

Palm Sunday Sermon Transcript, March 28, 2021

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Palm Sunday, day of joyous festivities in the midst of our Lenten season. It is a wonderful time. We do something completely different. We go outside of the church, we wave palm branches. We sing as we walk into the church, emulating that walk into Jerusalem, following after our Savior. Often there's a procession with a cross or other things going before, and it's an exciting and joyous time. And yet, even though it is that way and we all know what's coming, just Friday, by Thursday night, or Friday morning, depending on how you time it, Jesus was sentenced to be crucified.

He was captured by an angry mob. He was brought before Pilate. He was brought before Herod. He was brought before the high priest. And everybody was hurling false accusations at Him. And yet, He never defended Himself. He never tried to justify Himself. He simply took it. Why? Because He had been chosen as the lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. Not only had He been chosen by God Himself before the plan

So, we have Jesus being selected to be the sacrificial lamb. And He does so with all confidence, fulfilling what was said about Him in Zachariah Chapter 9. Again, in Zachariah, it's a story we have of the King coming into Jerusalem, but David comes in on a mule, not a donkey. And again, this is one of the times where people will look and say, "Look, the King is supposed to come in on a donkey, and yet David is riding a mule." Again, that means the Old Testament writers got confused. There were several editors. And so, they did not say the right things and it is two traditions pushed together. And so, we can't trust the Bible. Obviously, it's a mistake.

But again, just like the sacrifice of Isaac where Abraham said, "Behold, God will provide the Lamb for the burnt offering," and then a ram is found, in the same way also, the King riding on the mule is a recognition that he is not the true of fulfillment of these words. The true fulfillment is Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb that God Himself provides for the sacrifice. And He is the King, the true King of Israel, who comes riding on a donkey. And so, He is the culmination of everything that's been going on for thousands of years in the Old Testament, coming to this point where He goes before all of these people. And He dies.

Now, it's interesting, one thing I'd like to point out, when Pontius Pilate said that his blood was... What was it? "I'm innocent of this man's blood. See to it yourselves." And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children." Now, that can be both a condemnation and a blessing. The fact that you shed innocent blood is a condemnation and none of us should

be excited to have the blood of an innocent man upon our hands. That's a story in many books and movies about people struggling with their morality when they discover that they have innocent blood on their hands. That's a real crisis of conscience.

And yet, we can also see this as a joy because it is the blood of Christ that is upon us. We are white in the blood of the lamb, washed as white as snow, and our robes are white in the glory of God and the forgiveness of sins. So, to be covered in the blood, if you believe that blood was shed for you, becomes a life-giving source of joy, that because of our washing in the blood, we are free from the condemnation of God. That's what Jesus was coming into this world for. That is why He came. That is why He became flesh. He incarnated, He enfleshed, He tabernacled with us. He became like us in every way, human who humiliated Himself in every way possible, taking on the form of a servant and being born in the likeness of a man.

Okay, the form of servant, likeness of a man, that does not mean He simply appeared like a man. It means that He was a man. He acted, He took the part of a servant, even though He was the God of the universe and all serves Him. He still did not deem that glory and might worth holding onto because there was something much more important that He desired to hold onto. And that was us. He desires to hold us in love, to forgive us our sins and to give us everlasting life so that we might be free. So, He did not count equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself and became a man exactly like us.

Now, at this point, we want to make very clear that He was a man just like us. 100% body, mind and soul. He has a human soul. He has a human body. He has a human mind. But in addition to all of that, in some miraculous God only way, He is not only 100% man, but He is also 100% God. He is the second person of the Trinity, the son of God, who was before the beginning, through whom God created all things by His Word. And that Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

And so, because He was willing to empty Himself, because He was willing to be humiliated and die in our stead, the Father, God, highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name. So, in the end, we know that no matter how difficult this life becomes, no matter how antagonistic our world becomes to Christianity, that's not the ultimate answer. We know that in the end, every knee will bow in Heaven and on Earth and under the Earth. It means even Satan himself and all of his demons, they have no authority over God. When He comes again, every knee will bow. Satan recognizes that, the demons know that, the angels glorify in that. And we will also know that when we see Him.

Now, those of us who have heard the Word will bow with joyous expectation of the coming of our Messiah and King to bring us home to His Heavenly Kingdom, to receive the new Heavens

and the new Earth to plant us back in the Garden of Eden, the way it should have been and the way it will be from now on. That is what we are looking forward to.

And so, this Palm Sunday is a brief little glimpse of the joy and the celebration of being with our God before the horror of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross takes place because we know that through that death comes life everlasting. May you hold firm to the promises of God and delve deeply into His Word, into the scriptures, that you might know that you are His child, loved by Him, and that you might be bold to bear witness to that love to those that you meet. May His grace and mercy and peace be and abide with you always now and forevermore unto life everlasting. Amen.