

Hosanna to the Son of David

Matthew 21:1-11

Matthew 21:6-9

As Jesus enters Jerusalem, riding on a donkey, the crowds are shouting praises and prayer to God for Him. “Hosanna in the highest heaven!” Hosanna means “O save!” or “Save us now!”

Passover was a feast that was celebrated every year that reminded the people of the deliverance God had provided them from Egyptian oppression. Psalm 118 was a psalm that was sung during Passover.

Psalm 118:5-7 When hard pressed, I cried to the Lord; he brought me into a spacious place. The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? The Lord is with me; he is my helper. I look in triumph on my enemies.

Psalm 118:11-15 They surrounded me on every side, but in the name of the Lord I cut them down. They swarmed around me like bees, but they were consumed as quickly as burning thorns; in the name of the Lord I cut them down.

I was pushed back and about to fall, but the Lord helped me. The Lord is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: "The Lord's right hand has done mighty things!"

Psalm 118:24-28 The Lord has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad. Lord, save us! Lord, grant us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you. The Lord is God, and he has made his light shine on us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you.

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Hosanna to the Son of David!” These are cries of deliverance placing Jesus in the royal line of David, the long-awaited king. They see Jesus as the deliverer, the conquering king who will set them free from Roman oppression.

Matthew 21:1-5 Zechariah 9:9

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.

Matthew describes Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem differently from the people. Rejoicing and victorious! Yes, but also lowly and gentle. Jesus does not come in riding as a conquering king on a warhorse but on a humble donkey, an animal of peace.

The crowd is shouting for victory and salvation from the Romans. Matthew and Zechariah are whispering a different kind of salvation and a kingdom that the people were not expecting or prepared to receive.

Matthew 21:10-11 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

The city of Jerusalem is stirred up and asking the question "Who is this?" Is this possibly the king they have been waiting for?

"This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee." The people waved palm branches and laid their cloaks on the ground before Him as political and regal gestures, a welcoming for a king but not for a prophet. They celebrate Jesus as the Son of David, the son of a king, of royal heritage.

Matthew tells us Jesus is not merely a prophet, nor is he a conquering warlord. He does not seize control, intimidate or overpower. His kingdom is not built on force or sustained by violence.

He is a king who comes gently riding on a donkey.

He reigns through humility, obedience, self-giving love. His entry into Jerusalem demonstrates and reveals the nature of his kingdom. His kingdom is one that will not crush its enemies but it is a kingdom that will transform them. This is the King and this is his Kingdom.

When we pray, "Your kingdom come", what are we praying for? A kingdom of triumph, power and immediate victory like the crowd wanted when Jesus entered Jerusalem? Or are we praying for the kingdom Jesus actually brings shaped by humility and does not dominate but transforms?

Palm Sunday confronts us with the kind of king Jesus truly is. He entered Jerusalem as King on his own terms. He would win the world through humility, love, grace, sacrifice and service. The people of his kingdom would willingly yield, repent and follow him as Lord.

It is Friday and Jesus has entered Jerusalem to shouts of "hosanna". In a matter of hours those shouts will turn to shouts of "crucify him."

Jesus is the king who lays down his life for his people. One who conquers the true enemy. Not Rome, but sin and the grave.

The resurrection proclaims that the victory has been won even though it was a different sort of victory than what the people had imagined.

Our King Jesus is raised to life and has conquered the enemy once and for all.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Small Group Discussion Questions

Hosanna to the Son of David Matthew 21:1-11

1. What are some words, phrases or titles ascribed to Jesus in Scripture (i.e., King of Kings; Lamb of God, etc.)? Can you come up with 20 or more?

Matthew 21:1-5

2. What was Jesus both saying and not saying when He chose to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey instead of a war horse, or walking into the city like all others? How does this demonstrate his character and the nature of his coming?
3. Why was this incident significant in fulfilling the prophecy of **Zechariah 9:9** regarding a humble king riding on a donkey?
4. Verse five points to a prophecy of the Messiah as King. If you were to write a job description for Jesus as King what would you include? Who? What? When? Where? How? What is His Kingdom?

Matthew 21:6-9

5. What does the crowd's reaction of spreading cloaks and shouting "Hosanna" reveal about their expectations of a political or military savior? What difference does that make?
6. How did the crowds react? What would the population of Jerusalem have been like at the time? Why?
7. What is the significance of palm branches? What does "Hosanna" mean?

Matthew 21:10-11

8. The question circulating through the crowd when Jesus approached Jerusalem on the donkey was, "Who is this?" What were some of the common perspectives of Jesus at that time?
9. How did the crowd accompanying Jesus answer the city's question, "Who is this?"
10. What difference does it make in your life if you honor Christ as King over all rather than just a prophet or good teacher?
11. What does Jesus' title as King of Kings mean to you? What difference does it make to your thought life and perspective to view Him that way? In what ways does your life reflect Jesus as King?

12. If someone were to approach you today wanting to know who Jesus was or is, what would you say?

Personal Study Guide

Triumphal Entry and the Passion of Christ

This week's personal study includes passages from the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) regarding the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and the Passion of Christ leading up to His resurrection. Read each gospel and note the focus of each gospel writer.

Matthew: Jesus is the Messiah. He is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

Mark: Jesus' abandonment and the scandal of the cross.

Luke: Jesus' compassion and forgiveness.

John: The divine sovereignty and purpose of the Lamb of God.

The Triumphal Entry

Matthew 21:1-11

Mark 11:1-11

Luke 19:28-44

John 12:12-19

The Passion of Christ

Passion: to suffer or to endure

Matthew chapters 26-27

Mark chapters 14-15

Luke chapters 22-23

John chapters 18-19