

**LOOK! THE WHOLE WORLD HAS GONE AFTER HIM!****John 12:12-19****(Read John 12:12-19)**

**Intro:** My mother has been in glory for ten years and almost two months. A few years before she died she called me and asked me to find the song JUST INSIDE THE EASTERN GATE. She had been looking in every hymnal (and she had lots of them) and every Gospel song book (and she had lots of them) and she just could not find this old song that she remembered from her childhood. I'd never heard it but I Googled it and I found it and I loved it. Fast forward to 2015. Mother died in February of that year and Kathy and I travelled with my sister Beth and her husband Morris to Israel just seven months later. I've talked about it before – it was one of the most powerful experiences of our life. And one of the most wonderful things was this. This is that very Eastern Gate from the inside on the Temple Mount and this is the outside of it. This was what inspired the song that ran through my mom's memory and made her long for it.

*I will meet you in the morning,  
Just inside the Eastern Gate;  
Then be ready, faithful pilgrim,  
Lest with you it be too late.  
I will meet you, I will meet you  
Just inside the Eastern Gate over there;  
I will meet you, I will meet you,  
I will meet you in the morning over there.  
2 If you hasten off to glory,  
Linger near the Eastern Gate,  
For I'm coming in the morning;  
So you'll not have long to wait.  
3 Keep your lamps all trimmed and burning;  
For the Bridegroom watch and wait;  
He'll be with us at the meeting  
Just inside the Eastern Gate.  
4 Oh, the joys of that glad meeting  
With the saints who for us wait!  
What a blessed, happy meeting  
Just inside the Eastern Gate!  
I will meet you, I will meet you  
Just inside the Eastern Gate over there;  
I will meet you, I will meet you,  
I will meet you in the morning over there.*

That is the hope of a soul who put his faith in Jesus and my mom's hope too. But it was the gate into Jerusalem that Jesus passed through as he rode into the city only a donkey's colt.

Now, I don't know what passed across your mind's eye as I read John's relatively short description of Jesus's Palm Sunday entry into the city. I hope the song and then my photos of the gate may have conjured some visuals for you – but let me add to it.

**Passover was just a few days away**

- Anticipation was thick in the air – this is the highest holiday of the Jewish year and pilgrims came to Jerusalem from far and wide. The population of Jerusalem swelled by tens of thousands during the celebration. Many of the people in the crowd who welcomed Jesus were no doubt Galileans from 100 miles north cheering on their hometown hero – Jesus of Nazareth. They were excited – he had just recently raised Lazarus from the dead – so he sure looked like a King of Israel to them!
- To that picture in your mind, add sheep. Well actually, sacrificial lambs – for the Passover sacrifice and the Passover feast – thousands of them. A Jewish historian by the name of Josephus said that one year a census was taken of the number of lambs used for Passover at 256,500. That's a lotta mint jelly!!!!

- But seriously, people took this seriously and they were intent on celebrating the deliverance of the people God from the Egyptians and here was someone who, in their collective mind, was a deliverer. And he was – but not in the way they thought. They wanted a King who would conquer with political might, and instead they had, among the quarter of a million sacrificial lambs, the ultimate sacrificial Lamb who made those wooly lambs completely obsolete.

### **The power Jesus brought was far different**

- Palm branches were a political symbol for the Jewish people. Waving a palm frond wasn't the 1<sup>st</sup> century equivalent of ticker tape or confetti – it represented the nationalistic hopes and dreams of a conquered people. They wanted freedom and it seemed so close.
- In truth it was close. The palms revealed what they wanted and the donkey revealed who he was. Here riding on the colt of a donkey was a deliverer – just not the one they had in mind. Jesus's ride should have given him away. A political conqueror would have been riding a decked out warhorse. Jesus was riding a donkey. Don't miss this – a donkey wasn't a lowly animal – he just represented a different purpose. As I said last week – walking was the main mode of transportation in those days – so to ride a donkey, mule, or horse was a step up. And a donkey was the transport of a person of peace who came to do business.
- That business for Jesus far different. The people who shouted "*HOSANNA! Blessed is he who come in the name of the Lord!*" John 12:13b thought their time had come, FINALLY a deliverer! And Jesus was that, he was a deliverer, but not the one they thought they needed and he was exactly what they needed.
- They wanted an earthly political king but they needed a Savior king. It's still that way – the more things change, the more they stay the same
- Time after time over the previous three years, when he performed a miracle he would tell the one he healed or delivered from demons, "Don't tell anyone." In the first miracle that is recorded here in John 2, Jesus's mother had told him, like a good Jewish mother, to do something about the fact that the wine at the wedding they were attending was running low. His response to her, right before he did exactly as she asked was, "*Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.*" John 2:4 Why so secretive? Well, it was because he was setting the stage for this very week. Now the time had come – and his Father's plan was unfolding.

### **He so loved the world**

- Is it any wonder the whole world would go after him?
- The frustrated Pharisees whined to one another, "*You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.*" John 12:19. And they were right – in a way. Or maybe I should say they were prophetic. Let me explain as I wrap this up.
- God's plan was unfolding. Jesus's arrival in the triumphal procession we celebrate today on Palm Sunday was part of the plan. We'll look at that as the week progresses. The griping Pharisee's thought they were losing the battle on this occasion but as the week progressed they thought the tide was turning for them. And so it seemed. On Thursday they thought they had it in the bag. By Friday they knew they had him in a grave. But it was all part of the plan that would begin on a cross and end with an empty grave.
- And their prediction will ultimately come true – they cried, LOOK! THE WHOLE WORLD HAS GONE AFTER HIM! And they were spot on. I mean think about it, we just looked at it a couple months ago in Philippians, this is the way it's going to be: *Therefore God has highly exalted him* (Paul is talking about Jesus here) *and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Philippians 2:9-11.

The whole world will go after him. So start now – you can use the same words of those people in Jerusalem – *Hosanna, Blessed is he comes in the name of the Lord* – because we know him for who he truly is. Right? You do know him, right? Let's talk if you need to make sure. Amen.