

Blessed is He who comes – Sunday 29th March, 2015 – Palm Sunday

“ As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, ³⁸ shouting:

***“BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” (Luke 19:37-38).***

Beloved in The Lord,

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem, He was greeted by a large crowd, who were shouting and praising God. They met Him with songs of praise, with shouts of joy. Many had lined the road with garments and branches from trees. The main cry was ***“Blessed is the King who comes in the Name of The Lord.”***

Jesus arrived in Jerusalem that day to complete His mission upon the earth, namely to go to the cross. He came into Jerusalem that day to offer up His life for us. He knew what lay ahead, and He came determined to fulfill His mission.

Today on Palm Sunday as we commemorate that day, I would like to focus your thoughts upon the fact that Jesus is coming back and we are to be ready for Him. We should be ready for Him, to greet Him with a shout and a song of praise upon our lips.

Forty days after His Resurrection, Jesus left this world and returned to His Father in Heaven. He had fulfilled His mission and returned to His Father. The day He left (Ascension Day) there was a very powerful promise made, that had not yet been fulfilled, but whose fulfillment Christians eagerly await. We read in the Book of Acts:

“And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹ They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:9-11).

We are clearly told that Jesus who was taken up into Heaven, will return in a like manner. These words contain our blessed hope and they are a source of our eternal joy. One day, our King shall return. One day we will greet Him with songs of praise and thanksgiving.

He is coming back to bring God’s plan of redemption to its final and exciting climax. He is coming back to establish God’s Kingdom over all things and all people. He is coming back to rid the world of Satan and his demons, who will be cast into the lake of fire forever. He is coming to rule as King of Kings and Lord of Lords forever.

When Jesus will have completed His mission, then there will be a New Heaven and a New Earth. John saw it in a vision and left us this description:

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.² And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,⁴ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

⁵ And He who sits on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” And He *said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.”⁶ Then He said to me, It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.⁷ He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son” (Rev.21:1-7).

My friends, these words are our blessed hope. If we are in Christ Jesus The Lord, then this is a description of our eternal home, our future residence.

As we look around at this world it is easy to lose hope and to begin to despair. Sin and evil is on the increase. We are all getting older and with that there are associated issues and problems. But we need to look up. We need to lift our eyes to Heaven and know that soon and very soon our King shall appear. In God’s set time, everything that is written will be fulfilled. God said to John: ***“Write, for these words are faithful and true.”*** This is not a nice story or fairy tale, it is the absolute truth. It is the Word of Almighty God and God’s Word is absolute Truth.

As we enter Holy Week, the invitation is raise up your eyes. Stop looking at this world, look to Jesus. Prepare yourself for His return. Be ready to greet Him when He comes. We know not the day nor the hour, but over and over again we are cautioned in the Scriptures to be ready, to be awake and waiting for Him.

The Early Church was driven by this earnest hope and expectation. They expected Jesus at any moment and this motivated them to live for Him. This has always been and always will be the greatest motivation for all true Christians.

Jesus taught:

“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.³⁷ For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.⁴⁰ Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left.⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left” (Mt.24:36-42).

There is a clear warning given here, that we are to be ready, to be alert, because we do not know at what hour our Lord will come.

What we must also be clear about, is that none of us knows the day nor time of our death. We do not know when God will call us out of this life. In this light, Jesus return is only as far away as our own death, if He doesn't come before then.

Lent, and especially Holy Week is a great time to find some quiet time and to do a stock take of our faith life and life in general. It is important to take a good look at our life, and to consider whether we are ready to meet Jesus. Does the day that you will stand before Him frighten you, or are you waiting with glorious anticipation to see Him face to face?

I know from personal experience it is so easy to fall asleep in the warmth of God's Grace and mercy and to forget that we live in a battlefield. Faith is a battle, and this battle will only end when we step out of this life into glory. Up until the day he gets cast into the lake of fire, Satan will continue to tempt, to entice, to trip us up and to try and get us to stray off the narrow path.

This is why we must be alert at all times and in all places. This is why we must be focused upon Jesus Christ. We need to live everyday with the knowledge that at any time we may step out of this life and find ourselves face to face with Him.

When you keep this truth at the forefront of your thinking, then it motivates you to be, and to stay alert and to stand firm in the faith. It does not allow you to become complacent.

As long as you inhabit your earthly body, there is work for you to do. As long as God gives us breath, we should be actively working for His Kingdom and His glory. There is much to do. There are still so many people who have not heard the Gospel, who have never experienced Jesus love. Our role is to pray for them, to witness, to support those who preach the truth, those who teach God's Word.

Holy week is a good time for each one of us to share our faith with someone. We have opportunities to explain the real meaning of Easter. Maybe we can invite someone to come to Church. As we hand out Easter eggs, to tell people that they are a symbol of the Resurrected Christ, the new life, that is given to all who trust in Him.

This Holy week may we focus our thoughts upon Jesus. May we delve deeply into His Word, everyday. Let us lay aside some time everyday to meditate upon His coming and to thank Him for His tremendous love for us.

May we praise Him every day, and tell Him that we are eagerly awaiting His return.
May our cry be: ***"BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!"***

Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.