

## Catch a Vision of Christ's Visitation Palm Sunday

**Thesis:** May we catch a vision of Christ visiting our cities and nation like he did on Palm Sunday and like he has done through other revivals and moves God.

**Text:** Matthew 21:1-17

*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. 3 If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."*

*4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:*

*5 "Say to the Daughter of Zion,  
'See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.' "*

*6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. 8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 The 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!"*

*10 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"*

*11 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."*

*12 Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. 13 "It is written," he said to them, " 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers.' "*

*14 The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. 15 But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things*

he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant.

16 "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him.

"Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read,

" 'From the lips of children and infants  
you have ordained praise'?"

17 And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night (Matthew 21:1-17).

### **Cast vision:**

Here is my prayer for us today. **May we catch a vision of Christ visiting our cities and nation like he did on Palm Sunday and like he has done through other revivals and moves of God.**

Steve Hawthorne. *Seek God for The City 2021* (Kindle). WayMakers.

### **Palm Sunday Welcoming Christ our King**

The event we have come to call "Palm Sunday" shines as a prophetic portrait of the spiritual awakening Christ desires to bring. Jesus not only initiated the procession, but He refused to shut it down. He was doing more than merely fulfilling prophecy. He was prophesying, presenting a lasting vision of how He will be recognized in the midst of hostility at the end of the age. Christ will be followed by some in every people. He will be welcomed, at least by a few, in every place. Palm Sunday gives us a vision of the global spiritual awakening we are praying toward.

### **Preparing the way by prayer**

Jesus prepared the way for Palm Sunday by sending His followers to pray on-site in many communities (Luke 10:1-2). The prayers of these ordinary followers were publicly prayed and then openly answered. God was being honored. Jesus was becoming famous in places where He had not yet personally visited. The expectancy of what God would do was great.

### **A crescendo of welcoming praise**

The raising of Lazarus touched off an explosion of welcoming praise (John 12:18). The dramatic answer to Jesus' prayer for His friend Lazarus (John 11:41-43) got everyone talking about all they had seen God do in the lives of their friends and neighbors. Luke says the crowd was praising God "for all the miracles which they had seen" (Luke 19:37). Grateful praise for many answered prayers quickly became a crescendo of welcoming worship.

*The crowds... were shouting, "Hosanna!... Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!"... All the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" (Matthew 21:9-10).*

Whenever there has been revival, it has been a partial fulfillment of the promise of Palm Sunday.

### **The Hope of Christ's Visitation**

#### **A lasting movement**

Thousands of people gathered at the temple with Jesus early every morning, hanging on His every word (Luke 21:38). The Palm Sunday worshipers should not be confused with the much smaller mob which shouted for Jesus' execution later in the week. That crowd was incited by Christ's enemies, who were forced to arrest Jesus by night "because they were afraid of the people" — the very throng that had welcomed and honored Him daily with increasing devotion (Luke 22:2, Mark 14:1-2).

#### **A prophetic portrait**

Palm Sunday is sometimes dismissed as if it were a political rally gone wrong. But Jesus was all for it. He planned whatever could have been planned. And He refused to silence the celebration. He said that rocks would have cried out if the people had been restrained (Luke 19:40). The intensity mounted. The crowds increased. Eventually "all the city was stirred, saying, 'Who is this?'" (Matthew 21:10). Those who hadn't yet personally encountered Jesus were eager to know more. If Jesus was giving us any indication of how God desires to visit communities with transforming power, we are right in praying for such receptive glory to sweep throughout whole cities.

#### **His arrival more than our revival**

Hated or praised, Christ was then what He will be again: the sole focus of attention of whole cities in days of great spiritual awakening. **Our best prayers**

**are prayers of welcome**— that the risen Jesus Himself will be recognized and received throughout entire communities.... Now, more than ever, it's time to invite Christ the Lord to bring His life-giving presence upon our cities.

**Seek God for the King of glory to come. (Let's pray.)**

*Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart... He shall receive a blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face — even as Jacob (Psalm 24:3-6 NASB).*

We approach You with the boldness of Jacob, who refused to stop wrestling with You until You blessed him. You were not offended by his tenacity. Like Jacob, we have yet to see Your promises fulfilled. So we boldly approach You, day after day, seeking Your blessing on our families and our cities.

*Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in! Who is the King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle (Psalm 24:7-8 NASB).*

Beyond tangible blessing, our hearts desire Your presence and Your glory. Our greatest request: Open the gates of heaven! Come through and enter the earth which You have made. Invade the cities which we have made. The fullness of the earth is Yours, but it is empty without Your glory. So again, we cry:

*Open the gates of heaven and come! And with Your blessing, bring Your glory! Lift up your heads, O gates, and lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in! Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory (Psalm 24:9-10 NASB).*

And when You come, we will know You. We will know You because of the many days we have sought You. We know who You are: You are the King of glory! Subdue Your enemies. Who can withstand You? You are the only rightful King. You are power itself. You are the Lord Almighty. Open the ancient doors. Come fill the earth with Your glory! (Steve Hawthorne. *Seek God for The City 2021* (Kindle). WayMakers.)

**Pray:** We are asking Jesus to visit our city and nation in his transforming power and presence.

1. **Let's remind the Lord of his Scripture-based prophetic words and promises.**
  - a. *We have heard with our ears, O God; our fathers have told us what you did in their days, in days long ago (Psalm 44:1).*
  - b. *LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O LORD. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy (Habakkuk 3:2).*
2. **Let's remind the Lord of his current prophetic words**, like the promise of an outpouring surpassing the Azusa Street outpouring of 1907.
  - a. In 1913, there was a prophetic word given to Charles Parham, Daddy Seymore, and Maria Woodworth-Etter of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in 100 years that would surpass the Azusa Street move of God.
  - b. We are 8 years overdue for that prophetic word. May this be day of that outpouring.
3. **Let's remind the Lord that we need spiritual awakening in our nation.** We are way past due.

**Prepare the way for the coming of the Lord:** through acts of service, witness, and invitation.

1. **Encourage people to shine for Jesus** (Matthew 6:13-16).
  - a. *"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 **In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven** (Matthew 5:13-16).*
  - b. May we shine through our acts of service, good deeds, and demonstrations of love.
  - c. May we shine through asking "How can I pray for you?"
  - d. May we shine through acts of kindness and compassion.
2. **Encourage people to announce (witness, testify) about Jesus to their friends, families, and neighbors** (Acts 1:8; 1 John 1:1-3).
  - a. Pay attention to the Lord and be sensitive to the opportunities he gives to you.
  - b. Pay attention to others and listen to their conversations and hearts.
3. **Encourage people to invite others to join them for Easter either in-person or online.**
  - a. The good news is that people are thinking about going to church at Easter.
  - b. They just need an invitation.
  - c. They are waiting for someone to invite them.

**Invite: welcome people to participate in the Stations of the Cross in the Prayer Garden.**

1. This week, we will have the Stations of the Cross set up in the Prayer Garden.
2. Come to walk, meditate, and pray.
3. We will have the prayer guides online so that you can print out those resources when you come.

**Celebrate the Lord's Supper.** Song: *Remembrance*.

1. The Lord's Supper is an opportunity **to express gratitude to the Lord.**
2. The Lord's Supper is an opportunity **to meet the Lord at his table.**
3. In the Scripture, we read about the Passover Meal which the Lord Jesus shared with his disciples. Jesus reinterprets it and gives us the Lord's Supper. **We encounter Jesus at his Communion Table to remember all that he has done for us, all that he is doing, and all that he will do.**
4. By celebrating the Lord's Supper, (1) we remember the Lord Jesus and his sacrifice, (2) we proclaim his gospel, and (3) we prophesy his return (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
5. First, let's meditate up the song, *Remembrance*, and sing it if you know it.
  - a. Then, you are released to come to the table and to get the elements for the Lord's Supper.
  - b. You can return to your seat or spread out through the Prayer Room.
  - c. I will call us back together with closing instructions and prayer after we have observed the Lord's Supper.

**Suggestion:**

1. On Thursday evening of Passion Week, I invite you do something special. Spend time with the Lord as an individual or as a family around the Lord's table.
2. First, I invite you to go your own pantry and get some bread and juice. You can use whatever you have. It doesn't need to be a certain type of bread or cracker in order to be holy. It is all about God's love shown through the cross of Jesus that makes it sacred.
3. Next, pray and ask the Lord to help you meet him at his table. Pray and sanctify the bread and the juice and your time with the Lord and each other.
4. Read one or more of the Scripture passages detailing the meal Jesus shared with his disciples (Matthew 26:14-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:1-39; John 13:1-38).