

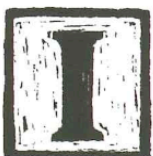
JESUS IS THE TRIUMPHANT KING

“WHO IS JESUS?” FAMILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE - Week 32, March 18

JESUS IS OUR TRIUMPHANT KING

They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna!”
“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the king of Israel!”

JOHN 12:13



It was time for the Passover feast, when the Jews remembered their slavery in Egypt and God’s amazing rescue. Everyone was required to go, so they all packed their overnight bags and headed to Jerusalem. Little did they know how special this particular Passover was going to be. All the Passovers they had ever celebrated were pointing to this one, and Jesus would be the final Passover lamb.

Even though the crowds didn’t know all that would happen to Jesus, everyone was talking about him. The news that Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead was

spreading, and people wanted to see this great teacher and healer. Meanwhile, the Pharisees and priests were plotting to kill Jesus. They envied his popularity and saw him as a threat to their authority. They also worried what would happen if the Romans caught wind of all this, so they ordered that anyone who knew where Jesus was should report it so they could arrest him.

Jesus, of course, knew all this because he’s God. And he wasn’t surprised either. He knew his time to die was coming soon, and he went up to Jerusalem willingly. When they arrived at the Mount of Olives outside the city, Jesus sent two of his disciples to a nearby village to

find a donkey and her colt who were tied there. “Bring them to me,” he said. “If anyone says anything to you, say that that the Lord needs them” (Matthew 21:2-3).

The disciples hurried to obey. They put their cloaks on the colt, and Jesus sat on them. A large crowd gathered, and they too took off their cloaks, placing them on the road to make a royal path for Jesus. This was how a king traditionally entered a city, so by doing this the people were saying, “Yes, Jesus, be our king!” Others cut palm branches from the trees to spread on the road and to wave in celebration.

The people shouted, “Hosanna!” which means, “Lord, save us!”

The crowd grew as some went ahead and more followed shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the king of Israel!” (Matthew 21:9; John 12:13).

It was a big “Hooray for Jesus!” moment. Was it time for Jesus to become king and save them from the Romans? The crowd was buzzing with excitement and they carried their joy into the city. Everyone wanted to know who Jesus was and what all the fuss was about.

Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were buying and selling there. The blind and lame came to him, and he healed them. Children continued

to follow him, still shouting, “Hosanna!” All this made the chief priests and teachers angry.

“Do you hear what these children are saying?” they asked Jesus (Matthew 21:16).

“Yes,” Jesus replied, “have you never read, ‘From the lips of children and infants You, Lord, have ordained praise?’” (21:16).

Jesus was quoting from Psalm 8. In doing so he silenced his enemies (what could they say?) and confirmed that the children were doing the right thing (which surely infuriated them more!). The children were praising him, which is right and good, because he is God! And yes, he had come to save them!

It wasn’t until after the resurrection that the disciples understood everything that had happened that day. They had assisted Jesus in fulfilling a prophecy of Zechariah: “Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (9:9). Jesus was their king, coming to bring salvation and peace. He wasn’t coming to drive out the Romans, as they may have expected, but he was coming to bring them salvation and victory through his death and resurrection so we can have peace with God.

We now know this day as Palm Sunday, and we know

Jesus as our reigning king. For the Jews, this was the day they would choose their lamb for the sacrifice. They would select a one-year-old male, without defect. Jesus presented himself to the people by riding

into Jerusalem on a donkey. It was as if he was saying, “Here I am. I’m your perfect lamb. I’m your Messiah and your king. Will you choose me?”



REFLECT

1. Why do you think Jesus came on a donkey rather than a horse, which was more typical for a king? How does Zechariah 9:9 describe the king?
2. Find a picture of a donkey’s back. What do you notice?
3. Read Psalm 24:7-10 and picture Jesus entering Jerusalem.
4. Read the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9-10. Is Jesus just the king of the Jews?
5. Read Revelation 7:9-10. When will people wave palm branches again? What will they say?
6. Read Revelation 19:11-16. What is Jesus riding in this passage? Why do you think it has changed?

BIBLE REFERENCE MATTHEW 21:1-17; JOHN 12:12-19

KEY VERSE JOHN 12:13