

Palm Sunday: Shall I Stay or Shall I Go?

- **Holy Week as a journey to the heart:** We step into the core of the gospel story, Jesus's ministry, and the essence of our faith.
- **The central theme of choice:** Holy Week reveals two divine choices — to stay or to go.
- **Jesus chooses to stay:**
 - Enters Jerusalem on a donkey, fulfilling Zechariah's prophecy with humility.
 - Faces Gethsemane's agony with the prayer: "Not what I want, but what you want."
 - Rejects escape and violence, choosing obedience and love over self-protection.
- **The Father chooses to let go:**
 - Sends the Son into the world at the Incarnation.
 - Anoints and releases Jesus into public ministry at baptism.
 - Withholds intervention at the cross, allowing Jesus to cry out in abandonment.
- **A divine paradox:** While the Son stays, the Father lets go — both acts of love, trust, and self-giving.
- **Personal reflection for Holy Week:**
 - Are we being called to stay in a difficult situation — to endure, to be present, to trust?
 - Or is God asking us to let go — to release someone or something we cling to out of love or fear?
- **Gospel characters mirror our choices:**
 - Judas goes when he might have stayed loyal.
 - The disciples sleep and flee when invited to stay and watch.
 - The women at the cross stay, faithful and present in suffering.
- **Final challenge:** As Holy Week begins and the King comes near, each of us must ask — *Shall I stay, or shall I go?*

Questions:

Shall I Stay - or shall I go?

1. How does Jesus's choice to stay and enter Jerusalem on a donkey (Matthew 21:1–11) reflect both obedience to God and defiance of earthly power?
→ What does this moment tell us about the kind of king Jesus is?
2. Read Matthew 26:36–46 (Gethsemane). What does Jesus's struggle in the garden teach us about what it means to choose to "stay" in hard times?
→ How do we relate to Jesus's prayer, "Not what I want, but what you want"?
3. Consider the Father's choice to "let go" by sending the Son into the world (Philippians 2:5–11). What does this tell us about divine love and vulnerability?
→ How might that shape how we think about letting go of control in our own lives?
4. In Matthew 26:47–56, Jesus refuses to call on angelic help. What might this choice teach us about divine restraint and strength?
→ How do we see strength differently in the kingdom of God?
5. Judas, the sleeping disciples, and the women at the cross each respond differently to the question: "Shall I stay or shall I go?" (Matthew 26–27).
→ Which of these characters do you identify with most in this season?
6. What situations in our lives right now might mirror this spiritual tension between staying and going?
→ How can Scripture help us discern when God is calling us to persevere, and when to release or step away?