

# The Triumphal Entry

**Text:** John 12:12–19

**Theme:** Jesus is the true King who comes in peace, fulfills God’s promises, and calls for genuine, enduring faith—not shallow praise.

## Introduction

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week—the final days leading to the cross. In this moment, Jesus enters Jerusalem publicly as King, and the crowds respond with celebration, praise, and expectation.

Yet within days, those same crowds will turn.

This passage invites us to examine not only **who Jesus is**, but also **how we respond to Him**.

## Key Truth

**Jesus is the King who came to bring peace through sacrifice, and true faith follows Him beyond the moment of celebration.**

## Scripture Reading

### John 12:12–13 (NIV)

“The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. 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!’”

## Point 1: Jesus Is Publicly Revealed as King

### Observation

- A large crowd gathers for Passover
- They recognize Jesus and respond with praise

- They use language from Psalm 118 (a messianic psalm)

## Study Notes

- “Hosanna” means “**Lord, save us**”
- The crowd identifies Jesus as the promised King and Messiah
- Palm branches symbolized **honor, victory, and royalty**
- This moment is a public declaration of Jesus’ identity

## Discussion Questions

1. What does the crowd’s response reveal about their expectations of Jesus?
2. Why is it significant that they quote Scripture (Psalm 118)?
3. What does “Hosanna” reveal about their need?

## Application

It is possible to recognize Jesus as King outwardly without fully understanding who He truly is.

## Point 2: Jesus Is a King Who Comes in Peace

### John 12:14–15 (NIV)

“Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:  
‘Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion;  
see, your king is coming,  
seated on a donkey’s colt.’”

## Study Notes

- This fulfills Zechariah 9:9
- Kings rode:
  - Horses → war and conquest
  - Donkeys → peace
- Jesus enters as a **peaceful King**, not a political conqueror

## Discussion Questions

1. Why is the donkey such an important detail?
2. How does this challenge the crowd’s expectations?
3. What kind of King were the people hoping for?

## Application

Jesus often does not meet our expectations—but He always fulfills God’s purpose.

## Point 3: The Crowd Responds with Incomplete Understanding

### John 12:16 (NIV)

“At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize...”

### Study Notes

- Even the disciples didn’t fully understand what was happening
- Understanding came **after the resurrection**
- God is often at work in ways we don’t immediately recognize

### Discussion Questions

1. Why didn’t the disciples understand this moment?
2. When have you only understood something God was doing after the fact?
3. What does this teach us about trusting God?

## Application

Faith often requires trusting God before we fully understand His plan.

## Point 4: The Crowd Is Drawn by Signs, Not Commitment

### John 12:17–18 (NIV)

“...the crowd...continued to spread the word...because they had heard that he had performed this sign.”

### Study Notes

- Many followed Jesus because of miracles (like raising Lazarus)
- They were drawn to **what Jesus could do**, not necessarily who He is

- Signs pointed to Jesus—but were not the goal

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Why were so many people interested in Jesus at this moment?
2. What is the difference between curiosity and commitment?
3. How can people follow Jesus for the wrong reasons today?

## **Application**

Following Jesus for what He gives is different from following Him as Lord.

## **Point 5: Opposition Reveals the Reality of His Identity**

### **John 12:19 (NIV)**

“So the Pharisees said... ‘Look how the whole world has gone after him!’”

## **Study Notes**

- The religious leaders are threatened by Jesus
- Their rejection contrasts the crowd’s praise
- Both responses reveal something about the human heart

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Why were the Pharisees so opposed to Jesus?
2. What does their reaction reveal about pride and control?
3. How do people resist Jesus today?

## **Application**

Jesus always demands a response—acceptance or rejection.

## **The Turning Point: From “Hosanna” to “Crucify”**

### **Key Insight**

The same crowd that praised Jesus would soon reject Him.

## Study Notes

- The crowd expected:
  - Political victory
  - Immediate deliverance
- Jesus came to bring:
  - Spiritual salvation
  - Victory through the cross
- When Jesus didn't meet expectations, they turned on Him

## Discussion Questions

1. Why did the crowd turn so quickly?
2. What expectations did they have of Jesus?
3. How can unmet expectations affect our faith?

## Application

True faith is not based on whether Jesus meets our expectations, but on who He truly is.

## Personal Examination: Are You Truly Following Jesus?

### Reflection Questions

- Do I follow Jesus only when life is going well?
- Do I trust Him when His plan doesn't match mine?
- Am I influenced by the crowd or committed personally?
- Is my faith rooted in truth or convenience?

## Connecting to the Lord's Supper

The Triumphal Entry leads directly to the cross—and shortly after this event, Jesus gathers with His disciples for the **Last Supper**.

### Key Connection

- Palm Sunday: The King is praised
- The Cross: The King is rejected
- The Lord's Supper: The King is remembered

## Meaning of the Lord's Supper

- The **bread** represents Jesus' body given for us
- The **cup** represents His blood shed for the forgiveness of sins
- It is a **symbolic act** pointing to the reality of the cross
- It is a time of:
  - remembrance
  - reflection
  - renewed commitment

## **1 Corinthians 11:28 (NIV)**

“Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.”

### **Reflection Before Communion**

1. Am I trusting in Christ alone for salvation?
2. Is there sin I need to confess?
3. Am I remembering the sacrifice of Jesus with sincerity?
4. Am I fully committed to following Him?

## **Gospel Reminder**

The King who entered Jerusalem:

- Did not come to conquer Rome
- Came to conquer sin and death

Jesus:

- Lived a perfect life
- Died on the cross in our place
- Rose again in victory

**Through faith in Him, we receive forgiveness, new life, and peace with God.**

## **Closing Prayer**

Father, thank You for sending Jesus as our King—not just a King of power, but a King of peace who came to give His life for us. Help us not to be like the crowd whose praise fades, but to be people of lasting faith and true devotion. As we remember the cross, examine our hearts and draw us closer to You. Strengthen our commitment to follow You in every season. In Jesus' name, amen.

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