

Sermon 3-27-10

Ride On, Lord Jesus

Luke 19:28-38

Today is Palm Sunday. Today's scripture reading shows us the historical picture of Jesus entering into Jerusalem, as the Messiah and King who entered into his Kingdom, welcomed by the people in Jerusalem.

It was today, Palm Sunday, about two thousand years ago that this procession occurred. A few minutes ago, we saw a short repeat performance of Jesus entering into Jerusalem. Sorry Duane, for letting you walking on foot rather than riding on a donkey.

One week before Palm Sunday, Jesus and his disciples, in company with Galilean pilgrims on the way to the Passover, had to walk up to Jericho and Jerusalem. After leaving Jericho, Jesus and His disciples climbed the fifteen steep miles to Bethany, from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday, and rested in the home of Martha and Mary at Bethany.

On Palm Sunday, today, two thousand years ago, they went into Jerusalem. On the way Jesus sent two disciples, Peter and John, with instruction to go into the village where they would find a donkey tied, and a colt with it. These they were to bring to the Master. If anyone protested, they were to say, "The Lord has need of them."

The disciples carried out their commission. Apparently, the triumphal procession began near the top of the Mount of Olives. The disciples placed their clothes on the donkey, in lieu of a saddle, for the Master to sit on.

A very great multitude spread their garments in the way. This shows the almost tumultuous enthusiasm of these Galilean pilgrims, who had seen the many miracles which Jesus had performed. Now they acclaimed him as their Messiah.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, all the city was moved. Everybody asked, "Who is this?" The answer of the crowd was, "This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." That is the historical review. But, we need to enact this historical event into our life as a real encounter with Jesus our Lord today.

When I read and meditated on this scripture, I had one question which popped into my mind, "Did Jesus make a reservation to use the donkey?" If not, how could he instruct his disciples to bring a donkey to use without the consent of the owner? I guessed that the owner of the colt must be a follower of Jesus. Then, if the owner should question their action, the disciples were to say that the Lord had need of it and would return the animal promptly.

Why did Jesus choose to ride into the Holy City? The scripture answers that his purpose was to fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah. Who was the biggest contributor for Jesus' entry

into Jerusalem? I would guess the owner of colt, and more importantly, the colt itself that gave a ride to Jesus into Jerusalem.

Sun wished to have a piano in her house before she got married. But, it was so expensive at that time that she couldn't think about a piano. So, she saved money for several months and bought a reed organ which plays by pumping the pedals. She enjoyed the reed organ and cleaned and waxed it, and covered the organ with a nice hand-made cloth cover.

Several months later, a minister who started a new ministry visited to her house and saw the organ, and he said, "This organ is good to be used at my newly started church! Let God use the organ for the glory of God!" "The Lord needs it!" Sun's mother was so naïvely respectful to any minister that she gave it to the minister without asking Sun's permission. She told this story to me. "Hey! I need an organ in my church, too!" I had said. At that time, I was appointed to a small church in rural area, and we could also have used an organ for worship. "Why didn't you ask me before giving it to him?" I told her.

God is the real owner of what we have and of me. When the real owner, the Lord said, "I need it" we are supposed to give it to the real owner. God creates human beings to glorify God. We insist the ownership and make a lawsuit to take back when other has mine. We insist, "I am the owner of this house, you can not enter my house without my permission!" But have you thought about the owner of you. God is the owner of you and me.

I think the owner of donkey knew the real owner of donkey and of him. When the disciples said, "The Lord has need of it" the owner of donkey was pleased to let the Lord use his donkey. If the Lord tells us "I need you!" then it would be a blessing on us.

Palm Sunday is a time to reflect, to commemorate and worship the story of Jesus entering into Jerusalem. And Palm Sunday is time to react to his entering into our life. Jesus rode on a donkey in the triumphal procession. He neither rode on a horse, nor a camel, nor on a chariot, but on a donkey.

I imagined the Lord riding on donkey entering into Jerusalem. As I guessed, the best contributor to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was the donkey that gave him a ride and the donkey was the best worshipper of the Lord. The animal was able to glorify the Lord on Palm Sunday.

Remember that Jesus instructed the disciples to say, "The Lord needs it!" Don't boast of what you have, what you own. But, remember who owns you. The best life is the life being used by the Lord. The Lord is the owner of the owned. Because Jesus is the owner of the owned, he could tell them to bring a donkey because "The Lord needs it!" We cannot complain to God, even when God takes a beloved thirty eight- year old -son without our consent, because God is the real owner of all that is ours.

The Bible instructs us about who we are, and whose we are. Human beings were formed from the dust of the ground by God. God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Romans 9:20 shows us that God, the potter, has the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes, and some for common use.

Saint Paul teaches us about life as vessels being used. "In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble." (2 Timothy 2:20). If we want to be used by God, we need to remember two things.

First, remember that God uses clean vessels. Paul instructs us, "If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work." For about two weeks, I had to cook by myself while Sun visited our daughter and her family in Chicago in February after the birth of our newest grandson. Cooking is fun, sometimes, as it is a total art, involving all of the five senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and feeling. But, the pesky work is cleaning, the dish-washing afterward!

David asked the Lord before he prayed, "Lord, cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." If your heart is captured by something other than God's spirit, you cannot pray wholly. Our hearts and minds should be kept clean. Otherwise, God won't use us when God needs us.

Second, remember that God can't use us when we are filled with something other than that God wants. God does not use a person who is arrogant, proud of oneself. God rejects the arrogant and uses the humble. The Lord does not look at things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."(1 Samuel 16:7) The one who is filled with pride cannot listen to others and looks down on others as inferior.

Socrates said, "There are three kinds of the not knowing; One who is silly and knows nothing; One who thinks arrogantly he knows everything, but knows wrong; One who recognizes that he knows nothing. The most ignorant is one who thinks arrogantly he knows everything but knows wrong. This kind of person cannot be used by God because he is filled with something already. Be empty in God so that God may find you useful.

Be cleansed and empty yourself for the Lord so that you can be used by God. You are made to be used by the creator. Brothers and sisters! Imagine yourself as a donkey that gave a ride to the Lord, Jesus. And offer yourself to the Lord. Lord, ride on your donkey, we are all your humble donkeys. Let us be glorified when you ride on your donkey! The Lord's, "I need you!" is a blessing on us.

God creates human beings to glorify God. It is a blessing to find the real owner, the eternal owner, of me than to be an owner, a temporal owner of a perishing being.

Ride on, Master Jesus! Ride on me! I will be glad to be a donkey for your glory! I want to be used by you. I want fully to serve you as a donkey and to glorify you. John Wesley prayed like this, which I think is another image of the donkey for the Lord.

“I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing to thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.