

Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Thank You O Christ for Your royal entry into Jerusalem. You are the King of our hearts, our true God in the flesh, we humbly ask for Your grace that we might always and forevermore worship You aright bowed low at Your feet. Use us Your willing servants on the way of the cross in every way You deem necessary for the victory of Your truth bringing everlasting peace to all on earth. Amen.

[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent. For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross.

In Christ Jesus, in whom dwells the fullness of God, so that by His holy precious blood we might be at peace, with God our Creator, dear fellow redeemed:

There was another Prince of Peace who entered Jerusalem to the shouts of acclamation by the people riding on a beast of burden before Jesus. It was about 1,000 years before when King David was soon to die. David's son by his command was anointed the Prince. His name was Solomon, which in Hebrew means "peace". Just as Jesus had to deal with pretenders to His position, so there were those who sought to assume the throne soon to be vacated by David. There was only one Prince of Peace who would unite the kingdom of David. But while much of his beginning reign as the crowned king prefigured that of our Lord Christ, it would not end up the same way. As a result of Solomon's idolatrous unfaithfulness, the united kingdom would be destroyed for many generations to come.

But not so with the Anointed One, the Christ, the One who would bring peace to all. He came to bring the Kingdom of God near to all sinners and failed not in His mission. He was welcomed into Jerusalem on this day on a beast of burden indicating that He came in peace. He would then be crowned as our King on Friday and ascend to His everlasting throne some 40 days later. So based on our text let us recognize how it is that **The Prince of Peace Reconciled God to Our Entire Fallen Race.**

As Jesus rode upon that donkey it was not so obvious He was “the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation and that by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, that all things were created through Him and for Him.” The crowd that day wanted Him to be the One the Father sent to save Israel, but how this was going to happen was beyond their expectation at this time. Many also were looking for the state of Israel to be saved, not necessarily themselves as sinners.

Something had just taken place, which had the people talking with great expectation. Even Jesus’ most high-powered enemies were concerned about what He had recently done. What had them receiving Jesus with great anticipation was the raising of Lazarus from the dead in Bethany, a town through which many of them had just passed through to come to the Holy City for the Passover. Jesus’ reputation was known by many festival goers before this, but to hear that He had power to raise a dead man who had been in the grave for four days was truly incredible and at the same time hopeful.

Only One who created all things in this world would have power and authority over all matter, even lifeless matter, and be able to give it life once again. Jesus did this, not by calling on a higher power, but He had the power Himself to give the command to Lazarus’ lifeless body and say: “Come forth!” with the result that the once dead man would come out of the grave before many witnesses.

The image of Jesus riding upon a beast of burden underscored that He had come to bring peace. He was not coming as a conquering king to mete out punishment, but rather to pronounce reconciliation. They, sinners like you and me, had every reason to expect condemnation, but instead He came with the message of peace for all. “Hosanna – Save us now!”

Is that not the reason you are here this morning? You are looking for the same thing today. If you have come here to have self-righteous pride rewarded, and on the side of this great Conqueror only to condemn others, you will not find such self-glory here today.

II

Now many of your neighbors who know little to nothing about Christ’s religion often think we gather in places like this to glory in ourselves, boasting that we are more holy than they. Sadly there are outward Christian Churches who conduct themselves with that emphasis. But this is not what our Lord Jesus has called us to do. Consider what we do here: we begin by confessing our sins; then receiving absolution for all our sins we hear the Word of God calling

us to lives of repentance and faith; then we receive the food in the holy meal for strength on our journey in this life toward heaven.

Again those who received Jesus on that first Palm Sunday were present to celebrate the Passover, the meal recounting Israel's deliverance from Egypt. On this day as they entered the city they were to choose the lamb that would be slaughtered later in the week and eaten. As John the Baptizer had already announced three years previous, *Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*. You see, our sin was and remains a most serious matter. Through this humble Lamb, this Prince of Peace, God would "reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross."

Whenever we hear of a wrongdoer being reconciled, we naturally think that the wrongdoer has done the work to be reconciled. But God knew that we had no power in ourselves to set things right with Him. So He, the offended One, did the work alone that would result in our reconciliation with Him. The blood of His Holy Son would be poured out for all sin of all time and in every place in this world.

The holy precious blood of our Substitute sent by God, would satisfy the eternal just sentence against us sinners. In Christ there would be peace between God and us, the sinners. This man riding on the donkey is the very God, "in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell." "He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent."

This is our proper worship – to recognize Jesus as the Prince of Peace who reconciled God to the entire human race through the shedding of His blood. At times, the unbelieving world tries to convince you that your sin is only a minor matter and that in truth since you are a conscientious follower of Jesus you do a pretty good job of obeying the rules. Therefore your constant need of cleansing through Word and Sacrament is really unnecessary.

Beware of this demonic deceit. Your old sinful natures prefer that approach to Jesus' religion. But Jesus never taught you this way. His peace and reconciliation are not to be found in the gatherings of the world. Not that it is wrong to enjoy parties, games, concerts, as long as they do not lead you into sin, but all such activities as fun as they can be, even enriching in some ways, they are not replacements. There you never find the gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation, which you continue to need until the end.

Next Sunday we are going to gather together as Christians to rejoice in the firstborn from the dead, namely our resurrected Lord Jesus. The payment made on Friday would be declared to the world, even in the depths of hell, that God has reconciled Himself to us sinners in the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ. A common greeting the resurrected Lord used at His appearances was "Peace be with you." This is an expression heard often in our divine services as well. God is at peace with you my fellow sinners, for Jesus' sake He paid the costly price for your peace. Go now in that peace. Amen.