

Hosanna – Save Us Now!*Introduction – “Hosanna”*

- “Hosanna! In the highest! Blessed... Look, here comes Jesus! Coats, palm branches – cover the road! He’s the one who can save us! Shout his praise! Honor his name. He’s Savior, Messiah! Hosanna, in the highest!” Hear joy? Wish you could be among those first Palm Sunday worshippers: shouting praise, waving palms, crying out, “Hosanna in the highest!”?
- In a sense we are. Today on Palm Sunday we join with those worshippers and millions of other believers around world in Jesus shouting, “Hosanna in the highest! Blessed...” We sing “hosanna” many times today, in our hymns and psalm; we wave palm branches; and we praise our Savior with shouts of joy. Why? He’s worthy of our highest honor; he’s our victorious king! 1st lesson: **“See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey” (Zech 9:9).**
- Today we begin Holy Week, holiest and most precious time of the church year. Today, loud shouts of praise – “Blessed is he!” But in a few days, loud shouts hatred – “Crucify him!” This holy week we will see Jesus crucified, dead, buried, and raised to life. History of world culminates in this one holy week, when our salvation is accomplished. That week begins today. Today Jesus rides into Jerusalem to finish the task he was born to accomplish, to save humanity – to save us. So today, with the first Palm Sunday worshippers, we cry out in joy and praise, “Hosanna – Save Us Now.”

“Hosanna” Means “Save Us Now”

- That word “Hosanna” – know what it means? Not a title for Jesus (like Messiah, Savior, Lord). Hebrew word, pronounced *Hoshiana*. *Hoshia* means “save, deliver, rescue.” Sounds like Jesus’ Hebrew name, *Yeshua* – Savior. At birth, given name Jesus because, as Gabriel told Joseph, he would save his people from their sins (Mt 1:21). Jesus’ name *Yeshua* and this word *Hoshia* sound alike and mean almost the same thing – save, deliver, rescue. *Na* ending = please, we beg you, come now, urgency, serious about this request! *Hoshiana*, Hosanna, means save us now! Jesus, save us now!
- Hosanna was favorite word of Hebrew people. Spoken to kings and military commanders when enemies were attacking. To God in prayer when enemies approached. To God to forgive sins.
- This is how “Hosanna” was used in the OT – a cry for help. Look at Psalm 118, we see word hosanna used. Ps 118 prophesies about first Palm Sunday. Sung by Jews on way up to Jerusalem to celebrate annual festival of Passover. On first Palm Sunday, with Passover just a few days away, the people shouted these words from **Ps 118:25-27 – “LORD, save us (hoshiana); LORD, grant us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless you. The LORD is God, and he has made his light shine on us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.”**
- “Hosanna” means “Save us now.” What they cried out. Today, what we cry out, too.

Save Us from What?

- But when we cry out to Jesus, what are we actually asking him to save us from? What were the people in our gospel asking Jesus to save them from? They had all kinds of things they wanted to be saved from: “Save us from Romans (be leader); from hunger (miracle food); from diseases (miracle healing).” All kinds of things wanted to be saved from.
- Same with us. We have all kinds of things we want to be saved from, as well. My marriage falling apart; I see sickness in friends; someone I love died, miss them; not making enough money to support my family, can’t find a decent job. Every one of us, in our personal lives, have all kinds of situations, cry out to Jesus – save me! “Hosanna – save us now!”
- Jesus wants us to turn to him in prayer. But what happens when troubling situations don’t change, when we don’t see Jesus saving us, and we still have to deal with these problems. Tempted to say,

“He didn’t fix things; he didn’t save me. I still have all these problems! Why isn’t he answering me!? Is he really a Savior? Really come to help me? Interested in saving me? Or should I throw palm branches elsewhere and shout “Hosanna” to someone else?”

Save Us From Sin!

- Brothers & sisters in Christ, don’t forget the reason Jesus rode that donkey into Jerusalem. Jesus entered the city, amid shouts of “Hosanna,” on a mission to save the world from sin, and this Holy Week we see that mission of salvation accomplished. This Thursday, Maundy Thursday, we see Jesus wash his disciples’ feet as their humble servant. We see him institute the sacrament of Holy Communion as a covenant of forgiveness for his people. We see him betrayed by Judas and arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. This Friday is Good Friday, and we see Jesus on trial, whipped and tortured, crowned with thorns and spit upon. We see Jesus crucified, and we watch him die. We see him buried in a tomb, and we wait. We wait with eager expectation for Easter Sunday – this Sunday – when the cold chains of death are burst and the one we call Savior (*Yeshua*, Jesus), our king, rises in victory over sin and Satan forever.
- **“See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey” (Zech 9:9).** This is why Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, why we honor him with palms and shouts, “Hosanna – save us now!” Jesus saved us by giving his life to pay for our sins and by rising from the dead to guarantee our resurrection into heaven. Today, as we begin the holiest week of the church year, we cry out, “*Hoshiana*, hosanna, save us now!” to the only one worthy to be called Savior, our Savior Jesus Christ.
- And when it comes to all troubling situations you face in day to day life (your marriage that’s falling apart, diseases and death that surround you, financial situation, whatever in personal lives), when it comes to all the things you need saving from here on earth, keep crying out “hosannas” to Jesus. He’s the Savior of the world, and he’s the Savior of your world. If he has power over death and hell, he certainly has power over the troubles you face in life. He’ll either take them away from you or take you safely through them – but he’ll never leave you hanging – because he’s your Savior, and he loves you, and this week he proves that love to you.

Conclusion – Jesus, Save Us Now!

- So today, on this Palm Sunday, we pray to Savior Jesus, “*Hoshiana!* Hosanna, save us now! Save us from our sins; save us from our sad situations; save us from ourselves. Ride into our hearts and lives and be our Savior. Save us in your sacrament, save us in your death, save us in your resurrection. Hosanna, save us now, and bless us this Holy Week. Bless us with faith and trust and peace. The time has come; Holy Week begins today. Save your people, Lord Jesus. Hosanna – save us now!” Amen.

Mark 11:1-10 (NIV 2011)

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ² saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’”

⁴They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵ some people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. ⁷When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!”