arrest by Sanhedrin - To house of Caiphias the High Priest as Sanhedrin is convened - Peter betrays Jesus. Matt 26:1/Mark 14:1/Luke 22:1



"Maundy Thursday" is an ancient way to title the Thursday before Jesus went to the cross on Friday morning. Maundy comes from the word "mandate" meaning "do this." Jesus washed his disciples' feet and told them to do likewise. He was telling them to defer to one another and serve one another just as we are to do in the church today. The events now leading

up to the crucifixion have been set in motion. On that Thursday night Jesus had his Last Supper with His disciples. This was done in the "Upper Room" which was a large room very near the house of Caiphias the High Priest. This house sits on the far southwest side of Jerusalem. I had the privilege to stand in this room nine days ago. It is a room built on the very location of that room visited by Jesus approximately two thousand years ago. During the time in the upper room deeply significant things were happening between Jesus and His disciples. Scholars debate as to whether this was a full Passover Seder meal because scripture indicates that the full Passover was observed on the very day of Jesus' crucifixion. But in my thinking the Passover meal was eaten between sundown on Thursday and sundown on Friday. Let's listen to the gospel account from Matthew.

²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." ³⁰ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. (Matthew 26:26-30 NKJV).



There is no mention of a lamb being eaten at that last supper, but it doesn't mean that it wasn't part of the meal. Scripture does tell us that lambs were being slaughtered on the day of the crucifixion, but this doesn't mean that there couldn't have been sacrifices being performed a day earlier to accommodate the crowd. I personally believe Jesus knew He was going to the cross, so He practiced the

Passover after sundown on Thursday with them as had been planned.

It is in this last Passover Meal (be it a full Seder or an abbreviated version) that Jesus directly states what it will now mean forever to His followers. He is explicitly telling His disciples that He is the bread that would be broken sacrificially. Likewise, He communicates that His blood will now carry with it a new promise of redemption. Just as the third Passover cup symbolized the redemption causing the Death Angel to pass over the houses of the Israelites back in Egypt, Jesus' blood now avails for the sins of the whole world.

It is interesting to note that as the killing of the innocent lambs began again on that Friday morning in the Temple; the innocent, perfect lamb of God was dying on a cross as the perfect and final and sufficient sacrifice for each of us. What a picture that day was in history. This is not just a "day in history." It is a day to which each of us has the opportunity to cling.

The prophet Isaiah says, "⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. ⁸He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken." (Isaiah 53:6-8 NKJV).

Isaiah must have wondered who this was all about. The beauty is that now we know. Will you cry out today, "Save me oh Son of David". He is waiting and He will give you eternal salvation if you only ask Him. If your breath is not taken away, and if you are not able to praise Him, 'the stones themselves will cry out' that He is the King of Glory.

Let us Pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Fryday - Webster, Texas.)