Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Did They Know? Do You?**

**Matthew 21:1-9**

Palmarum – 04.10.2022

“Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”

What does it mean? Hosanna means, “save now.” They are crying out, “Save now son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Save now, O highest One.”

On that day, as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a lowly mount, did those who strewed the road with their cloaks and palm branches know? Did they truly know?

On that day, many were in Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. This day on their calendar, was the day that their forefathers in Egypt brought into their homes, the lambs without blemish. These were the very lambs that would be slaughtered four days later. These lambs would die that their blood could be spread and mark the doorposts and the lintels of Israelite homes, a sign to the Lord's destroyer that he might pass over them. It was these very lambs which would be roasted, whose flesh the people would eat as they listened to the cries of the Egyptians, wailing at the deaths of their firstborn. They ate this meal with their staffs in their hand, their shoes on their feet, and their loins girded for walking – to leave the land of Egypt and end their slavery.

Did those who strewed Christ’s path know all these things? If not, why would they be in Jerusalem for the Passover?

Of course, there are different types of knowing. Sometimes people go through the motions, knowing what they are doing, but having no clue whatsoever as to what it is all about.

How many of the Israelites knew the significance of the Passover? They knew it as the day their forefathers gained their freedom from slavery in Egypt. But did they understand it to mean that they were to trust God for everything? It was a lesson they had drummed into their heads again, and again, and again. But, did they know?

God had brought ten plagues on the Egyptians, with the 10th being the Passover of the Lord's destroyer who took the lives of all the firstborn in the homes of those who did not have lamb’s blood on the doorposts and lintels – especially all the first born of the Egyptians.

As they thought they would die at the hands of Pharaoh’s army, God parted the Red Sea for them to pass through, and the Egyptians He drowned. In the wilderness, God provided water from a rock. He gave them bread every morning in the manna that they found, and meat every night in the flocks of quail God sent into their camp.

They knew all this. They had been freed from slavery, saved from being slaughtered at the shore of the Red Sea, been given food to eat, and water to drink. They had grumbled against God and He had provided for their physical needs.

Now we come to the scene on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Jesus comes into the holy city, the city where near the temple it smells like a slaughter house. Animals killed daily, the smell of burning flesh rising in the air and permeating the city. It was the smell of sacrifices made regularly to pay for the forgiveness of sins.

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem that morning, did they know? Or were they just going through the motions? Did they know that He was God’s Christ? Did they know He was coming into Jerusalem as the Lamb of sacrifice whose shed blood would cause death to pass over? Did they know Him as the Lamb to be slain who would free men from their slavery from sin? Did they know Him as God, who humbled Himself in obedience – in the stead of their disobedience – obedient even to the point of death on a cross?

Or, were they calling “Hosanna” because he was the miracle worker, the multiplier of loaves who would feed their bellies? Were they crying out “Hosanna” to the one whom they thought would be the new king of Israel who would free them from their Roman overlords? That’s what they thought, and too sadly, many did not know – did not fully understand.

As the smell of sacrifices from the temple assailed their nostrils, God’s Christ humbly rode into Jerusalem to be the fulfilling sacrifice, the perfect sacrifice, to free them and all from their slavery to sinfulness, that those who trust in Him would enter the eternal promised land.

Do you know?

Do you know the eternal riches that are yours in Christ Jesus? Do you know what He came to accomplish, and which we celebrate in this coming most Holy of Weeks? DO YOU FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD, IN YOUR FLESH HAS DONE AND IS STILL DOING FOR YOU AND YOUR ETERNITY AS HIS BELOVED CHILD?

What do you want from God’s Christ? It is simple to know. Ask yourself, “For what do you pray?” And then, “How do you respond when He answers your prayers – for He answers every prayer?” How do you respond when He does not answer your prayers in the manner you desire?

The people cried out that day, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest.” Hosannas ring out in our service as well. Your voices are raised in that ancient cry for God’s mercy that He might save us now.

Four days after treating Jesus like a victorious conqueror, they realized Jesus was not quite what they wanted. The miracles had stopped. There were no more healings or raising of the dead. He told them to pay taxes to Caesar – and to give to God what was His due. He cleared the money-changers out of the temple. He called the church leaders hypocrites. He preached some pretty powerful parables about the end of Jerusalem and the end times. He told them it was about faith in God. And, He made no move to restore Israel to earthly glory.

So, four days later, it was easy for the Jewish leadership to convince the people of Jerusalem to beg Pilate to have Jesus crucified. “Crucify Him,” was their new cry.

Little did they know, but this is as God required. As planned from before the foundation of the world, Christ became the sacrifice.

Do you know? What do you want from Jesus? Good news, fun stuff, the miraculous, we want God to say yes to every one of our prayers – even though He knows better than we, that to answer all our prayers in the affirmative might lead us away from Him.

Do you know? Jesus endured this week of His passion to pay for our sin. He is the Lamb of God whose only purpose for putting on human flesh, was to humbly be obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. He died as God’s plan to free us from our slavery to sin, so death might pass over us, and we might at the last, enter His promised heavenly land. It was for His sacrifice that God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Today your song echoes the cry of those gathered in Jerusalem as in our text, Hosanna, Hosanna, hosanna in the highest – Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.

You do know!

Christ comes humbly, as He did in Jerusalem. A Word – and you are cleansed of sin.

You do know!

Christ comes humbly, as He did in Jerusalem. A bit of bread – His body to feed you for your journey in the wilderness of this life, so you might not pass out along the way.

You do know!

Christ comes humbly, as He did in Jerusalem. A sip of wine – His blood to quench your thirst so that you might be refreshed along life’s road.

You do know that today, we raise our voices singing hosannas to our King, for indeed, He has come NOW – in this time and this place – to save us. In the name of Jesus. Amen.