

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
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HERE COMES THE GROOM

Luke 19:28-40

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There are four parts to today's message:

- Something old
- Something new
- Something borrowed
- Something true

INTRODUCTION: In ancient Israel, when a marriage took place, the bride was not the center of attention. It was the groom. The groom, splendidly dressed and surrounded by his friends, paraded to the bride's house to claim his wife. Today, on the day we call Palm Sunday, we are going to look at the story of Jesus's entrance into Jerusalem only a few days before his death. As we do so, I want you to think of Jesus like a Jewish groom parading to meet his bride.

1-SOMETHING OLD

SCRIPTURE: Luke 19:28

After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

EXPLANATION: According to archeological evidence, the area now known as Jerusalem may have been settled as early as 4500 BC. The first historical mention of Jerusalem is in Egyptian texts around 2000 BC. At that time, it was called Rusa-li-mum. Five hundred years later, the city was a vassal of Egypt, meaning that it received protection from Egypt in return for the servitude of its citizens. In the 12th century BC, the Bible records that Jerusalem was known as Jebus and was inhabited by the Jebusites. In 1000 BC, David conquered the city, which then became known as Jerusalem, the city of David, the capital of Israel.

Of course, at the time of this story, Jerusalem was no longer free. Because the Israelites had not been faithful, God allowed conquerors to overtake the land. At the time of Jesus's triumphal entrance into the city, Jerusalem was under Roman occupation.

ILLUSTRATION: Many of us are familiar with the rhyme, "Something old. Something new. Something borrowed. Something blue." The rhyme originated in England during the Victorian era and symbolizes gifts that are presented to the bride for good luck or best wishes. Each gift has a special meaning. The old or well-used gift was supposed to represent a bride's ties to the past.

EXPLANATION: Jerusalem, even at the time of Christ, was definitely old. In addition, it was a good representation of Jesus's ties to the community. In the same way that we have strong feelings about Washington DC, or the place we were born or call home, Jesus felt a sentimental attachment to the city of Jerusalem.

In Mathew 23:37, Jesus said, "*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.*" Just a few verses down in this chapter of Luke, Jesus weeps over the city.

Jerusalem was the capital of Israel and the site of the temple where people came to worship God. However, while the city may have been special to Jesus, his love was actually for the people who inhabited it. His heart broke for their sinfulness and their rejection of him.

- Jerusalem was something old.

2-SOMETHING NEW

SCRIPTURE: Luke 19:29-34

As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,³⁰ "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here."³¹ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'"³² Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told

them. ³³ *As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?”* ³⁴ *They replied, “The Lord needs it.”*

EXPLANATION: We know from other New Testament passages of this account that the colt mentioned in this passage is a donkey colt. While this could have fallen under the category of “borrowed,” for the purposes of today’s sermon, we are going to classify it as something new because the colt was a young (“new”) donkey.

The Israelite people believed that their Messiah was going to be a military warrior. As such, he should have ridden a great horse. But Jesus rode a donkey and not a horse because the donkey has traditionally been a beast of burden. Jesus first came to earth as a humble servant, submitting himself to death on behalf of his people. The donkey symbolized his humility and servant’s heart.

As a colt, this animal likely had never been ridden before. While Jesus was exhibiting humility, he was also demonstrating his authority and superiority. Just as any king would demand the best, Jesus rode an animal that had never been ridden. In addition, the animal willingly submitted to Jesus’s command—even in the face of a loud and raucous crowd.

ILLUSTRATION: In the wedding poem, something new is given to the bride to represent the giver’s wish for her long and happy future.

EXPLANATION: As Christ rode into Jerusalem a week before his resurrection, the people did not understand the gift that he was presenting them through the sacrifice of himself—the gift of salvation through faith not just for the Jews but for the entire world.

Zechariah 9:9 says, “Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” The colt represented Christ’s humility and service as he made way for the long and happy future of his people.

- Jerusalem was something old.
- The colt was something new.

3-SOMETHING BORROWED

SCRIPTURE: Luke 19:35-36

They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. ³⁶ As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.

EXPLANATION: Many of us are probably familiar with the chivalrous act of putting a coat over a mud puddle for a lady to walk over. Of course, I doubt that any of us have actually done this, but we understand the meaning behind the gesture. Such an act signified that a man cared enough about the lady that he would take great efforts to keep her from getting her feet wet or dirty. It would be a gesture to show affection and honor.

In the same way, the laying down of coats on the road into Jerusalem was a way in which the people honored Christ. This was not a new custom. In the Old Testament, the Bible records that people showed deference and honor to the newly anointed King Jehu by spreading their coats before him.

The equivalent of this today would be like our rolling out the red carpet for the president or a member of royalty. The people lined the dirt road into Jerusalem with their garments for the King of Kings.

ILLUSTRATION: Something old. Something new. Something borrowed... According to tradition, an item for the bride is supposed to be borrowed from a woman who is already happily married. The gift itself is supposed to represent a transfer of happiness and a show of support.

EXPLANATION: Like the bridal gift, the coats were only borrowed. It's unlikely that the worshippers left them there in the streets. The crowd laid them down to honor Jesus and express their support of him, and then they picked them up and went home. In less than a week, many of those same people shouted in favor of the crucifixion of Jesus. Even those who loved Jesus best ran away in fear.

- Jerusalem was something old.
- The colt was something new.
- The coats were borrowed, but what about...

SOMETHING TRUE

SCRIPTURE: Luke 19:37-40

When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: ³⁸ “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” ³⁹ Some 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.”

EXPLANATION: In the other gospels, the authors record that the crowd shouted “Hosana” which roughly means “Lord, please save us.” They waved palm branches and shouted blessings to their unlikely king. The Pharisees thought it blasphemous and told Jesus to make them stop.

Jesus’s reply about rocks crying out may sound like a metaphor, but it is not. Scientists say that the earth gives off a relentless hum of notes that cannot be heard with the human ear but can be picked up through the use of specialized instruments. In a similar way, each planet produces a unique song. Jesus was not being factitious. If the people would not rejoice and praise him, the earth itself would.

ILLUSTRATION: Of course, the wedding poem does not say anything about something true. Instead, it calls for something blue. In fact, the original poem also included another phrase. It said, “Something old. Something new. Something borrowed. Something blue, and a six-pence in her shoe.” A blue gift was supposed to represent love, purity, faithfulness, and modesty. The sixpence, a Victorian coin, obviously represented wealth and good fortune.

EXPLANATION: The praises of the people on the road to Jerusalem did not represent their own love, purity, and faithfulness, but their words of truth did represent God’s. Jesus came to save and glory belongs to him. It was not the crowd that offered a future full of the riches of Heaven, it was God sent in the form of a man to pay the price for their sins.

Isaiah 54:5 says, *“For your Maker is your husband—the LORD Almighty is his name—the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth.”*

In 2 Corinthians 11:2, Paul writes, *“I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.”* In other passages in the New Testament, Paul compares the church to the bride of Christ.

On this day, the day we call Palm Sunday:

- Christ rode into Jerusalem as a humble servant.
- He rode into Jerusalem as a loving citizen of Israel.
- He rode into Jerusalem as a future king.
- But most of all he rode into Jerusalem as the Son of God getting ready to claim his bride, the church.

INVITATION: Those of us who acknowledge him as Savior and Lord, who have given our lives to him, who love and serve him - we are the bride of Christ. He made himself ready. He humbled himself and came to earth. He paid the price for our sins and resurrected from the grave to defeat death.

What are we doing to ready ourselves for him? The Bible tells us that Jesus is the only way to the Father. No one will get to Heaven unless you have a relationship with him. That’s the first step. If you do not know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, let today be the day. He loves you. If you are a Christian, then I want you to ask yourself, “What am I doing to make myself ready to meet my Savior?”

We do not earn our salvation, but just like a bride makes herself beautiful for her groom, we too should desire to make our lives beautiful for Jesus. Is your life a beautiful representation of God’s work in your heart? The altar is open if you need to ask Jesus to forgive you of your sin and to become your Savior.

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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