



## Greenway's Benefice Weekly Devotional (No. 3)

5<sup>th</sup> April 2020

**Matthew 21 : 1 – 11, Psalm 121 : 1 – 8**

"See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands"  
(Isaiah 49 : 16)



Hosanna to the Son of David!

You are the King of glory,  
You are the Prince of Peace.  
You are the Lord of heaven and earth,  
You're the son of righteousness.  
Angels bow down before You,  
worship and adore, for  
You have the words of eternal life,  
You are Jesus Christ the Lord!

Today is Palm Sunday – and normally many of us would be joining together in church, worshipping and singing praises to God, as we celebrate the triumphant entry of Jesus, riding a donkey, into Jerusalem, 2000 years ago. But, of course, owing to the coronavirus precautions we are all having to take at the moment, we are unable to meet together.

But for a few moments let's put aside anxious thoughts about the coronavirus and take our minds back 2000 years. Imagine being part of the noisy crowd, full of excitement and joy, as they waved palms, shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

The atmosphere must have been vibrant as the crowd recognised Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God. Many of them, had witnessed the miracles Jesus had done and experienced the awesome teaching he gave, and joyfully praised God.

Amid the noise, with Jesus sitting on his back, the young donkey plodded serenely over the cloaks and branches that were strewn across the road, calm in the knowledge that he was with the One who had created him, and cared even about a donkey (Zechariah 9 : 9).

We know the story well, but as we read it again it always invites us to join afresh in the praise and worship of who Jesus really is – God, our Creator, in human flesh, coming amongst us.

But beneath Jesus' calm, gentle exterior, he knew full well what would happen in the next few days. He was well aware of the betrayal that would take place. He knew his disciples, in their fear, would desert him. He knew about the rejection, the mocking, the spitting, the cruel beating, and ultimately the excruciating pain of crucifixion and separation from God, His Father.

In Isaiah ch 50 the prophet Isaiah said that Jesus, even though he was aware of what awaited him, would set his face like a flint towards Jerusalem and the cross, and He did. Why? Because He loves you and me passionately and knew this was the only way for us to be released from the evil power of Satan and sin.

So, in Gethsemane when all the powers of evil were attacking Him, Jesus took the cup of bitterness from His Father and said 'Yes, I will drink this cup to the full'. And the mind blowing thing is that even if only one of us had sinned, the Bible says He would still have drank that cup.

In a few hours time He would be standing in front of a hostile, unsympathetic crowd. It is possible that some of those present were the same people who just a week earlier had laid down their coats and waved palm branches for Him, chanting “Hosanna” as He entered Jerusalem on a donkey.

They could have been there when Pilate offered them the choice between Jesus or Jerusalem’s most wanted villain, Barabbas.

And they had pointed at Jesus and chanted “Crucify Him!” He wasn’t the Messiah and Deliverer they expected. They and the religious leaders, who were also there amongst them, had expected Him to come with force and destroy the Roman Empire. “He saved others, let Him save Himself” they shouted.

On Palm Sunday, as Jesus rode into Jerusalem, surrounded by the chanting crowds, He knew all this would happen. And Matthew 23 tells us His heart bled for them, not Himself.

Even on that Thursday evening, just a few hours before he was arrested, Jesus was far more concerned about his disciples than himself. We read in John 17 He prayed that His Father would divinely keep and protect them through the ordeal that lay ahead - more than that – He prayed for us too.

The Bible says that even today He is praying for us by name, we’re not just a number! He knows what you’re going through right now, and He is standing at the throne of God, interceding for you - by name. You are valuable to Him and He loves you. He has not promised that we would never have troubles – but He has promised to be with us in the good times and the not so good, sometimes even carrying us.

**On this Palm Sunday, can I invite you to join with me in a short prayer –**

Eternal God, as we celebrate Palm Sunday and look towards the cross of Jesus we see the cost of our sin and the depth of your love.

All we can say is thank you. And as we trust you, we can each say, You are my Advocate and my great High Priest, continuously interceding for me by name, and giving hope for tomorrow.

In humble reverence we place at Your feet all that we have and all that we are, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.