

FEASTING ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

The Day the Blessing Was Offered

John 12

INTRODUCTION: St. Andrew Baptist Church, I miss you!

Sundays bring joy to my soul because I know we are worshipping together. We cannot see each other, yet the knowledge that our praises and our prayers are rising simultaneously to Heaven still reinforces the unity that we have together in Christ.

I very much look forward to those days in the future when we can be physically reunited, but until then I am grateful that the Lord has given us a way to stay in touch, worship, express our love for one another, and even continue to grow through the study of God's Word together. And with the Governor's order to stay at home as much as possible, it looks like we will be meeting online for the rest of this month at least.

Today marks the beginning of Holy Week, that very special eight days in the earthly life of the Lord Jesus Christ, when He completed the work the Father sent Him into the world to do, becoming our substitute on the cross, and rising from the dead to offer forgiveness of sin and eternal life to us all.

One thing the Coronavirus has done for us all is to change our schedules. Frankly, we are not happy about most of these changes, but let me suggest one that I believe is positive. We all have more time to focus some of our attention upon this very special time of year and consider what all the Lord did for each of us on each of these eight days.

As a staff (a wonderful, gifted, godly bunch of men and women), we all are working together to make Holy Week this year, beginning today, the most special observance of Holy Week any of us have ever experienced. Here is what we are going to do to partner with you and your family to still make times of contemplation, meditation, Bible study, and worship available even during a time that we cannot physically meet together.

Daily, beginning tomorrow, in the blog I have been writing for the last couple of weeks, I will remind us of what happened in Jesus' life on that particular day and some of its implications for our lives today. These will be brief and will be available on our website, sabc.org, as a short video to watch or in print to read, whichever you prefer.

You will find this posted each morning when you get out of bed, even if you get up at 4 a.m. They will remain on the site so you can access them later in the day or later in the week if you miss one. I hope, at least for this week, that you will access this brief devotional and use it as a help to focus your own thinking and meditation on the Lord and what He has done and is doing in your life.

On Friday, Good Friday, two things will happen.

In my morning blog where I will try to prepare us to consider the day that Jesus was crucified, I will explain why Good Friday is called good. You may be surprised by the reason.

Secondly, at 7 p.m. in the same place that you are watching this service right now, we will have a Good Friday worship service online. It will be a short service, a half hour or less, but a very special time of worship.

And then of course, next Sunday, we will celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead, what happened that morning, and what it means for each of us today. That of course will be during our regular worship time at 9:30 a.m. on our Facebook page, on Boxcast, or on our website, sabc.org.

Now, we actually begin our observance of Holy Week this morning as we consider Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. I call it The Day the Blessing Was Offered.

Wherever you are, would you please stand as we read from John 12. We do this to demonstrate our attentiveness to and reverence for the Word of God.

John 12:12-15 NKJV 12 The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is *He who comes in the name of the LORD!*' The King of Israel!"

14 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: 15 "*Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt.*"

Feast – Passover

It is obvious to us as readers that this is somehow a most significant event, but why?

Even the disciples did not understand at the moment.

John 12:16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that they had done these things to Him*

It was not until after the resurrection, and probably not until after the Holy Spirit came to live inside of them and began to do what Jesus promised, to remind them of all Jesus had said and done and to teach them the significance of it.

So, what did they come to understand?

John 12:12 NKJV The next day a great ... cried out: "**Hosanna!** 'Blessed is *He who comes in the name of the LORD!*' The King of Israel!"

1. The words the people were shouting were the words of Ps. 118:25-26.

Psalm 118:25 NKJV Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.

Hosanna is not a Greek word. It is a transliteration of the Hebrew the people were quoting, Ho shi áh na – Save, now!

The translation “Send now prosperity” I think misses the point in the text. The key word means literally “to go through” in the sense of go the way of victory or success.

My own paraphrase – “Save us now, Yhwh, send the One who knows and will do what will accomplish salvation.”

Psalm 118:26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Blessed is He who comes in the name of Yhwh!

You are the One we have been blessing when we sing the songs on the temple mount.

But then they added something to the ancient psalm.

John 12:12 NKJV The next day a great ... cried out: “Hosanna! ‘Blessed is *He who comes in the name of the LORD!*’ **The King of Israel!**”

How did the crowd recognize Jesus as the King? Because Jesus was sitting on the colt of a donkey as He rode into Jerusalem.

John 12:14-15 14 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: 15 “*Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey’s colt.*”

Even the common people recognized that this was a fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9 prophesying that the Messiah King would come to Jerusalem.

Zechariah 9:9 NKJV “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, **your King is coming to you;** He *is* just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

2. The second thing the disciples came to understand was that this was the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant.

To the Jews, Abraham was the number one most important person in their lineage.

- More than David.

- More than Moses.
- More than Jacob whose name was changed to Israel.

They delighted to be known as the children of Abraham! They like to call the patriarch, Father Abraham!

And this love for Abraham goes back to the promise God made to him.

Genesis 12:1–3 NKJV 1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you.

2 I will make you a great nation;

I will bless you

And make your name great;

And you shall be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you,

And I will curse him who curses you;

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Seven promises

No conditions

All of these promises were promises that focused on the ultimate blessing of Israel.

Except one – the last one

And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

This was the promise that through the descendent of Abraham, all the families of the earth would be blessed.

And God was faithful to keep this promise. FEASTING ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD!

Jesus was and is that descendent of Abraham.

He was and is the one to bless all the families of the earth.

How would Jesus do that? Jesus explained beginning in v. 23

John 12:23 But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. 24 Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.**

Jesus was telling them that He, the Son of God, was going to die, so that by His death God would have many sons and daughters.

Jesus knew – Rom 3:23 and Rom 6:23

Cross

Sin on Jesus

Pay penalty

He told them He would rise

After the resurrection He told the disciples to tell everyone everywhere that Jesus would give forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all who would trust in Him.

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey, He was making clear that He Himself was the Messiah-King. He had come to be the Savior of the Jews and of all the world through His death and resurrection. He was offering the blessing of salvation to every man and woman, boy and girl. He Himself was the descendent promised to Abraham that would be a blessing to all the families of the earth.

The blessing was that salvation would be offered to each and every person of the world.

The offer of the blessing came first to those Jews of Jerusalem.

Sadly, we read in verse 37 of John 12,

John 12:37 But although He had done so many signs before them, **they did not believe in Him, ...**

Matthew and Luke both report that Jesus wept that day over the rejection by the vast majority of the Jews of the gift of salvation He offered.

Nevertheless, Jesus continued to offer the gift of forgiveness and eternal life to all who would put their trust in Him.

John 12:44-46 44 Then Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. 45 And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.

46 I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

And this remains His invitation to each and every one of us.

His salvation is offered as a free gift.

But each of us must make a choice as to whether we receive that gift or not.

If we want to receive that gift of salvation, we must obey Romans 10:9.

Romans 10:9 NKJV ... if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.