

Hearing the Passion of our Lord, like we do each Palm Sunday, is a powerful experience. At least it should be. Read in parts with the different voices for the different characters brings depth. It is something that we need to hear in its entirety at least once a year, from the entry into the city to the tortured prayers in the garden to the vending of the temple, to a final Passover meal that launch a new type of meal to the trial and the execution. And, of course, the perfect time to hear this is as we enter into the remembrance of the week that it all took place, a week that we call holy.

We get to hear it again, we get to see it again in our minds... the entry into the city on a donkey with palm branches and cloaks being laid out in front of him, as if he were royalty. We get to imagine again the reception he received by the people, around the Temple as a prophet. People who would later yell, “Crucify Him!” and calling for Barabbas’s release. We get to feel the undercurrent of speculation within the city that he was indeed the Messiah. His overturning the tables of the money changers in his Father’s house. The last supper. Washing feet. Betrayal, arrest, denied three times, trial, crucifixion, death. And, as he put a period to his mission with the words, “It is finished”, we get to hear him call out on *our* behalf, as he asked his Father to forgive us, because we knew not what we were doing. It was a big week.

And that was the way it was meant to be...from the beginning of time itself. It couldn’t have ended, successfully, any other way. The door back to God could not have been opened any other way. The way back to restoration of life and relationship could not have come any other way. God’s love for us was so big, so profound, so complete, that it would not be denied. The Son was sent for this week.

The Son, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, was sent for a specific purpose...with a specific mission, for a particular battle. It was what his life was made for. And, in that, we are the same as the one whom we call Lord. We were sent, each one of us is here with a mission and a purpose to engage a battle. And, like Jesus, we are asked by God the live that life and purpose how, and where, he puts us.

Does that sound hard? To actively and faithfully be who, and where, God calls us to be. Well, it might be at times. There might be crosses to bear and struggles to endure. There might be friends and loved-ones who are missed, plots endured, temptations fought.

But there will also be joys. There will be the blind that will see and the lame that will walk. There will be hungry people fed and water transformed to wine. There will be walking on water and witnessing a transfigured rabbi on a mount holding a conclave with Moses and Elijah.

You have been sent, we have been sent, for all of that. There is only one requirement. We all must listen, and we must all say yes. God asks us to hear about our part of his plan in this world and then to have the strength and the courage, the humility and the faith, to be where he leads and do the part he had given to us.

So, what is God saying to you? Some of you have been here for your entire lives. Others have arrived within the past month. He has sent you all here for a reason with a mission. What is your part of his plan in this place for this time? Whether it be in the midst of struggle and trial, or in joy and celebration, why has God sent you to this place?

Everyone has a purpose and we all are being sent to fulfill that purpose. Like Esther, everyone has been sent “for such a time as this.” Embrace it.

Jesus was sent by his Father for a specific purpose and a powerful mission. In that, we are no different.

Amen