

Palm Sunday – Communion

3/2/23

Various Text

Sunday AM

As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, on the way, He took the (12) aside and said, “We’re going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to be mocked, flogged, and crucified. On the 3rd day, He will be raised to life!” As they came near to Jerusalem to Bethpage on the Mt. of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there w/ her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone asks, say the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.” This took place to fulfill what was spoken thru the prophet: “Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’” The disciples did as Jesus had instructed. They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of Him and those that followed shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” The crowds said, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Palm Sunday is the day we celebrate the **triumphal entry** of Jesus into Jerusalem, yet for the Jews, it marked the pinnacle of their hopes that the Messiah had come to save them from the tyranny of Rome. For Jesus, it marked the beginning of the Passion Week and the final leg – *to seek and save the lost*.

Palm Sunday began w/ Jesus and the (12) traveling over the Mt. of Olives into Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. The **Passover** is the holiest of all Jewish holidays that remembers the events in Egypt where the Israelites made a blood sacrifice and painted the blood over the doorpost so the death angel would Passover their homes and spare them from God’s wrath.

As Jesus traversed the Mt. of Olives, the crowd, **believing Jesus to be the Messiah**, began to worship Him by spreading their cloaks and waving palm branches. It was a similar gesture that was granted to King Jehu at his coronation in 2 Kings 9:13. They also began shouting Psalm 118:25–26 – accepting Him as their Messiah – *Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!*

Unfortunately, the celebration wasn’t to last as the crowds weren’t looking for a Savior to rescue them from their sin, but for a Messiah who’d save them politically/nationally. Simply put, even as they waved palm branches and shouted for joy, **they missed the true reason for Jesus’ presence**.

It’s a tragedy to see the Savior but not recognize Him for who He is. It boggles the mind to think that the very crowds who were crying out “Hosanna!” on Palm Sunday were crying out “Crucify Him!” by Friday.

Yet honestly, we shouldn’t be so surprised. For even in our day we have far too many people who have missed the message of the Cross. Too many people have placed their faith in themselves rather than in the sacrifice of Christ. And too many people have excused and minimized their sins living unconcerned about the consequences of their rebellion.

Quite simply, far too many people have failed to understand the wages of sin and the cost of the cross.

So, on this Palm Sunday, let it be a day of worship – but also, a day of remembrance; but not for what we want Jesus to be, but for who He really is – our suffering servant and wonderful Savior.

Let’s partake in the bread and the cup in remembrance of the price that had to be paid to make an end to sin and to bring us into a saving relationship w/ our God.

Come to the sacred table, not b/c you must, but b/c you may; Come not to testify to your righteousness, but to express your sincere love to our Lord; Come not b/c your goodness gives you a right to come, but b/c in your frailty and sin you stand in need of heaven's mercy and help; Come b/c you love the Lord a little and want to love Him more; Come b/c He loved you and gave Himself to you; So, lift up your hearts, above your cares and fears; let this bread and cup be a sign of God's grace to you and a pledge of your love to the Him; receive His love and consecrate your life new and afresh to discover and live His will for your life.

The BREAD

The bread represents the body of Christ torn for us – the real manna from heaven to meet our soul-need.

In John 6, we find the 1st of (7) amazing truths about Jesus in what are known as the **I AM Discourses** – (7) statements Jesus shared during His earthly ministry to distinguish Himself as God in the flesh and the great I AM to Israel from the O.T.

*When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, you're looking for me, not b/c you saw the signs I performed, but b/c you ate the loaves and had your fill. Don't work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him, God the Father has placed his seal of approval." So, they asked, "What work is required of God for this?" Jesus said, "The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent." So, they asked, "What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe You? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." "Sir," they said, "always give us this bread." Then Jesus said, "**I am the bread of life**. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. 6:25-35*

Jesus tells us that He is the bread of life – the manna of God and show-bread who was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for iniquities – so that the punishment that brought us peace was placed on Him – so that by His wounds, we can be healed.

Take a moment to reflect on the true manna of God and what He endured in His body to give your life.

The CUP

The cup represents to the blood of Christ poured out for us to satisfy God's justice on sin – for w/out the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sin.

He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption thru His blood, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:16

rescued (*apolutrosis*) – to deliver/release by payment of a ransom or to free a slave from bondage.

Meaning Jesus has given us complete freedom from the effects of sin by paying our ransom in full.

For this reason, Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. Hebrews 9:15

ransom (*aphesin*) – to pardon, forgive, or remit by sending away

B/c of Christ's finished work on the Cross, we have been pardoned/redeemed. God has sent our sin away *as far as the east is from the west...* so that they'll never be found again (Psalm 103:12). It is a reference to Jesus becoming our scapegoat taking our sin away to bring us redemption/forgiveness thru His blood.

The Colossians passage teaches us that Jesus paid in full of debt and thus, rescues us from the rule of evil by removing us from sale. In this process, He adopts us as children and gives us a new citizenship, which qualifies us to share in all of His blessings – including the forgiveness of sin, the promise of abundant/eternal life, and the privilege of representing Him until the day of return.

His death on our behalf paid in full the price to redeem us. On that basis alone, God forgives our sins, grants us His inheritance, delivers us from the power of darkness, and makes us citizens of His kingdom.

Take a moment to reflect on the His blood that was spilled for you.