

Title: After the Hosannas

Text: Matthew 21:1-11 (in John 12:12-14)

Take your Bibles, please, and turn to Matthew chapter 21. Today we come to the glorious story of the TRIUMPHAL ENTRY OF JESUS INTO JERUSALEM.

Matthew chapter 21 beginning with vs. 1-11. *Would you please stand for the reading of God's Word*
(Read Matthew 21:1-11)

Prayer

With the cry of "HOSANNA", they greeted Him. With the cry of "HOSANNA" in His ears, He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. And with the cry of "HOSANNA" began the last and most important days in the earthly life of Jesus.

Dear Friends These eight days are perhaps the most important days in human history. But it is not the "HOSANNAS" that we remember. It is not the "HOSANNAS" that interest us some ~~nineteen~~ *two thousand* years later. ~~For we know how fleeting... how meaningless... the greeting of the crowd was.~~ *Dear Friends* [We cannot view Palm Sunday nor, indeed, any other day in the life of Jesus, apart from the events that unfolded in the hours and days after the "HOSANNAS." For after the "HOSANNAS" came the efforts of the authorities to trick Jesus into condemning himself... after the "HOSANNAS" came the warnings of Jesus concerning the last days... after the "HOSANNAS" came the Last Supper and Gethsemane, the betrayal of Judas... the trail before Pilate... the denial of Peter... the ~~appearance before~~ *scourging by* ~~the Roman soldier~~ *the Roman soldier* Hared and the people. And of course after the "HOSANNAS" came the crucifixion.....

These events form the drama of HOLY WEEK. But the drama does not end on the sixth day with the burial and the sealing of the tomb. It is brought to a complex only on the eighth day with the cry.. "HE IS RISEN."

Seven days from today we will be here again. We will stand and sing "CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY". And from our outward dress to our inward spirits the feeling will ~~again~~ be that of joy.

S.F.W. But the fact, dear friends, is that there are other feelings we should be having during these next seven days....there are other emotions that should be experienced.... *he*

If Jesus Christ is to have the meaning in your life that He should have, if Easter is to speak to you its full message of life, then you cannot move from Palm Sunday to Easter in one simple jump. You must walk through each day of the week. You must move step by step from that which happened after Jesus entered into Jerusalem with the cry of "HOSANNA" TO that moment when two women dashed from a grave ^{yard} and seven days later to proclaim, "HE IS NOT THERE, HE IS RISEN."

And so, for a few minutes let us walk through the days of the week Jesus knew that stand between Palm Sunday and Resurrectin Sunday.

I have no intention of trying to draw earth shaking insights from each thing that happened. My concern, this morrowing, is that we FEEL deep down what happened to Jesus and how He reacted as He became caught up in those things that played upon His life.

My concern is that we sense the actions and reactions to this man to whom we, as Christians have committed our lives. For only as we do so, will the full impact and importance of Jesus upon our own lives be felt and experienced *in a fresh and new way.*

Palm Sunday is the day that Jesus entered into Jerusalem. It is the day of selection. Throughout the country side Lambs were being selected out of the flocks for Passover. And how fitting that the Lamb of God, Jesus, entered into Jersualem on the day of selection.

Palm sunday is, also, the day Jesus entered the temple and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. And in angry He drove them from the Temple saying; "IS IT NOT WRITTEN, MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER: BUT YOU ARE MAKING IT A DEN OF ROBBERS."

At the close of that first Palm Sunday, the sun went down as Jesus and his disciples left the city and made their way down the hill to Bethany where they had been invited to stay. It was probable in the home of Mary and Martha. And Sunday ends.

But, when morning came they were again on the road with their faces turned toward Jerusalem. ~~MONDAY WAS THE DAY OF CONFRONTATION.~~ Monday was a day in which Jesus let the full weight of who He really was break through. It was a day when no words were with held.

Monday is the day Jesus entered the temple and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And in anger He drove them from the temple saying: "IS IT NOT WRITTEN, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL THE NATIONS? BUT YOU HAVE MADE IT A DEN OF ROBBERS.'"

Monday is the day that Jesus spoke about the blindness of people....of those who did not recognize the truth...not that they were not capable... but because they were too set in their way, because they preferred things to stay as they were. "I HAVE KNOWN PUBLICANS AND HARLOTS THAT ARE MORE OPEN AND RECEPTIVE TO GOD'S PRESENCE THAN SOME OF YOU," he said to the so-called religious leaders. *The Pharisees and the Scribes*

"Remember the scripture," Jesus said, "the stone that the builders rejected...the same became the head of the corner."

On Monday, Jesus told the parable of a king who prepared a great meal to commemorate the wedding of his son. He sent out messengers with invitations. But, no one came. Again, he sent out invitations and again the people refused to come, even mistreating those who came to deliver the invitation.

When the king saw what had happened he was deeply hurt and gathering his servants together, he bid them go out and bring in those who would come. Whoever they might be....the good and the bad...the lame, the blind, the poor...bid them "come."

Jesus ends the ^{parable} story with words that are sad and are a commentary on his age and on ours: "FOR THOUGH MANY ARE INVITED, FEW RESPOND."

Let me ask you. HOW MUCH TROUBLE SHOULD A CHRISTIAN GO TO IN TRYING TO BRING AN UNSAVED PERSON TO JESUS? HOW MUCH TROUBLE?

The story of the paralytic borne of four is a good example for each of us. These men went to a lot of trouble and expense to bring their friend to Jesus. They gave much time and had to overcome many obstacles. They exercised faith...hope...love...and perseverance. But, oh how they were rewarded. A man who was lost to God...a man bound down by the things of the earth.....THIS MAN WAS GIVEN NEW BIRTH.....

A soul that was lost in sin, that no man's art could cure; that soul was made pure. The joy of the four men who brought their friend will be our joy when we exhaust every resource to bring a spiritually sick person to the great ~~teacher~~ ^{Physician}. Is any price too great to pay when we consider what Jesus went through on the cross for us? "MANY ARE CALLED....FEW RESPOND".

Monday comes to a close with the great teaching of Jesus about prayer. Jesus said, "WHATEVER YOU ASK IN PRAYER, BELIEVE THAT YOU SHALL RECEIVE IT, AND YOU WILL. AND WHEN EVER YOU STAND PRAYING, FORGIVE, IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING AGAINST ANYONE: SO THAT YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN MAY FOR GIVE ^() YOU YOUR SINS." *And Monday ends - and Tuesday begins*

Tuesday,..became a day when those who saw Jesus as a threat to their position plotted to find a way by which they could arrest him.

They devised a plan. We will ask him ^{IT IS IT OR IS IT NOT LAWFUL TO GIVE} ~~to whom one should render tribute:~~ ^{TO} ~~should it be Caesar,~~ ^{or God?} If he says ~~yes~~ ^{God} we can inform the Roman Governor that Jesus is unfaithful to Rome. If he says, "~~Caesar~~" ^{yes} ~~Caesar~~ we can arrest him ourselves for he will have blasphemed against God.

And so they ask Jesus, to which he responded, "RENDER TO CAESAR THE THINGS THAT ARE CAESAR'S, AND TO GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD'S." ^{POLL TAX} ^{TIP}

And so the day went. Over and over again they tried to catch Him in a way that they could justify action against him, but always he turned the table. Yet, not once did he compromise His position. Nor did he hesitate to let them know that He knew what they were trying to do. He reminded them again that there were only two great commandments.....TO LOVE GOD AND TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. Jesus reminded them that greatness was not measured by position or wealth or ancestry. He said, "HE WHO WOULD BE GREAT AMONG YOU, LET HIM BE SERVANT OF ALL."

To the Pharisees

Then he said, "WOE TO YOU, YOU HYPOCRITES. FOR YOU MAKE YOUR OFFERINGS AND SING YOUR HYMNS AND OMIT THE MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS OF THE LAW: JUSTICE, MERCY, FAITH, AND TRUST IN A LIVING GOD."

Again Jesus said, "YOU CLEAN THE OUTSIDE OF THE CUP BUT FAIL TO CLEAN THE INSIDE WHICH IS FILLED WITH FALSEHOOD AND EXCESSES."

Oh, dear friends, WHAT IS OUR EXCESS? Do we continue to clean the outside and fail to clean the inside. ~~St John 1:9 says...~~ "IF WE CONFESS OUR SIN, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST TO FORGIVE OUR SIN AND CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS." *And Tuesday ends - and Wednesday begins*

Wednesday became a quiet day. It was probable a day when Jesus stayed in Bethany. It was a day that reminds us of the humanity of Jesus...his need for rest....his need to be alone with himself and God.

This was not a wasted day, but a time when the things that had taken place were put into proper perspective and when the things to come, were prepared for. This was a time for being with friends...for quiet talk that also added strength to the soul and body. *It was a Time To Be alone With God.*

Thursday was Passover. Jesus had chosen to observe it in Jerusalem with those who had been closest to Him. Two of the disciples were sent into the city early in the day to make the final arrangements. As the afternoon came to a close Jesus and the others came up the road and entered the city....Jesus for the last time.

John 13

He gave his disciples a lesson in humility as they gathered in that upper room that night, as He girded himself with a towel and washed their feet. This was to become forever a symbol of true humility. And it continues to be that today. *The heart of a servant - one who truly serves*

They did not understand all that took place around the table...at least not then....the bread...the cup, their meaning for a while remained clouded in mystery....

The disciples revealed their weakness that night as they fell asleep in the garden although they had been asked to watch and pray....

Jesus revealed again his humanity as he prayed - "Let this cup pass from me - yet not my will but yours be done" - and in the late hours of that night ^{and} the early hours of the next day, Jesus revealed a courage and determination that comes only after one is sure of what he is doing.

Our tradition says that Jesus was crucified on Friday. And by late afternoon Jesus, the Messiah, was dead. They took him down from the cross and laid him in a borrowed tomb. The tomb of Joseph of Arimathia. The entrance was sealed with a stone and soldiers were left to guard the tomb. And the week comes to a whimpering close. And the heavens broke loose with a violent storm....The disciples had fled...at least most of them. Judas has hanged himself...And all that God seemed to have had in mind for Jesus seemed to have come to a sudden halt. Or, so the disciples believed.

J You see, dear friends, only as we live this week day by day - only as we see it as it is, do we find why Jesus Christ has the right to make claims upon our lives. Only as we feel the full weight of what this week called "HOLW" was to Him, can we sense what He can really be for us. Only as we walk these days do we understand all that was involved in His decision to come to Jerusalem. Only as we look upon the hatred that was raised against Him and behold the betrayal of Judas and the denial of Peter the scouraging, the crucifixion, are we prepared to understand and be moved by that event which bears the name ^{Resurrection} ~~EASTER~~. (PHAS+)

It is sad that so many people limit themselves to Palm Sunday and Easter when they should live the days in between. ^{Oh! How we need to} Walk with Jesus day by day. Experience within ^{our} ~~your~~ soul the anguish and joy and sorrow of this GREAT WEEK. For the events of this week can become a key which will open a deeper relationship with Jesus.

So many people live on the shallow edges of life. So many people are willing to settle for second best. When you could moved into the wonderful presence of Almighty God.

Think of it this way. In your bookcase at home there maybe a book that you have never read. It maybe the glory and wonder of the tragedies of Shakespeare or some other great literary work. But, there it is in your bookcase. And so long as it remains unread it is external to you. It remains outside of your experience. But, then one day you take it down and you read it. You are thrilled and fascinated and moved. The story sticks in your mind, the great lines remain in your memory. And now, when you want to, you can take that joy out from inside yourself and remember it and think about it and feed upon it. Once, the book was external to your experience. It was on the shelf. But, having read the book, you now can feed upon it.

My dear friends, it is that way with the events of this final week in the life our Lord. It can remain external to your experience. Or, it can become a living force within your experience.

It all depends on you. Walk this week with Jesus. Let him fill your soul with his presence. If you have never done so, receive him, today, as your Lord and savior.

May Palm Sunday and the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem be symbolic of Jesus moving from the external to an internal experience in your life? And live this week in the expectation of Resurrection Sunday.

Shall we close in prayer?