

Palm Sunday: “Hosanna”?

Scripture Reading — Mark 11:1-11

“Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” . . . “Hosanna in the highest heaven!”
— Mark 11:9-10

The Prince of Peace enters the "City of Peace" ("Jerusalem") as the people cheer, "Hosanna!," which means, "Save!" Do they know what's happening? Probably not. "Hosanna!" will become "Crucify him!" by the end of the week. Perhaps their "Hosanna" needs a question mark.

The crowds took their salvation cry from Psalm 118:25-26. They wanted Jesus to overthrow the Romans and take back their capital city (see John 6:15; Acts 1:6). Had they forgotten his prophecy about going to Jerusalem to suffer and die for their salvation (Mark 8:31; 9:30-32; 10:32-34)? Easter's victory would be impossible without Good Friday's surrender to death.

And what of the two disciples Jesus sent to get the colt? Were they honored to do this for Jesus? Thankfully, they did as directed, and their obedience challenges us to be obedient disciples. What about the other disciples? Did Jesus even need cheerleaders (Luke 19:37-40) and crowds waving branches and throwing cloaks to carpet the way for the Messiah?

Sadly, the crowds' cheers would soon turn into jeers. So it goes when a hero—even God—doesn't give us what we want.

But today we know who Jesus is and who and whose we are. Do our "Hosannas" ring true? Do we believe in and honor the one who saves?

Prayer

Lord, too often we cry for you to save us on our own terms. Please save us and mold us to honor you— on your terms and for your glory. In your name we pray. Amen.

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