

28TH MARCH 2021

FERINTOSH PARISH CHURCH

WORSHIP AT HOME



www.ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk

"Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in." (Psalm 24:7)

PSALM 118: 19 - 26

This is the gate of God, by it
the just shall enter in.
Thee will I praise, for thou me heard'st
and hast my safety been.

That stone is made head corner-stone,
which builders did despise:
This is the doing of the Lord,
and wondrous in our eyes.

This is the day God made, in it
we'll joy triumphantly.
Save now, I pray thee, Lord; I pray,
send now prosperity.

Blessed is he in God's great name
that cometh us to save:
We, from the house which to the Lord
pertains, you blessed have.

PRAYER

Father, we pray this morning that You would use the sheer wonder of Your word to open our eyes again to this principle that we are saved by faith in Christ alone, this faith that looks away from ourselves and looks to Christ. Help us to gaze upon Him today that all who believe may be thrilled to the very depths of our being that You set your love upon us before the foundation of the world. Help us to worship in spirit and in truth we pray in Jesus name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING MARK 11: 1 - 11 (NKJV)

1 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples;
2 and He said to them, "Go into the village opposite you; and as soon as you have entered it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has sat. Loose it and bring it.
3 And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it,' and immediately he will send it here."
4 So they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door outside on the street, and they loosed it. 5 But some of those who stood there said to them, "What are you doing, loosing the colt?"



6 And they spoke to them just as Jesus had commanded. So they let them go.
7 Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it.
8 And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road.
9 Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'
10 Blessed is the kingdom of our father David That comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"
11 And Jesus went into Jerusalem and into the temple. So when He had looked around at all things, as the hour was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.*

SERMON

So, It's Passover in Jerusalem, what's Passover all about? Well, it's about deliverance from oppression and bondage, but it's not deliverance from Egypt this time but the people are longing for the deliverance from Rome. Jesus is coming in through the East gate, and people are throwing their palm branches and cloaks, the expectation among the people of this coming King is incredible. To them, He is like a conquering General coming home at Passover to deliver His people from the tyranny of Rome, no wonder there was excitement, and joy - The King has Come to save His people from Rome?! You can almost hear the palpable cries of Freedom!!

That's why they say, 'Blessed is the kingdom of our father David! (vs. 7-10). "And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it.

8 And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. 9 And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! 10 Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!"

Now Jesus makes an entry, but it is paradoxical. He makes claims to be a king, but He is an entirely different kind of King. The accompanying crowds are enthusiastic but ignorant. They have huge respect and an acknowledgement of Jesus' royalty. They had great enthusiasm for Jesus. They believed this was the liberator of Israel. They thought He would release them from Roman oppression. Yet they are utterly ignorant. John tells us right in the middle of his account in *John 12:16*, "His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him".

Even the disciples were ignorant. Jesus was not coming to release them from Roman oppression. They thought this was the glorious moment when the Messianic kingdom would come, and Jesus would now take over the world. **But the Lord Jesus Christ came not to sit on an earthly throne, but He came instead to reconcile us to Himself and to "save His people from their sins"!** The greatest oppression that Christ liberates us from is our own hearts. He liberates us from the slavery to sin! The paradox is that the people here are celebrating Jesus and all the while misunderstanding Him.

How many people celebrate Jesus but utterly misunderstand Him? He has not come to give us a better life. He's not come to give us our best life now! He came to deal with our sin and to reconcile us to God and to promise our best life in eternity in heaven where He is seated on Heaven's throne!

We can say this regarding the crowds gathered to welcome Jesus to Jerusalem: *that the symbols of nationalism wave in celebration of a multinational king*. They wave palm branches. They want their own king; they want a Jewish king. But the king that comes, this Jesus is a multinational king!

They go on in verse 8, "...and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields". So, they are going into the fields and to the trees and cutting down branches and they're putting them on the ground and they are waving them in the air. John 12:12 specifically says, "they took branches of palm trees". And they were celebrating with joy and enthusiasm. Passover brought all the feelings of nationalism to the people. The problem with this is that God's plan is not to make the nation of Israel great. It is to make Jesus Christ great, and to bless all the nations of the earth through Him!

We find the very first promises of God's blessing to Abraham. And it says of Abraham in Genesis 12:3, "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." And here in Jerusalem, the great anticipation was that a political kingdom would now be established and that the Romans would be driven out, and they would have a political power on the earth. And yet, what was the plan of Jesus? To save His people who are from all nations of the world from their sins. Jesus had said in Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." After His resurrection, Jesus would give the church the great commission "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel."

Yet within less than a week, Jesus would be nailed to a Cross and executed. What the crowds could not understand was that the death and His resurrection would be the greatest act of victory, and that He would be proclaimed as Lord and King of every kindred and people and language and nation! **The people were looking for a king of the sword, but Jesus was coming as King of the Cross.** Jesus came to reconcile His people through love, not through force. He came to lay down His life for the world.

Then to conclude our thoughts this morning we read in Verse 11, "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." You've got to imagine the Temple is a large open area. The court of the Gentiles is crammed with tens of thousands of people. There is the sound of animals for sacrifice. And we are told that He looks around at everything. He's come to cleanse the Temple.



PRAYER

Jesus Christ has come into the world to change us. The New Testament calls His people, "the Temple of God". The ultimate Temple that Jesus wants to cleanse is not made of brick and mortar. It is your heart and soul. He has come to humble you and make His throne in your heart. We must follow Jesus Christ on His terms. We cannot say, "I'll follow you..." and then give God a job description. The people were expecting one thing, but they got another. Are you willing to come to God today, and say, "I want your way? I give you no terms. I come on your terms. I want your way and your will no matter what that may mean." Are you willing to come to God that way? He may not make the circumstances of your life better, but He will heal your heart and He will forgive your sins and liberate you from your sinful desires if you come to Him on His terms!

This King who rode into Jerusalem on a colt is the Christ and He will reign in the new heaven and new earth but until then, He first had to die the death of the Passover Lamb, the crucified One, who loved His people and gave Himself for them and rose again for them and in union with Him they sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus, His people live for Christ and Christ lives in them. We finish with a few lines from an old hymn which sums up who this King is, the One who rode upon a colt into Jerusalem...

HYMN

I heard an old, old story, how a
Saviour came from glory
How He gave His life on Calvary to
save a wretch like me
I heard about His groaning, of His
precious blood's atoning
Then I repented of my sins and won
the victory

Oh victory in Jesus, my Saviour
forever
He sought me and bought me with
His redeeming blood
He loved me 'ere I knew Him and all
my love is due Him
He plunged me to victory beneath
the cleansing flood

Heavenly Father, we thank you that in your mercy you have given us your Word that we might know the Word made flesh, the Word of God the Father. We bow before your magnificent majesty. We acknowledge your authority over our lives. We wonder at your amazing grace. We delight in your demonstrated love for us in Christ. And we cast ourselves utterly on your mercy in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

BENEDICTION

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all this day and forevermore, Amen.

WORSHIP

From 28th March the Sunday Zoom service will move to 6.30pm as we will re-commence our limited numbers Sunday morning services in the Church at 11am and 12.15pm (if numbers require).

If you would like to join the Zoom-service, please contact the Session Clerk

SessionClerk@ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk

For the return of Church services the seating is limited to comply with current guidelines. To attend you must contact the Session Clerk, Martin McLauchlan, by Friday at 5pm prior to the service to book a place.

To book, either visit the church website, and complete and submit the online booking form at: ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk/booking or email the Session Clerk at SessionClerk@ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk and he will send you a link to the Booking Form for you to complete and submit. If you do not have access to the Internet, phone him on 01349 830303 and leave your name and phone number and he will get back to you as soon as he can to take your details.

Our services over Easter are:

28th Palm Sunday 11am + 12:15pm (Church) + Zoom service 6:30pm

April 1 Maunday Thursday service 7pm (Zoom)

April 2 Good Friday service 7pm (Zoom)

Easter Sunday 11am + 12:15pm (Church) + Zoom service 6:30pm

Please continue to take care and stay safe.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

The Ladies Bible Study meets each Wednesday via Zoom at 9.45am for about an hour. We are studying the Letters of John. We will look at 1 John 3 in the study entitled "Children of God". Please email jintys@btinternet.com to receive an invitation to join the meeting. We'd love to see you there.

THE LEPROSY MISSION

Last call for donations for this financial year! If you still have a collecting box, or want to make a donation, please get the money to Janet Winchester by Thursday 1st April.

GUILD

The Guild will meet on Zoom on Monday 29th March at 3.30pm. We will have a series of readings and hymns for Holy Week and Easter, and perhaps also think about how Easter is celebrated around the world. We extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to join us at the start of Holy Week. Contact Elizabeth Blackburn for an invitation.

TAKE IT TO THE LORD IN PRAYER

Anyone who has passed the Church in recent days will have noticed that the gate is sprouting leaves. These are prayer cards. There is a supply of cards, pens (and wipes!) nearby, and the idea is that people can write their prayer or prayer request on one or more cards, then attach the card(s) to the gate. It would be wonderful if the whole gate could be covered in prayers during Holy Week. So take a walk and add a prayer. If you want to think about it, take a card home and bring it back later to attach to the gate. Anyone who can't make it to the Church, but would like their prayer or request to be included can phone Janet Winchester on 01349 865308, who can either deliver and collect a card, or take dictation.