

Title: *'The Lord needs it...'*
Date: *29th March 2015*
Scriptures: *Psalm 118 & Mark 11:1-11*

Psalm 118:

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!
 Let Israel say,

**'His steadfast love endures forever.' Open to me the gates of
 righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.
 This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.**

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

**This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day that
 the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we beseech
 you, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!**

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

We bless you from the house of the Lord.

The Lord is God, and he has given us light.

**Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar. You
 are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you.**

**O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures
 forever.**

Scripture Reading: Mark 11:1-11

The Message: On the Sunday morning before the Passover began Jesus made His way from Bethany to the city of Jerusalem.

Jesus found the streets and roads crowded with fellow travellers from Galilee and those from Jericho who had heard of the miracles and wanted to catch a glimpse of Him.

They welcomed Jesus with such enthusiasm and cried out, with cries of joy,
***'Hosanna! Praised and blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord!
 Praised and blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna, O
 save us in the highest heaven.'***

Up until this Sunday Jesus had said and done everything possible to avoid such a public display of exactly Who He was, the long awaited, and eagerly expected Messiah.

But the hour had come when He could no longer conceal Who He was - but had to affirmed His kingship as the Son of David.

And Jesus was satisfied that the honour and respect being shown to Him by this vast crowd was indeed sincere.

Jesus sent ahead 2 of His disciples and instructed them to go into the village, and as soon as they entered it they would find a colt tied, which had never been ridden by anyone. **T**hey were to untie the colt and bring it to Jesus, and if anyone asked, *what they were doing*, they were to answer, *'The Lord needs it...'*

So the disciples went away *and* found everything to be just as Jesus had said, they were even asked, *what they were doing*, just as Jesus had said they would be.

What strikes you about Jesus' instructions, the disciple's response, and the willingness of the owner of the colt to let the disciples take it???

How would we respond if we were convinced that Jesus was telling us to do something similar?

Like the 2 **un**-named disciples who left on their mission of faith in trust and obedience, *no questions asked, no excuses made*

OR

Like Moses, who when God told him He was sending Him to Pharaoh in order to bring God's people, the Israelites, out of Egypt made one excuse after the other - *'who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh?' - 'what shall I say to the Israelites?' - 'But they will not believe me or listen to and obey my voice' - 'O Lord, I am not eloquent, I am slow of speech and have a heavy awkward tongue' - 'Oh, my Lord, I pray You send someone else.'* After which the Word of God tells us that *the anger of the Lord blazed against Moses*, no wonder.

And what about the prophet Jeremiah who, when the word of the Lord came to him, saying that God had appointed him as a prophet to the nations said, *'Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am only a youth.'* To which the Lord replied, *'Say not, I am only a youth...'* (Jeremiah 1:4-7).

But Jesus didn't need to become angry with the 2 disciples they left trusting that it would be just as their Lord had said - **AND IT HAPPENED EXACTLY AS JESUS HAD SAID.**

How their faith must have strengthened to find **EVERY** detail was as Jesus had said.

And we can have that same trust - that same faith in God's Word as found in our Bibles, for the Lord has said in...

2Corinthians 1:20 *'For as many as are the promises of God, they ALL find their 'Yes' answer in Christ.'* AND

God also says in Jeremiah 1:12, *'...for I am alert and active, watching over My word to perform it.'*

Then, what about the owner of the donkey?

And while we consider the owner of the donkey, who willingly gave his donkey to the 2 disciples when he heard those special words, *'The Lord needs it...'* let's also consider the *master of the house* to whom Jesus sent 2 **un**-named disciples to say, *'The teacher says: where is My guest room, where I may eat the Passover supper with My disciples?'* and once again Mark 14:16 tells us that the 2 disciples *found everything just as Jesus had told them* - the *master of the house* also gave willingly to the Lord the one thing he had, which the Lord needed?

And what about the crowd who spread their garments on the road, and others who scattered leafy branches which they had cut from the fields on the road.

With less than a week to go before Jesus would be led outside the city walls and crucified, He made a **'triumphal Entry'** into Jerusalem - He was God's anointed King and Saviour and everyone on the journey with Jesus that day had a part to play, *a gift to give*, no matter the size.

One gave a donkey

Others threw their cloaks on the road as was the custom when welcoming a king

Still others cut branches and laid them on the road for Jesus to ride over on His borrowed donkey.

And then, a few days later there was the homeowner who gave his upper room to Jesus and His disciples to use for their Passover meal together.

At present the '*Fellowship Groups*' are studying the various gifts given by God the Father, appointed by Jesus the Son, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which we should all be seeking.

I know that many of us have begun the study thinking we have no gifts to offer for the building up of the Body of Christ, but we do all have something *the Lord needs* - joyful, sincere praise in here on a Sunday, a prayer warrior who, in their home will intercede for those people and situations *the Lord needs* their prayers for.

We only read of our Lord needing *a donkey* and the use of *a room* ONCE in the whole gospel story, BUT THAT ONCE was so important at that moment in God's plan - may we be aware of the importance of what we have to give the Lord, and give it willingly when we hear those special words, '*the Lord has need of it.*'

So, this **Palm Sunday** as we hear again the joyful shouts of the crowd lining and travelling the dusty road to Jerusalem with Jesus riding a borrowed donkey *and* as we journey with them over the Mount of Olives - down the mountainside - across the Kedron Valley - mount the slope which leads to the gate of the City of Jerusalem - pass through the streets to the temple - the crowd swelling in number all the time as people join in from every quarter - and the shouts of '*Hosanna! Praised and blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord!*' ringing louder and louder

Let us take away with us, the knowledge that we too can have absolute trust and faith in God's Word - **Numbers 23:19** says, '*God is not a man, that He should tell a lie, neither the son of man that He should not make good on His promises* ... what God has said He will do AND what He promises He fulfils - so let's act on God's Word immediately, without question and excuse.

And let us never forget that, whoever we are, however little we think we have to offer, someday, some time, our moment will come - a day when our

contribution to His kingdom will be requested in those lovely words: '**the Lord needs it.**'

Let us pray:

Prayer: *Heavenly Father, Whose eyes saw our unformed substance, and in Whose book all the days of our lives were written before ever they took shape - we are not all called to positions of eye-catching responsibility in Your service, but we all have a part to play nonetheless. Whoever we are, whatever our gifts, we each have a contribution to make which You can use in fulfilling something of Your eternal purposes. Teach us, then, to listen for Your voice and, when You call, to respond gladly, offering whatever you ask whenever You need it, to the glory of Your name Lord Jesus, our Passover Lamb. Amen.*