

Luke 19:28-40 or Luke 22:14-23:56

Not the obvious choice

In preparation for his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus sends his disciples to find a colt that has never been ridden – not the obvious choice for the Messiah.



Bible notes



There are two Gospel readings for today, Luke 19:28-40 for the Liturgy of the Palms and Luke 22:14-23:56 for the Liturgy of the Passion. Luke's Gospel closely connects Jesus' coming to Jerusalem with his crucifixion there. Jesus is always on his way to Jerusalem (9:53, 13:22, 17:11); 'I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed away from Jerusalem' (13:33). In Luke, the crowd both greet him on Palm Sunday (19:36) and follow him to the cross on Good Friday. Jesus had addressed Jerusalem while still on his way there: 'How often have I desired to gather your children as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!' (13:34). And as he is led to execution, Jesus says to the weeping woman in the following crowd, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but for Jesus who rides into Jerusalem, 'the city that kills the prophets' (13:34), as a prophet. His advance arrangements indicate a deliberate action. It is a very bold prophetic sign, indicating that the promises of Israel's deliverance are being fulfilled. The two disciples collecting the colt are told to expect an appropriate response to the Messiah: 'The Lord needs it' is all that need be said. This colt seems a surprising choice, since it is unbroken and would be difficult to ride. But this animal was destined for this purpose, as were the previously unyoked cows that brought the ark after its journey from the wilderness to its final resting place in the sanctuary in Jerusalem (1 Samuel 6:7, 2 Samuel 6:2). And Jesus' ability to ride the colt suggests the fulfilment of Isaiah's Messianic vision of humanity's harmony with all living creatures (Isaiah 11:1-10). The multitude's shouting of the pilgrim psalm makes this identification explicit: 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord' (Psalm 118:26). But this too takes us to the Passion, since it was this very psalm that helped his followers understand that the crucified prophet was their risen Lord: 'the stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone' (Psalm 118:22, Mark 12:10, Acts 4:11).

Write

Think of someone who you can pray for. Someone from church, work, school or family, but choose someone who you may not usually think to pray for. Write their names on a piece of paper, and place it somewhere where you will all see it during the week.

First impressions

- How does Jesus challenge the status quo?
- Can you think of other Bible characters who do not seem like the obvious choice?
- How might God use you in ways you haven't foreseen?



Discuss

Spend some time as a family thinking about how you can actively welcome Jesus into your home together. Could you begin praying together at certain times of the day? Could you choose a favourite Bible promise, and create it as art to place somewhere in your home?

Pray

Let us journey on, as people of the cross, following a king riding on a donkey. Servant of the world, let us serve with love, Jesus, our Saviour, as we follow you on the stony way to the cross. Amen.



LISTEN

Sometimes it is difficult to hear the voice of God in our lives. Use a birthday cake candle and sit in quiet for the time it takes to burn down (about 12 minutes), listening for the voice of God. How might God be calling you? It's even better if you put the candle in a muffin to eat afterwards!

WATCH

Watch some films with unlikely heroes, e.g. *Nimona*, *A Man named Otto*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Shrek*. Why are these people unlikely heroes? What made the people in these films special? Pray together and explore how God might use your gifts.