

Passion Sunday – 3/16

"The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame." (Isaiah 50:7)

Today the end begins! On this day the streets are filled with rejoicing, but dark clouds are on the horizon. Only one person seems aware of the gathering storm and even He will not be able to stop it. On this day of Hosannas Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey, and He does not look back.

Jesus understands His role in salvation even if the people lining the streets of Jerusalem don't. The words of Isaiah are inscribed on His heart. He will hold firm to His mission and He will allow himself to be struck down. Jesus will offer Himself up because the Father wants this of Him. He will hold steady because we need Him to hold steady. We will strike Him but He will not strike back. He will be disgraced before His family and friends but He will remain committed to our redemption. Jesus will love us so much this week that the healing waters of salvation will spring forth in hearts of stone.

Isaiah tells us that Jesus has set His face like flint. It is interesting that he used this particular type of stone for his metaphor. Survivalists use flint to strike a campfire. The flint is held in one hand as the camper strikes it with another rock and the sparks that issue from this contact will ignite the kindling wood. If the camper does not hold the flint steady there will not be enough friction to cause the spark to appear.

Jesus was flint in His father's hand. He longed to set the world on fire with love but that would only happen when He was struck down. This innocent Lamb of God backed up His love with rock solid determination. Jesus was God's expression of compassion, but we are mistaken if we think of love as weakness. Jesus allowed Himself to be vulnerable, but He is not weak.

As this blessed week begins let us walk with Jesus. Let us set our face like flint so that the Father might use us to bring the fire of love into the world. When this fire is burning brightly in our hearts we may be able to see evidence that there has been a spring of living water present all along.

Questions for Reflection

- 1. Do I have the courage to allow God to strike a spark of love from me?*
- 2. If you were Jesus would you have even started down the road to Jerusalem or would you have been too afraid to enter that city?*

Prayer: Jesus thank you for making this trip to Jerusalem for me. Your love has brought so much light into my world and I am grateful. Amen.