

TORN EASTER SERIES
“THE ENTRANCE”
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Intro

→ stage is building – as we enter Easter week and will transform throughout the week – represents the Holy of Holies...curtain that separated people – 1 priest, Once a yr...could enter – to make atonement for sins of the people

Luke 9:51 **simple sentence = loaded with significance!**

- Jesus had been to Jerusalem before – but this time would be different – so he moved with determination toward that entrance – into that week and that moment
- We celebrate it as its called Palm Sunday – Jesus’ entrance

(go to door)

We make all sorts of entrances all the time – everyday. In fact – how many do you make in a day? In a week? (*ask pp around ya – quick calculation...*)

Must are ordinary, nothing stands out about them - simply mundane –

→ but some stand out, cause commotion or get lodged in our memory –

- Time I was wrestling / fighting my brother in our room and dad’s entrance in the room caught us by surprise and the situation quickly adjusted and changed...suddenly we we’re fighting anymore – the shadow in the doorway just took away any angst we had...
- Time I entered the room (yesterday) to find my 2 yr with scotch tape everywhere and playing with scissors – I can only assume she was trying to cut her way out... she just starred up at me & began handing me scissors...

There are some celebrated entrances in life:

- When the President is introduced in the chambers of Congress to give the state of the union (flare)
- weddings: procession - the bride – turns the corner and enters down the aisle in church
- Your 1st born child enters the world

Look at TV/Film:

- Gladiator – Russell Crowe enters the coliseum (light is streaming thru)
- Kramer entering into the room of Jerry Seinfeld’s apartment (*maybe most memorable*)
- The Oscars –red carpet entryway, star treatment...

→ as we begin to see Jesus’ last week take shape – he’s traveled this road many times, but this path is taking him toward something new – very purposeful...
 this special arrival, that has so much swirling about; this red carpet moment – just with much less media and people aren’t asking him – what are you wearing? (*ah, a robe my mom made*)...

This is an arrival – a very special moment in Jesus’ life: it’s deliberate, it’s chosen, it’s timed and he knows exactly what he’s doing (sometimes it gets looked over – but there is a ton here for us to dive into as we come **to recognize who Jesus is and how we’re to respond to him**)

T now we’re walking into the last 6 days of Jesus’ life – every minute, every moment matters now

I want us to explore and experience this text together today...

Illust: this wk, I was tucking my middle daughter in, reading the bible, my 2 yr old grabbed my other daughter's bible, ran up in a chair, started turning pages and mumbling – I bent down and told her “this is special book – God wrote it so we could know Him”...for next 20 minutes she sat there, turned pages, mumbling...looking...

→ **1 NT author says: these words are living and active (*Hebrews 4*)**

Luke 19:28

To understand where Jesus is – we have to understand where Jesus has been

On his way to Passover – thousands of years of celebrating this

History of Passover (Moses – up to the sprinkling of an unblemished lamb's blood on altar)

People from all over – are traveling into Jerusalem

Tens – 100's thousand other pilgrims traveling along

In the Judean desert (from Jericho to Jerusalem) -

Walking thru the Judean desert – same desert where Jesus was along 40 days, fasting and being Tempted by Satan to chose any other way but God's plan; yet he refused; God blessed That and he began his public ministry Same desert he's walking thru → probably facing some of those same temptations

Town of Bethany – just outside Jerusalem – he has friends (Mary / Martha / Lazarus) (**Jn 11**)

Some wks Earlier -- Lazarus had died – women are weeping – frustrated at Jesus – their only brother, only source of income was gone and they're alone – we see a short verse in the bible where Jesus wept! Jesus cries over their pain (may mess with your image of God to know he cries over your pain)

Thru his tears and sorrow – he makes his way to the gravesite and He calls Lazarus out...

Thousands of people on the road shortcut thru Bethany – hundreds of people around Jesus

→ all the sudden there is this ...Zombie guy like walking from the grave...

■ Lazarus is like: Jesus!

■ Jesus is like: Lazarus! (ooh you stink...)

People are AMAZED! The celebration of this event is so dramatic that look what it says in

Jn 12:9-11

(b/c Lazarus has become this living REMINDER/example of what God can do!)

Luke 19: 29-36

He's on the backside of Jerusalem – can't see it yet...

***Unusual – b/c Jesus walked everywhere*

Sends disciples ahead to get a donkey – (say the Lord needs it)

- We've seen cops shows where they flash the badge – ‘give me the car’ and all these disciples have is ‘the Lord needs it’...(jedi moment)

(we see in mk acct: that they're bring it back...afterwards) → PROPHECY (Zech 9:9)

Jesus getting on this donkey is deliberate and he knows where this will take him, into Jerusalem, right to the cross

It takes him up to the top of mount of olives → 1st time Temple would be in view → across the Kidron valley → temple built by Herod few yrs earlier...most beautiful structure built (about 40 acres enclosed)

You would have seen thousands of people camped all around the entire city – would have been tents, campsites, RV's, tailgating going on (*we're talking early NASCAR infield*) → city only holds 50,000 pp non-tourist time – but now would have been buzzing with over 110-120,000 pp (Josephus records).

Right next to the Temple would be the → **Fortress of Antonia (named after: Marc Antony)** – 4 towers w/ passage ways right down into Temple courts → built by Romans (occupying power) to house soldiers 600 soldiers all the time – doubles up on soldiers...during this 40 days of Passover

The desert air would be charged – the joy of Jewish celebration and the reality of Roman occupation → you could feel it – it would be electric!

T

this brings us to the day of Jesus' triumphal entry – I want to look at how he made his entrance, what happens and **why this particular day...this has huge implications!**

The day Jesus chooses is: (*we call psalm Sunday*) – but it would be called LAMB SELECTION DAY; where about 5 days before Passover your family would go and select a lamb that you'd offer as a sacrifice for atonement of your sins for the last year. → I know that seems a lot foreign to us, bit sadistic...for little kids to "I'll choose lambie, and I'll feed her and brush her..." (as the Father would have to explain that we'll be kkkiiickkk...cut it's throat a few days later) → that's how it worked for this celebration of Passover...

It's lamb selection day → everyone going to select their lamb (120,000 pp at the same time)... a lot of commotion (*lamb* – *thinking: "I'm adopted"*)...there would be a lot of baaing going on, feet shuffling, bartering and if you listen close enough you'd begin to hear this slow, soft rumble of praise that is about to break forth...

Q why did Jesus choose lamb selection day for his entry into Jerusalem (talk with pp)

→ John the Baptist said, "behold here is the Lamb of God, sent to take away the sins of the world"

John 1:29

** **the day** Jesus chooses is vital/important

→ won't you choose me this lamb selection day?

** **the way** Jesus chooses to make his importance is so significant → because he's coming from the East

- Devout Jews knew that the messiah would come from the East - scripture says
- Some Rabbinical traditions = they'd leave the eastern door to temple, city open just in case (*in case the messiah would come and forget His keys?... (esp. on HOLY DAYS)*)

T often around this time there would be another kind of entrance – and entrance from the West that would stand in stark contrast to this day...as Rome would send their Leaders and reinforcements for these holy day celebrations.

Octavian ruled prior = Caesar Augustus 1st

Tiberius was Emperor of Rome (14-37AD) and (Rome Empire was so vast – you'd appoint people to take care of regions) - had appointed Pontius Pilate as Governor over Caesarea on the coast – every Passover Pilate would march West toward Jerusalem to remind the Jews who really was in charge.

As Pilate first took over – he marched on the city, banners announcing their conquest, the Roman Armor was created to not only be effective defense, but the sound of intimidation as they marched – with the statues of Rome's leaders put them up around the holy places – Jewish leaders were outraged; another time he took money from their temple treasury to build aqueducts around the city for Rome; he had a rebellion snuffed out at a large assembly – where he had guards dressed as citizens and then at a command they attack and killed many. → just to send the message to cool down...Rome's in charge! We're the ones with the power...you'd send a message...

Ill American Gladiators: contestants vs Gladiators – the way they'd introduce them was so different...the gladiators would enter with smoke, music, armor spandex, muscles, here's (Helga, Wolf and Tundra) - then they'd introduce the contests who go up against the mountain of a man – (this is Mike from accounting in Burbank – 'doing this for my kids)...
→ the contrast is so different!

They'd enter from the west perched upon their valiant horses & chariots – all waxed up, shined up – *1st century's version of a Hummer...*

Luke 19: 37

They began to sing/shout → they hadn't been singing yet...(b/c they knew...
John 12: 17-18 → “many people went out to meet him”

They'd run up and see their King who coming into the city

Q Why a donkey?

We're they out of horses at Avis – did you have to get the compact one?

Ill: I asked the kids choir today; if you could be any animal what would it be...no one said donkey.

*they expected a lion who would lead a revolution – but, he comes as the lamb

*they expected a horse of war – he comes on a donkey

ILL. You see, in times of war the conqueror would ride upon a prancing stallion. But in times of peace, the king would ride a colt to symbolize that peace prevailed. So, for Jesus to ride into Jerusalem upon a colt is to declare that He is a King.

→ he is announcing who He is -- what he's about – in this moment...His peace will prevail!!

→ **Luke 19:38** **Jn 12:13** (*Psalm 118:25-26*)

--taken from a Hallel Psalm that would be a part of the liturgy used at Passover...

*They're taking palm branches and lining the roads with them...shouting

Q → Palm Branches b/c they couldn't find anything else? → palm branches were a symbol of Israel's independence and freedom (couple hundred years earlier – archeologist found coins – with palm branches stamped on them) represented nation pride... (Like: waving American flag) (they're declaring that Jesus is king, not Rome, not Caesar...)

Pharisee's are beginning to freak out! (people are shouting: "hosanna" – means 'save us now')
They ask Jesus to shut them up...

Luke 19:39 // **Jn 12:19**

So there is this revolutionary parade making it's way into the city – fueled by the desire for a messiah, fueled by the stories/miracles they've seen, fueled by a hunger for freedom...

They wanted the Lion of war on his horse – they didn't want the lamb of God → they wanted to be freed from their oppressors, from Romans...But in the middle of this all the singing, dancing, noise

Luke 19:41

Jesus is the weeping king – unlike any of your expectations (gospel of Jn. – implies it was blubbing sobs)

Are people so caught up in their worship of Jesus – don't even see what breaks his heart...

So caught up in their songs, – they can't even see what moves him...

b/c although they see him, but they don't recognize him – don't recognize what he's all about...

He's entering the city with an announcement of Peace – an invitation to trust in him to bring ultimate peace between God and humanity...

He's entering gently and not forcefully

Luke 19: 41-44 – describe...

About 40 years later Rome would take over – plunder the city and destroy the temple

We see Jesus weeping for the people who are missing him even in the midst of their worship

→ some of the same people who are shouting: Hosanna on Sunday – will be yelling something different a few days later...

And Peace has been lost upon them...

Conclusion:

Friends, we're invited this wk to remember why Jesus entered into that moment for you, for me...
 T draw out a couple things to consider as we enter into experiencing Easter week...

#1 Jesus came as the Lamb – b/c we needed him too. (I needed Him too)

Wants/needs are 2 diff things: I have lots of wants – but needs are of greater and primary importance...

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote:

"God allows himself to be edged out of the world and on to the cross....and that is the way, the only way, in which he can be with us and help us....Only a suffering God can help."

The crowds on that first Palm Sunday wanted a Warrior King, but Jesus came as a suffering Messiah. His sacrifice would free us not from a political enemy → but deliver us from the grasp of the ultimate enemy.

No amount of sacrifice, or good works could ever earn us – or give us a right standing with God on our own merit...*(and God knew it)*. we became fatally flawed by sin and we needed a rescue that only Jesus could provide.

Ephesians 2:8-9

#2 when Jesus enters –(gets involved) things change...

All throughout his ministry – he'd enter into a situation and it would change, town after town, village after village, person after person felt his impact...people were amazed & awed by him, the sick were healed, the broken were made whole...the wandering were welcomed home...

When Jesus enters in – (gets involved) things change...

→ maybe you find yourself this morning needing a fresh visit from the God who loves to enter into our lives...our brokenness, our doubts and bring about change...

Jesus wants to enter into every area of your life – to bring you his peace, his presence – but he won't force his way in...

(look at what John records Jesus saying in revelation)

Revelation 3: 20

“my presence will be w/ you – in all that you face”

#3 Even though he came as the lamb – He is the true King!

(* pick up rock from on stage)

Luke 19:39

ALL CREATION RECOGNIZES IT'S TRUE KING

→ Jesus responds to their attempt of control with a very poetic statement

-quite possibly the simplest/profound explanation of what we were created to do/be about

Luke 19:40

We are created to recognize and worship Jesus for the King he is

Scriptures speak of how all creation (wind, waves, trees, grass...)

Our lives are to be acts of worship to Jesus/God – or we'll get shown up by the rocks

T today: we're going to join in with the declaration made thousands of years ago...to our King – our King who can bring peace into your life...who knocks on the door of your heart...who came as the final sacrifice needed to make things right between you and God.

Worship Song: Here is our King...