

"I Feel Your Pain!"

Luke 19:28-44

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connect groups

PATH

I have often been drawn to this biblical text over the years for Palm Sunday because the events *did* take place on a Sunday and Jesus was greeted with happy song and palm branches. But in light of the present situation with the entire world suffering the spread of the coronavirus, I want to look at it through the lens of suffering: our own suffering, Jesus' personal suffering, and the future suffering predicted. In so doing I think we will see Jesus in a very different light.

I. Jesus Entered *Our* Suffering (v. 28)

II. Jesus Embraced *His* Suffering
(vv. 29-40)

III. Jesus Predicted *More* Suffering
(vv. 41-44)

POINTS

Jesus Entered *Our* Suffering (v. 28)

- Isaiah said the Messiah would be "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). Jesus' suffering is how we understand His life. Psalm 69 predicts the suffering Messiah—a man soaked in suffering and sorrow. Although there was rejoicing in Luke 19:37-38, the crowd's joy gave way to Jesus' tears (v. 41). Jesus' followers were happy because they didn't understand the truth—they believed their Messiah would be a rescuer, not a suffering redeemer. What began with a rejoicing crowd ended on a rugged cross.
- Jesus understood pain—He had been around the blind, lame, deaf, sick, demon-possessed, and dead. He had just come from Jericho after healing two blind men, one named Bartimaeus (see Matthew 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52); He also healed ten lepers (see Luke 17:11-19). Jesus came to the poor and brokenhearted (see Luke 4:18). He emptied Himself and "took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being" (Philippians 2:7, NLT); He was Immanuel—God with us (see Isaiah 7:14). We can come confidently to Jesus in our suffering because He knows what it's like (see Hebrews 4:14-16).

Jesus Embraced *His* Suffering (vv. 29-40)

- Jesus entered into humanity's suffering, but He came to Jerusalem to suffer (see Psalm 118 and Zechariah 9). Jesus came as a humble servant to die on the cross and bring the world into a state of peace with God. At His first coming, Jesus entered Jerusalem on a humble donkey's colt; at His second coming, He'll arrive to conquer on a white horse (see Revelation 19:11-16).
- Jesus had dissuaded people from proclaiming His majesty, miracles, and mission. He often withdrew from the fanfare or asked those He healed not to tell anyone.
- The timing of the triumphal entry fulfilled a prophecy in Daniel 9:24-26 (the seventy weeks prophecy). On April 6—the tenth day of Nisan—Jesus presented Himself as Messiah and embraced the suffering that would follow. As one theologian stated, "Christianity is the only major religion to have as its central event the humiliation of its God." No other religion has even anticipated the humiliation of its God; and yet, Jesus' death was predicted by prophets and even Jesus Himself (see Matthew 16:21). John 12:27 shows us Jesus' personal pain: "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour?' But for this purpose I came to this hour" (v. 27).

- The Greek word for "troubled" refers to being "agitated, upset, and unsettled." Jesus was contemplating the physical horror of the cross and separation from His Father as the sins of the world were dumped on His sinless soul (see 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Hebrews 12:2).

Jesus Predicted *More* Suffering (vv. 41-44)

- The celebration of Jesus' triumphal entry was interrupted when, in the midst of rejoicing, the hero stopped and wept. The Greek word for "wept" indicates He burst into tears and wept audibly. He was heartbroken because His own people missed who He really was.
- This points us to a more serious question: Are you really saved?
- We're focused, not without reason, on the deaths caused by COVID-19, but that's just a fraction of the deaths happening on any given day. Death is a reality: almost 25,000 die every day from heart disease; almost 27,000 from cancer; 4,300 from diabetes.
- Jesus told a man He had healed, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you" (John 5:14). Eternal suffering is worse than lifelong suffering. A disease may rob you of your best years, but sin will rob you for eternity.

PRACTICE

Connect Up: God sees your future—He knows your choices, and He cares about the decisions you make every day. Make time today to connect with Him—put the day ahead into His hands and give Him editing rights over your life. Praise Him for His faithful goodness and mercy and talk to Him about your struggles. He knows how you feel, and He sympathizes with your suffering.

Connect In: Look out for your fellow believers. Stay in touch with your Connect Groups and others you know through ministry or fellowship. Check in with them, pray with them, and maybe even put them in touch with Calvary's Kindness Campaign if they need food or hygiene supplies (call the front desk at 505.344.0880 for assistance).

Connect Out: Don't be afraid to reach out to unsaved people from work or your neighborhood who may be suffering. You can listen to their concerns, pray for them, and offer such help as you can provide—perhaps connect them to a pastor. You may never know what difference you could make for someone teetering between life and death. As Augustine said, can you "mourn a body from which the soul has departed, and not a soul from which God has departed?"ⁱⁱⁱ

ⁱBruce L. Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996 ed.), 3.

ⁱⁱⁱAugustine, *Sermons: The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century, Vol. III* (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1991), 196.