

Palms and Psalms  
#504, Week of 4-7-2019

Dr. Dennis Prutow

The Prophet Isaiah cried out on behalf of God. “Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance*” (Isaiah 45:22-23). The Psalmist exclaimed, “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord; we have blessed you from the house of the Lord” (Psalm 118:26).

Both of these old prophecies came together when Jesus took His final pilgrimage to Jerusalem. “Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!’” (Matthew 21:8-9). The people recognized Jesus. They worshipped Him.

Old and New Testaments converge in Christ. “God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow... and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10-11).

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Resurrection Awakening  
#505, Week 4-14-2019

by Dr. Dennis Prutow

“Some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, ‘Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.’ But He answered and said to them, ‘An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth’” (Matthew 12:38-40).

Psychic readers and seers experience booming business. What about the real sign? Jonah came back from a watery grave. A great fish swallowed him. Jonah was no tasty dish. The fish vomited Jonah on dry land. It was a sign. God sent this prophet to preach to the people of ancient Nineveh. They all took notice. They all turned to God.

Jesus likened his impending resurrection to the return of Jonah. Thomas doubted. “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe” (John 20:25). When Jesus appeared to him, Thomas had one response. “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28). The sign of the resurrection awakened Thomas from the slumber of unbelief. What about you?

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Hope Confirmed  
#506, Week of 4-21-2019

by Dennis Prutow

God has a strange way of confirming hope within us. It is through trials and tribulation. God pushes us through knotholes. We squeeze through difficult jobs. We struggle through troublesome relationships. We wrestle with cranky kids. Storm clouds regularly gather over us. The future looks bleak. There is little hope. The Bible puts the silver lining of hope around the black clouds of despair.

“And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Romans 5:3-5).

We wonder if God has given us faith by the power of the Holy Spirit residing in us. How do we know? When we push through our trials, the difficulty produces perseverance. As we persist in our work or in overcoming adversity, God proves the character of our faith. There is actual fruit in our lives. Hope emerges. God is with us. We know the embrace of God’s love in the most trying of circumstances.

The storms of life give way to the sunshine of grace and the smile of God’s love. We bask in its warmth and give thanks for tribulation. God uses it for our growth.

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Seek Peace  
#507, Week of 4-28-2019

by Dennis Prutow

Here is great motto. Something to live by. “Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:14). When confronted with evil, we want to lash back and get even. We want to avenge injustice and set the record straight.

A vengeful spirit is the opposite of one that seeks peace. “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone” (Romans 12:17). Remember this and avoid a lot of violence and heartache. God will balance the scales of justice. We must not take matters into our own hands. “Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord” (Romans 12:19).

What can we do on the positive side? Here are a couple of suggestions. First, be ready to overlook the faults of others. “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions”

(Proverbs 10:12). So, “keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8). Love overlooks much.

Second, always be ready to forgive. When we realize how much God has forgiven us, how can we be unforgiving toward others? “Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you (Ephesians 4:32). Love forgives.

Seek peace. Overlook faults. Readily forgive.