



# WEEKLY SERMON

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**Sunday** April 10, 2022

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**Message** Palm Sunday Message - 2022

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**Text:** Matthew 12:38-45

The crucifixion event covers about 6 hours. During those 6 hours, the Gospel writers capture seven sayings of Christ which are sometimes referred to as "The Seven Last Words." The first three statements are horizontal in nature, describing Christ's conclusion of His dealings with mankind. Let me call your attention to these THREE statements:

**There is the Message of Compassion:** In John 19:25-27 we read,

**"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. (26) When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! (27) Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."**

As the Savior looked at these women at the foot of the cross, it was His mother who captured His heart. How it must have intensified His own suffering to see her in such grief. He spoke to her calling her "**Woman**." He severed the old relationship of mother and son. It signaled a shift in how they were to relate to each other. In John 2:4, He had also called her "**Woman**" and told her His hour had not yet come. Now that hour was here, and she needed Him to die for her sins as well!

Christ was concerned for this sorrowing woman. In compassion for her loneliness and loss, Jesus turned to John, the only disciple willing to stand with the women at the cross of the Master. It's apparent that Joseph was no longer living by this time, and Jesus' half-brothers did not yet believe (though they will). As a result, Christ entrusted Mary to one of His true family members and guaranteed her well-being by giving her to John, the disciple whom He loved.

Of this loving compassion and care, Bible scholar William Barclay writes in his commentary on the gospel of John:

**"There is something infinitely moving in the fact that Jesus, in the agony of the cross, when the salvation of the world hung in the balance, thought of the loneliness of His mother in the days ahead. Even on the cross, Jesus was thinking more of the sorrows of others than of His own."**

That's the definition of compassion. In the midst of His intense sufferings, Jesus cared for those He loved, and in so doing concluded His dealings with men. His focus now shifts upward to the purpose behind it all, the awful task of becoming the Lamb of God, the sin-bearing sacrifice for a lost human race.

**Second there is the Message of Completion:** In John 19:30 we read, "**When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave**

up the ghost.” In the Greek the words "It is finished!" is “Telelestai” meaning “it is completed; I have done it!”

**Third there is the Message of Control:** Matthew 27:50 says that Jesus' last words were cried with a loud victory shout! Jesus' commitment to the Father's plan had been evidenced throughout His earthly ministry. He had carried that commitment all the way to the end as “**he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**”  
Philippians 2:8

He had done it all! He had left no prophecy unfulfilled, no work unfinished, no love unshared, no suffering unaccomplished. He had completed all the Father had sent Him to do. Then He rested. But it was not the rest of weariness that Jesus experienced. It was the rest of fulfillment. He had completed salvation - no more sacrifices were ever to be needed. No human effort would ever be required. As the gift of eternal grace, Jesus had completed salvation, once for all - for all of us.

This week, may your heart be enraptured at the cross of Calvary where our eternal redemption was forever paid by the Lord Jesus Christ.

In His Amazing Grace,

*Pastor David Miklas*

# “The Greatness of Jesus”

Today we begin a very, very special time of remembrance, worship and celebration. We start with Palm Sunday during which we call to remembrance the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, where the crowds cried, "**Hosanna blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.**" Several days later, on Wednesday just before the crucifixion of Jesus at Calvary, this same crowd would cry "**Crucify Him, Crucify Him!**" The climax is the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday.

It was at Calvary where God in the flesh as Jesus took upon Himself the **SINS** of the **WHOLE WORLD**. He stood guilty and condemned before God and paid the penalty for your sins and mine.

It was at Calvary where Jesus cried, "**My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**" and suffered like no one has ever suffered.

I don't understand all that He suffered. But I do know that He bore the sum total of all the sufferings that every person who has ever died and gone to Hell would ever suffer for all eternity. Remember the hymn,

**Years I spent in vanity and pride,  
Caring not my Lord was crucified,  
Knowing not it was for ME He died, AT CALVARY.**

Please turn with me in your Bibles to our text found in Matthew 12, and follow me as I read verses 38-42,

**“Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. (39) But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: (40) For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (41) The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. (42) The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”**

For the Jews to ask for a **SIGN** was evidence of unbelief. They wanted Him to prove that He was the **MESSIAH**. But what further proof could they have been given? Had the Jews searched their own scripture, and sincerely examined the life of Jesus, they would have come to the same conclusion as the Roman Centurion after the crucifixion, who said, "**Truly this was the Son of God.**"

Here in verses 39-42 Jesus reviewed the history of the Jews which becomes a judgment against them.

The first sign against them was that of the **PROPHET JONAH**.

The second sign against them was that of the **QUEEN of SHEBA**, as she searched for the wisdom of Solomon.

Jonah was a **SIGN** to the people of Nineveh. In the belly of the great fish, Jonah experienced a three day burial and then a resurrection. The only sign Jesus would give this nation was His burial and resurrection.

Check it out in the book of Acts chapters 2-7. The main message was not the crucifixion, but the resurrection. The Jews of Jesus' day believed that he had died, **BUT THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THAT HE WAS ALIVE**. After the resurrection, the

Holy Spirit gave to the Jewish nation abundant witness that Jesus was alive. This was the only sign needed.

Jonah preached to the citizens of Nineveh and they repented. Therefore they could easily witness against the rulers of Israel. The Jewish leaders could have had someone **GREATER THAN JONAH**, the resurrected Christ, and yet they still rejected both the messenger and the message. What message was that? It was the **GOSPEL** message found in I Corinthians 15:3-4, where Paul said,

"... that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scripture."

Let's look at the story of the Queen of Sheba given in II Chronicles 9:1-6, where we read,

"And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. (2) And Solomon told her all her questions: and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not. (3) And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built, (4) And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his cupbearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her. (5) And she said to the king, It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom: (6) Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard."

The Queen of Sheba became a witness against the rulers of Israel. She traveled a long distance to hear Solomon's wisdom, yet the Jewish leaders rejected the wisdom of the **GREATER THAN SOLOMON** Christ who was in their very midst.

The point that Jesus was making was, "**THE GREATER THE OPPORTUNITY THE GREATER THE JUDGMENT.**" This nation who now has had the opportunity to see and know in person the "**GREATER THAN**" in the person of Jesus Christ will have the greater judgment.

Returning back to Matthew 12, at the end of verse 41 you notice, "**And behold, a greater than Jonah is here.**" Who is this? Jesus is speaking of Himself. Jesus is **GREATER THAN JONAH** in many ways.

Jesus is greater in His person for Jonah was a mere man.

Jesus was greater in His obedience, for Jonah disobeyed God and was chastened.

Jesus gave His life for the whole world, while Jonah ministered to only one city.

Jesus was greater in His love, for Jonah did not love the people of Nineveh, he wanted them to die. But Jesus' LOVE is for all mankind.

Jesus is a message of salvation, Jonah was a message of judgment.

At the end of verse 42 you notice, "**And, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.**" Again Jesus is speaking of Himself. Jesus is **GREATER THAN SOLOMON** in His **wisdom, wealth, and words**. The Queen of Sheba was amazed at the wealth and wisdom of Solomon, but we have far more in the Kingdom of God.

O Lord, my God, when I, in awesome wonder,  
Consider all the works thy hands hath made;  
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my Soul, my Saviour God To Thee,  
How great Thou art.

And when I think; that God, His son not sparing  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in.  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin.  
Then sings my Soul, my Saviour God To Thee,  
How great Thou art.

Let us pause on this Palm Sunday morning to consider the **GREATNESS OF JESUS CHRIST**. Why is He **GREATER THAN A JONAH**? Why is He **GREATER THAN A SOLOMON**? Let me give you five reasons.

**FIRST: Jesus is GREATER because He is God**. Jesus is **GREATER** than a **JONAH**, and **GREATER** than a **SOLOMON** and **GREATER** than any other prophet. Why? Because **JESUS IS GOD!** " Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God."

When you reduce Jesus to a mere man you make a mockery out of the **CROSS, RESURRECTION** and **SALVATION**. Today we have an anti-Christ spirit that denies the deity of Jesus Christ, by trying to reduce Him to being just a man. There are those who would say that:

He is just a man.  
He is a just a Jewish prophet, a great teacher.  
He was just a moral example, a martyr for a cause.  
He was the founder of Christianity.

Such statements as these make a mockery out of the **DEITY of JESUS CHRIST**. Jesus is all these and more, **He is GOD**. Jesus is not "A" Son of God, a human being endowed with supernatural powers and character. Don't be fooled by the statement, Jesus is "THE" Son of God. He is **God the Son, Co-equal with God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit**.

He was this **GREATER THAN JONAH, GREATER THAN SOLOMON**, sinless **GOD MAN**, like no other, who died in our place.

**SECOND: Jesus is GREATER because He spoke as no other**.

Jonah was a **REVIVALIST PROPHET** to Nineveh.  
Solomon was given great wisdom as the writer of over 3,000 proverbs.

But Jesus uttered words like no other.

**How** many people have **been comforted** with the words found in John 14:1-3? This is where Jesus promises that He is preparing a place for us, and will return for us.

**How** many people have **found salvation** with the words of Jesus in John 3:16? "**For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**"

**How** many people have had their **burdens lifted** with the words of Matthew 11:28? "**Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**"

**How** many at their time of death have been comforted by the words of Jesus in John 11? "**I am the resurrection and the life.**"

**How** many, finding their way **hard, have been up-lifted** by these words of Jesus? "**I am the WAY, I am the TRUTH, I am the LIFE.**"

In John 6:68-69 Simon Peter summed up this point when he said, "... Lord, to who shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believed and are sure that thou art

that Christ, the Son of the living God."

**THIRD: Jesus is GREATER because He loved as no other.** Jonah did not love the people of Nineveh. He didn't even want to go to Nineveh. After his preaching and the repentance of the Ninevites, he pouted instead of rejoicing.

Solomon on the other hand loved his wine, women and song. But Jesus is God's **LOVE GIFT.**

Praise God for Romans 5:8, "**But God commended his love towards us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**"

Praise God "**Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so...**"

Listen again to this word in Romans 8:35-39, "**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. (37) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (39) Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**"

**Oh, the LOVE that drew salvation's plan!  
Oh, the grace that brought it down to man!  
Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span at Calvary.**

The Bible is a love story. Every page in the Bible is just one more page of God's love letter to us. **For God SO Loved!**

Weigh that **LOVE** and measure it in the sorrows and the pains of Jesus on the cross. Measure it as Jesus hung there on that Old Rugged Cross, tasting death for everyman.

We are told prophetically in Isaiah 53:5 "**But he was wounded for our transgressions; HE was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with his stripes we are healed.**"

How much love? **JESUS is GREATER than a JONAH, GREATER than a SOLOMON,** because His love is measureless. In I John 3:16 we read, "**Hereby know we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.**"

There is **NO GREATER** love than that of the Love of God in Jesus. There is nothing in this world of cheap, vulgar, vile, Hollywood love that will keep a man or woman. Today's love is here today, gone tomorrow.

But the Love that comes from God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, lasts for eternity. No other Love draws like the Love of God. John 3:16, "**For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life,**" has broken through to thousands of hard hearts.

This morning, stop for a moment and consider this. Maybe I am talking to those of you who once embraced the Love of God. You know what it was like when you were first saved. You were oh so happy. What a honeymoon you had with Jesus:

**The Love of God was radiant in your heart.  
You loved Him, you walked with Him, you talked with Him.  
Every day was like a new beginning in Christ.  
Every day the sun shined brighter than the day before.  
The Bible was so wonderful you couldn't get enough of it.  
You couldn't wait for church time to come.**

How wonderful it all was to you. You were saved, you were justified in Christ. You felt new, and clean, and you knew you had eternity in your soul. But now you have drifted:

**You don't read your Bible like you used to.  
You pray only when you feel like it.  
You come to church only when the spirit moves you.  
You can't find time to serve the Lord.**

This morning, our dear Lord is looking down from Heaven saying: I want you to LOVE me, not just on Sunday for one hour, but for the entire 365 days a year, 168 hours each week.

Wouldn't it be a good thing, this **PALM SUNDAY** morning, to again look up to the one who is **GREATER THAN JONAH, GREATER THAN SOLOMON**, and see the **GREATNESS OF THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST, AND FALL IN LOVE WITH HIM ONCE AGAIN?**

Why not come this morning and say, "**Dear God I don't know how you put up with my sinful ways. I know how imperfect my love is. Let me again feel the GREATNESS OF THY LOVE. Work through me to show your LOVE TO OTHERS.**"

May you be able to again sing:

**My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine.  
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign.  
My gracious Redeemer, My Saviour art Thou.  
If ever I love Thee, My Jesus, 'tis now.**

**FOURTH: Jesus is GREATER because He forgives like no other.** All the way from the court of Pilot to the Cross of Calvary, Jesus was repeatedly saying those first words of the cross in Luke 23:43 "**Father forgive them for they know not what they do.**" The word forgive means "**send it away.**" **Father close the case against them. Remember their sin no more.**"

There is a headstone over a grave on which is written just one word **FORGIVEN.**

**There is no art work, just the word forgiven.  
There is no epitaph, just the word forgiven.  
There is no name given, just the word forgiven.  
There is no eulogy, just the word forgiven.**

**PRAISE THE LORD**, I have been to a place over which God has written the word **FORGIVEN.** The place is Calvary. Because of Calvary, I am forgiven, and because of Calvary I am to likewise forgive others, "**even as God for Christ's sake, hath forgiven me.**"

Someone said, "**Every person should have a special cemetery lot in which to bury the faults of friends and loved ones. For we win by tenderness, we conquer by forgiveness.**"

Jesus is **GREATER THAN A JONAH** and **GREATER THAN A SOLOMON**, because on the Cross of Calvary, He provided for the **FORGIVENESS OF ALL MY SINS.**

**FIFTH: Jesus is GREATER because He suffered as no one ever suffered.**

In Luke 24:46 we are told, "... **thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to SUFFER**

..."

Peter, who we believe was an eyewitness to the crucifixion, wrote in I Peter 2:21, "**For even here to were ye called because Christ also SUFFERED for us...**" And in I Peter 3:18 he said, "**For Christ also hath once SUFFERED for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.**"

**On a hill far away, stood an old rugged cross,  
The emblem of suffering and shame.  
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best,  
For a world of lost sinners was slain.  
So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,  
'til my trophies at last I lay down.  
I will cling to the old rugged cross,  
And exchange it someday for a crown.**

In Matthew 27:45 we read, "**From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.**" From these words, we find that on the cross, Christ suffered abandonment by God for some 3 hours.

**It was a heaven sent darkness that lasted for three hours.  
It was as though all of creation was sympathizing with the Creator.**

Before the darkness, Jesus uttered three sayings from the cross. But when the darkness came, Jesus was silent for three hours. After the darkness left, then Jesus cried, in Matthew 27:46 in Aramaic a quote from Psalm 22:1 "**Elio, Elio, Lama Sabachthani?**" Which is to say, "**My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?**"

How could a Holy God look with favor on His Son who had become sin? It was during the time of darkness that Jesus had been made sin for us. In II Corinthians 5:21 we read, "**For God hath made Him, to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Christ.**" On the cross, Jesus had taken the sinner's place. Literally the cry of Jesus, "**My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?**" is the cry of an abandoned soul being "**made a curse for us.**"

Jesus was forsaken by the Father that He might suffer the agony of separation for a few hours, so that we might live with God the Father forever and ever.

**Behold a GREATER THAN A JONAH is here.  
Behold a GREATER THAN A SOLOMON is here.**

Today I challenge you, on the authority of the Word of God, to look to the Christ of Calvary who died there to save your soul. **It is there we have the GREATER THAN in the person of JESUS CHRIST who died, was buried, and rose again!**

Oh, the hands that where once pierced on the cross are now knocking at your heart's door. Won't you yield to the **GREATER THAN**, yield to that Love, and accept the Saviour who loves you and died for you? Why not come, as the Hymn we are going to sing tell us:

**Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

**Just as I am, and waiting not,  
To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,  
O Lamb of God, I Come! I Come!**



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Has God spoken to your heart after reading the sermon, **“The Greatness of Jesus,”** then why not, right now, talk to God about what He has spoken to you?

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, **“...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...”**

Romans 10:13, **“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”**

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: **“I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.”**

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, please let me know. Please send an e-mail to [pastormiklas@aol.com](mailto:pastormiklas@aol.com) and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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