2023 04 02 THE CONTRAST – Palm Sunday

Psalm 50. Psalm 118:1-29. Philippians 2:5-11. Matthew 21:1-11.

Was there ever such a contrast as the joy and praise of the people when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on what we call ‘Palm Sunday’ and the vicious hatred of ‘Good Friday’ five days later!

Sunday: a huge welcome, dancing in the streets, expectations – the Saviour, Gods person for these times, blessed-just the man that we have waited for to solve all our problems and bring prosperity and security. The people trembling with excitement – “Who is this? -this is the prophet Jesus!”

I wonder how often a minister or church leader/worker feels this as they start a new position?

But Jesus knew the human soul and did not trust himself to them.

It was only a few days latter that the tide turned and became a tsunami. Jesus went to the temple where he could have expected honour to God and activities which would honour God, draw people closer to God, and to each other.

What he found was greed, corruption of the laws, suppression of the poor, dishonour to God.

Jesus was furious for the disrespect of God and he caused such a commotion that news of it spread throughout Jerusalem. Jesus turned over tables, drove the animals and people out of the courtyard and whipped them with the cry of “you have turned my Fathers house of prayer into a den of robbers and thieves.”

Now, gone is the adoration – ‘Palm Sunday’ is finished and the rejection and anger and manipulation starts. Can you imagine the whispering – “who does he think he is, we want a messiah to slaughter the Romans and bring back the kingdom of the past, he is a fraud, a magician, around and around the streets it goes building in intensity, fanned by those whose power he threatens, the very people who should have recognized him and fall at his feet.

And then it came to mindless screams of kill him, kill him, “crucify him, crucify him,” give us Barnabas – a thief and murderer a man of action, – and that is what they got, for the next 2000 years – captivity by those who enslaved them and killed them.

“Because of your iniquities you were sold” (Isaiah 50) They chose to continue their ancestor’s rejection of God’s love, and the living that comes through that love.

**So where does God go from here???????????**

Consider the trust, the story of humanity shown in threads from these three sections of Isaiah 50:

1. **GOD IS CRYING OUT** –

“why have we abandoned Me!”

Did I abandon you

Did I divorce your mother?

Did I sell you as slaves?

When I called - no one answered

Do you think that I cannot save, cannot redeem you?

Do you not see that I cloth the heaven in blackness and?

That I drive the seas.

1. **COMPARISON**

The Servant of God – Jesus says God has given me the tongue

Of a disciple

One who is taught

Able to speak a word in season to him who is weary

He awakens my ear every morning to hear as a disciple hears

I have not rebelled or turned backwards

I have been tortured

My hair has been torn out

My face has been spat in.

*Sound familiar? – and quoted a thousand years later in regard to Jesus*

1. **Third thread MOTIVATION/TRUST for Jesus and for us individually.**

**Because** I know the Lord God helps me

I am not ashamed or confounded

I know that I will not be put to shame

God is near and declares me right

my enemies and those who contend with me will grow old

4…… v10.**CHALLENGE AND ENCOURAGEMENT.**

I have had hesitation in my soul as to completing this section – I feel that it is so easy to write- “now this is how you/we live” It has to be real from inside me and for me to bring to you. I am going to conclude with Isaiah 50: v10, 11. (if the dog stops hassling me to take her for a walk in our Gods world!).

V10b “Who among you walks in darkness and deep trouble and has no shinning splendor in their heart.” (Amp)

Come – walk into Gods love, rely on Jesus, know that you belong. Let God support us and grow us strong.

We enter into Gods love and are clean through the Son of God taking our individual sins into Himself – “Jesus became sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”. We are clean and right and have the gift of Gods Spirit, Gods Presence in us, (John 14-16) our Lords death bed blessing to us.

Come let us honour God together.