

A Meditation for Holy Week

That was the week that was

Holy Week is a week of destiny that is full of paradox.

On Palm Sunday Our Lord rode into Jerusalem, receiving the shouts and the welcome of many. “*Hosanna to the son of David!*” They were looking for a warrior, but he came proclaiming a rule of peace, not violence. His action in the temple and with the fig tree proclaimed God’s judgement on corrupt religious and national systems, which bore no fruit. Can He find fruit in our churches and our lives today?

Lord Jesus, come into our midst today. Receive our welcome and our acclaim. Come to rule in our hearts and minds and to go out and proclaim you as King over all the world and every life.

Many who proclaimed Our Lord as King on Sunday with the shouts of “*Hosanna!*” shouted ‘*Crucify him!*’ on Friday.

May our faith and our love never falter or turn to hatred or indifference, but remain constant now and forever.

“God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
Romans 5:8

We see the love of Jesus in the humility with which He washes His disciples’ feet, even washing the feet of Judas when he knew that he was about to betray him. What love is this? Amazing love! Sacrificial love! Selfless love! Redeeming love! This is the love for which we give thanks this week, the love that surpasses all knowledge, the love that never falters, the love that pays the price, the love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.

We see the love of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, which means ‘olive press’, where He agonized before His Father, while His friends slept. It was almost as if the love was been pressed out of Him like the oil pressed from olives.

We see the love of Jesus at Calvary; an all embracing love. ‘This is how much God loved the world: He gave His Son, His one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in Him anyone can have a whole and lasting life.’ (John 3:16 from Eugene Peterson’s translation, ‘The Message’)

The hymn writer Robert Lowry wrote:

*Here is love, vast as the ocean, loving-kindness as the flood;
When the Prince of Life my ransom, shed for me His precious blood.
Who His love will not remember? Who can cease to sing His praise?
He shall never be forgotten, through heaven’s everlasting days.*

*On the mount of crucifixion, fountains opened deep and wide,
Through the flood-gates of God’s mercy, flowed the vast and gracious tide.
Grace and love like mighty rivers poured incessant from above,
And heaven’s peace and perfect justice kissed a guilty world in love.*

Yet it is also a very personal love. Charles Wesley wrote in one of his great hymns:

*Saved from the legal curse I am,
My Saviour hangs on yonder tree:
See there the meek, expiring Lamb
'Tis finished! He expires for me.*

Martyn Lloyd Jones, one of the great evangelical preachers of the 20th century wrote:

“When I survey the wondrous cross, what do I see? I see a spectacle that the world has never seen before, and will never see again. I see the holy Son of God bearing the punishment of my sins, the author of life dying that I might live, that I might become a son, a child of God, and go on to spend my eternity in the glory everlasting with Him.”

Graham Kendrick wrote in a song: *Amazing love, O what sacrifice. The Son of God, given for me. My debt He pays and my death He dies, that I might live.*

All for Jesus – You have loved us, all for Jesus – You have died, all for Jesus – you are with us; all for Jesus crucified

This week we celebrate the love of God expressed to us through our Lord Jesus. As we follow Him through this week of destiny and are reminded of the depths of his agony, let us fix our eyes upon Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and let us lift up our heads as we see beyond His suffering, to His glorious victory on the Cross and to His mighty resurrection. In gratitude we move from “Hosanna” through “Crucify Him!” to “The Lord is Risen!”.

(Mike Leader 2007)

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