

3/28/2010

**PALM SUNDAY PRAYER OF THE DAY** Most merciful God, as the people of Jerusalem, with palms in their hands, gathered to greet Your dearly beloved Son when He came into His Holy City, we pray that we may receive Him as our King and, when He comes again, we may receive Him with trusting and steadfast hearts and by your mercy receive eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**THE PALM SUNDAY GOSPEL** Luke 19:28-41 (see insert)

28 After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 30 "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.'"

32 Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" 34 They replied, "The Lord needs it." 35 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.

36 As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. 37 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

**38 "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"** 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" 40 "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." 41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it

**THE SERMON** "The Victory of Humility" **Philippians 2**

**PART 2 - THE SERVICE OF THE PASSION**

**THE EPISTLE LESSON** Philippians 2:5-11

*(Christians are called to follow Christ's humility.)*

**5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!**

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**THE PASSION READING OF LUKE** Luke 23:13-56

*(The final trial, the suffering, death, and burial of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.)*

### **The First Passion Reading**

**Luke 23:13-23**

13 Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, 14 and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him. 15 Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death. 16 Therefore, I will punish him and then release him." 17

18 With one voice they cried out, "Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!" 19 (Barabbas had been thrown into prison for an insurrection in the city, and for murder.) 20 Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate appealed to them again. 21 But they kept shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

22 For the third time he spoke to them: "Why? What crime has this man committed? I have found in him no grounds for the death penalty. Therefore I will have him punished and then release him." 23 But with loud shouts they insistently demanded that he be crucified, and their shouts prevailed.

### **The Second Passion Reading**

**Luke 23:24-47**

24 So Pilate decided to grant their demand. 25 He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, the one they asked for, and surrendered Jesus to their will. 26 As they led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. 27 A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. 28 Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' 30 Then "'they will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"' 31 For if men do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

32 Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. 33 When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals-- one on his right, the other on his left. 34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. 35 The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One."

36 The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar 37 and said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself." 38 There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

44 It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, 45 for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last. 47 The centurion, seeing what had

happened, praised God and said, "Surely this was a righteous man."

### **The Third Passion Reading**

### **Luke 23:48-56**

48 When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. 49 But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

50 Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, 51 who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea and he was waiting for the kingdom of God. 52 Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. 53 Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. 54 It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

55 The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. 56 Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

**THE PASSION SUNDAY PRAYER OF THE DAY Almighty and everlasting God, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take upon Himself our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross. Mercifully grant that we may follow the example of His great humility and patience and be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

INTRO - When I was about 10 my mom and another lady from the neighborhood took me and her son to the Fair. Back then the fair was called the Eastern States Exposition. It covered a number of states and brought in lots of shows. That afternoon there were a couple of shows. My mom and her friend wanted to go hear a man sing. Did you ever hear of Tennessee Ernie Ford? He is still known for his deep voice, his songs of faith, and the fun he had singing. He was putting on a show at the fair that day. But, there was another show, Joey Chitwood and his stunt drivers. My friend and I wanted to go to see that show. My mom and my friend's mom were paying. But, they gave up what they wanted to do what their sons wanted. We did see Joey Chitwood drive on two wheels. But, now that I like Tennessee Ernie I realize the sacrifice my mom made. When a person gives up something they want for another, they lower themselves. They humble themselves to serve another.

I. That is the essence of the Palm Sunday account.

A. Jesus entered Jerusalem to the cheers of his followers.

1. Our verse today tells us they shouted, **38 "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"**
2. Jesus deserved the praise. He was and is God.
3. But, even this event was humbling. Jesus didn't come in on a grown horse, but on the colt of a donkey.

4. Jesus knew who He was, but he wept over Jerusalem because He knew He was entering to be crucified.
5. The willingness of Jesus to sacrifice Himself is the essence of humility.

II. God calls us to humble ourselves. He calls us to sacrifice what we want, or even deserve, to serve Him and to love others.

A. Our Epistle lesson will say, **5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:**

1. What was Jesus' attitude?

**6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!**

2. Jesus lowered himself to come to this world, to become a man, for God to be obedient. He humbled Himself in that the righteous ruler of the universe died like a criminal.

B. Humility is hard.

1. We like to serve ourselves.

2. We like glory and honor.

3. We like to be exalted and praise.

4. But, when we grasp what we want for ourselves, we often then keep ourselves from praising God, or loving others.

C. When we went to the fair my mom and her friend tried to convince us to go to the concert, but my friend and I argued for our point of view and they agreed. We got what we wanted but kept my mom and her friend from what she wanted.

III. Today, I know that my mom gave up going to the concert willingly, because she wanted to do something for me. Her sacrifice, her humbling of herself, gives me even more reason to praise her. In fact, probably the best way I can praise her is with sacrifice that gives love to my own children.

A. The sacrifice of Jesus is beyond understanding. But, when I realize Jesus is God, but gave up heaven for me so I can be forgiven, so I can have eternal life, it makes me want to serve Him in humility.

B. Sometimes people think that serving God has to be a great act. One of the most famous Christians who humbled themselves in our day is Mother Theresa. She left Croatia and served in the poorest part of the poorest people of India, in Calcutta.

1. She did that for God, but there are many smaller ways that occur daily where we serve God and love others in humility.

2. Martin Luther said that one of the greatest acts of worship is when a mother, in faith toward God and love toward their baby, changes a diaper. If you've listened to a teenager, you know that changing a diaper is humbling, but a mother does it willingly.

C. A Christian has many opportunities daily to praise God and love others in humility.

1. When a person who is ill praises God, that is humility.

2. If a person is financially challenged, but works hard to provide for their

family legally, that is showing praise to God and love for another at their own expense, that is humility.

3. When someone who is tempted with a sin struggles against that sin in order to turn to God, that is humility.

4. When a busy person takes time from their schedule to volunteer with children, or help simply help someone who needs their time, that is praising God and loving another. That is humility.

CONCLUSION - When Jesus rode into Jerusalem He received praises he deserved, but he entered to die. He was able to humble Himself because He loved us, and because He trusted in His heavenly Father who would raise Him from the dead.

When we are tempted to selfishness, to pride, to indulgence, we not only know that God has promised heaven to all who believe, we know that Jesus suffered and died for us. The best way we can sing His praise, the best way we can say **38 "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"** is with simple acts that lower ourselves so we can praise God and love others.