

SERMON: A WEEK OF CONTRASTS

Mark 11:7-10

(7) And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on Him; and He sat upon him. (8) And many spread their garments in the way: And others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way. (9) And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. (10) Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

Mark 15:12-14

(12) And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto Him whom ye call the King of the Jews? (13) And they cried out again, Crucify Him. (14) Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath He done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify Him.

Introduction

Passion Week or Holy Week is the most important week in the history of humankind. It not only changed the course of history, but it also changed the course of eternity. It fulfilled many Old Testament prophecies and ushered in a new dispensation- the dispensation of grace. It begins with what we now call Palm Sunday. It is filled with many contrasts. We see the “worst of the worst” and the “best of the best.” Let’s look at a few of these contrasts.

Exposition

1. A King on a Donkey.

(The Fulfillment Of Zechariah 9:9.)
 (God Keeps His Word.)
 (The Epitome of Humility.)

2. A Sorrowing Savior And A Rejoicing Crowd.

(While The Crowd Celebrated Passover,)
 Jesus Grieved For Jerusalem.)
 (Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34.)

3. A Strong Savior And A Weak Pilate.

(Mark 14:60-61; Matthew 27:24.)
 (Jesus Maintained His Dignity Throughout The Many Trials.)

(Pilate Did Not Act Authoritatively.)
 (He Washed His Hands Of The Situation.)

4. A Steadfast Savior And A Fickle Crowd.

(Jesus Stayed True To His Mission Of Salvation.)
 (In Less Than A Week The “Hosannas” Morphed Into “Crucify Him.”)
 (Jesus’ Approval Rating Took A Quick Nose Dive.)

5. A Most Glorious Act And The Most Shameful Acts.

(He Died For Our Sins And Saved A Sinner While On The Cross.)
 (They Crucified Him, Spat on Him, and Ridiculed Him.)

Closing Thoughts

These contrasts clearly display the viciousness of sin, but also the availability of the remedy. The remedy is the blood of Jesus. Aren’t you glad you are washed and covered in the blood? Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

End Notes:

1. Two-thirds of the written gospels is dedicated to Passion Week. Perhaps, Albert Schweitzer the theologian, medical doctor, and organist was the first person to make this a relevant issue. Schweitzer discusses this in his classic work, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. This preponderance of details about Passion Week in the gospels affirms its theological importance. Along with the crucifixion, many of the discourses and parables of Jesus were delivered during this week.

2. The contrasts of Passion Week also mimic our lives on earth. Sometimes it is like a ride on a rollercoaster. Our fore-parents were well acquainted with the vicissitudes of life, yet they kept the faith. They sang, “Sometimes up and sometimes down; Sometimes level to the ground. No matter where my feet may trod, I’m in the hands of my dear God.”

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