

business as usual?



One of the popular songs of Easter, *Via Dolorosa*, will be performed by choirs and soloists around the world over the course of the next three days. It has become a standard of the holiday. The lyrics and the imagery they produce tug at the heartstrings of Christians as we consider the sacrifices made by our Lord on our behalf.

Today, along the *Via Dolorosa* in Jerusalem are shops with vendors promoting their wares. Centuries ago, when Jesus was on His way to Calvary, He trudged along that path, popularly known now as The Way of Suffering.

Here are some lyrics of the song written by Niles Borop and Billy Sprague:

Down the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem that day ... The soldiers tried to clear the narrow street ... But the crowd pressed in to see ... A Man condemned to die on Calvary ... He was bleeding from a beating, there were stripes upon His back ... And He wore a crown of thorns upon His head ... And He bore with every step ... The scorn of those who cried out for His death ... Down the Via Dolorosa, called the way of suffering ... Like a Lamb came the Messiah, Christ the King ... But He chose to walk that road out of His love for you and me ... Down the Via Dolorosa, all the way to Calvary ... The blood that would cleanse the souls of all men ... Made its way to the heart of Jerusalem.

Was that day then like all others? Was everything business as usual?

More than likely, the activity was something like this: Farmers bringing in luscious fruit and vegetables larger than you have ever seen, skinned animal meat laid bare, hanging and ready for the butcher, noise and shouting all around. If we had been there, we probably would have seen bargain hunters negotiating the prices, dark-haired boys playing loudly in the hustle and bustle of the streets, Roman soldiers scurrying past black-robed Hebrews.



“Just another crucifixion,” a woman might be overheard as saying while she is purchasing a trinket.

(more)

Could it have been that people were too busy buying and selling to even look up when Jesus made that lonely walk along the rugged cobblestones?

Contrast the noise and congestion and pressing crowds – the hubbub of the marketplace – with the solitude and peace of the Garden Tomb where Jesus was buried after the crucifixion. Amid the beauty, serenity, overhanging trees and flowering plants, a holy hush rules in this sacred place.

But the story doesn't end there. Oh, no. Christ arose! For any follower of Christ, the promise is this: The resurrection of Jesus is proof and preview of our own.

From the Via Dolorosa to the Garden Tomb to living within our hearts, Christ comes to us in victory over death, over sin, over the obstacles of everyday life.

Nothing about His life, death, and resurrection that we celebrate this weekend is "business as usual."



Because He lives, the world is changed forever.

Since Jesus died and broke loose from the grave, God will most certainly bring back to life those who die in Jesus (1Thessalonians 4:14 MSG).

– Beecher Hunter