

THE LORD WEPT

Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss

Lesson: Luke 19:28-48

The Lord is called by many names, and He is likened to many people. He is called the Lord Jesus Christ, God, Jehovah, the Savior, and so on. But He is also called a Prophet, a Priest, or Minister, a Judge, a Prince. And, very often, He is called a King. On Palm Sunday He was called a King; you remember how the people shouted, saying, "Blessed by the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest."

Now the Lord is called by these names, and likened to these people, because of the things that He does. And there is a very special reason why He was called a King on Palm Sunday. You remember that He showed He was a King in many ways? He rode on a donkey, and upon a colt, the son of a donkey, and this was the sign of a king, for when David the King, long ago, made his son Solomon king in his place, he made him to ride on his own mule, or donkey. So the people knew very well that when a special person rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, it was a sign that He was the great King who had been promised. And then the disciples took off their outer clothes, and put them on the donkey, so that it would have a special saddle of clothes, and people put their clothes in the way, so that the Lord had a special road to ride along, and others put palm branches in the way too, to make the road special. All these showed that the Lord was a king. And, of course, the people shouted happily, calling Him their King.

Now the Lord called Himself a king because He wanted people to realize that He ruled over all the earth. And one of the jobs of a king is to look after his people. A king on earth has the job of seeing that his people are safe, that evil people don't do harm to them. If there are evil people in the kingdom, and they are hurting the good, the king must see to it that they are punished. That was why the Lord was coming to Jerusalem, the leaders of the Jews, who were making His people unhappy. So the Lord came to the city to show how bad these rulers were, and to tell the good ones how to do what was right and how to be happy. And He was going to show that the evil ones would be punished in the other world for what they had done.

Now you would have thought that as the Lord rode into Jerusalem He would have been angry as He thought of the wicked rulers of the Jews. But does the Word tell us that? No. It tells us that as the Lord came near to Jerusalem, He wept, that is, He cried. That seems strange, doesn't it? What could make the Lord, the King of all the earth, weep? There's only one thing that can make the

Lord unhappy, and that is when the people He has made, His children, are unhappy. The Lord wept for all those wicked men in Jerusalem who had done so many evil things that He now had to come and judge them.

Let us think about that: the Lord did not come into Jerusalem in anger. He came feeling very sorry, for He was sad that He had to punish those wicked men. After all, the Lord had made those men just like He made the good ones. They were His children just like we are. He wanted them to follow Him, so that he could lead them to all the wonderful happiness of heaven, but they would not listen to His Word, and so He could not lead them. And now He had to punish them, and He was sad.

The Lord is a God of love. He loves all people, even the evil ones, and wants to help them every moment of the day. He is always sad when He knows that they are doing something that is going to make them unhappy.

And so it is with us, too. When we do something that is wrong, we think that the Lord is angry with us. Perhaps it seems that way, and if we are very wrong, He has to punish us, too, by not letting us have some happiness. But always He is sad when we do what is wrong, and if we do really evil things, it is as if the Lord weeps for us. He does this because He knows much better than we do what is good for us. We may think we're happy when we're doing wrong, but the Lord knows that's not so, that we're going to be miserable. A man who steals a lot of money may think that he's very happy while he's spending it, but the Lord knows that he's going to be miserable. The Lord knows much better than we do. And so He is sad when we do wrong, for He loves us with a perfect love. And so the moment we are sorry, then He forgives us, and helps us again.

So let us remember that on Palm Sunday, that special day when the King of Kings rode into Jerusalem, He wept. And if we remember this, we may remember that the Lord as it were weeps, He is sad whenever we do what is wrong. Then we might remember why He is sad: because He loves us and knows what is best for us, and wants to lead us away from unhappiness. And then we can know that whatever we have done, the Lord will forgive us, if only we will weep to, that is, be sorry, and turn away from it. *Amen.*