

# **Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Des Moines, WA March 24, 2013**

**Zechariah 9:9-10**

## **Why Do You Shout?**

- 1. Shout, "Hosanna!"**
- 2. Shout for Joy!**
- 3. Shout to Others**

**Hymns: 131 – 133 – 134 – 370 (vv.1,5)**

All Scripture quotations from NIV 1984

***Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the Earth.*** Zechariah 9:9-10

We raise our voices for many different reasons. At home, perhaps we shout because we don't want to get out of our comfy chair, even though we need to get someone's attention. Or maybe there are times when our frustration level boils over to the point that we yell out, hoping that a rise in our voice will get our point across. As we drive down the road, perhaps a careless or reckless driver causes us to shout out foolish profanities. We might give a shout of warning if we see an accident about to take place. Or maybe we shout as fans. Whether it be the Sounders, the Seahawks, or the Huskies, the stadiums in Seattle are known nationwide for the loudness of their shouting fans. There are many different reasons that people shout.

During the course of Holy Week, this week ahead that is so important to Christians, we will also hear much shouting. From the jealous Jewish leaders who wanted to kill Jesus, we will hear shouts of blasphemy. From the soldiers standing in court as Jesus is put on trial, we will hear shouts of ridicule and mocking. From the people of Jerusalem outside Pilate's palace, we will hear

those hateful shouts to "Crucify, crucify!" Even from the Savior, we will hear shouts of agony and despair.

So, perhaps it is very fitting that our Palm Sunday worship also began with shouts, as the children entered at the beginning of our service, they let out joyful shouts of "Hosanna!" They waved palm branches, recreating a scene that happened over 2,000 years ago as Jesus rode into Jerusalem for the final time. Palm Sunday is known for those shouts of "Hosanna," but do you know what it means? Do you know why we let out that shout each year to begin this final way to the cross?

A military squadron is deep beyond enemy lines doing covert recon work. As they continue to move forward, their worst nightmare takes place when they are ambushed on all sides. They immediately know, that on their own, they stand no chance. Without hesitation, the radio man repeatedly sends out a frantic signal while the bullets fly dangerously by. Over and over, he signals out, "S.O.S! S.O.S!"

We are relaying a similar message as we shout out "Hosanna!" Though we watch with joy as our children happily sing out those words, we are really yelling out a spiritual S.O.S. because "Hosanna" means "Help us! Deliver us!"

Here are the many reasons the Bible gives us for crying out "Hosanna!" We are sinners from birth, full of sin from the moment we are conceived (Psalm 51:5). Our sinful hearts and minds are hostile to God, they don't submit to God's law, and in fact, they can't even do so (Romans 8:7). And out of those sinful hearts come all kinds of evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander and the list could go on and on (Matthew 15:19). The wages that those sins earn is death (Romans 6:23). Because of them, we are objects of wrath (Ephesians 2:3), and we deserve to be thrown into the gloomy dungeons of hell that were prepared for the devil and his evil angels (2 Peter 2:4). And just in case you think that you aren't amongst that group, the Bible says that everyone has turned away, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one (Psalm 53:3). "Hosanna" is a cry of helplessness, and our sins are the reason why we shout "Hosanna!" today.

That cry of "Hosanna" was also one that the people of Israel made during the time of Zechariah the prophet. Zechariah lived and worked during a time in Israel's history that was supposed to be full of joy. After toiling in Babylonian captivity for 70

years, King Cyrus of Persia had allowed the Israelites to return to their homeland. It was what the people had been waiting for, and as the people returned to Jerusalem with rejoicing, great plans were made. They would rededicate themselves to God; they would rebuild his glorious temple; they would restore the great nation that King David had built. However, that exuberance quickly faded away. Things did not come as easily as they expected. Devotion to God waned; restoring personal lives became more important than rebuilding God's house; enemies continued to attack. So, the people once again cried, "Hosanna!" They needed help.

And the message that Zechariah gave to them in response, and the message that he gives to all of us who shout "Hosanna!" because of our sins is certainly different than what we would expect. As the cry for deliverance goes out, Zechariah responds with this advice: **"Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!"** (Zechariah 9:9).

With his words, Zechariah introduces us to a new kind of shouting. Our cries of "Hosanna" do not need to be filled with despair, instead they can reign out with gladness. For those who desperately need help, there is reason for happiness and joy. He tells us to rejoice and shout, but those English words don't do justice to what Zechariah wants us to do as we gather together on this Palm Sunday morning.

A few years ago, I remember a YouTube video that showed a young child on Christmas morning, basically losing his mind when he first saw what was under the tree. He was screaming with glee while rolling around on the floor uncontrollably. He was overtaken by happiness. That is what Zechariah had in mind when he tells us to rejoice. He imagined people so filled with joy that their entire bodies rejoiced, so exultant that they twirled around, dancing with excited joy. And when he tells us to shout, he means yell it out. Here he uses the same word that was used when the people of Israel shouted outside of Jericho, causing its walls to fall. It's the same word that is used in Psalm 95 when God's people are encouraged to **"Come, sing to the Lord. SHOUT ALOUD to the rock of our Salvation."** This is the kind of shouting that you would hear coming out of a stadium. Zechariah imagined people joining in a chant of praise to God, rocking the place in vibration. That is the way we are encouraged to rejoice and shout today!

Here is the reason why: Salvation is Coming! For those who cry to God for help, help is given.

For those who shout, "Hosanna!" God comes and proclaims a message of deliverance. And he does so through his eternal Word, through the voices of his prophets. Zechariah gives us our reason to shout for joy when he says, **"See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey"** (Zech. 9:9).

The deliverer that Zechariah spoke about long ago to the Israelites wouldn't come as the people necessarily expected. Instead of coming on a powerful stallion, leading an army of soldiers, this deliverer from God would come in humility. He would ride a lowly donkey. Though he would be a king, he wouldn't necessarily rule as the people wanted. He wouldn't go out into battle with the sword. He wouldn't set up and rule on an earthly throne. And perhaps that is why so many missed him when he came. They were looking for a different kind of help as they raised their voices to shout "hosanna."

Today, we see the king that Zechariah spoke about long ago. For many in this world, he isn't the king that they want. From his birth in a manger all the way to his ugly death on a cross; to many, he does not look like the Almighty God, he does not look like the King of Kings and he doesn't bring the deliverance that they desire either. There are no promises of earthly wealth or easy lives. Instead this Deliverer brings a promise of crosses while we live here on earth. He brings an assurance that we will be hated as he was hated. And that is hardly the message that people want to hear and perhaps that is why so many still miss him or reject him.

However, we can know that Jesus Christ is the answer to our shouts of Hosanna!" We can shout for joy because this humble king comes in the exact way that we need. He came in humility because that is what we needed. As he was laid in the manger, we were given a Savior who would face the same temptations as us. We were given a Savior who would ride humbly on a donkey to face rejection and shame. We were given a Savior whose humility would take him all the way to Calvary to die.

We can rejoice because this humble king brings the exact help that we need. He would be just and perfect. He would bring spiritual deliverance. By his perfect life, he met all of the demands of God which we have fallen short of. Because of his sacrificial death, we have the assurance that every one of our sins is paid for. We can know with certainty that eternal salvation is ours. We can shout for joy today as we see our King ride on.

Because of Jesus, our cries of “Hosanna” can be filled with joy because we know that our help is from God.

We can shout out the praise of our King to others. Zechariah saw a King’s reign that would bring extended peace. He said, **“I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.”** Through the work of our humble king, there is a peace that is available for all. And it is our work to proclaim it to the nations.

As we look out into the world around us, there are so many who shout “Hosanna;” there are many who cry for help. But they do not know where to look. Point them to the king who rides in humility to bring deliverance. Shout for others to see their salvation, so that many more can join us in singing “Hosanna, glad hosanna!” Let them know why we shout! Our king comes in humility, but he delivers victory. May God bless your week ahead as you watch again as your Savior answers your Hosanna call. Amen.