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St. Paul's Lutheran Church
2100 16th Street SW
Austin, MN 55912-1749
Pastor Ted Barthels
Sermon preached on
April 5, 2020
Palm Sunday

Passion History Lessons: Jesus' Death and Burial
Hymns: 160; 162; 174 151:1,7 (367:1,2)

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord
and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon Text: Isaiah 53:12

Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,
And He shall divide the spoil with the strong,
Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many. (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Your truth. Your Word is truth.
Amen.

In Christ Jesus, God our Savior, dear fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: The Palm Sunday Celebration

The Palm Sunday celebration was quite a spectacle. It was the first day of the week of festival of the unleavened bread; great crowds of people were making their way to Jerusalem starting early in the day. The Passover would be celebrated later that week and there was much to do in preparation for the festival. People from all over Judea and Galilee and even many from distant lands all made the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. Among them was Jesus and His disciples.

Jesus understood fully all that was about to take place, and that it was time for His mission of salvation to come to its climax with His sacrifice for us. In fulfillment of prophecy Jesus approached Jerusalem riding on the foal of a donkey. The image

may have almost been comical but for the glory of the Him who humbly came in the name of the Lord. People noticed, and there was stir in the crowds. Once it started others asked, "Who is this?" The answer was given, "This is Jesus the prophet from Galilee!" Words of praise coming from the psalms were often sung by the pilgrims as they made their trek to Jerusalem. Those same words were sung in praise of Jesus, our Redeemer King.

Jesus' approach to Jerusalem quickly became a triumphal procession. People were going before the Lord waving palm branches some laying them down on the road before Jesus. Some even lay their coats down before Him. Others followed after and the crowds of people joined in to sing, "*Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna in the Highest!*" (Matthew 21:9) "Hosanna" means, "Save now we pray!" The cheers were acknowledging and praising Jesus as the Christ. He was receiving a welcome reserved for the war hero, the Deliverer of one's people, the Man who would be King!

Yes, it was all in an exuberance of emotion, and yet it was praise due Jesus. It was praise that acknowledged a victory that was to be secured by week's end with Jesus' sufferings and death on the cross. It is this victory, the triumph of our Savior over the forces of evil, that Isaiah described in our text 600 years before these things took place. And so looking to Jesus as the Servant of the Lord we consider in His sufferings and death --

THEME: Our Triumphant Sacrifice.

Isaiah begins by setting this verse of prophecy in the context of war, the great battle that it was! We are told of --

I. The Spoils of War Being Secured.

The opening lines of our text might seem a bit obscure. We may have a bit of difficulty getting the point of what this is about. It is about a great deliverance!

Jesus is the Champion of our salvation. When we think about champions we think about athletic events like baseball or basketball or even golf. The champions in those arenas are simply better at playing a game than others. What went on at

Calvary was no game. It was a struggle to the death. The old evil foe, the devil came with great might. He is mightier than any of us would ever even dream of being. He has his hordes of evil angels. He is bent on our destruction! When the devil first deceived Adam and Eve so that they fell into sin they also fell into death, and death passed upon all men. The people of this earth were taken captive by the devil. Also from the beginning God promised a Savior, a Champion who would take on the devil in mortal combat, and the winner walks away with spoils of war. The spoils of that battle was the souls of mankind.

Now consider the words of our text speaking of Jesus our Savior.

“Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,”

Jesus is among the mighty ones of the earth, a Champion like none other! He is not only one of the greats like Samson battling the Philistines to deliver God’s people, or like David fighting Goliath to deliver God’s people. Jesus is God’s Champion sent into combat to deliver God’s people from death and the devil.

And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Jesus’ victory means that He takes control of the spoils of war. Remember the spoils of this war are nothing less than the souls of God’s people. Delivering God’s people, Jesus Himself has a stake in the spoils of war. This is the wonder of grace which Paul describes for us in -

Romans 5:9-11 “Having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. ¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

We were delivered from wrath, delivered from God’s wrath because of OUR sin! We were reconciled to God through Jesus’ death on the cross. That is what Isaiah prophesied in our text: We are the spoils of war which Jesus brings to God the Father, delivering us from death and the devil **“Because He poured out His soul unto death”** That was the sacrifice that won the day! He paid the price of our sin with His holy precious blood. It

could be nothing less than the precious blood of Christ poured out into death. But wait doesn't Isaiah say more than that? He poured out His soul unto death even as Jesus cried out "My God, My God why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46) and as Jesus finally said, "Father into your hands I commit My spirit!" (Luke 23:46)

It was this tremendous sacrifice made for us, one or behalf that forms the foundation for --

II. His Intercession for the Transgressors.

Isaiah prophesied:

Isaiah 53:12c "Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many."

We know, in fact we just read how Jesus was crucified between two horrible criminals who deserved the death sentence they received. We see how these words of prophecy were fulfilled in Jesus' crucifixion, but it runs deeper than that doesn't it? Jesus bore the sins of the world. He bore the sins of the masses of humanity. He carried the crimes of others to Golgotha. All those charges that were against us, they were nailed to Jesus' cross! He was the sacrifice for our sin, He offered Himself as our sacrifice to God.

With that sacrifice, that tremendous sacrifice comes the benefit of Jesus making intercession for us before the throne of God. It is as John expressed it in his first epistle, "*We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*" (1 John 2:1-2) He argues our case before the judgment seat of God the Father, and is successful also in this, unfailingly successful, because that sacrifice that Jesus made for the sins of the world appeased the wrath of God. He satisfied the debt, He appeased God's wrath on account of sin.

We learn so much of the grace of this intercession by recalling Jesus' word from the cross, "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.*" (Luke 23:34)

Today is Palm Sunday. This is the day when we join the throngs in bringing Jesus our "Hosannas!" Regrettably, many on the road into Jerusalem did not comprehend the triumph that was to be the Lord's and how their Hosannas would be fulfilled in

the cross. By faith we understand where the victory was won by our Champion of salvation. By faith we turn our eyes to the cross as we join in the praise of our Redeemer King and sing, "Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the Highest!" (Matthew 21:9)

AMEN.

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Amen.

(Romans15:13)