

Behold your King

The King of What?

The King of Peace!

John 12:12-19 ¹² The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed *is* He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!" ¹⁴ Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: ¹⁵ "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt." ¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that* they had done these things to Him. ¹⁷ Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. ¹⁸ For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. ¹⁹ The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!"

Thirty-three years have passed since the Magi came to Jerusalem looking for the King of the Jews. Jesus has not been called that since, although His other titles, Son of Man and Son of David, did allude to it for those with spiritual sight. But now, 33 years later, He is once again proclaimed to be King of the Jews.

The crowds hail Him and welcome Him as King. They give Him the royal treatment. Spreading palms and clothes down before

a king so that their horse would not have to step in the dirt was the custom for welcoming a King. And indeed that is how they name Him calling Him the King of Israel. And calling in joy, Hosanna!

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.!

These were the words from Psalm 118 which were used at various times for religious ceremonies. Hosanna literally means save now or help but was used to denote a wish or desire for success as is repeated in the next phrase, "Blessed be He who comes in the name of the Lord." If they were English they might say "Long live the King!"

So they exalt and celebrate Him as King, but a King of what? . ¹⁷ *Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness.* ¹⁸ *For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.* This was a pep rally for the one who had raised Lazarus from the dead. They aren't coming and calling Him King of Israel and Son of David because they see Him as their Spiritual Savior, they are coming and crying out "*Hosanna!*"

'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!" because it is what everyone else is doing and because they wanted him as their earthly savior.

They want to see more miracles. They want someone who can feed 5,000 people from a few loaves and few fish. They want someone who can make water into wine and burn Roman soldiers with fire from heaven. They want someone who can heal sickness and even death, but this was not the type of king Jesus was.

All of Jerusalem, even though they are proclaiming it with their own mouths, do not understand what they are saying. They don't understand what type of king Christ was even though Jesus was showing them. ¹⁴ *Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: ¹⁵ "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt."*

Jesus had, before His entrance, made arrangements to fulfill this prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 by sending two of His disciples to fetch this colt for Him to sit on. By fulfilling, He demonstrates that He was the promised son of David who would be King of Israel but

He also demonstrates what type of king He would be.

Tell me, would an earthly king come riding in on a donkey? No, an earthly king, whose purpose was to make them rich and prosperous, would come riding in with grand array, with gorgeous clothes, and wagons full of food and money. An earthly king would come with a crown on his head and an army at his back. Christ came riding in lowly fashion, they should have realized from this and their own words that this Jesus was a different kind of King. His throne would be a wooden cross, His crown would be thorns and the blood shed for victory would not be His enemies, but His own.

Only eyes of faith could see this truth that His kingdom would not be of this world. Eyes of faith see that Christ's Kingdom is greater. Daniel, long before even Christ lived on earth, prophesied of this kingdom. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had a dream and Daniel told him what that dream was and what its meaning was. ***Daniel 2:31-35*** ³¹ *" You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. ³² "This image's head was of*

fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,
³³ *"its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ "You*
watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the
image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵
"Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were
crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing
floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was
found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain
and filled the whole earth. Daniel later gave the meaning of this
*dream **Daniel 2:44** ⁴⁴ "And in the days of these kings the God of*
heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and
the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces
and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

That final kingdom represented by a stone that was not cut by human hands, is the kingdom of Christ. It did not carve its territories and boundaries into this world like all others have. It was not set up by humans. It will not fade and be replaced by another country as all other kingdoms have. It will last forever and fill the

whole earth because it will be created by God in the hearts of men. Christ came to establish this spiritual kingdom for us, but the people could not see it, so just five days after hailing Him as King, they abandoned Christ to death.

So what is he the King of? He is the King of peace.

John 12:15 ¹⁵ *"Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt."*

There is a reason that Christ decided to make His entrance into Jerusalem on this Sunday. This was the day that the Passover Lamb was picked. **Exodus 12:3** ³ *"Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.*

This is no coincidence. On the tenth day of the Jewish month of Nissan, every Israel family was to go out and find a male lamb without blemish. Do you remember what the Passover Lamb was for? The lamb was to be killed and the blood put over the threshold of the home so that the angel of death would not enter.

The lamb died so they would not. So as commanded by God, the Jews on this day would choose the lamb that was to be sacrificed later in the week.

Unknowingly to them, the people in our text with their cries of “Hosanna!”, that will soon switch to “Crucify Him!”, are choosing the true Passover lamb to be sacrificed in their place. I can’t help thinking of movies where the white man is stranded on a pacific ocean Island and the natives there treat them like kings - throwing flowers around them, carrying them around on a chair, feeding them lavishly. The guy has no clue what is going on but he enjoys it, until he finds out they are pampering him because they plan on sacrificing him to their gods by throwing him into a volcano. The difference is of course, Jesus knew what was coming and went forward anyway. And so Holy week begins with Christ being shown to be the Lamb of God who would die for our sins. Die so that the angel of death would not come and kill us for our sins.

That is why the prophets exhort us, the daughters of Zion, to rejoice and fear, not because our king is coming sitting on a donkey.

We don’t care that He is riding on a donkey. It shows His humility, and it is in His humiliation that He won victory for us. By willingly dying in our place for our sins He won peace for us.

If Christ had not come as our Passover lamb, the angel of death would be out there and it would only be a matter of time before he came to you. I am not talking of physical death, that is only the beginning for those who do not believe in and love Christ for dying in our place, I am talking of spiritual death. Spending eternity in fear and pain in Hell. This is why Christ is our King of peace. He brings us peace by knowing that because His blood has covered our sins, the angel of death is not waiting for us. He brings us peace by knowing that we are part of His kingdom. His kingdom of loving-kindness, joy and peace forever. Behold your king! He rides to death to bring you peace. *"Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!"*

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