

March 24, 2024

Palm/Passion Sunday

Mark 14:1-15:47

This is a long Gospel and it has many prophetic connections with many other books in the Bible. The focus of today's sermon is these prophecies and a smaller focus on loving thy neighbor. I have always been a student of prophesy and noticing patterns in scripture.

Prophecy does not make sense until all the elements come together at one focal point.

We all know that Judas from Iscario would betray Our Lord. Yet the author of Psalm 41:9 saw it centuries before it occurred. "Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against Me." This predicted how Judas would leave the Last

Supper with the Eucharist still in his mouth. Only to go and get the Romans so they could capture Jesus.

Jesus would also quote Zechariah 13:7 to describe the events that would soon play out in the garden. "I will strike the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered." Once Jesus is arrested and in custody the disciples flee for their own safety. Mind you some will follow at a distance to see how this will all play out. They are awaiting the outcome with great anxiety.

Judas shows up at the garden of Gethsemane with the Romans and the Temple guards. They are there to arrest Jesus. Judas identifies Jesus to them with a kiss. Proverbs 27-6, "Well meant are the wounds a friend inflicts, but profane are the kisses of an enemy."

While in custody Jesus does not say very much. Isaiah 53-7, "He was oppressed and he was afflicted. Yet He did not open His mouth, like a lamb before its shearers is silent so he did not open His mouth." Isaiah goes on to describe how Jesus is treated among the Roman cohort.

They would flog and whip Him and insult and spit upon Him. Isaiah 50:4-9, "I gave my back to those who struck Me, and my cheeks to those who pull out my beard. I did not hide my face from insult and spitting." Through most of this Jesus remains silent.

They lead Jesus through the streets of Jerusalem. His physical appearance has changed greatly after being abused by the Romans. Many accounts say He was unrecognizable. Psalm 31:11 attests to this fact. "I am the scorn of all My advisories, a horror to My neighbor, an object of dread to My acquaintances, those who see Me in the street flee from Me." After they crucify Jesus the Romans cast lots for His garments. Psalm 22-18, "They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." While being crucified He is placed between two thieves. Isaiah 53-12, "And He was numbered with the transgressors." While there, people would come only to mock Him. Psalm 62-6, "A reproach of men and despised by the people. All those who see Me ridicule me. They shout out the lip, they shake their heads

saying, He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him. Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him.”

At the ninth hour Jesus cries out His final prayer. It also comes from Psalm 22-1, “My God, My God why have thou forsaken Me.’ The whole Psalm should be read in order to fully understand the context of what is being prayed by Jesus. We will read the entire Psalm on Good Friday. It completely describes the events of that day very accurately. It is haunting how accurate it is. While Jesus is praying this Psalm someone runs to get Him a drink. Psalm 64-21, “They also gave Me gall for my food and for My thirst they gave me vinegar to drink”.

The prophecies about Jesus’s final days are very detailed and accurate. It is disturbing how accurate they are. Yet in all of His trials Jesus still maintains His love of neighbor. That may have been the things that gets Him to His desired end. Jesus had compassion on the thief on His right. With His words He leads him into paradise that afternoon. Jesus also prayed for His torturers to God. So that God would have pity on

them for what they inflicted upon Him. Forgive them Father for they know not what they are doing.

Only the Son of God could behave in such a way. That is a large example to try to follow for those of us who claim to follow Him. It is one thing to lay down your life for a friend or loved one. It is a very difficult thing to lay down your life for those who hate you and want you dead. Yet that is exactly what Jesus did on Golgotha.

Have a blessed and prayerful Holy Week, Pastor D