

Behind the Hosannas

Ովսանանաներու Ետիճ

Mark 11:1-11

There is a beautiful line from a song I have been quoting lately in almost every sermon: The cross is **“the place where heaven’s love and heaven’s justice meet.”** (Elizabeth C. Clephane)

Today is the beginning of the Passion Week, the most important week in the life of our Lord Jesus. Today is the beginning of Jesus’ last journey to Jerusalem, where **love and justice** met. Also this week, we see our Lord expressing both **his sorrow and his love** towards us, towards the universe, towards God’s creation. One of my favorite songs is: *When I survey the wondrous Cross*. The poet expresses the concept best: **“See from his head, his hands, his feet, Sorrow and love flow mingled down.”**

In the last four Sundays I transported you to Calvary, to the hill where Christ uttered his seven words on the cross. In his last words, Jesus gave several very important messages that we studied in detail.

It all started today on Palm Sunday. The victorious entry of Jesus on Palm Sunday was **anticipated by the people of Jerusalem**. They were waiting for this moment. They sang psalms. They quoted the words of the psalms like Jesus did on different occasions (he quoted Psalm 22 while on the cross).

“The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us (*hosanna, hashouanna*), we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. We bless you from the house of the LORD.” (Psalm 118:22-26 ESV)

Today I will look at this event through the eyes of Mark.

First, we have an emphasis on the preparation of this parade. “Go find the colt and bring it to Jesus.” (1-7).

Second, we read about the procession. They put their garments and leafy branches on the road and they were multitude of crowds shouting, “Hosanna, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.” (8-10).

Third, there is only one verse about what happened next:

“And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, ...” (11)

Entering the temple should have been the climax of the parade. We just quoted Psalm 118.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. We bless you from the house of the LORD.” (Psalm 118:22-26 ESV)

We bless you from the house of the LORD? Where are you guys?

It is incredible; **no one greeted him at the gates of the Temple.** Imagine you arrive in your hometown. They cheer for you on the road, but when you get home, no one is around. Mark does not describe Jesus’ emotions. But Matthew and Luke describe the tears that Jesus shed when he looked at the city.

It was a Jewish custom that when a dignitary came to the city of Jerusalem, the high point of the visit would be **visiting the Temple**. The end of the procession was the Temple. Jesus was also making a theological statement by visiting the Temple, the place where God resides. **He will be replacing the Temple**; he will give a new meaning to the Temple. Where are those who believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Where are the worshipers? Where are the ones who were shouting, “Save us”?

Therefore my sermon title is, **“Behind the Hosannas.”** Last week’s sermon was about Jesus being forsaken by God the Father. We spoke about the pain and suffering of Christ who was left alone. Today, I go back chronologically to describe the sorrow that Jesus felt in his ministry, not just today, but during his encounter with people.

We will be looking at different passages in the Gospels where Jesus wept or was “greatly troubled”. We will journey with Jesus and see how he dealt in different situations.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen

gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, '**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**'"

We see Jesus weeping and lamenting over the city of Jerusalem. His lament applied to all of Israel, since Jerusalem was the religious and political center of the nation. Jesus weeps when we reject his protection, like a "hen" that gathers her "chicks". How often they rejected Jesus. How often we reject Jesus. Jesus laments on the authorities of the day, the big guys who thought they had authority and they could rule best. In fact, they would soon be destroyed.

-Does our political and "religious" life submit to Jesus? Does our church authority submit to Jesus? Does your home authority submit to Jesus?

-John 11:33-38

"When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was **deeply moved in spirit and troubled**. "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

Jesus wept.

Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus, **once more deeply moved**, came to the tomb."

We find Jesus deeply moved, troubled, in tears and deep sorrow. I think he was full of sorrow because he loved these people. **Death means separation**. He knew that we were not created to die; we were created to live with God forever- perfect love without sickness.

Jesus loved his friend Lazarus. He loved Martha and Mary. When he saw them weeping, he wept with them.

As Paul mentioned in Romans 12:15, “**Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.**” He feels with us in our pain. He mourns with us. He also rejoices with us. He loves us and has deep compassion towards us.

-Do we mourn and rejoice with Jesus and with our community?

How often you think about others? How often you see “others” who are not like you and you share Christ’s love with them?

-John 12:27-28

"Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!"

Jesus is facing the cross. I call this the agony of the cross. He is carrying the weight and the burden of his death, the death on the cross. I see Jesus struggling, yet he finds the answers himself. He came to the world for this reason, for this hour. He gives everything up to His Father’s will. He says, “**Father, let my crucifixion be for your glory.**”

This indicates both the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ. He is struggling yet he is surrendering to his Father.

The crowd heard this and said:

“We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'? (34)

Jesus answered: “You are going to **have the light just** a little while longer. **Walk while you have the light**, before darkness overtakes you.”

Although Jesus' "heart is troubled" by looking towards the cross, I believe he is also troubled when **we choose darkness instead of light.**

"In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it." (John 1:4,5)

-Do we choose light or darkness?

-John 13:21

After he had said this, **Jesus was troubled** in spirit and testified, "I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me."

Again we see Jesus was troubled and in deep sorrow. How sad is to see one of the twelve, one of his own betray him. These are the ones who are prepared to continue His work. I think Jesus was weeping from the inside, not just for Judas' betrayal, but also for his unregretful heart, and the ending of his life surrendered to the evil.

-Do we betray Jesus in our lives?

-Luke 19:41-44

As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, **he wept over it** and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes...They will not **leave one stone on another**, because you **did not recognize the time of God's** coming to you." (They did not know the time of your visitation.) (ESV)

Jesus weeps over his people Israel. Israel was called to be light to the nations. They were called to spread the TRUTH to the nations. Jerusalem was the center. They missed God's visitation. What a sorrow when you miss the most important

appointment in your life, the visit of God in your life. There is a judgment on this city. There is a judgment on our lost lives. No stone will be left on another. All the towers and temples will be destroyed. Jesus weeps with us when we reject God's visit in our lives.

-Did you miss God's visit in your life?

-Mark 14:32-34

They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be **deeply distressed and troubled**. "**My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow** to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."

We know that the disciples did not stay awake. They slept and they left Jesus alone. Although his main distress was looking towards the cross, yet he knew how fragile was the faith of the disciples. He knew that they, even Peter, would scatter and be afraid.

-Are we awake and praying with Jesus and in the name of our Lord Jesus?

-Luke 22:55-62

"Peter replied, 'Man, I don't know what you're talking about!' Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: 'Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly."

Jesus turned and looked at Peter. What kind of look was that?

I don't think it was a look of judgment, "I told you so". It was a look of tears mixed with compassion. **It was a look of encouragement, that there was hope if he repented.** It was not a look of condemnation, although Peter felt that way. I think

Jesus was looking with pain to the fragility of our faith. He gives us a new chance to start all over again.

-Do we deny Jesus?

Here is the Good News; Jesus gives us a new chance every day. Do not postpone your response.

The choice is ours. Do we continue causing Jesus to weep?

Jesus weeps when we keep hearing his voice and ignoring it. We think we are worshiping him, shouting Hosannas, yet our lives do not indicate that we are truly worshiping him: Worshiping in Spirit and Truth.

This is Palm Sunday. A victorious day...

Can you identify with the tears of Jesus?

Amen

-Does our political and "religious" life submit to Jesus? Does our church authority submit to Jesus? Does your house authority submit to Jesus?

-Do we mourn and rejoice with Jesus and with our community?

How often you think about others? How often you see "others" who are not like you and you can share Christ's love to them?

-Do we choose light or darkness?

-Do we betray Jesus in our lives?

-Are we awake and praying with Jesus and in the name of our Lord Jesus?

-Do we deny Jesus?