

Rejoice in Your Palm Sunday King!

✠ For what He has done. (v.9)

✠ For what He is doing... (v.10)

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

Can anyone doubt these are “crazy times”? Even strangers in the store will tell you that – from at least six feet away wearing a mask! Seems like for years Carly Simon’s song has been ringing in my head: “These are the good old days.” Ever wonder, “Do Americans know how good we have it?” Some kept criticizing younger generations for taking things for granted, but most of us “Boomers” missed the real hardships of the 20th Century. We just heard stories from our parents and grandparents about how bad it was – while they wondered why we just “didn’t get it.” Now our children and grandchildren can someday say through their gray hairs, “When I was little, we had to stay home for weeks on end. We couldn’t even go to school!” And some little shaver will look back amazed, “You were so lucky!” One Mom said this was good for her kids to have “a reset.” Amazing how God can reset our appreciation for the privilege of worshiping together. God’s Word rings out today: **Rejoice in Your Palm Sunday King!**

✠ For what He has done. (v.9)

We have anxiety over a virus and so much more. Isn’t it one of the hardest things to deal with that you just don’t know who to believe? “Modelers” have been feeding data to their computers, then feeding our medical and political leaders with dire predictions. Now that not so many hundreds of thousands are dying, some modelers are asking, “Where do you come up with those predictions?” Answer: “From you!” Everyone wants to be right...never admit wrong....Who are we supposed to believe?

About a century before the prophet Zechariah was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write this Palm Sunday prediction, same thing. Everyone, especially the rulers, wanted to believe the prophets predicting victory. But Jeremiah? Who’d want to believe him? Jeremiah kept promising God’s judgment. He was right. The Babylonian Captivity destroyed Jerusalem and the Lord’s temple. Remember?

The name “Zechariah” means: *the LORD remembers*. Remember three names – Jeremiah, Daniel, Zechariah – and “*seventy years*” – much longer than any virus models. The LORD inspired Jeremiah to write a letter to exiles in Babylon. One of the verses gives hope in this pandemic. Remember? “*This is what the LORD says. After seventy years have passed in Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious word to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to give you peace, not disaster, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come to pray to me, and I will listen to you. When you seek me, you will find me, when you will seek me with all your heart. I will let you find me, declares the LORD, and I will bring you back from your exile. I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have sent you as exiles, declares the LORD. I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.*” (Jeremiah 29:10–14 EHV¹)

Years later in Babylon an elder statesman named Daniel did the math. Remembering Jeremiah’s “*seventy years*,” Daniel wrote a powerful prayer of confession and faith in Chapter 9. He reminded the LORD of His mercy (*Chesed*) – awesome promises, constant care, never forgetting when it’s time to pay up.

Zechariah – the LORD remembers! With his fellow prophet Haggai, Zechariah was reminding the returning Remnant of believers that God was with them in power to rebuild God’s temple in Jerusalem.

¹ EHV ~ *Evangelical Heritage Version* (<http://wartburgproject.org>) © 2019. NPH: 800-662-6022; also Amazon-Kindle.

Older folks cried to remember Solomon's huge temple compared to the tiny new foundation. But the LORD remembered His mercy and promised that glory of the smaller second temple would be greater than the first by Solomon. ***"For in this place I will provide peace," declares the LORD of Armies.*** (Haggai 2:9)

So Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to begin Holy Week. Jesus knew full well the trauma waiting for Him. Jesus kept predicting to His disciples who did not like hearing this at all: betrayal, denial, death on the cross. They failed to remember the resurrection! But *Zechariah! The LORD remembers!* **Rejoice in Your Palm Sunday King! – For what he has done.** Then you can **Rejoice!**...

✠ For what He is doing... (v.10)

Since *the LORD remembers*, we remember to **Rejoice – For what He is doing** on Palm Sunday. Bible critics ask, "What's the big deal? Other kings rode donkeys too!" Maybe those critics should show us how to mount a young colt and ride slowly, humbly through a crowd beside the donkey's mother. Bronco buster, anyone? Our Creator still controls creation. God's power, courage, love for you are not just old stories by your parents and grandparents. Trust in Jesus and His story is your story too!

"His kingdom will extend from sea to sea, from the River to the ends of the earth." Do we remember **what He is doing** now? Isn't God giving you extra time at home with your family to teach your own children more of God's Word? Remember your family devotions. Make it your goal to read at least Luke with your spouse or children during these days. Or read a chapter then tell your little ones your favorite story or passage and why. In your personal devotions meditate on Jesus' love for you by reading Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Spend some time with Jesus so that you remember.

Our website now archives the memory of New Life sermons by book, chapter and verse. Find three sermons on today's Gospel (Matthew 21:1-11), two on Philippians 2:5-11. If listening is easier, review sermons on Matthew, then Mark, Luke and John. *The LORD remembers!* As you remember, **Rejoice!**

Remember **what is He doing** now as you pray for your neighbors. Do you remember to call the lonely? It's so sweet to be on the receiving end of calls like that! Troubled? Anxious? Call me!

Who can you trust? Remember that God commands us to pray for all rulers and politicians, even the ones we don't like. (1 Timothy 2:1f) God can thwart the wrong and uphold the right. (Jeremiah 29:7)

Will this virus time help you remember to thank and praise the Lord for His blessings? To match your words with firstfruit offerings? God remembers to bless us; we want to bless His Name too!

God's resolute faithfulness brings us to Holy Week – Jesus' suffering, death, resurrection. God's Word and memory are true. In agony on the cross, Jesus did not forget us. Remember what the criminal prayed after admitting he deserved to die? ***"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."*** Mercy answered from the middle cross: ***"Amen I tell you: Today you will be with me in paradise."*** (Luke 23:42f) Then Jesus could cry: *Tetelestai! It is finished!* Salvation is done. Nothing more is needed. Nothing can be added. Your Substitute rode into Jerusalem to suffer God's wrath in your place and wash away your guilt with His holy, precious blood. Humble Jesus wants to ride into your heart today. **Rejoice!** God never forgets His promise, even at the cost of His own shed blood. ***"I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem. The battle bow will be taken away, and he will proclaim peace to the nations."*** Someone noted that nations ready to fight are now asking for help. Terrorist leaders have told their suicide bombers to "stay home"! The Coronavirus could kill them! Is that "peace"?

Jesus' ***"peace"*** surpasses all understanding. ***"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, and do not let it be afraid."*** (John 14:27 EHV) Recall how the LORD remembers with one example from His Sermon on the Mount, asking why we worry about food and clothing: ***"Look at the birds of the air. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"*** (Matthew 6:26 EHV) Time for bird watching! His eye is on the sparrow and he watches over you! Amen.