

Palm Sunday Reading 2017

Whew! I'm out of breath from running along side this processional! And I kept getting swatted with palm branches as people waved them across the path of Jesus. As I ran, I heard bits and pieces of what people were saying and yelling. "Look at me Jesus! Bless us Jesus! Hosanna! He has come in the name of the Lord!" (pause, thinking, hesitant to share).....But I have to tell you, I heard Mocking, too. "This is the King of the Jews? Riding on a colt? His feet are hanging off in the dirt! But then it is the right of victorious kings to ride in triumph on a donkey! More questions....Who is this Jesus!?"

There is quite a history to the confusion about who Jesus really is. He was born humbly in a stable in Bethlehem, where Wise Men sought him out. At that time King Herod had heard about this Baby, this Jesus, being worshipped as a King in Bethlehem. He had also heard the prophecy that Jesus was to become "a ruler to shepherd God's people, Israel." So Herod wanted to kill this baby who seemed to be threatening his own power. An angel appeared to Joseph, Jesus' father, warning him to take his wife Mary and the Baby to Egypt, which he did. When Jesus was not found in Bethlehem, Herod in his rage ordered every child under two years old who lived in or around Bethlehem, to be slain. The prophet Jeremiah had predicted this slaughter and the weeping, lamentation and inconsolable grief of this community.

All of his life Jesus has spoken with authority and taken it upon himself to tell his followers what God (He calls him his Father) wants us to do and to be. He is a lightning rod for the hatred of those in power wherever he goes. Even today, I know the preachers and teachers are just waiting for Jesus to enter the temple. They'd like to arrest Him, but they're afraid of the crowds. If they could find a way to turn the crowd against Jesus they would probably arrest him and even put him to death. There are already two crosses on the hill, and room for another.

Jesus seems to know he is in danger. He isn't waving to the crowd. He looks so sad and he has been spending so much time teaching and preaching, as if he can't say all he wants us to know. He is healing

I wonder what will become of Jesus. I've been following him for several days now, and I have listened to what he's teaching. I'd like to believe it all, but it's **DANGEROUS**. He's been talking about **The Kingdom of God belonging to Children**. About **How hard it will be for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God**. **He's been trying to get people (even WOMEN) to leave their** mothers, fathers, brothers, and even their children to help him share what he calls the **Good News**. I know he has gotten frustrated with me, because I just don't get it sometimes. I'm new at this way of thinking and I haven't been a follower for very long.

Jesus has some really good friends. I guess sometimes they argue about who is most important to him. I heard him tell James and John that if they want to stand with him they must be servants to **all**; that **HE** came to ransom many. ...(Now what does **THAT** mean?)... “The First shall be last, and the Last will be first.”

There are rumors that Jesus just won't let things rest! He's stirring up trouble, and I'm going to have to decide where I stand with all of this. If he is arrested (or worse) will I be strong enough to speak for him? Do I believe strongly enough? Perhaps his **REAL** followers, those who've been with him longer, will take the risks so I don't have to get involved. But then again, Jesus has said that following him is all that really matters in life.....and after life. Hmm... What will I do? What would YOU do?

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