



FAMILY STUDY

Palm Sunday

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"Palm Sunday"

Blessed is He...

We've all heard "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord," and associated it with Palm Sunday, the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem to start the last week of His life on earth. Yet have you ever taken the time to consider those words? What do they mean? What did the crowds mean when they proclaimed it loudly that day long ago as Jesus entered Jerusalem for His last Passover? How is it that less than one week later, the very crowd that said, "Blessed is He..." was the same who said "Crucify Him!" What changed in just a few short days? Did their attitudes really change, or were they guilty of wanting Jesus to be what they wanted instead of accepting who Jesus really was?

As you read the different passages that describe that memorable event of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, take a close look at what the people said. As you study carefully, you will begin to understand how the people's attitudes could change so quickly towards Jesus.

They Wanted a Prophet

In Matthew, as the crowds were proclaiming the entry of Jesus, they also proclaimed Him as a prophet. What kind of a prophet did they really want? They loved the signs and miracles that Jesus was performing. In fact many of those who had gathered to see Jesus had originally come to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead days earlier (John 12:9). But did they really want to listen to the message of Jesus? In Matthew 23, we see Jesus confronting the people on this very issue. He tells them how they are guilty of killing the prophets that God had sent over and over again.

The people wanted the miracles of God without the message of God. Has this been the case for you? Have you longed for God to work a miracle in your life while ignoring the message He has for you? We ask for signs from God, yet we ignore His Word and don't follow it as we should. Are we like the 'unbelieving generation' in Jesus' time who heard the message but were guilty of not applying it to their own lives? Jesus asked the question in Matthew 17, "How long will I put up with you?" Does He have to ask the same of you?

Matt. 13:14-16 Matt. 17:17 Matt. 21:7-11 Matt. 23:27-36

They Wanted a Conquering King

The Jews were tired of Roman oppression. They wanted to be free to govern themselves. They saw that chance in Jesus. With such miraculous power, surely He would be able to overthrow the Romans. As you look at the Triumphal Entry in John 12:13, the people cry out, "Blessed is the KING of Israel." We see here that the people wanted to make Jesus the new king of Israel, not realizing that Jesus was already King of the Universe. They wanted to limit Him to their idea of a king. No longer would they have to pay taxes to Rome. No longer would they have to put up with Roman soldiers. Jesus was their solution to all the hardships they were facing.

Can you relate to the people's desires to be free from hardship? While Jesus is the Comforter, that is not His primary purpose—to make our lives comfortable. Being a Christian is hard work, and those who are looking for

the easy life in Christ will be sadly disappointed.

The Jews wanted to force Jesus to be king. Do we sometimes try to force Jesus to follow our agenda like the Jews did long ago? Don't fall into that trap, otherwise your attitude will change towards Christ. If you are looking to control the agenda, you will end up bitter and angry, just like the crowds did a few days later who yelled, "Crucify Him!"

John 12:12-13 John 6:14-15

"Hosanna!" Save Us, We Pray!

The Jews said over and over, "Hosanna" as Jesus entered Jerusalem. Most people believe this is a term of worship and praise. While this is true, there's more to it. Hosanna is a greek derivative of two Hebrew words which mean "Save us, we pray." As the people of Israel proclaimed the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, they were literally saying, "Save us, we pray. Blessed is He..." They were calling for Jesus to save them from Rome, not realizing that He was saving them from their sins.

Jesus cannot be put in a box. He is who He is. He is the Savior of the World, not just of Israel. He is the King of kings, not just King of Judah. He was not merely a prophet, He was the fulfillment of prophecy. The Jews wanted a king and a prophet to save them from their earthly woes. Their vision for Jesus was limited and restraining. The Savior of the world had come, but the world would not recognize His true purpose for being there, and Jesus knew it. As He approached Jerusalem, Luke 19:41-44 tells us that Jesus saw the city and wept over it, knowing that they would not see the truth. Do you see the truth?

Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord

God's vision is so much bigger than ours. That day in Jerusalem, so many missed it. Jesus was not a savior, He was THE Savior. He was not just a king, He is THE king. Jesus is not a way of salvation, He is THE way of salvation. He cannot be limited or restrained. And because He would not be limited by the short-sightedness of His fellow Jews and follow their plans, Jesus was crucified a few days later by the same crowd that asked Him to save them.

How about you? Have you cried out to Jesus and asked Him to save you, and then tried to limit Him in how He will save you? Are you trying to limit God? Are you trying to box Him in and compartmentalize Jesus into the areas of your life that you want to limit Him to? It doesn't work that way. Jesus must be Lord of all, or not Lord at all. Prayerfully consider how you view Jesus as you begin the Easter season. If you have limited Him, expand your view and throw off your limits. If you have sought to control the relationship, turn over the reigns. If you allow Jesus full access and control of your life, then He can truly save you, and be your King as it was meant to be all along. "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

Psalm 112:1, 119:1 Luke 19:35-44 Philippians 1:20-21
Mark 11:7-11 2 Corinthians 5:15 Philippians 3:7-14
Luke 14:33 Ephesians 5:15-17 Colossians 1:9-12