

April 14th 2019

Text: Psalm 8

Palm Sunday

0423

Theme: We See Jesus.

May the humiliation and exaltation of the Son of God, even Jesus Christ our Savior, give all of you a precious understanding of the price of sin, and the glory of your salvation. Amen. Dear Christians: In our Gospel Lesson this morning we heard the story of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem to begin the week which would ultimately see His death on the cross. In that story we view the praise of Jesus as He rode into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey by those who were there for the feast. The praise that comes from their lips is one of adoration and praise unto their Lord and Savior, yea the King of all creation. It was the very glorifying of Jesus' name here on earth by the people of earth. Now every Sunday, the entire congregation says together the Lord's prayer, and often we say it without giving it much thought, but if we think back to our days in catechism class we remember a discussion on the first petition: "Hallowed be Thy name." This petition Luther explains: "God's name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be holy among us also. How is this done? God's name is hallowed when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead a holy life according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven. But he that teaches and lives otherwise than God's Word teaches, profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, Heavenly Father." The petition then is asking that God's name be worshipped and praised in this world in a similar fashion as that on Palm Sunday so long ago. The Lord does need our petition to make His name holy, for it is holy simply by virtue of the fact that He is God, but we pray that it is holy here on this earth, among all the men of earth. This would be to hallow God's name. It is done by every Christian, such as those at Jesus' triumphal entry, when they worship Him in spirit and in truth, and live lives which are in accord with His Word.

Now the things that are seen with the eye on that day when Jesus entered Jerusalem does not at all fall in line with the words which proceed from their mouths. Jesus was a Man, albeit a Man which had many miracles; He was riding a donkey not exactly a noble steed as any other king would ride; He did not appear to One who would deserve such worship, and yet they call Him the King of Israel, they bless His name as though He were the almighty God Himself, as indeed He is, but it was not readily seen. Yet so it is that the eyes of faith sees Jesus. Our faith does not see Him only as a crucified and condemned criminal, not as a Man riding into Jerusalem upon the foal of a donkey, not as a man who had no bed to lay His head upon, no not even as a Baby born in a stable, but as the almighty God of heaven and earth, He who called all things into existence by the Word of His mouth, who brought life and immortality to life through His death and resurrection. Truly His is a name above every name, a name to which every knee should bow of things in heaven, earth, and under the earth, for He is the Son of God, the Messiah, the Savior, the Chosen of God. This is what those people saw on that day with the eye of faith, which faith as a gift of God gives man the ability to see

that which cannot be seen with the eye of the flesh. The epistle to the Hebrews declares: *"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor: that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."* (Heb. 2:9) This passage will serve as our theme for this Palm Sunday, as we view the humiliation and exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our text for this morning is Psalm eight.

"O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

Let us pray, Dearest Lord and Savior, as of old it was declared that Thou art Hosanna, the King of Israel, so today we magnify and glorify Thy precious name. For humbling Thyself in taking the form of human flesh, subjecting Thyself to Thine own perfect Law, keeping it perfectly in our stead, enduring the just punishment of our sins upon the accursed tree, and going into the grave we thank O most gracious Lord. Sanctify our lips, purge them from the sin which so easily besets us, so that we may praise and worship Thee in truth all our days, hallowing Thy name on earth, giving glory unto Thee by our lives, and so be as beacons of light in this sin darkened world. Help us to see the glory wherewith Thou hast been exalted, that we may, as Thy brethren, may have the blessed hope that like as Thou wast glorified, we too shall be glorified. Give us peace of conscience, hope of forgiveness, and the certainty of salvation, that we never despair of help, but always have firm confidence that we shall indeed be with Thee in paradise. O Lord how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! Let this forevermore be our exclamation, for Thou art our All in all. We ask all these things for Thy sake. Amen.

Dearest Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us learn first that when we see Jesus, He was:

- ***Made a little lower than the angels.*** We read verses one through five of our text: ***"O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour."*** The psalmist David begins by making a statement

of how great and glorious the name of God is above all the earth. It is quite similar to the praise given to Jesus upon His entry into Jerusalem, and while the words are different, the same theme runs through both, that God the Lord is to be praised for all His wonderful works unto men. He cites the praise of babes and sucklings as those wherein praise for Him is perfected. There was a time in my life, where I was helpless and unable to take care of myself. In fact, every person who has ever lived has been such a time of their life. It is when we are infants and babes. An infant is entirely reliant on others for his well being. He cannot feed himself, he cannot move around by himself. He is utterly dependant upon others for his survival, and David here points out this in this state is when praise is perfected. It may not only be at the time of our lives when we are babies, but when we are as babies. True Christianity is the being reborn like a baby and entirely relying on God for all things. A true Christian, at least in so far as he is a Christian, puts all his care and trust upon Jesus Christ, and therein true faith consists, and it is in this faith that man sees Jesus one way with his eyes and more fully with his faith.

With the eyes of our flesh we see One who was made a little lower than the angels, or in other words took upon Himself the flesh and blood of men, became like unto one of His own creatures, so that He might serve them in forgiveness and salvation. David makes a statement about his own consideration of God's creation when he looks at the moon and the stars, and is incredulous at the greatness of God almighty. He then asks how it can be possible that God in comparison with those mighty works is still mindful of such insignificant creatures as the human race. Why does God go to such lengths for man? He created great galaxies and planets, He puts them in their orbits, and sustains them, and yet He Himself came to earth in the likeness of sinful flesh, to rescue the lost race of men. It is enough, when we actually consider it, that our soul must cry out: *"I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord."* (Ps. 104:33-34) If it was not enough that He came to earth to save men, the manner in which He came, truly that was necessary for Him to come, is all the more incredible. Jesus did not come as the King of kings, not as the almighty God, but came a little lower than the angels, and this because He must be subject to His own Law. He came in humiliation, for as God He is not subject to His own Law, but as a Man He is, and thus He did not always and fully use His divine power while on earth. And thus what we see entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday is quite different than that which we see with our faith. We see a lowly Man riding on a donkey, but our faith sees the Hosanna, the King of Israel. But in addition to coming in humility to be subject to His own Law and keeping perfectly in our stead, we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels to:

- **To suffer death.** We read verse four of our text: ***"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"*** When mankind sinned, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Now this statement is made in the past tense, as if man has already died, and this is because in truth mankind did die in the very moment of the first sin, for spiritual death had passed upon all men who would be

born from the first two people, Adam and Eve. Thus Satan had slain the entire population of people from Adam and Eve to the present day's youngest person, and all who will follow. Not one man was exempt from this curse, and thus if you can, imagine the devil with all these dead in the his hands. Who would ever want such a race? Who would ever devote themselves to those who are already dead? It is truly remarkable to see that those very dead souls are they for whom Christ had come. He purchased those dead souls. And the price? The flesh and blood of the Son of God was the price necessary to purchase them. And so Jesus Christ came in humiliation to pay that very price. He gave His body into death, that is experienced death for every person, to pay a penalty which was not His, all for those who were already dead. But here is where we find the most incredible part of the story. Through the preaching, the teaching of this story, God has given power for a man to be born again, resurrected from spiritual death to spiritual life, and so praise the Lord as those people did on Palm Sunday. His death gives life, His suffering grants forgiveness, His humiliation grants exaltation to all who receive it by faith, by faith which relies on Him alone for its forgiveness and salvation. We hear: *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part in the same; that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."* (Heb. 2:14-15) And thus we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels to suffer death, but who was also:

- **Crowned with glory and honor.** We read verses five through nine of our text: ***"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"*** In our epistle lesson we heard: *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* (Phil. 2:5-11) What happened on that first Palm Sunday is a preview of all people who worship and serve Jesus Christ in faith from the beginning to the end of the world, in both His divinity and His humanity. And it is also a preview that all men at the end of the world will bow the knee in submission to Him, though they do not trust in Him for their salvation. His shall indeed be hallowed on earth by all men. He is crowned with glory and honor and all things are put in subjection to Him also according to His human nature. This David declares in our text and says that He has dominion over all the works of His hands, all the animals the birds, the fish, yea everything is His.

Yet what gives us the greatest comfort is that the King of all, who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death is directly our King. He rules over us, not as a tyrannical King, but benevolent, merciful, and gracious. He grants unto us His precious Word and Sacraments to grant faith, forgiveness and salvation, and assurance of such. He gives us great and precious earthly gifts especially children, and in the end He crowns us with glory and honor, as we are heirs with Him. What more can we say? What else can we simple creatures offer unto Him, but the highest of our praises, all our possessions, yea our very lives as living sacrifices unto Him who spared not His own Son but delivered him up for us. May the praise which streams from our lips ever be as those on Palm Sunday, who declared of a truth: Hosanna in the highest, the King of Israel. May He ever grant that through the eye of faith we see Jesus both as the humiliated Son of Man, and the exalted Son of God, that our faith ever be found centered on Him alone, and our worship directed at only the Triune God, who is manifest unto us in the person of Jesus Christ. Amen.