

**“Who is Jesus?”: Our Hope**  
**John 12:12-19**

*John 12:12 ¶ The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.*

*John 12:13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!”*

*John 12:14 And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,*

*John 12:15 ¶ “Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!”*

*John 12:16 ¶ His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.*

*John 12:17 The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness.*

*John 12:18 The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.*

*John 12:19 So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.”*

**Introduction:**

- Response to Jesus’ resurrection of Lazarus. The effects of the sign are extensive.
- One of only a few events recorded by all four gospels.

**Triumphant Entry: The Introduction of Hope (vv.12-16)**

A) The Arrival (v.12)

- a. A crowd gathering event
- b. Josephus claims over 2 million people at one particular Passover during this period.
- c. Presumably the Sunday of Passion Week

B) The Welcome and Entrance (vv.13-15)

a. The Welcome

- i. Palm branches were already common symbols of victory, particularly promoting nationalism due to Roman influence (palm branches printed on coins to denote conquering)
- ii. Former use of Jews for the Tabernacle
- iii. **Psalm 118:25-26**, “**25** Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! **26** Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord.” (Part of a song sung at the Feast of Tabernacles, also used at the Feast of Dedication and Passover – not unusual since in different ways all of these feasts are fulfilled in Christ)
- iv. Just prior... **Psalm 118:21-24**, “**21** I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. **22** The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. **23** This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. **24** This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”
- v. This welcome appears to be a welcome that would denote something more than just a teacher, for the statement “King of Israel” is more of a messianic designation. Now, what kind of kingdom this king would rule in their minds is probably mixed.

b. The Entrance

- i. **Acts 1:7** – Consistency in misconstruing the nature of Christ’s kingdom. As I have visited with Jews, they still are looking either for an actual messianic figure, who is all human to restore the nation of Israel, or (on the more “liberal” side of Judaism) looking more for the spirit of the messiah to bring the people together.
- ii. Recently in John people have said or done things that had deeper meaning beyond their

- comprehension. This appears consistent here as well. (c.f. – Caiaphas, Mary and the ointment)
- iii. **John Calvin**, *“I readily acknowledge that the people who went out to meet him were not well acquainted with the nature of this kingdom; but Christ looked to the future. Meanwhile, he permitted nothing to be done that was not suitable to his spiritual kingdom.”*
  - iv. **Luke 19:41-44** helps us know Christ’s view of the crowd and the entry
    - v. In large part would have been those from outside Jerusalem, pilgrims
    - vi. Lord’s prayer “Thy kingdom come...”
    - vii. How much they understand is partial guesswork, what we know is that Christ allowed all this to be said of Him, in keeping with scripture and prophecy, yet constrained the view of those looking only to a nationalistic hero by riding on a donkey (Zech 9:9)
  - viii. **Zechariah 9:9**, *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”*
    1. This Messianic chapter makes clear that this rule will be for the peace of God’s chosen ones.
    2. The rule will be, not with military might, but with the peace of a conquering God with the people in constant praise – extended to all nations.
    3. Rooted in his covenant by blood! (Passover, fulfilled in Christ)
  - ix. The God who displayed power coming out of the grave and ascending into heaven began His week fulfilling scripture by riding a donkey!

### C) The Realization (v.16)

- a. The Significance
  - i. **John 2:22**, *“When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.”* (compared with glorification)
  - ii. **“these things”** – the fulfillment of scriptures
- b. The Sufficiency of the scriptures (now complete)
  - i. Our hope is realized in the fulfillment of scripture
  - ii. **2 Peter 1:19-21**, *“19 And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”*

<b>Triumphant Witness: The Testimony of Hope (vv.17-19)</b>
-------------------------------------------------------------

- A) The Crowds
  - a. Those who saw (v.17) - continued
  - b. Those who heard (v.18) – were curious
  - c. Again, diverse and we must rest assured that some understood in part and continued, while others were either merely curious or were self-serving.
- B) Pharisees
  - a. Hyperbole & exaggeration, displaying their fears
  - b. More than they meant (John’s use of irony): “World” (kosmos – created order of man) meaning the whole of humanity, in that sense it is true! Once again, this is not universalism (all religions, or non-religions, lead to God and salvation), nor inclusivism (one religion is best, but many ways possible). Rather it is a very exclusivist type of meaning.

## APPLICATION

- A) What kind of Christ are you looking for this morning?
- a. Does the all-sufficient Word of God inform this view or your own personal interpretation of the scriptures not read?
  - b. Is it not our own earthly “kingdoms” that we look for in Him at times? Winning a ball game; improving our salaries; better jobs; healthier relationships?
  - c. To know the Christ of scripture, you must acknowledge that God has created all things for His glory; that man has failed at that because of sin; that Christ has taken on the sin of each of His own and His blood establishes a promise of salvation. Will you accept that Christ has died on the cross in your place and follow Him the rest of your life?
- B) Whose rule will give you the greatest joy?
- a. The truth is, with this mixed crowd, it is only those who remain through His beatings, crucifixion, burial, resurrection and ascension who are truly His own.
  - b. The kingdom of Christ is one of peace, which includes His chosen ones whom He has purchased with the blood of His covenant. The end of that realization is the praise of His people.
  - c. So, do you find your greatest joy in Christ, or do you constantly ask Jesus to give you joy in something else other than Him?