

**MINISTRY BY MAIL**  
**Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship**  
[www.lutheranlccf.org](http://www.lutheranlccf.org)  
**Palm Sunday, April 17, 2011**

✠ ✠ ✠

(Hymns found in The Lutheran Hymnal, CPH, 1941)

Hymns: 161, 237:1, 162, 160, 47.

Zechariah 9:9, Philippians 2:5-11, John 12:12-16.

Sermon Text: Luke 19:28-40

Sermon by Pastor Robert Mehlretter

In the name of Jesus Christ, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

Many people have special memories of the day we call Palm Sunday, for various reasons. For some, it may have been their confirmation day. Confirmation day is a day when people publicly confess before the congregation what they believe.

On the first Palm Sunday, followers of Jesus also confessed what they believed about him, in a very public way. Today as we look at

**JESUS COMING TO JERUSALEM**

1. **We hear the people praise Jesus “for all the miracles they had seen.”**
2. ***“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”***
3. **Although unbelievers demand that Jesus rebuke his disciples, he has an answer for them.**

Luke gives us the background of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem. He rode on a colt and we read *“As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen.”*

These are people who had seen miracles such as Jesus feeding people, Jesus healing people of their diseases, Jesus giving life to people who were dead, Jesus giving people hope and confidence for the future because their sins were forgiven!

Have you seen any miracles? Your first thought might be ‘No I’ve not seen any miracles such as raising people from the dead, or people instantly being healed from their diseases.’ But what miracles have you observed, even today? How about the miracle of the last breath you drew? How about the miracle of the sunrise of a new day? A new day in which you may serve your Lord God? A new day, in which you may have the opportunity to live as a child of God, seeking to avoid the sins you committed yesterday? The miracle of having food to eat this morning? The miracle of being able to earn a living? Miracles of healing in your life, perhaps through the people and medications that God has provided for your help and may even use to keep you alive? And if you think back further in your life, perhaps all the way back to your baptism, how about the miracle of Jesus giving life to you, who were dead in trespasses and sins?

So I think that you would realize ‘Yes God has performed miracles in my life.’ Now of course many people would look at the things that I just mentioned that happened to you today as ordinary, everyday things that just happen in life, day after day. But you, as a child of God, realize that God is behind all these things. He gives life and breath and everything else to all men. How do we know that? Paul told the people of Athens, *“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.”* Acts 17:24-25

So isn’t there a good reason for you, too, to praise Jesus for all the miracles you have seen? Absolutely! This Palm Sunday you, too, can. Maybe on your trip home today you can recount miracles God has done for you and for your family! These followers of Jesus on Palm Sunday joyfully and publicly praised God in loud voices!

And our congregations do that, too. I love to sit in the front of the congregation and hear your singing especially of familiar hymns you particularly love!

Look at how these people praised Jesus. Luke tells us they were shouting **"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"**

They are praising the king who comes in the name of the Lord! They are recognizing that there is peace in heaven! They are recognizing that there is glory in the highest places!

And look at how the other evangelists pile up the praise that mankind gives on this sixth last day of Jesus' life. Matthew records: **"Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!"** Matthew 21:9. Mark records **"Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" "Hosanna in the highest!"** Mark 11:9-10. John records **"Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"** John 12:13.

Did you realize that the day that the people are praising Jesus so highly is the sixth last day of his life on earth before he will be cruelly crucified? The people who were praising Jesus on this day did not know he had only six days left to live. But that is human nature. Not a single one of us knows that we have X number of days left to live. Well, in a sense we could say, if we are thinking in terms of algebra, yes, we have X number of days left to live. And in algebra X is the unknown. We do not know how many days we have left to live. We do not know how many hours we have left to live. That is totally in God's hands.

Look at the words they used. **"Hosanna!"** Hosanna is an expression of praise and adoration. It comes from the Hebrew exclamation that means "Save" or "Help!" They are asking "Help the Son of David. May he succeed! May this hosanna, this song of praise sound in highest heaven!" **"Hosanna in the highest!"** The people are saying 'could there be any other greater praise?' 'O Lord in the highest places, in heaven, may you be praised and adored!'

**"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!"** Blessings go two ways. God blesses us. The greater blesses the lesser. But we are also asking that the one who comes in the name of the Lord be honored, and praised, and glorified!

Jesus is called the Son of David. Jesus is called the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Jesus brings the coming kingdom of our father David. Now maybe the people didn't really understand what this really meant, but they said it, echoing what the Old Testament says, as in our Old Testament lesson.

They shout about peace in heaven. It is an accomplished fact. Now there is peace between God and man – at least it is going to come sooner than people think – that will finally be accomplished with Jesus' sufferings, death, and resurrection. Blessed is the King of Israel. Of course, Jesus is not the kind of king that every one of them thinks he is. But they exalt him. So they confess him as the Savior. They do it very loudly and publicly – and are mocked for it by the Pharisees, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law who hate Jesus and want him out of the way. But the people – and even Jesus' own disciples – don't realize the true significance of their words. It is now time for Jesus to be glorified.

But we must remember how six days later we read in John (19:15) of the Jews and especially their leaders, who SHOULD have been pointing to God as their ruler: **"But they shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered."**

On the day he was crucified people wanted to kill this one whom today, the first day of the last week of his life, they called the Son of David, the one they called the King of Israel, the one who came in the name of the Lord.

But there is one more point we need to make today: Luke records these words: **Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.""**

Matthew gives us more history about Jesus' enemies demanding that Jesus rebuke his disciples because even children are honoring Jesus: *"When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, 'Who is this?' The crowds answered, 'This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.' Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. 'It is written,' he said to them, 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers.'"* The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, *"Hosanna to the Son of David,"* they were indignant. *"Do you hear what these children are saying?"* they asked him. *"Yes,"* replied Jesus, *"have you never read, 'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise'?"* And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night." Matthew 21:10-17

Matthew records that these things happened that same day that Jesus threw the moneychangers out of the temple. Matthew also records that he continued to heal, to perform miracles: *"The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them."* Matthew 21:14

But our real emphasis is these verses: *"But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' they were indignant. 'Do you hear what these children are saying?' they asked him. 'Yes,' replied Jesus, 'have you never read, 'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise'?"* Matthew 21:15-16

Some of the Pharisees, and the teachers of the law and the chief priests – they all wanted Jesus to tell his disciples – especially the children – to be quiet and stop shouting these kinds of praises.

On Palm Sunday and even the next day, Jesus' enemies demanded that he silence his followers. They objected to the praise that Jesus received, especially from children. They are the same leaders among the Jews who had been trying for a long time to get rid of Jesus, to have him killed. They should have been leading the praise of the God-sent Messiah, but instead, 6 days later, they were demanding his crucifixion.

If the adults, the leaders: the chief priests and teachers of the Law and the Pharisees who should have praised Jesus would not, then children would! In addition, because children often imitate their parents, they continued to praise Jesus with loud hosannas, as our hymns today suggest. I would like to ask the children 'why are you here this morning?' Aren't you here to praise the Lord? That is what you are doing with your singing, your praying, your very being here. You are praising the Lord. From the lives of children and infants the Lord has ordained praise. And the unbelievers hated to hear this. Is our world today any different? On how many occasions can you really hear real worship and praise of the true God, and hear music of worship and praise, on the radio? Once upon a time Sunday morning was a time for frequent Christian music. Today, on the best classical music stations, we might be fortunate on Sunday morning to hear a half-hour of religious music, some of that marvelous Christian music that has been written over the centuries to praise our Lord Jesus Christ. Historically, much of what has been considered the greatest music in the world has been written to praise God. I think it is safe to say that the unbelievers have taken control of Sunday. If you are driving on Sundays, as I often must, try surfing the radio stations and notice the terribly secular music you hear. Sunday, the first day of the week, the same day that Jesus entered Jerusalem, is our day of worship. But how many worldly activities haven't encroached on Sunday? Even years ago the Super Bowl football game was identified by a newspaper as a temple in which people worshiped!

We must always be on our guard against those who would mock and take away what we believe, including the opportunities, few as they are, to worship the Lord God.

The first Palm Sunday was a day to confess Jesus. In this Palm Sunday celebration, you are here confessing what you believe about Jesus. Don't forget to confess when you leave this building! *"Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"* Amen.