

Sermon Transcript from 13th April 2025 - Palm Sunday

Sermon TLDR

Palm Sunday is part of God's big plan, which started with creation, was marred by sin, and is being redeemed by Jesus. In the beginning, God created everything and saw that it was good. However, sin entered the world through Adam and Eve, leading to a broken relationship with God. But God sent Jesus to redeem us from sin and death.

Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday as a humble king, riding a donkey, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9. The people wanted a political saviour, but Jesus came to bring peace between God and humanity. He faced suffering and death to defeat sin and death, and to bring forgiveness and eternal life.

Palm Sunday leads to Good Friday, where Jesus became the ultimate sacrifice, shedding his blood for our redemption. This act of love defeated sin and opened the way for us to have a relationship with God. It is finished; Jesus paid the price once and for all.

We also have a future hope. One day, there will be a new heaven and a new earth, free from sin and suffering. God himself will be our light, and every knee will bow to him. This is the assurance we have in Christ.

As we celebrate Palm Sunday and prepare for Easter, let's remember the significance of these events and share the good news with others. Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection are the foundation of our faith and the reason we have hope.

Link to the Start of this Sermon (on YouTube)

<https://youtu.be/FsR7RMX7njU?t=2583>

Full Sermon Transcript

Well, good morning again.

I love Christmas. And I love Easter. They're the most celebrated events in our Christian calendar, isn't it? This morning we celebrate Palm Sunday. Show us the cross? Brothers and sisters, we are part of a universal family of God, there are millions and millions out in the world celebrating this event and we are part of what God is doing. And you'll be glad I am I'm glad that we are part of God's big family.

Palm Sunday is the day we celebrate the triumphant entry of Jesus riding on a young donkey, into Jerusalem, as the Easter festivals begin. Some churches followed a 40 days of Lent. I noticed this in my own church, a spiritual time of preparation, repenting, praying, fasting, preparing myself ourselves before that wonderful time of Easter.

The triumphal entry is described in the in the in the whole 4 gospels. Each account offers distinct details that enrich the full picture of this amazing moment in Jesus ministry. Jesus spent the majority of his time in Galilee and Judea. But as his earthly ministry approaches to its conclusion, he entered Jerusalem as prophesied to fulfil his mission.

This morning I would like to concentrate on three areas as we continue to prepare our hearts and minds during this Easter period. The story of Palm Sunday is so common to us, we are aware of it. But I want to talk about the big picture, the big picture. Where does Palm Sunday fit into God's big picture, God's big story?

The Christmas and Easter narratives are part of God's big story. It takes us right back in time to creation narrative of Genesis, where God orders and creates a perfect world for himself. God's story captures all of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation and involves all of life. What life is all about.

The story of God's mission is told in four parts.

First; Creation in the very first sentences of the Bible, we are introduced to the author and the director of this great story of all time; “In the beginning, God”, Genesis 1:1.

Although the word mission is not explicitly mentioned in scripture, yet from the beginning to the end of the Bible, we read of God's plan. And his intentions for the world he creates. A Christian leader and writer in his book *The Mission of God*, identifies a common phrase in Latin which many evangelicals use for the mission of God as “*missio de*”. And it means descending of God. The story of God's mission begins with God sending himself, Jesus and of course the Holy Spirit. In Genesis 1 and 2, God sends himself to initiate order, creates a wonderful garden of beauty, order and happiness out of nothing for himself. Out of all creation, mankind was a special creation. He saw that all he made and said “It was good”, in fact, he said it was very good. In Chapter 3, God's good creation project was ruined by Adam and his disobedience, which resulted in the breakdown of the fall of their relationship with God, and sadly, all of humanity came under that curse of Adam and Eve. The Bible tells us in Romans 5:12. “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin and in this way death came to all people because all have sinned”. We have sinned. The whole world has sinned. Kings, Queens, everybody, no one is acceptable or exceptional.

The garden that was brimming with beauty holder and tranquilly is now hostile, distant and broken. Mankind was separating from God, a form of spiritual that saw the God the Lord God sent them out of Garden of Eden, Genesis 3:23. Here the story of God's mission seems to go wrong from Adam and Eve's disobedience to Cain and Abel sharing of blood. No one in the flood story. Israel's slavery in Egypt. Up to the present, we live in a broken world. There is sin. There is presence of sin.

But that's not the end of the story. We come to redemption. The good news is that whilst mankind and creation were hopelessly lost in sin, God and his divine wisdom, grace and love sends himself to redeem his people from the power and punishment of sin and death.

In Scripture, the word redeem means God pays a ransom for our freedom and release, through Jesus Christ. We could never no one could ever possibly save themselves. We are we were hopelessly lost. Having for that, but God in his divine wisdom and love, he reached out to us in our hopelessness. The Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:21; “God made him who had no sin to be seen for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”. Jesus says this about himself; “The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim goodness to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed to proclaim they hear of the Lord's favour.”.

The Hero of Jubilee, the Hero of Freedom, the Hero of Liberation.

I work with some brothers, sisters in North Kensington and some of the Iranians who came to faith they were telling me the other day about the freedom they were saying to me that in their own country it was very difficult to become a Christian. We all know. They were struggling and they felt that they were always being watched by people. They were always in a cage. There was no sense of freedom. They feel like somebody is always watching, always watching over you. But when they came here, there was this sense of freedom. You can sing as loud as you can. You can walk to the church and don't have to look around who's watching you. You can go to the church and pray. Freedom.

Talking about freedom in the Old Testament, blood of animals were used to make peace in the sin, offering a symbolic act that pointed to Jesus, who became the ultimate sin bearer and redeemer. So there's a lot there in that phrase about Redeemer and God redeems us. God took the initiative and he paid the ransom and that ransom was through Jesus, Jesus' blood. I wanted I mean, for us, Christmas maybe give a thought, give a thought. Jesus. God had to go to the cross. Just for me, that's rich, that's deep.

Of course, there'll come a day, there's a future hope. This my brothers and sisters, my friends, this is just a shadow of what is yet to come. Like Jesus, everything was pointing to Jesus, the prophets, the kings. They were always pointing to this Redeemer, this Liberator, this person was going to come and set us free. But we are living, I believe we are living in between the the periods of the New Testament and the year yet to come and the gospel that we need to bring it out to people. There is a future hope, the story that seem to have gone wrong in the first garden will reach a new climax in a new garden, a new heaven, and a new Earth. The trees will reproduce, its leaves will be used for healing. There won't be any curse, no more crying, no more darkness. God himself will be delight[ed].

Wow, we [only] have to pay EDF for electric bills only. God himself will be our light. This is the future glory. This is the future hope. We have in Christ great assurance, the great assurance.

In that place, God will become king and every knee will bow and every tongue will contest that he is God. God's initial project, Creation project will take a new lift and things will be what God has intended in that original place. But listen to this Revelation 22:12; "Look, I am coming soon. My reward is with me and I will give to each person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega. The first and the beginning. The last, the beginning and the last." We are talking about a God who, who is everything, who is everything? I could talk more about that in my conversation with those atheists on Friday we were trying to define who was responsible for the trees, who's responsible for the air I breathe, who is responsible for me in my life? Who is it?

Let me go my time is going on... Yes, so Palm Sunday is not an isolated event, it's part of God's big plan.

Secondly, let's let's dig deep into the Palm Sunday.

Jesus comes as king but not as expected. Palm Sunday is a great humanity to all of us, will laugh and worship the Lord for who he is and for all that he has done for us. Also, it's a great reminder to the many who have not yet believed and accepted God's gift of salvation through Jesus. They brought the court to Jesus and threw the [cloths] over it. He sat on it in verse 7. Jesus didn't come in power as the people expected. He came lowly on a borrowed donkey, a humble king riding into a broken world. He fulfils Zechariah's prophecy; "See your king comes to you gentle and writing on a donkey." Zechariah 9:9, in ancient times Kings wrote horses when they came.

In war, but a donkey symbolises peace. Jesus came not to conquer through violence, but to bring peace between God and humanity. This is not the King people expected. But it is the king we all need. Ample servant King, who was willing to lay down his life for his people.

The crowd wanted a political saviour, someone to overthrow the colonial rule of Rome. But Jesus came to defeat the greatest enemy of all. What is it? Sin and death. Sin and death, that is our greatest enemy, separation from God.

Yet the crowd celebrated him with palm branches and sounds of hosanna blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. The word hosanna, a Hebrew word used in praise about salvation. And it means save us. Save us. Even though they misunderstood the kind of king he was, yet their voices still declare the truth about God.

Palm Sunday is a moment of glory, yes, but it's also the first step towards the cross. Jesus enters Jerusalem to the sound of praise, but he knows suffering is just days away. He was willing to go all the way for us to the pain, to the rejection to death. Are we willing to go for him? We read, we sang in one of the lines of the song about people coming to faith. I read there was some data going around and I think was produced by [the] Bible Society, and they were talking about a quiet revival, a quiet revival, and this revival is about, you know, the young generation that see a generation. The young people are coming back. The Lord is turning the hearts of the young people to come back to them to himself.

The number of people, that have never been to church are now realising that they need to connect to church. Somewhere him in the spiritual world, the Lord is turning people around to come back to himself. Of course, I would say again that I see this in the lives of the Iranian state in, in, in Iran, in here, in UK, the Lord is doing amazing things. And I think this also promised you the thing about, well, there are people will probably asking the question “What must I do to be saved?”. Like like Peter and the gaoler. And there are lots of people who are within our reach, but yet not being reached and are waiting to listen or hear.

So what what I thought I could do was some. I made this little card here and I thought this this end with the prayer. But there's a thing in the back of the where I thought perhaps maybe you want to pray for some people you know? Put them under what George [...] used to say, George was the founder of and he used to say, put them under Holy Ghost at least. He used to say that the Lord is going to do something, but there's some little [cards] come get one if you want to and then stick one the fridge to say every time you go past the freezer to say Lord I pray a breakthrough I you pray blessing over these people. Yeah, that's a practical thing.

So that was number second.

The third thing I want to talk about is this. There is no way we can talk about we. We can talk about Palm Sunday and not Good Friday. Good Friday is like the Senate states of God's plan, isn't it so? I think I've done a little thing there for, for, for for Good Friday, but also for this week. Jesus final [days], in, in Jerusalem in Jerusalem. There's a lot of things going on in that week. Palm Sunday, Jesus triumphal entry.

- Monday, Jesus at the temple and he curses the fig tree and the praises of children.
- Tuesday, engages with religious leaders.
- Wednesday. Jesus' betrayal.
- Thursday, The Last Supper, prayer and arrest.
- Friday, Good Friday. Jesus crucifixion.
- Saturday Jesus died, was buried.
- Easter Sunday. Jesus is risen.

Hallelujah. In that one week, the God who created time, the God who created universe. Counts his days, his earthly days. There's a lot of things going on in there, but listen, we could spend the whole morning talking about I haven't got no time. So what? I thought I could do is just I'm just going to zoom in to Friday. Good Friday. Good Friday.

What is good about Good Friday? What is good about Good Friday?

Well, there's some some reasons I thought I can share with you. The first one is Jesus becomes that Passover lamb. I'm so most of you know, about Passover lamb and the sharing of the blood somehow in God's own divine timing. And that event was taking place at the time, and Jesus was designed to be there and he becomes that Passover lamb, not the blood of animals anymore, but the blood of Jesus Christ. You see, the animal blood was only to cover it. But Jesus, it doesn't only cover it, he removes it.

He leaves no trace behind. He removes it. Good Friday reveals the depth of God's love. You know, let me tell you, brothers and sisters, if you haven't heard it from your loved ones or somebody matters to you with the love of God, let me say this. God loves you more than you know. God loves me more than I know. God loves us so much. That's why he he was able to do what he was able to do. He goes way beyond to rescue us, way beyond to save us. You matter to God, God, we matter to God. And he would be very jealous if we don't come and worship. This is our special here. When God created us out of all the creations, remember we were his special creation. In his own likeness, we are created.

But God demonstrated his own love for us in this while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

While we were still in darkness, Christ died for us.

Another thing I could say about good, Good Friday Good Friday brings forgiveness and freedom. Brothers and sisters, the death of Jesus wasn't a strategy, it was a triumph. He took our place, he bore our sins. The punishment was we deserve fell on him. He redeemed us with his life once and for all. Remember the words. It is. Come on, say it one more time. "It is finished". No more animal sacrifices, no nothing. It is finished once and for all.

Christ paid it with his own blood.

We do not need to do good works like some of our other brothers and sisters are doing in other faiths to earn their way into God's heaven. Jesus has done it once and for all, it is finished.

I remember when in an earlier version Jesus says this about himself in John Chapter 4:34 you would remember when he came and there was disciples who brought him food to him, when they were passing through the Samaritan village in Seca and when they're asking master teacher eat something and Jesus remember what he said; "I have food to eat of which you do not know. My food is to do the the will of God and to finish it on the cross.". Jesus kept his word. "It is finished.". Brothers and sisters it is finished. Like I say, it's not cheap. Its the cost of Jesus blood. Christianity, some people say, oh, your religion is cheap, you don't need to do anything. I have to go to this place and I have to pay money and I have to do this. I have to do that. But listen, this is not what the gospel is all about, the gospel is good news. That's why Friday is good news. That's what excites me, brothers. If anything else, the gospel, we need it.

Again Good Friday professed the way for Easter Sunday. If there was no death, there's no resurrection. Amazing how God works. Because that has happened, resurrection happened so that you can put the two together and then we can say death has been defeated. The power of death has been defeated by God himself.

So what's good about Good Friday? I say everything. Everything, because it's the day death was defeated, sin was silenced, love was proven, and the way was open for you and me to walk in faith in grace,

forgiveness and eternal life. The lot, everything. It's not just good, it's the best news in the middle of the worst moment, and that's why we call it Good Friday.

Not two days from now, we will be celebrating this whenever you have turn about brothers and sisters, let's not [waive our branches] on Sunday and then hide it in our jacket on Monday. Let's go out and proclaim it. Let's go out and tell it. Let's, let's not be ashamed. Why should we? Why should I have nothing to lose? We are talking about life and death here.

You know, people are willing to go and make themselves look silly and foolishness for some entertainment. But we are talking about life and death, eternity matters. Brothers and sisters. If anything, I want to do, I want to start all as much as I'm speaking to you. I'm saying to myself instead of me as well. We have a reason we have something to celebrate.

Can I just give you a little a little something to take away? This is a little gospel track I use, but it's it. What is it? It's got this little signs here. It's got the heart. An "X" and a plus and a question [mark] some some people already might use it, but I find this very useful in our outreach. So when I go to people, I just show them this heart and then ask them what what is that? What do you see? There's a heart and then of course you can talk about love. You can talk about a lot about the heart, but then there's a little verse at the bottom that says, a sentence at the bottom that says "God loves me. God loves you". God loves me so you can start a conversation like this.

The "X" is. It looks very obvious. You know, Once Upon a long time ago, when I went to school, I used to like all the green things. But when the teacher gave me an "X" I didn't like it. The "E" talks about all the wrong things we do and say, and the truth is this. We've all done things wrong. Sad things, wrong against God, and we will all be punished or judged so we can talk about. I have seen we have seen, we have fallen short of God's glory, the cross, and I need to tell you Good Friday.

Then this little question mark here. It says so question is this, you can ask the person to say. So what does that mean for you? If you consider about your faith? If you consider about eternity, that's things of spiritual things. Matter to you. Do you talk about it? You know, just in a gentle way, engage people, because as we have said earlier on, God is doing something in people's hearts. You'll be surprised when you stop out there and talk to people. Oh, yeah. I've been thinking about that.

You know, like Jesus sends the two disciples to go ahead and prepare the donkey. I mean, they they they just went. The donkey had an owner, the owner did not protest, everything was everything, was divinely arranged. Listen, God has arranged people with that. We need to go and talk to him. You know, sometimes we feel that. Oh, if I talk to him, they might think of me differently or I might lose the friendship. Listen, listen, let me encourage you. Let God deal with all the questions that we have. Let's just get out there and do the possible. And then God will do the impossible.

When these people ask why are you untying donkey? The master needs it. No conversation, no questions...

My time's up, I have have to stop here, but thank you so much for listening, and I'm going to hand back. But before I do, can I? Can I just say a prayer...

[Heavenly Father] I stood here in the last quarter an hour to talk about loads of things. I do pray that Lord, if anything I said is not from your or of you I would ask you to remove it. But what I prayed it if anything I said is of you, Lord, I pray that you help us to take this on board and also Lord, if things that I didn't share

from here but you dropped into our hearts that we can identify. Lord, I pray that help us to respond to that. Above all, Lord help us to go from this place with excitement, with joy, with enthusiasm that you loved us so much that you came to die in our place so that we can be free from sin and death and receive eternal life. Also, Lord, I would like to pray if there's a brother or sister here if there's someone watching online and if you haven't made that decision about coming to Christ, I would like to appeal to you. I would like to extend this invitation to you to think about it. If I think about it, pray about it. Because the truth is this. God loves you and God does not want you to be judged by sin and evil. So father, I pray and ask for lists in Jesus name. Amen.