### THEME: WAVE YOUR CHRISTIAN VICTORY FLAG READINGS: Isaiah 50:4-7/ Phil. 2: 6-11/ Luke 22:14-23:56. Palm Sunday

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While we may wave our national flag if, for instance, our national football team wins a championship, the Jews of old would wave palm branches to celebrate their victories. For example, around 170BC, the Maccabees led some fellow Jews to defeat the Greeks who had earlier on taken over Jerusalem and desecrated the Temple. On the occasion of the purification of the Temple and the celebration of the victory, the Jews sang songs of praises to God while waving PALM and other branches (*cf*. 2 Macc. 10:7).

Thus, the jubilant crowd who waved PALM branches as Jesus entered Jerusalem was actually celebrating the victories of their HERO! The people were celebrating his victories over evil:

* His victory over sickness (the many times he healed the sick, lame, blind, etc.)
* His victory over evil possessions,
* His victory over hunger (e.g. feeding over 5,000 people with 5 loaves),
* His victory in raising the dead (the most recent of which was the raising of Lazarus).

Beloved, as the crowd celebrated the victories of Jesus, they didn’t, however, know that they were welcoming him to the ‘arena’ of Jerusalem for the greatest of all his victories – his victory over sin, death and Satan.

Beloved, Rev. 7:9-12 informs us that as the **saints in heaven**, with PALM branches in their hands, praised God and Christ, the Lamb of God, the **angels** responded by **prostrating** before the heavenly throne and worshipping with the words: ‘AMEN! BLESSING AND GLORY AND WISDOM, THANKSGIVING AND HONOUR AND POWER AND MIGHT, BE TO OUR GOD FOREVER AND EVER, AMEN!’

So we could say that as the crowds waved the PALM branches in Jerusalem, the **angels**, who had the fore-knowledge that it was the celebration of Jesus’ **anticipated victory** over Satan, were prostrating and worshipping in heaven!

Usually a victorious crowd has its victory song. The crowd in Jerusalem were shouting: ‘HOSANNA to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’ (Mk. 11:9-10). The ‘Hosanna’ in the victory song means ‘SAVE US!’ or ‘SALVATION’. The saints in heaven with PALM branches also sang a similar victory song: ‘SALVATION belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’ (Rev. 7:10). Therefore, let us join the saints to sing: ‘HOSANNA to the Son of David! … SALVATION belongs to our God and to the Lamb of God!’

Beloved, since the victory of Jesus for our salvation is an **everlasting** victory, let us **always** wave our VICTORY FLAG – let us wave, in the church and outside the church, our **PALM** branches:

* **P** – Prayer (with the **sign** **of** **the** **cross** as the unique symbol of our flag)
* **A** – Adoration (worship God)
* **L** – Lifestyle (good lifestyle)
* **M** – Mercy (deeds of mercy and forgiveness; for Jesus says, it is mercy that God desires (Mt. 9:13))

Beloved, anytime we wave our PALM branches of PRAYER, ADORATION, good LIFESTYLE, and deeds of MERCY, may the angels respond with their worship in heaven! Amen! And may we one day be part of the heavenly saints with PALM branches and witness ‘LIVE’ the angels prostrating before the throne of God and of the Lamb of God! Amen!