

## **Zechariah Chapter 9 and verse 9 : 9** says

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!

Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he,  
humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey

My friends, on Palm Sunday, we remember, the excitement of the crowd, as Jesus entered Jerusalem, many of whom were pilgrims, there for the Passover, a major Jewish holiday, which remembered and celebrated the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.

We remember, that palm branches, and garments were spread, before Jesus, and there were, shouts of :

“Hosanna to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”<sup>[c]</sup>

“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

Now in shouting Hosanna, they were in effect, saying, "Save us now" - "**Save us now**"; and so as, the great crowds, gathered, they came to hear Jesus preach, there was excitement, and there was expectation.

For as we know, the cheering, did not, last for long. For there came a point, when the tide, began to turn, against Jesus. Now, you didn't notice it, so much, at first. For people, still came, to see him, but, BUT, the old excitement, was missing, and the crowds, were not, as large, as they, had been. At this time, His critics, began to publicly, attack him, and that was, something new, for earlier, they had been, to afraid, to speak out, for fear, of the masses, but as time passed, they began to perceive, that the fickle, public, was turning against Jesus. And so, the opposition, began, to grow and grow. But, BUT, when they discovered, that they could not, discredit, his moral character, they began, to take, more desperate, measures; and before, it was all over, a tidal wave, welled up, that brought Jesus, to his knees, under the weight, of a cross.

Now, I wonder, I wonder, why, did the masses, so radically, turn against Him ? How did the shouts, of Hosanna, on Sunday, transform into, the shouts, of crucify him, on Friday ? You see, I am not, just talking about, the immediate events, that may have, brought it about, but the deeper, root causes. What were, the underlying issues ? For in just five days, it all, IT ALL, fell apart.

## **And so Why ? Why did the cheering stop ?**

Well, the first reason, I'd like to suggest, why, the cheering stopped, is that Jesus, began to talk, more and more, about commitment. For during the last week, of Jesus' life, a very interesting scene occurred, and even more significantly, it occurred in full view, of the people. A rich young ruler, came enthusiastically, running to Jesus. I am sure you are all familiar, with the dialogue, that took place. For Jesus says: Go, and sell all that you have, and give it to the poor, and then come, and follow me. Well, the masses, to say the least, were stunned. You see, I believe, they were troubled, firstly, for a theological reason. For they had been raised, to believe, that God had especially, blessed rich, men. Yet, here is Jesus, turning as it were, the big money, away.

And then, I think they were troubled, for a second reason. For you may remember, that prior to this, Jesus' message, had largely, been one of grace. For when the 5,000, were hungry, he fed them. When they brought, their sick, to him, he healed them. When a woman, is caught in adultery, and is about to be stoned, it is Jesus, who comes, to her rescue, and saves her. The message of Christ's ministry, is one of grace, upon grace.

But now, NOW, Jesus seems to be saying, "The time for miracles is over. The time for commitment, is now."

My Friends, it is interesting to note, that in all four Gospels, after Jesus, enters Jerusalem, to the shouts, of Hosanna, and to the excitement and expectation of the crowd, there are no more, miracles recorded, not one.

Now, there are some events, we might count, as miracles, but no miracles, are done, for the people. OK, so on the face of it, this may not seem, that significant, but when you consider, that nearly one half, of the Gospels, is devoted, to the last seven days, of Jesus life, well, I think then, you begin to understand, significance of this. Friends, why not check it out if you wish for yourselves, and see if what I am saying, is not true.

**But, BUT, and please hear me on this: While there are, no miracles, recorded, in these chapters, what you will find, is a persistent call, to commitment. X2**

**For looking at Marks Gospel we have :**

**Mark Chapter 11: 12** - For Jesus, is hungry, one morning, stops by a fig tree, and finds no figs. He withers, the tree, because, it is producing, no fruit. For Jesus demands, fruitful committed, lives.

**Mark Chapter 11: 15** – We have, the cleansing of the temple, for Instead of *praying* for the people, the priests were *preying* on the people ! For the temple was not a “house of prayer” (Isa. 56:7); it was a “den of thieves” (Jer. 7:11). For Jesus demands, his priests, to be committed, to the work of God.

**Mark Chapter 12 : 1** – We have, the parable of the wicked tenants, giving to the master the fruit that he is due. For Jesus demands, fruitful committed, lives.

**Mark Chapter 12 : 13** Is a trap, by the religious leaders, about money, with Jesus concluding, “render to Caesar the things that are Caesars and to God, the things, that are Gods. The answer being, a commitment, of everything, to God.

**Mark Chapter 12 : 28** Here Jesus gives, The Great Commandment, echoing the Shema, of Deuteronomy 6; for Jesus says, that we are to, Love the Lord your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ This for me, is a demand, of lives, lived, in total commitment, to God.

**Mark Chapter 12 : 41** We have, the widows mite, and Jesus saying, that the widow, she put in, everything, she had, in fact, her whole living. Again, a call of commitment, to God, upon our lives, and, **and** our resources, being given to God.

And so, in just, two short chapters, of Mark, we can see, a call, and a challenge, to lives, being lived, that are Committed to God. Then in chapter 13, of Mark, Jesus speaks, of a tribulation to come, and that his people, are to keep watch.

Then at the start, of Mark Chapter 14, we hear of the plot, to kill Jesus.

**For the cheering, has indeed stopped !**

**To Conclude :** A number of years ago, Norman Cousins wrote an editorial in an American newspaper, called the Saturday Review, in which he reported, a conversation, he had, on a trip in India. He was talking with, a Hindu priest, named Satis Prasad.

The man said, he wanted to come, to America to work, as a missionary, among the Americans. Cousins assumed, that he meant, that he wanted, to convert Americans, to the Hindu religion, but when asked, Satis Prasad said, "Oh no, I would like to convert them, to the Christian religion. Christianity cannot survive, in the abstract. It needs, not membership, but believers. The people of your country, may claim, they believe, in Christianity, but from what I read, at this distance, Christianity, is more a custom, than anything else. I would ask, that either you, accept the teachings, of Jesus in your everyday life, and in your affairs, as a nation, or stop invoking His name, as sanction, for everything you do. I want to help save, Christianity, for the Christian. **I want to help save, Christianity, for the Christian.**"

**Finally my freinds:** After the triumphal entry, everywhere Jesus goes, he asks for commitment, and devotion, from the people, and sadly, what he heard, in response, well he did not like. For then, just as today, commitment is, and can be, hard work, and a work many, shy away from. But a work, a service and a commitment to Discipleship, I believe, that can be the only response of those, called Christians, to the events of Good Friday and Easter morning. AMEN.

Prayers

**Our Prayers of Intercession response is**

Lord of all hope,  
**be with us we pray.**

God of the palms  
we give you praise and thanks  
for the work of Jesus in our world and in our lives.  
We pray for those in our church family,  
especially our children and young people.  
Lord of all hope,  
**be with us we pray.**

God of Bethany  
you spent time with your friends and disciples  
in the household of Lazarus who died and was raised:  
we pray for those who find themselves alone  
and for those who mourn the death of a loved one.  
May the fragrance of your loving presence  
be made real to them this week.  
Lord of all hope,  
**be with us we pray.**

God of the seekers,  
during your ministry there were many who came to you  
to seek for answers and comfort in their lives:  
we pray for all those who are seeking and searching this day,  
for all who are troubled and need answers and comfort.  
Be with them this day and give them strength for their search.  
Lord of all hope,  
**be with us we pray.**

God of the Last Supper,  
you washed the feet of your friends,  
you broke bread in friendship and sacrifice:  
help us to serve those in need.

We pray for those in our community who need help.

We ask that we may give our time and talent sacrificially for others,  
as you gave your body and your blood for us.

Lord of all hope,

**be with us we pray.**

God of the cross,  
you suffered and died that we might know your love:  
be with those who suffer and with those who are dying.  
May they know the strength of your love for them.

Lord of all hope,

**be with us we pray.**

God of Holy Saturday,  
teach us the patience of waiting:  
when the work is done but the time of resurrection has not yet come,  
give us patient hearts  
and a strong faith that supports us  
and others in the times of darkness.

For ourselves and all who are without hope,

Lord of all hope,

**be with us we pray.**

God of the Resurrection,  
you burst forth from the tomb on Easter day,  
bringing light and life to a needy and dying world:  
enable your body here in this place and throughout the world  
to bring light and life to our needy and dying world today.

Lord of all hope,

**be with us we pray.**

**Amen.**

Well, Thank You for listening. Hope to see again, on Tuesday,  
But for now, may the blessing and peace of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you, and those you love,  
this day and always Amen.