

JESUS THE KING ENTERS JERUSALEM

John 12:12-19
Key Verse: 12:15

#33

A great crowd of people had come to Jerusalem for the Passover. Six days before the Passover Jesus came from hiding in the desert of Ephraim with his disciples back to Bethany. He had raised Lazarus from the dead and planted resurrection faith in his disciples and friends. Not only this, the raising of Lazarus created a great stir in Jerusalem. People were believing in Jesus. They were telling their friends about the raising of Lazarus. And Lazarus was there. People were coming to see him and to see Jesus. The Pharisees were getting more and more upset and the crowds were getting more and more excited.

1. The great crowd of believers

Verse 12-13 say, "The next day the great crowd that had come for the feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem." They took Palm branches and went out to meet him. They shouted "Hosanna" which means "Save" and "Praise God." Their faith was based on seeing or hearing about an amazing miracle—Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Jesus was not an ordinary man. He was surely coming to do some great thing in Jerusalem. They welcomed him as king. Once people had tried to make him king by force in order to solve their bread problem. Now, many hoped that he would restore the kingdom of Israel. But Jesus' destination was not the palace but the temple. The shouts of this crowd accurately described Jesus the King. "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." Jesus came as the one sent by God. He came in the name of the Lord. He came as the Lord. He is the one worthy of this welcome. They said, "Blessed is the King of Israel." Jesus is indeed the King. Later, he would tell Pilate, "I am a king, but my kingdom is not of this world." It is a kingdom based on truth. Everyone on the side of truth comes to Jesus. Jesus was coming into Jerusalem to be crowned king; his throne would be a cross. The enemy he would defeat was not Rome but Satan.

2. Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey

Verse 14 says, "Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt." Jesus deliberately acted out the prophesy of Zechariah. He announced his kingship by riding into Jerusalem in the traditional way in which great kings entered Jerusalem. And he fulfilled the words of Zechariah: "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea. And from the River to the ends of the earth." (Zec 9:9,10) King Jesus is humble and gentle and righteous.

He brings salvation. He brings peace. He came into my heart and brought salvation and peace. I was unrighteous, but he brought forgiveness and his righteousness. He brings peace not only to my heart, but he is the only one who can bring peace to our nation and our world. Making war does not bring peace. Only Jesus can bring real peace to our world. Lord, grant that the war in Iraq may cease and the seed of the gospel may be planted in the soil plowed by war.

Americans do not really understand kings, and we do not like the idea of a king and a kingdom very much. But the Bible speaks of the kingdom of God. God established the kingdom of Israel to teach us about kings and kingdoms. David was a shepherd king. Jesus is also a shepherd and a king. Kings require obedience of their subjects. Paul tells us that we are the servants of whoever we obey. If we obey God and his righteousness, we are his servants. If we obey our sinful desires in an effort to be our own persons, then we become servants of Satan. I pray that I may serve King Jesus who purchased me from slavery to sin by his own blood.

3. The disciples' faith

Verse 16 says, "At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him." Jesus' disciples' faith was based on the word of God. They understood the meaning of his Triumphal Entry when they thought about what he had done in the light of Zechariah's prophecy. They saw God's Sovereign hand at work in hours later shouted "Crucify him!"

4. The whole world has gone after him!

This was the agony of the Pharisees. Many people heard of the miraculous sign and went out to meet Jesus. The Pharisees and Jewish leaders had already decided that he must die. Arrest warrants were signed by the high priest and soldiers were on the lookout for him. But because of the crowds who were welcoming him they could not do anything. In despair the Pharisees cried out, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him." Indeed, the world would someday follow Jesus. Satan could not stop him. Down through the ages Court to affirm the Ten Commandments. Turn the hearts of the people of our nation to truth and right and restore the worship of the Creator God in our schools and in our land. Defeat the Muslims who are liars and murderers. Grant that the whole world may come to you, our Father God through Jesus.