

Isaiah 50:4-5 - ⁴The Sovereign LORD has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed. ⁵The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears; I have not been rebellious. I have not turned away.

LUKE 19:28-46 - After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹As 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. ³¹If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.’” ³²Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. ³³As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” ³⁴They replied, “The Lord needs it.” ³⁵They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. ³⁶As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. ³⁷When 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!”^[a] “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” ³⁹Some 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.” ⁴¹As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it ⁴²and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. ⁴³The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.” Jesus at the Temple ⁴⁵When Jesus entered the temple courts, he began to drive out those who were selling. ⁴⁶“It is written,” he said to them, “‘My house will be a house of prayer’^[b]; but you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’^[c]”

ISAIAH 50 OFFERS US A WAY TO CONSIDER THE FAMILIAR STORY OF JESUS’ ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

MANY OF THE VERSES INEVITABLY DRAW THE ATTENTION OF CHRISTIANS TO JESUS, SINCE THEY CAN EASILY BE APPLIED TO HIM.

IN PARTICULAR WE REMEMBER THE SAVIOR SAID HE WAS SENT TO DELIVER THE WORD OF GOD TO THE WORLD.

JESUS SHARED WITH OTHERS A MESSAGE NOT OF HIS OWN MAKING, BUT THE ONE HIS FATHER DELIVERED TO HIM.

VERSES FOUR AND FIVE OF ISAIAH 50 DECLARE: “THE LORD GOD HAS GIVEN ME THE TONGUE OF THOSE WHO ARE TAUGHT, THAT I MAY KNOW HOW TO SUSTAIN WITH A WORD THOSE WHO ARE WEARY.

MORNING BY MORNING HE AWAKENS MY EAR TO HEAR AS THOSE WHO ARE TAUGHT. THE LORD GOD HAS OPENED MY EAR, AND I WAS NOT REBELLIOUS; I TURNED NOT BACKWARD.”

THIS PASSAGE, ALONG WITH JESUS SAYING: “WHOEVER HAS EARS TO HEAR, LET THEM HEAR”, PRESENT A DIFFERENT WAY TO FOCUS ON THE GOSPEL PASSAGE.

A PALM SUNDAY HYMN BY AN UNNAMED AUTHOR ALSO HELPS SET THE STAGE FOR TODAY’S REVIEW OF THE GOSPEL STORY.

“LET THE PALMS WAVE ON THIS MOST HAPPY DAY!
GREETINGS THEY BEAR TO US OF JOY AND GLADNESS.
JESUS IS COME TO TAKE ALL GRIEF AWAY,
HE COMES TO BANISH GLOOM AND SADNESS.

HIS GENTLE VOICE PERVADES THE MIGHTY THRONG.
’TIS HE WHO FREEDOM GIVES O’ER LAND AND SEA;
’TIS HE WHO GIVES IN DARKEST NIGHT A SONG,
GIVES LIGHT, O LORD, THAT WE MAY COME TO THEE.

REJOICE, REJOICE, JERUSALEM THE HOLY!
LOUD LET THY JOYOUS NOTES IN PRAISE ASCENDING.
LAUD HIM, THE CHILD OF BETHLEHEM THE LOWLY,
ALL HEARTS AFLAME, IN SONG ALL VOICES BLENDING.

PEOPLE AND TONGUES SHALL CHANT HIS PRAISE;
TUNE EVERY VOICE, HIS NAME BE GLADLY SINGING.

HOSANNA! GLORY TO GOD! GLORY TO HIM WHO COMES
BRINGING SALVATION.”

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THAT IN EACH VERSE THERE IS A
MENTION OF WHAT WAS HEARD AS HE RODE INTO JERUSALEM
ON THE DONKEY.

TODAY I'D LIKE US TO APPROACH THE PALM SUNDAY READING
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF WHAT THOSE INVOLVED HEARD,
AND FAILED TO HEAR.

THE CROWD OF DISCIPLES, AS LUKE CALLS THE MOB AROUND
JESUS, SAW IN HIM THEIR MESSIAH AND KING, AND THEY
RESPONDED WITH THEIR VOICES.

THEY PRAISED GOD, AND CELEBRATED JESUS' ARRIVAL IN
JERUSALEM, SEEING IN THAT PROCESSION THE TRIUMPHAL
ENTRY OF THE TRUE KING OF ISRAEL.

THEY SAW IN JESUS THE MESSIAH RIDING ON A DONKEY, AND
SO INEVITABLY HEARD FROM THE VOICE OF THE PROPHET
ZECHARIAH THIS PREDICTION:

“REJOICE GREATLY, O DAUGHTER OF ZION! SHOUT ALOUD, O
DAUGHTER OF JERUSALEM!”

“BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU; RIGHTEOUS AND
HAVING SALVATION IS HE, HUMBLE AND MOUNTED ON A
DONKEY....”

YES INDEED, THEY HEARD AND SAW IN JESUS THAT DAY THE
FULFILLMENT OF ALL GOD PROMISED ACCORDING TO THEIR
OWN HOPES AND DREAMS.

THE PHARISEES, ON THE OTHER HAND, HEARD SOMETHING
ENTIRELY DIFFERENT. THEY HEARD IN THE VOICES OF THE
CROWD, AND THE REFUSAL OF JESUS TO SILENCE THEM A
DANGEROUS SOUND.

THEY HEARD WHAT MIGHT RING IN ROMAN EARS AS THE
SOUND OF REBELLION.

THEREFORE, THEY MIGHT HAVE ALSO HEARD THE DRAWING OF
ROMAN SWORDS, AND ANGRY SHOUTS OF SOLDIERS OF THE
EMPIRE.

THE PHARISEES AND OTHER JEWISH LEADERS ALSO HEARD A
GROWING THREAT TO THEIR OWN POWER AND PRESTIGE, AND
THE LOSS OF THE STATUS QUO.

AFTER ALL, JESUS HAD DEMONSTRATED TIME AND TIME AGAIN
HE WOULD NOT BE A KING UNDER THEIR AUTHORITY.

AND SO- FOR ONE GROUP THE PRAISES GIVEN TO GOD AND
SHOUTS OF JESUS AS KING WERE SOUNDS OF JOY, BUT FOR THE
OTHER GROUP THEY WERE FEARFUL NOISES.

WE COME NOW TO WHAT JESUS MUST OF HEARD, WHICH IN HIS
CASE WAS MORE THAN THE VOICES OF PRAISE OR PROTEST.

SURELY JESUS DID NOT HIDE HIS FACE FROM, NOR CLOSE HIS
EARS TO ALL THOSE OTHER SIGHTS AND SOUNDS UNSEEN AND
UNHEARD BY THE OTHER PEOPLE PRESENT THAT DAY.

JESUS MUST HAVE HEARD IN THE VOICES OF THE CROWD, SOME
SUPERFICIAL PRAISE, ALONG WITH THE SINCERE EXPRESSIONS
OF JOY AND DELIGHT OVER HIS ARRIVAL.

SADLY, THE SAVIOR ALSO HEARD THE UNSPOKEN MESSAGE OF
THEIR PRAISE. THEY WERE CELEBRATING THE HOPE OF
POLITICAL DELIVERANCE.

BUT JESUS HAD NOT COME TO CONQUER ROME, HE CAME
INSTEAD TO CONQUER SIN AND DEATH. AND THAT WAS NOT
WHAT THE PEOPLE WERE LOOKING OR CHEERING FOR.

HE CAME TO BE THE SAVIOR AND KING NOT ONLY OF THE JEWS
BUT ALSO OF THE ROMANS, AND ALL OTHER NATIONS AND
PEOPLES.

WE DO NOT HAVE TO LOOK VERY FAR BACK IN TIME TO SEE
WHAT CAN HAPPEN WHEN THE EXPECTATIONS OF SOME
PEOPLE ARE NOT REALIZED.

REASONABLE PEOPLE CAN QUICKLY TURN INTO AN ANGRY AND VIOLENT MOB, ONE THAT SPEAKS AND ACTS WITHOUT THINKING, OR CARING ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES.

AND SO, IT MIGHT EVEN NOT BE TOO FAR FETCHED TO IMAGINE JESUS HEARD IN THE CROWD'S PRAISES A HINT OF THE CRY THAT WOULD BE SOON SOUND FROM MANY OF THE SAME PEOPLE: "CRUCIFY HIM, WE HAVE NO KING, BUT CAESAR".

WE ARE TOLD HERE, THAT THE SAVIOR HEARD THE ANGRY DEMANDS OF THE PHARISEES, WHO WANTED HIM TO SILENCE THE CROWD.

IT ALSO SEEMS THAT JESUS SAW AND HEARD THE FUTURE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND THE DEATHS OF MANY OF HER PEOPLE.

WE KNOW THIS BECAUSE JESUS SUDDENLY STOPPED FOR A MOMENT AS THE CITY OF JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE CAME INTO HIS SIGHT.

HE STOPPED AND WEPT OVER WHAT HE SAW THEN: MANY PEOPLE GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF RELIGION WITHOUT REAL DEVOTION TO GOD.

HE WEPT FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE REFUSAL OF HIS PEOPLE TO OPEN THEIR EARS TO GOD'S WORD REVEALED IN HIM.

AND JESUS WEPT FOR THOSE WHO WERE USING RELIGION, AND THE FAITH OF THE PEOPLE FOR PERSONAL GAIN, WHILE LACKING THEMSELVES ANY REAL COMMITMENT TO GOD.

YES, JESUS SAW BOTH WHAT WAS AND WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN, IF ONLY THE CITY AND HER PEOPLE, AND THE ENTIRE NATION THEY REPRESENTED, HAD BEEN WILLING TO LISTEN.

THEY MISSED SO MUCH HE HAD TO OFFER THEM, BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT WILLING TO RECEIVE HIM ON HIS, AND THUS ON GOD'S TERMS, RATHER THAN THEIR OWN

THEREFORE, JESUS LAMENTED ALL HE HEARD AND SAW, AND DID NOT HEAR AND SEE WITHIN JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE.

HE WEPT BECAUSE JESUS LOVED THEM SO DEEPLY. HE GRIEVED AND LAMENTED OVER THE LOVE OF GOD THAT WAS NOT RETURNED.

AND HE WEPT BECAUSE JERUSALEM WOULD PAY DEARLY FOR HER UNWILLINGNESS TO LISTEN.

BUT THEN, AFTER PAUSING TO LAMENT, JESUS AND THE CROWD MOVED ON AND ENTERED THE CITY GATES.

AFTER HE ENTERED THE CITY, THE SAVIOR'S FIRST ACT WAS TO GO INTO THE TEMPLE. WHAT HE SAW AND HEARD THERE TURNED HIS GRIEF INTO RIGHTEOUS ANGER.

JESUS EXPERIENCED THE SIGHT AND SMELL AND SOUND OF DOVES AND SHEEP AND OXEN BEING SOLD TO THOSE WHO CAME TO MAKE SACRIFICES.

HE HEARD THE CALL OF MERCHANTS, THE HAGGLING BETWEEN BUYERS AND SELLERS, THE CLINK OF COINS.

THIS ANGERED JESUS, BECAUSE THE PURPOSE OF THE COURT OF THE GENTILES, WAS TO PROVIDE A PLACE FOR THOSE WHO WERE NOT JEWISH TO PRAY TO THE GOD OF ISRAEL.

BUT SURELY THEIR PRAYERS WERE DROWNED OUT WITHIN THE TEMPLE. BY THE SOUND OF THE MONEY CHANGERS AND MERCHANTS WHO WERE PERMITTED TO SET UP SHOP THERE.

THUS, GOD'S HOUSE WAS TURNED INTO MARKETPLACE, AND THE SOUND OF PRAYERS WERE OVERSHADOWED BY NOISE THAT WAS NOT DIRECTED TOWARDS THE GLORY OF GOD.

IT IS NO WONDER THAT JESUS WAS ANGERED WHEN HE HEARD AND SAW THE LACK OF RESPECT BEING GIVEN TO GOD, IN HIS FATHER'S OWN HOUSE.

AND SO, HE TOOK ACTION AND TURNED OVER THE TABLES, CHASING THE MONEY CHANGERS AND OTHER MERCHANTS OUT OF THE TEMPLE COMPLEX.

WE MIGHT WELL IMAGINE WHAT THE TEMPLE AUTHORITIES SAW AND HEARD BY THOSE ACTIONS.

THEY HEARD THE CRACK OF THE WHIP, THE SPILLING OF COINS AND THE SOUND OF THEM SPLATTERING ON THE STONE FLOOR.

THEN THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN THE NOISY PROTESTS OF MERCHANTS, CUSTOMERS, AND ANIMALS ALIKE. ALL OF THAT NOISE WOULD HAVE SURELY SOUNDED LIKE A DIRECT REBELLION AGAINST THEIR AUTHORITY.

THUS, JESUS OFFERED HIS OPPONENTS IRREFUTABLE PROOF HE WAS A THREAT TO THEM.

LET US NOW TURN TO WHAT WE CAN HEAR IN THIS STORY AS WE COUNT DOWN THE WEEK OF CHRIST'S PASSION ENDING IN HIS DEATH, AND FOLLOWED BY HIS RESURRECTION.

LISTEN AGAIN TO THE PRAISE OF THE DISCIPLES, THEY PROCLAIMED: "BLESSED IS THE KING, WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD! PEACE IN HEAVEN, AND GLORY IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN!"

DOES THAT SOUND FAMILIAR? DO YOU REMEMBER THE ACCLAIM OF THE ANGELS AT THE BIRTH OF CHRIST?

THEY PROCLAIMED: "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN, AND PEACE AMONG THOSE WHOM GOD FAVORS."

TRULY, THE WORDS OF THE DISCIPLES CAN REMIND THOSE WITH THE EARS TO HEAR, THAT THE FULFILLMENT OF THE ANGELIC PROCLAMATION WAS ALMOST AT HAND.

INDEED, WHEN JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS AND WAS RAISED ON THE THIRD DAY HE PROVIDED ALL WHO ARE GIFTED WITH SALVATION WITH HIS PEACE, THAT PASSES UNDERSTANDING.

CHRIST PEACE IS THE PEACE OF FORGIVENESS OF SIN AND RECONCILIATION WITH GOD.

WHAT ELSE CAN WE HEAR? COULD IT BE THE SOUND OF FUTURE GENERATIONS WHO CLAIM TO LOVE JESUS AND ONLY PRETEND TO DO SO FOR THEIR OWN AGENDA?

THIS REMINDS US THAT THE WORLD, STILL NEEDS CHRIST'S SACRIFICE. AND THOSE WHO ARE SAVED ALSO NEED TO REMEMBER IT.

WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT THE OTHER SOUNDS OF HOLY WEEK, ESPECIALLY THOSE ECHOES FROM MAUNDY THURSDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY THAT CAN STILL BE HEARD TODAY.

THERE IS THE SOUND OF SAVIOR'S WORDS: "THIS IS MY BODY; THIS IS MY BLOOD." "DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME."

THEN THERE IS HIS PRAYER IN GETHSEMANE- "LET THIS CUP PASS...NOT MY WILL BUT THINE BE DONE."

DOES JESUS' WORD TO JUDAS RING IN YOUR EARS- "WILL YOU BETRAY ME WITH A KISS?"

OR PERHAPS THE SOUND OF PETER'S DENIAL "I DON'T KNOW HIM!", IS ON YOUR MIND.

MAYBE EVEN THE BANG OF HAMMER ONTO THE NAILS THAT BOUND JESUS TO THE CROSS CAN BE HEARD BY SOME, OR HIS CRY OF AGONY AS HIS BODY WAS PIECED BY THE NAILS, AND THE CROSS WAS SET UPRIGHT.

MAYBE YOU CAN HEAR THE WEEPING OF HIS MOTHER AND THE OTHER WOMEN, AS WELL AS THE MOCKERY OF SOLDIERS AND OTHERS.

THEN THERE ARE THE SAVIOR'S WORDS AND PRAYERS FROM THE CROSS, SAYING: "FATHER, FORGIVE THEM", "TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE".

MY GOD, MY GOD-WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?", "I THIRST", "IT IS FINISHED", "INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT"

THERE IS THE SOUND OF A LARGE STONE SEALING A TOMB AND THEN THE SOUND OF SILENCE THAT CARRIES US FROM FRIDAY NIGHT UNTIL THE DAWN OF SUNDAY MORNING.

ON SUNDAY IT IS BROKEN BY THE HUSH CONVERSATION OF THE WOMEN GOING TO THE TOMB AND THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESURRECTION BY THE ANGEL.

SO LET US APPROACH THIS WEEK WITH EARS AND HEARTS OPEN TO HEARING WHAT GOD HAS TO TELL US. AMEN

SERMON SUMMARY: LUKE 19:28-46

TODAY I'D LIKE US TO APPROACH THE PALM SUNDAY READING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF WHAT THOSE INVOLVED HEARD, AND FAILED TO HEAR. THE CROWD OF DISCIPLES, AS LUKE CALLS THE MOB AROUND JESUS, SAW IN HIM THEIR MESSIAH AND KING, AND THEY RESPONDED WITH THEIR VOICES.

THEY PRAISED GOD, AND CELEBRATED JESUS' ARRIVAL IN JERUSALEM, SEEING IN THAT PROCESSION THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY OF THE TRUE KING OF ISRAEL. THEY SAW IN JESUS THE MESSIAH RIDING ON A DONKEY. YES INDEED, THEY HEARD AND SAW IN JESUS THAT DAY THE FULFILLMENT OF ALL GOD PROMISED ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN HOPES AND DREAMS.

THE PHARISEES, ON THE OTHER HAND, HEARD SOMETHING ENTIRELY DIFFERENT. THEY HEARD IN THE VOICES OF THE CROWD, AND THE REFUSAL OF JESUS TO SILENCE THEM A DANGEROUS SOUND. THEY HEARD WHAT MIGHT RING IN ROMAN EARS AS THE SOUND OF REBELLION. THE PHARISEES AND OTHER JEWISH LEADERS ALSO HEARD A GROWING THREAT TO THEIR OWN POWER AND PRESTIGE, AND THE LOSS OF THE STATUS QUO.

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