

Name Above All Names [Palm Sunday]

Discussion Guide

Summary

This sermon explores Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, focusing on the profound humility displayed by the King of kings. Jonathan examines how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy by choosing to ride on a donkey rather than a war horse, demonstrating that God's kingdom operates on principles opposite to worldly expectations. The message emphasizes that the Jewish leaders missed recognizing Jesus as the Messiah because His humble appearance didn't match their expectations of a conquering king. Through examining Zechariah 9:9, Matthew 21:1-11, and Psalm 118, the sermon reveals how the crowds' cries of "Hosanna" were prophetic declarations recognizing Jesus as the cornerstone, the sacrifice, and the Savior.

The sermon challenges believers to follow Jesus' example of humility, contrasting worldly pursuits of power and recognition with God's call to humble service. Drawing from James 4:10, Jonathan explains that true honor comes not from self-promotion but from humbling ourselves before God, allowing Him to lift us up. The message concludes with practical applications for living humbly: surrendering to God's lordship, serving others without seeking credit, and being honest about our struggles and failures. This humility isn't weakness but the pathway to experiencing God's grace and participating in His upside-down kingdom of the servant King, Jesus.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You this morning with grateful hearts, recognizing that You are the King of kings and Lord of lords. As we gather together to study Your Word, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to receive what You want to teach us today. Help us to set aside our own agendas and expectations, and instead be receptive to Your truth. Lord, just as the crowds had their own ideas about what the Messiah should look like, we sometimes have our own preconceived notions about how You should work in our lives. Give us humble hearts that are willing to be surprised by Your ways. Holy Spirit, guide our discussion and help us to encourage one another as we explore what it means to follow Jesus' example of humility. May this time together draw us closer to You and to each other. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

If you could choose any mode of transportation to make a grand entrance somewhere important, what would you choose and why? (Examples: helicopter, limousine, horse-drawn carriage, motorcycle, etc.)

Key Verses

- Zechariah 9:9
- Matthew 21:1-11
- Psalm 118:22-28
- James 4:10
- Acts 4:8-12

Questions

- Why do you think the Jewish leaders missed recognizing Jesus as the Messiah when He fulfilled the prophecy so clearly? What does this teach us about our own expectations of how God should work?
- Jesus chose to ride on a donkey instead of a war horse. What does this choice reveal about the nature of His kingdom compared to earthly kingdoms?
- The crowds shouted 'Hosanna' (save us) while laying down their garments and palm branches. How does their spontaneous worship challenge us in our own worship practices?
- Jonathan mentioned that some of the same people shouting 'Hosanna' would later shout 'Crucify Him.' What does this reveal about the human heart, and how can we guard against fickleness in our faith?
- The sermon explained that Psalm 118 prophetically describes Jesus as 'the stone the builders rejected' who became 'the cornerstone.' How does this metaphor apply to areas of your life where you might be rejecting what God is trying to build?
- James 4:10 says 'Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will lift you up in honor.' This seems counterintuitive to worldly thinking. Share an example of when you've seen this principle work in real life.
- Jonathan gave three practical ways to follow Jesus' example of humility: humble yourself before God, toward others, and in your struggles. Which of these three areas is most challenging for you personally?
- Jesus 'enters into our everyday life to redeem it' rather than remaining distant. How have you experienced Jesus meeting you in ordinary, everyday moments?

Life Application

This week, choose one specific area where you've been trying to promote yourself or demand recognition. Instead of self-promotion, practice humility by serving in that area without seeking credit or acknowledgment. This could be at work, in your family, at church, or in your community. Keep a journal of how God works through your humble service and watch for ways He might 'lift you up in honor' as you surrender your need to elevate yourself.

Key Takeaways

- Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy by entering Jerusalem humbly on a donkey, revealing that God's kingdom operates on principles opposite to worldly expectations of power and glory.
- The crowds' cries of 'Hosanna' were prophetic declarations from Psalm 118, recognizing Jesus as the rejected cornerstone who became the foundation of salvation.
- True humility is not weakness but voluntary surrender to God, trusting His ways over our own understanding and expectations.
- God's greatest acts often come in plain and unexpected forms - a manger, a towel, a donkey, a wooden cross - showing that glory is often dressed in humility.
- Following Jesus' example means humbling ourselves before God, serving others without seeking credit, and being honest about our struggles and failures, trusting that God will lift us up in His timing.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for being our humble King who chose the way of the servant, rather than the way of worldly power. As we leave this time together, help us to carry the truth of Your humility into our daily lives. When we're tempted to promote ourselves or demand recognition, remind us of Your example riding on that donkey. Give us the courage to choose the path of humility, trusting that You will lift us up in Your perfect timing. Help us to see opportunities this week to serve others without seeking credit, to surrender our pride before You, and to be honest about our struggles. May our lives reflect the upside-down values of Your kingdom, where the last are first and the humble are exalted. Transform our hearts to be more like Yours, and use our humble service to draw others to You. We love You, Lord, and we thank You for Your amazing love for us. In Your precious and holy name, Jesus, we pray. Amen.