

WHAT WE DON'T KNOW

Luke 19:35-40

35 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.

37 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!"

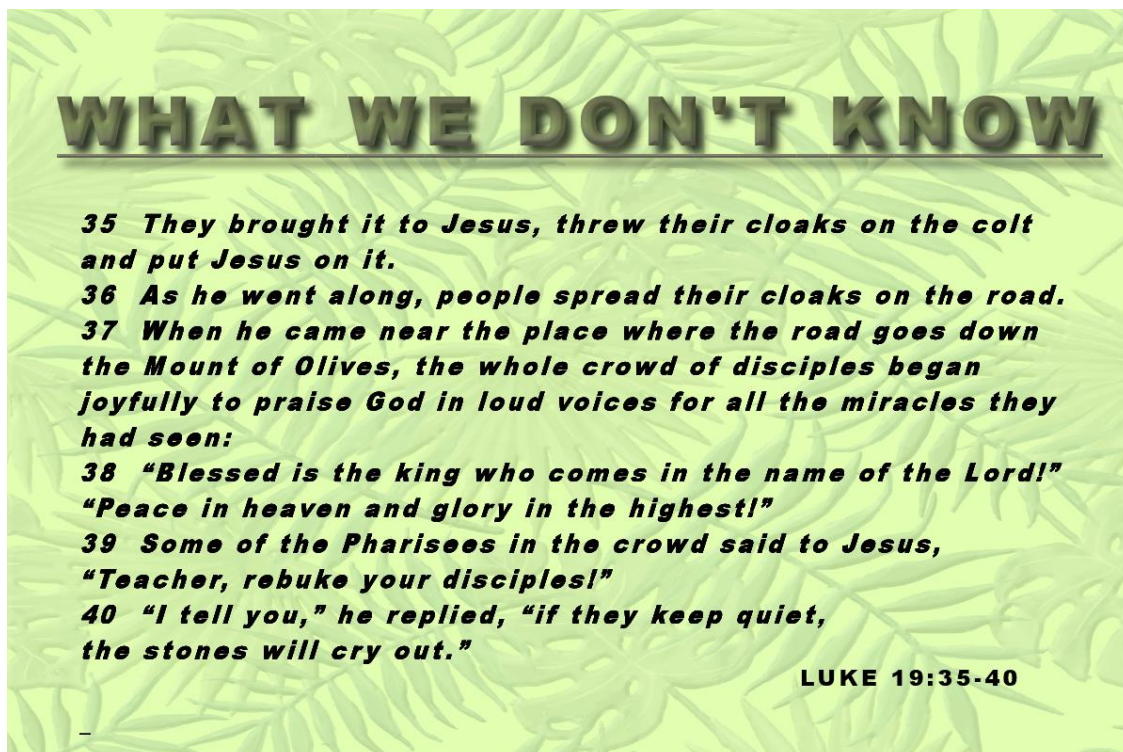
39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

40 "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."

Special Music: Hosanna – A Palm Sunday Song

The Maranatha Singers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YApEljvE6S4>



WHAT WE DON'T KNOW

35 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.

37 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."

LUKE 19:35-40

THE CAPTAIN AND THE SAILOR

The sun was low.
The sea was calm.
No land in sight.
The air was warm.

I eyed the chart
On the bridge of the ship
Measured our course
And thought for a bit.

I called for the captain
“We can save time
If we change to this course
And we follow this line.”

The captain stood fast
Like I’d not even spoken,
Hand to his beard.
I felt a bit broken.

It was as if
I had stepped from my place
And said something I shouldn’t,
Having fallen from grace.

His gaze never broke
But there was something inside
Finding restraint,
Though he had nothing to hide.

Slowly, he turned to me
Looked me straight in the eye
And said, "Stay the course,"
Leaving nothing implied.

"But Captain," I said
As I spoke out again.
"We have nothing to lose
And time to be gained."

Again, he turned to me
A stern look in his eye
And said, "Stay the course,"
My suggestion denied.

In utmost humility
I begged ask him why?
I knew he need not answer
Not attempt to justify

His decision
To the likes of me
A simple, plain sailor
A true want-to-be

The captain stood silent.
His patience grew short.
But he knew that my question
Came from my heart.

He slowly returned
To watching the sun
As it slipped the horizon.
The night had begun.

And then without turning,
He whispered to me,
“You see the chart,
But I know the sea.”

Please close your eyes with me here and envision this moment in your mind. Throngs of people, men, women, and children, gathered on the hillside along the dusty road leading into Jerusalem. Many of them had come to celebrate Passover. This event was an added moment that would make this Passover hard to forget. The air was electric, and the people were anxious. Conversations concerning what was about to occur drifted on the wind. Jesus was coming. Jesus, the rabbi was coming! Jesus the healer was coming to Jerusalem. People of all persuasions, colors, and conditions lined the road. Those who needed healing were there. Beggars were there. Rich people were there. Sinners were there. Even the religious leaders were there.

35 They brought it (the donkey) 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.

37 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.”

Those who were there to celebrate his arrival laid their coats and palm branches on the road. Those not there to celebrate watched with fascinated curiosity or predetermined attitudes of disdain, anger, and judgment. The

crowd's excitement must have been infectious. Let's face it, who doesn't like a good party or parade? Every eye was focused on the main event... Jesus. Those celebrating wanted to crown him king. Those who were in a less-than-celebratory mood were trying to think of a way to shut it all down, up to and including possibly killing this rabbi from Nazareth. How could anything good ever come out of Nazareth?

The detractors were trying to convince Jesus to get the people to settle down. They knew the people were not going to listen to them, so the words were going to have to come from this self-proclaimed healer and prophet whose very existence was in direct contradiction to the authority they had over the people who were present. And Jesus responds by telling them, "Even if I could keep the people silent, the rocks themselves would cry out."

The crowd was singing and shouting. The word "Hosanna" was chanted over and over, rising above the other noises of the excitement. Children darted out in front of and behind the parade, playing chase and shouting, even though they didn't realize what the fuss was all about. People pushed each other out of the way to get a closer look, or to be the next person to throw down their cloak or another palm branch. This was the beginning of a new day. Things were going to be different now. King Jesus had come to Jerusalem, even if he had no desire to be king.

If you or I had been there, it would have been difficult not to get caught up in the revelry. Roman soldiers were watching to make sure that things didn't get out of hand. Although the people were mostly having fun and caught up in the

moment, it could have easily turned into something nasty, so the soldiers were there to keep things in check.

And then there was Jesus, riding on a borrowed donkey, surrounded by his disciples, who were trying to hold the crowd back, always in a protective posture when it came to their teacher. They didn't want anyone to interfere with the moment. This was the culmination of three long years of ministry with their master, and they didn't want anything to dampen the spirits of the day.

And then there was Jesus. Think for a moment. What do you think is going through his head? I mean, this party is for him! But what is he thinking about? After all, he has no intention of allowing them to make him king of Israel. That job was already taken by Herod. And besides, he had no intention of being a puppet for the Roman government. No, that's not where his thoughts were. But he wasn't going to stop the people from celebrating his arrival, because his arrival was just the beginning of what was to come. This moment, riding on the back of a donkey, feeling the overwhelming joy of the people, was just setting the stage for the greatest moment in human history. As much as he had tried to get his disciples to listen and pay attention, they still didn't understand what was about to happen. They were caught up in the jubilation of the people and couldn't see anything but blue skies and smooth sailing ahead.

Here was a moment when it was so obvious to everyone that Jesus' ministry had turned the corner, and the Kingdom was at hand. Nothing was going to stop the inevitable. Jesus' time had come, and they were right there with him, lining up for the final push into Jerusalem. It had to feel good to be on the

winning team, invulnerable to those who had done their best to stop Jesus in his tracks. Listening to this crowd proved that the outcome was obvious. Jesus was golden. This was his moment of triumph!

Oh, how our perceptions are warped by the world as we get trapped in faith based on perceived outcomes. Their Master had not been talking about this parade. No. Jesus' words to his disciples regarding what was about to take place must have seemed like he had got it all wrong, that what he was saying about his approaching death could never happen.

21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Matthew 16:21

22 And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

Luke 9:22

22 When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men."

23 They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life.” And the disciples were filled with grief.

Matthew 17:22-23

18 “We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death

19 and will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!”

Matthew 20:18-19

1 When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples,

2 “As you know, the Passover is two days away—and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”

Matthew 26:1-2

All of those words have gone out the window as the parade wipes any doom and gloom from their minds. But you know that it has to be weighing on Jesus’ mind. He knows. He knows what is about to happen. The disciples have heard the words, but they don’t KNOW. They don’t believe it. They can’t fathom

it. This man that they admire and love so much, who patiently taught them, who has performed miracles right in front of them, including raising Lazarus from the dead. This man, whom they want to believe is the Messiah, the savior of the world, could not die. This man, who has conversations with the Creator of the universe, who has wisdom beyond anything they can understand, who has sat with them in their fear, their joy, their pain, who has so much love and patience for them, shouldn't be capable of dying. If he could save others, why would he not save himself?

We have a different perspective than they did at that time. Despite everything, or maybe because of everything, they did not see the cross coming. Walking down that dusty road, listening to the cheers of the crowd and seeing the devotion and excitement around them, feeling like they were part of something truly world-changing, there was no room in their thoughts for the death of the rabbi who was also their greatest friend. We are on the other side of the cross. We know what happened. And for us, so much of what confused the disciples as they walked that dusty road with Jesus becomes clear as we see the need for the sacrifice and the demonstration of the love of our savior as he redeems our souls, providing a lifeline to the throne of God.

Many years ago, my college roommate invited me to meet his parents and visit his church over a weekend. I had a lot on my plate at the time. I had some important decisions to make. I didn't really feel like I had the time to take off, but I decided to go anyway. I thought it might help me clear my head. I didn't know it at the time, but my life was about to be turned upside down. Everything that I

knew and believed was about to be challenged. Something very big was coming, but I couldn't see what. My soul was restless. I guess you could say that God was preparing me for the storm that I didn't see coming. It was like those moments when the hair on your arm stands on end, but you can't figure out why.

I needed to clear my head, so I took a walk by myself, and not too far from the house, I found an area that began to descend. Suddenly, I came across a cliff that overlooked a valley far below. There were storm clouds in the distance over the mountains, and lightning was flashing within the clouds, the soft rumble of thunder was not more than a whisper in my ears. The wind was cool and misty as it tossed my hair about. There was a complete absence of fear. This was a God moment. We all have them at times.

I sat on the edge of that cliff and took in the beauty of the moment. It was as if God was giving me this time to let me know how he had me covered, reassuring me that everything was going to be okay. I still had no idea what he was preparing me for, but it was so very comforting to know that he had my back, whatever was coming.

But here's the point, I didn't want to leave that spot. I didn't want to step back into the world and face whatever was about to change in my life. Instead, I wanted to remain on that cliff where I felt secure and loved through the efforts of my Creator. I wasn't worried about what was coming next. I so very much wanted to spend the rest of my life in that moment.

Don't we imagine that was how the disciples felt on that road? They would have loved for that parade to go on forever. Victory was at hand. This was how things were meant to be. Here was the world as they knew it, acknowledging the presence of God, preparing them for the salvation to come, even if it was not the salvation they believed it was. The people believed that their redemption was at hand. The Messiah had come to free them from the bondage of the Roman Empire. And he was doing it from the back of a donkey, rather than a war horse. He was rising up with a palm branch, rather than a sword. Everyone wanted that moment to be frozen in time with an ongoing chorus of "Hosanna! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord."

It is in the moments of not knowing what lies ahead that God can best bring us comfort and prepare us for what we don't know. God knows what is ahead, even if we can't see it. He never promises that the road ahead will be easy but reassures us that he has us draped in his grace and is standing with us, even as we begin to see the edges of the approaching storm. Jesus knew this on that road, even as no one around him would accept it. He was leaning into the presence of his father.

We need to embrace those God moments as the Lord prepares us for his purpose. We may not see what is coming, but our Creator does. He will prepare us for whatever it is and bring us through it.

He slowly returned
To watching the sun
As it slipped the horizon.
The night had begun.

And then without turning,
He whispered to me,
“You see the chart,
But I know the sea.”

God bless you all!

AMEN

Copyright © 2025 Rev. Walt Wellborn

Scripture references provided under copyright by:

**THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION©, NIV© Copyright © 1973,
1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. © Used by permission. All rights reserved
worldwide.**