

PURIM & PALM PARALLELS

A Biblical Study of the Jewish Celebration of Purim and Palm Sunday

Book of Esther and Gospel of John / Pastor Matthew Jones

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Maker of Everything (Genesis and John 1:1-3,14)

Message of *Euangelion* (Genesis-Esther)

Megillah Esther (Esther 1-10)

Providence

Persecution

Purim

Messianic Expectations (John 5, 11:55–12:1, 12:9–11)

Military Entry (John 12:12–19, cf. Mt. 21, Mk.11, Lk.19)

Powers

Politics

Parallels

Mixed Emotions (John 12:20–36)

Meaning Everyday (John 12:37-14:6)

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

Reflective Questions for You and Your Small Group

1. Have you ever celebrated Purim with Jewish friends or family? If so share. What connections did you see/experience from it that inform our faith in Jesus and witness of Him?
2. How has learning about Purim the last five weeks together and today helped you understand the Jewish roots of our faith? Share. Why is it important to understand the Jewish context of the Christian faith? Discuss.
3. How has leaning about Purim the last five weeks together and today helped you understand practical things about the Christian life and challenged you personally in godliness? Share.
4. As a contrast between Purim and Palm Sunday, the Sunday sermon paralleled Jesus' entry in John 12 to Mordecai's in Esther. What does this juxtaposition teach us about the grace and beauty of Christ, as well as our own sinful inclinations to self-exaltation and attention-grabbing? Discuss.
5. In Sunday's sermon we reflected on the Messianic expectations of Jesus' day and how some of those preconceived notions about what the Messiah was supposed to be or look-like caused many to miss Him. Before coming to faith in Christ what preconceived notions did you have about Him and God in general that were blocking you from seeing Him fully and completely? Discuss together.
6. People living in the days of Jesus were filled with personal anxieties that intersected with religion and politics. In our day, what are some of the personal and political anxieties we carry that—if we are not careful—can lead us into distorting our faith, getting off mission with the gospel, and/or emotionally coming unglued? Talk about it and make sure to dig into at both the socio-cultural level and into your own personal/mental life. Share.
7. Many of the factors at play in causing people to miss the meaning of the original Palm Sunday and Jesus more personally were related to the unwillingness to let go of preconceived notions about God and the things of this earth. That said, how are you doing in the realm of letting go of earthly things and worldly ideas? How is your financial giving to God's work in the church going and the renewing of your mind (Rom.12:2)?
8. How can we pray for your holiness and witness? Share, discuss, and pray.