

The Passion of Our Lord...

Scriptures' Insight Told...Inspiration Shared

"Our Passion's Prompting"

Based upon Mark 14:1 - Mark 15:47

Palm Sunday March 25, 2018

Palms...The Parade....Back To The Future

When you see a palm, what comes to mind?

A parade, children, donkey, some fun and relief at last, hope?!

Hope.

What do you know about hope?

Hope in the midst of daily life...resiliency, ey?

How does this story of Jesus entering on a donkey move us beyond hope, reflect the Kingdom of God here and now, help us to welcome what's next?

Does "hope" interface with true integrity and the joy it brings, eternally?

Today,

we enter Jesus' passion for life...***passion for your life...***

we enter through the eyes and heart and wonderment of bystanders of the key events that happen this week, again.

But today's encapsulation of the whole week cannot replace, in impact, the depth of the stories playing out in us

if we will give ourselves to the movement of the spirit this week and come together as community, moving together through the week's worshipful moments.

We look ahead, reflect....back to the future.

Woman With The Ointment (Jar of Ointment)

So foolish. All of them.

Arguing over me as if I wasn't there.

I knew perfectly well what I was doing and I still do.

Why are people so blind, so arrogant, so afraid?

This was my holy moment with him.

I never thought it would have been me...
who sees clearly what was about to happen...

I have outside eyes, not one of them...
maybe that is what allows me to see...
reflected in His words....
what others refuse to see.

I never thought it would be me, but it was.

That day and it seems each coming day holds its own surprise.

Things were...are changing.

There was more tension, more pressure, greater worry for his
safety....and for his message.

Didn't they sense His humanness....even if not His holiness?

I knew I could ease it for Him, calm Him, sooth Him.
Honor Him.

But it was more than that.....

I was anointing the promise that wrapped itself within Him...

God's promise to us and to all people for all time.

...I knew the Messiah would stand with God in integrity
proclaiming the kingdom is here and now...

and no one can take anything from us we are not willing to give.

The others focused away from the real message He came to
bring...maybe it was too much for them.

Not for me....not for you....surely not for you!

Jesus said,
“What this woman has done will be told forever.”

Imagine.

How we anoint the Messiah in our lives....

what you...do matters....forever!

The Trials (Rope)

You should have seen Jesus once they had arrested him and pulled him up before the high priest.

We were in the courtyard as it was happening and we found people had been coming all night.

This had been planned!

But no sooner had he been brought in than he was taken out again.

According to rumor, he was on his way to Pilate, or Herod, or both.

When they brought him back his head was low and his back raw. He looked almost dead...on the outside, inside coping.

The authorities were trying to find some crime to pin on him,

but how do you find someone guilty of peace,
guilty of justice, guilty of compassion!

The soldiers took him back out again.

This time we knew it was probably for the last time.

The leaders and the soldiers all looked so hollow,
so convinced they were right,

so sure they had nothing to learn.

They thought they were doing heaven a favor.

Who were they kidding?

Maybe only themselves?

Who are you kidding...only yourself?

At The Fire (Firewood)

I saw what happened, around the fire, when they asked Peter,
“Do you know him?”*when I asked him.*

It was awful. I never meant to make him feel so bad.

I just thought he might be able to tell me more about the man they
had arrested.

I was intrigued with Him.

Anyone who dared to challenge the authority of Rome and the
temple couldn't be all bad!

But Peter, cloaked in fear, couldn't hear the inquiry in my
voice...only accusation.

He got agitated...said he didn't know what we were talking about.

I could see him getting more and more upset.

And when the rooster crowed,
something seemed to snap inside of him,

and he just crumbled to the ground...as if in shame.

He looked as if he wanted the earth to open up and swallow him.

I know that feeling.
Don't you know that feeling?

In The Street (Cross)

All those words, the healings, teachings, hope He brought to us
and this is what it comes to!?

Nothing prepared me for this:
the man who had looked so large as he shared loaves and fishes,
now looked so small and defeated.

We stood by the roadside.

Further down we could hear the thud of wood as He fell and the
intake of breath from the crowd as his body jarred.

Slowly He came past us, hauling the great weight of....evil.

He paused for a short gasp of breath as He drew near.

Just as He arched His shoulders to try and pick up the cross
again....He saw us.

Those eyes burning with light.

He muttered something that rasped in his dry throat
and with a surge of sacred energy
He pulled the cross one more pace.

A stench of stale sweat lingered where He had been.

Splashes of blood blessed the stones
and a trail of splinters littered the way.

“Who could have done that to any human being?

We do it to so many.

How do we do what we do to each other?

I’m asking you!”

But no one was listening to me then, an now?

Are you listening? How do you do what you do?

And I turned onto the road with the crowd
and followed behind Him.

Golgotha (Nails)

I was shaking, I was cold. I was horrified.

I knew what would happen after the events of this week,
but when it actually happens, it hits you like a bolt from hell.

And what a miserable hell I was standing in right then.

Even “they” must have been ashamed by what they...
we do to Jesus.

Heaven was shattered and as the rain fell and the sky closed in,
You could feel the whole universe shudder and turn in on itself.

I was frozen to the spot.
I didn’t want to be there, but I didn’t want to leave.

Others were moving away and I wanted to go with them,
but I couldn’t.

Every touch that healed,
every word that loved,
every loaf that was broken...

the loaf He had broken and shared just the night before...
somehow led to this place and I didn’t understand.

I just kept standing silently there.

And as he breathed his last, mustering all the energy he had left,

His head fell,
His knees buckled,
His shoulders slumped

and in that moment
my soul tore.

The man who had given so much was dead.

There was an even deeper tear in heaven;
a dark moment for creation.

All the good in the world seemed to die with Him.

And I never thought I'd see His face again.

The Burial (Stone, Oils)

I loved him.

I would always love Him.

No pack of lies could ever detract from the beauty I saw in Him.

Just looking in His eyes,
you knew that you were loved,
that you were blessed by God,

that you were someone.
You are somebody!

He brought such hope to so many that we *could* stand up
for what is right and find our dignity and our peace.

Surely that could not have died with Him there on the cross!

“They cannot hurt Him anymore,” I thought.
“His pain is gone.”

**My pain...our pain...
just begins.**

We watched Joseph of Arimathea tell the soldiers to be careful
as they took His body down from the cross.

They made some sarcastic comment, and Joseph scolded them.

And Joseph himself took a linen cloth,

and wrapped his body in it, so lovingly, so gently.

This man was caring for Jesus as if He were Joseph's own child.

Or maybe that is caring for Jesus as if he were His child...as if he were Jesus' child....a child of God!

...Somehow I feel we *are* His children.

We went home to gather spices and perfumed oils,
to come back to anoint His body.

I did not want to leave that moment, but I knew I had to.
I needed to say goodbye.

But we would have to wait to return...for the Sabbath was coming.
We would return on the third day then.

And in that long, lifeless day in between,
I waited and wondered....what if?

What if He had done things differently?

What if things had ended differently?

What if we had done things differently....you and I?
Why did it have to end like this?

(Blow out the candle, drape the purple, and turn off the lights.)

Palms...The Grand Entrance To This Week

Hosanna, Hosanna in the Highest!
Praise be to the

King of Kings,
Prince of Peace,
Redeemer of Life!

Things are not what they seem to be!
Stay the course, be resilient...see the possibility

....Jesus lives.....Good News indeed!

(Adapted from Season's of the Spirit Curriculum's Congregational
Life Materials.)