

March 28 2021

Palm Sunday

Luke 19:29-44

We find ourselves at the conclusion of another Lenten season. I must confess that it seems like we have been in Lent for over a year. The past years seems to have been a prolonged desert experience. Which I hope and pray will make this Easter much more meaningful, prayerful and powerful to all of us who celebrate it.

This morning we celebrate Our Lord's entry onto Jerusalem. As He enters Jerusalem the crowds are going wild and celebrating as they welcome Him. I thought to combine the children's message with the adults this morning. It might challenge all of us to think and reflect on today's events. As we celebrate today, think of your hearts as the city of Jerusalem. What happens to us if we let Jesus enter into our hearts as He did in Jerusalem this morning?

There are three elements that I hope to focus on this morning. They are: clothes, branches and Hosanna. They play an important role in the meaning of the day and reflect the culture of Our Lord's time. Hopefully they will make us think differently about Palm Sunday.

As Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey the people placed their clothes before Him on the road. Clothes on the road is a tradition in this part of

the world. It was usually done when a victorious king entered the city. This was a great sign of celebration and submission. The people would show their loyalty to the king by putting their clothes under his feet. So ask yourself, do we have a similar loyalty and obedience to Our Lord and the King of our hearts? When we give Him permission to enter our hearts we are truly accepting Him as our saviour.

The people also placed branches of palm and olives before Jesus as He entered Jerusalem. In this part of the world palm branches represent victory and olives branches represent peace. So don't be shy in carrying or holding your palms up high. They are trophies of victory given to us by Jesus. They are a sign of His victory over sin.

Olive branches have represented peace for centuries. Noah sent out a dove in search of dry land. It returned to the ark with an olive branch. This was as if God was telling them that they could come out of the ark. The evil has been washed away by the waters of the flood. Jesus gives us the message today that He is the King of Peace. If we want that peace we have to let Him enter into our hearts. The peace of God which is above all human minds will keep our hearts focused on Our Lord Jesus.

The word Hosanna is what the people cried as they placed the palms, olives and their clothes before Jesus. It is a Hebrew word meaning to save us now. This word is set in the present tense. Meaning to save us right now and not later. There is an implied tone of immediate action. The people wanted Jesus to save them from the Romans and to restore the line of David's dynasty. This is very politically loaded. I remember a lecture by an Orthodox Rabbi who said that the Messiah will not be a political figure. That the Messiah will be a great teacher. Our Lord Jesus was that great teacher who came and taught us about God's love for us

and how we should love our neighbors. Most importantly He came and saved us from our sins.

The people are also shouting” Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.” The people are quoting parts of Psalm 118:26. They are also praying while celebrating.

Lets recap a little bit. When we let Jesus into our hearts, He brings us victory over sin and the peace of God that surpasses all understanding. When He enters our hearts our prayer changes to celebration and thanksgiving. Yet we have to ask Him to enter our hearts because he will not enter unless we ask Him to. He does not force Himself upon us. He made us with free will and we have to be willing to freely let Him enter our hearts.