

3 SW 200505 Palm Sunday
Graeme Skinner

Let me take you to Jerusalem today
The Mount of Olives

Reflection



The Mount of Olives

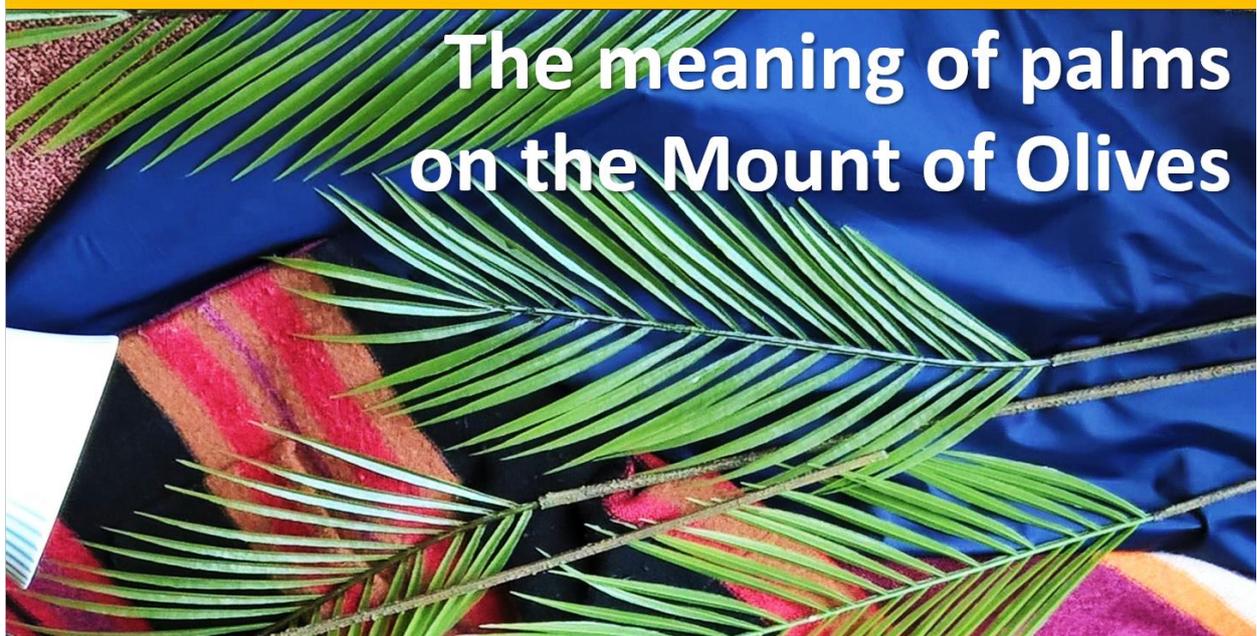
Is this the actual donkey Jesus rode?

This was possibly the actual place he passed as I in the top of the hill down The Mount of Olives to Jerusalem.

So let me ask a question

The meaning of Palms on the Mount of Olives

Reflection



The meaning of palms on the Mount of Olives

Bethphage wall - City limits – Judea is the Jerusalem region
Three large camps of pilgrims – social compaction – no social distancing possible
Why palms? just what was at hand?

The coins tell us

- 1) Jews rejected Herod's coins with face of Tiberias Caesar –
Herod was a puppet leader for the Romans
They demanded Only plant or geometric images on the coins used for
commerce... or no taxes would be paid,
So, Herod capitulated and minted ones with a palm tree.
(it was a victory against the force of domination)
- 2) Other cons have been found with emperor's face stuck out – with a palm
leaf
- 3) When Titus destroyed Jerusalem on 70AD he minted a coined with a solder
whipping a bowed woman ... the writing read 'Judea Capta' – Judea
Captured – the coin also bears to sign for Judea at the time
– you guessed it a palm tree.

The meaning of the palm?

Raising the flag against alien forces – go home Romans....

We have a saviour who will lead us.

Passover, with the huge pilgrim throngs has been opportune times for revolt
before – every attempt brutally stamped on.

Tension and expectation were in the air.

Now here was a man doing the donkey thing – a sign – like a catch phase that
everyone was waiting for – a catalyst that would start something truly
revolutionary.

Judea had fallen before ~600years previously to the Babylonian force.

It destroyed securities, expelled families from homes and laid waste to businesses
and the land.

In 587BC The people were Driven out of their home into the desert villages a
taken captive into Babylon .

So, a book was written to sum out the despair of the people

Lamentations 1v1

Reflection



Lamentations 1v1
How deserted lies
the city,
Once
so full of people

*'How deserted lies the city, once so full of people.
'A deep wailing n pain...'*

Read on....

3v22-23

Because of your great love

We are not consumed

For Gods compassions never fail

They are new every morning

Great is your faithfulness

This inspires the well-known hymn

'Great is thy faithfulness'

Which has the line *'Strength for today, bright hope for tomorrow.'*

That's a strapline for my motivation in SWWATCH

In the testing times, trial, desert and social isolation...*Strength for today*
And for what emerges on the other side... *Bright hope for tomorrow.*

There will be some who falter or even fall, in so many different ways.

The Queen in her speech today will speak about these days as challenging times
With grief, financial difficulties and a lasting change for us all.

We do not and cannot make light of this force that has the world in lock down.

For our monarch and for us there is one who rides on a donkey

Who is a sign of hope in dark times...

We call him...

A Saviour

Reflection

A saviour



A picture of the Judeans desert where Jesus was driven to –
which we marked in the Gospel of Mark when we walked into Lent so long ago
From the river Jordan towards Jerusalem

NOW Once again 3 years later
Jesus travels through this desert from the Jordan valley towards the city
Now emboldened by the fulfilment of his mission.
He set his face like flint towards Jerusalem

And then he paused at the wall at Bethphage.

And then all heaven broke loose **'Hosanna'**

hoshi'ah-nna "save, we pray"
yeshua "salvation, deliverance, welfare,"

The Romans bristled...
The Chief Rabbi was alarmed...
and warned of the danger to the status quo and hissed.
'Better that one man die, than the whole nation'.
One for all.

And so we turn into Holy Week with our Bibles at hand –
telling us the extraordinary story of God's love story - His-story
And if we read the scriptures with these eyes –
we will begin to see it afresh in Technicolor

I'd encourage you to read this week – and use your imagination,
Read, stop, pause. Imagine every few sentences of scripture
*If you were there as a bystander, what would you see, hear, touch, feel, smell,
What would you notice, what feelings does the scene prompt within you?
How would Jesus explain what was happening to you? Jesus the catalyst*

I listened to a very helpful 4-minute reflection
from a brother in the Taizé community
And it's now linked on our Sunday Worship page on this website.
He speaks about Three forces Jesus experienced...

Force of evil

Force of nature – our nature

Angels Messages from another dimension

Which will we listen to?

So lastly

The meaning of Palms on the Mount of Olives

Lord's Prayer – Do not lead us into a Time of Trial (temptations)

HIS time of trial was to come

OUR time of trial is upon us.

'Strength for today, bright hope for tomorrow'