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“When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil...”

And right after he entered, right after all of the crowds were cheering, Hosanna to the Son of David (i.e. who was a king, THE king of all the kings of Israel), we are told that he:

Then Jesus entered the temple^[c] and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.

Were the crowds still following him at this point? I assume they did. He takes definitive action against the establishment, against the way they were practicing their religion. How could they not take action against him?

And upon his death, we are told that *“At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split.*

Both upon his entry into the Holy City *and* at the moment of his death, Jesus upends the status quo. How is our worship, our certainty in the knowledge that we’re getting it “right,” get challenged by Jesus entry into our lives? It appears that, in a way, the point of it **was** to disrupt.

Even the time that he chose to go to Jerusalem was provocative. Celebrating the Passover was (and is) a huge deal. It is the birth-story of God’s people, their deliverance from slavery and (a generation later) finally, *finally* they get to enter the land promised to Abraham hundreds and hundreds of year ago. They were delivered from slavery in a foreign land and brought to a place that was their own. Yeah. Kind of a big deal. Jews from everywhere descended upon the city and all those in authority were nervous.

The Romans were nervous because the Pax Romana worked best when there was actually pax, peace. Disruptions were expensive and, well, disruptive the machine that was the Roman empire.

The Jewish leaders were nervous because of Jesus and the way the he struck at the roots of their beliefs and practices. This is discussed by the high priest, Caiaphas, and his cohort, in John’s Gospel. If he keeps on doing things like raising people from the dead, the Romans will come and destroy our thing! Caiaphas then says, *“You know nothing at all! ⁵⁰ You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed.”*

We have to understand that, as Karoline Lewis put it,

Because before it became salvation, before it became forgiveness of sins, before it became a sign of God’s sacrificial love and a symbol of a church, the cross was a

crisis of unfathomable proportions. And the death of Jesus, in no uncertain terms, was an earthquake. "The earth shook, and the rocks were split." When the earth shook and the rocks split all that we assumed, all that we knew, all in which we had become complacent, basking in overfamiliarity, was twisted upside down. Overturned. Never to be the same again.

No one who witnessed any crucifixion would say afterwards that the one who died had won, had conquered, was victorious. No. It is hard to imagine anything that looked less like success than a crucifixion.

We all fail. Have you felt that lately? Day by day we scramble to wrap our minds around this brave new world we now live in. We base our actions upon assumptions about how the world is shaped, but the shape of it has changed. So many of our assumptions give us the right answer to a world that no longer exists. {TED talk about line length...?} And we fail and come up short and disappoint – if not others, certainly ourselves. What are the rules now? How does this thing work? Everything's upside down now. Turmoil might be a good word for what we're experiencing every day.

"When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil...", indeed!

And everyone in this story – with the exception of Jesus – failed. Judas betrayed him and then regretted his decision (repented). Peter failed at NOT denying Jesus (as did, essentially, all the other disciples; at the very least abandoned him in his hour of need, after they had agreed with Peter: none of us will leave you!) No one understood what was going on here. Except Jesus. The Romans thought they had quelled a riot; the Jewish leaders thought that they had preserved their "nation," their thing. Judas thought, at least at first, that he was right in betraying Jesus; Peter was convinced that he could withstand the onslaught to come and remain loyal to his Lord. Everyone got it wrong. All need to repent.

We all grasp at what we think will make us safe and secure. That's what everyone was – except Jesus – was doing in this story. They all come up with answers that make sense, that seem like a good idea based upon their concept of reality. And they were all wrong.

Six million have filed for unemployment. A few weeks ago unemployment was at record low levels. Upside down.

It's Friday but Sunday's coming. We don't know exactly what that will look like, but if it's God's reality, we know it must be good. If we can assume that God actually chose this way to save us – this thing that is the embodiment of suffering and failure – then it means that we all have to die, we all have died, with Jesus. Because if resurrection is the goal, it means that death must come first.

There's a line from a Leonard Cohen song,

*And Jesus was a sailor when he walked upon the waters,
And he spent a long time watching from his lonely wooden tower,
And when he knew for certain only drowning men could see him,
He said, "All men shall be sailors then until the sea shall free them."*

These are the birth pangs of a new world breaking in. The old ways must die. No one puts a new patch on an old wine skin. You get a new wine skin for new wine.

And... "In the rush to return to normal, use this time to consider which parts of normal are worth rushing back to" (**Dave Hollis**).

We don't know what the resurrection will look like, but we know that it's going to be better than the old life we keep clinging to.

It's Friday but Sunday's coming. I've heard rumor that the story doesn't end where we left it today. *{Whispered} I've heard rumors that the tomb is empty.* But we'll talk about that next week!