

Hosanna!

Matthew 21:1-11

The city of Jerusalem was the focal point for Jewish worship at the time of Christ. The temple was located there, and the high priest resided there. Three times each year all the men of Israel were to come to Jerusalem to worship. They came in the spring for feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread. This marked the beginning of their religious year. Fifty days after the Passover week, they came again for Pentecost. In the fall of the year, they came for the feast of Tabernacles.

The Sunday before Passover was a week of much activity in Jerusalem. Thousands of people were coming into the city. Merchants were getting ready for the influx of visitors and the religious leaders were preparing for the Passover.

It is into this scene that Jesus came riding on a donkey down from the Mount of Olives (Luke 19:37) into the city of Jerusalem. The people were joyous and sang, “HOSANNA!”

What did hosanna mean? What was their source for this word? What was its significance?

I. The Meaning of Hosanna

- A. “Save, we pray” or “save now.”
- B. The term comes from Psalm 118:25
“Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.”
- C. Part of the Hallel: Psalm 113-118 which were recited at the major feasts.
- D. Hosanna comes from the same Hebrew word as the name “Joshua.” In its Greek form, the name is “Jesus.”

II. The Message of Hosanna

A. The Plight of Man

- 1. Save! Psalm 20:9
- 2. Save Me! Psalm 3:7; 6:4
- 3. Save Us Now! 2 Kings 19:19
- 4. Save Now! Psalm 118:25

Man’s plight is that he needs deliverance from sin and cannot save himself. Romans 3:9-28.

B. The Power of God

- 1. Indicated by His “right hand.” Psalm 108:6
- 2. Demonstrated in the gospel. Romans 1:16-17

C. The Promise of God

The promise of the future kingdom.
Isaiah 35:1-10; 43:1-11.

D. The Provision of God

Associated with mercy. Psalm 31:16; 109:26;
Titus 3:5.

The people who lined the streets of Jerusalem saw only part of the significance of the term, “Hosanna.” They longed for the conquering king and could not reconcile that with the suffering servant. The meaning and message of “Hosanna” follow two streams which merge together in the person and work of Jesus. In His first coming, He saved from sin. In His second coming, He will save from oppression.

We have a similar term, “Maranatha.” 1 Corinthians 16:22.

Conclusion

We also are people in need of a savior. Our hearts cry, “Hosanna,” when we are confronted with our sin. Romans 3:23. When our hearts cry out in faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ, our salvation is given to us as a gift of God. Romans 1:16-17; 5:1; 6:23.

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