

2019-04-14 ... 10am Palm Sunday ... Revd Canon Judy Hunt

Luke 19: 28 – 40

'Luke's Palm Sunday'

Introduction ...

Were you good at ... are you good at ... those **'Spot the difference'** puzzles ... you know the type ... two pictures almost ... but not quite ... identical. **Spot the difference.**

We have 4 gospels that tell us about Jesus ... but there are differences and different emphases.

So, have a look at today's Gospel passage **Luke 19: 28 – 40** ... see if you know or can guess the differences between Luke and the others ...

(we spent a moment talking amongst ourselves then Revd Judy asked for any differences we noted)

Missing ...

There's one obvious thing missing ... who spotted that? **No palm branches, palm leaves ...**

Yes, palms are there in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and John ... but not Luke.

What point is Luke making? We'll come back to that.

So – no Palms is the obvious difference but there are smaller differences too:

Other Differences ...

In Luke – it's only **the disciples**, the followers of Jesus who are shouting joyfully. And Luke alters the words of acclamation – to Jesus being **a King**.

And in Luke, we read of the Pharisees' request to Jesus – to shut his disciples up **and Jesus refuses**.

So what particular truths, insights can God give us through

Luke's account?

Remember this is the Gospel that has Mary's song – the Magnificat – prominent in Chapter 1. The exalting of the humble and lowly, the challenge to power.

And so Luke introduces a sense of irony into today's passage: the entry into Jerusalem:

No palm branches

No massive enthusiastic crowd – apart from the considerable numbers who were already his followers.

Yet – explicitly names Jesus as a King

though a King riding on a donkey.

As expressed in the **'Roots'** material – which our children and young people follow:

'This is a King and a Kingdom that shatter conventional expectations ...

we are in the upside-down world of the Magnificat

where the powerful are brought down from their thrones

and the lowly are exalted.'

And that understanding is strengthened by Luke's inclusion of the end of our passage. The **PTO**

Pharisees: **Teacher, order your disciples to stop ...** they were probably afraid that the Roman authorities would see this as a revolution and respond brutally ... keep quiet, don't rock the boat ... But Jesus replies – in effect **'No way!'**

Things that need to be said ...

This can remind us that sometimes things need to be said: authorities need to be confronted. Faith and politics are both about real life ... and cannot and should not be kept separate.

Application ...

So this year, with our Palm Crosses we can continue to see them as a reminder of praise to Jesus – as in the other Gospels and as a reminder:

that this public acclamation led directly to Good Friday and his death on the cross but also ... and perhaps as a new insight we can see these Palm Crosses as something to **waive in protest:**

Protests have been evident in news bulletins this week:

The election in Israel ...

Demonstrations in Sudan and Algeria ...

The tensions in and around Tripoli – though many more hours have been devoted to Brexit with both Leave and Remain demonstrations.

But as we might be tempted to join in one side or the other of that divide ... the Palm Crosses associated with our foot-washing servant King could remind us of other issues.

Issues which perhaps have more clarity about Christians definitely joining in ... waiving in protest:

Youth service cuts and the rise in knife crime ...

Taxation needed for ensuring dementia and social care is properly integrated with health services ...

Proper educational provision for special needs children ...

Facilities and care for special needs adults ...

The noisiness of Brexit can drown all of these out. If our political turbulence continues and tips into elections ... let's try and discern what God cares about most in our society ...

What would the stones cry out about in our time?

Palm Crosses: praise to Jesus ...
 a symbol of his death ...
 a reminder to protest about injustice.

Amen.