

# PALM SUNDAY

## Bible Study

### Scripture

#### The Triumphal Entry

Matthew 21:1-11 (ESV)

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.”

<sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

<sup>5</sup> “Say to the daughter of Zion,  
‘Behold, your king is coming to you,  
humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
on a colt the foal of a beast of burden.’”

<sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. <sup>7</sup> They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. <sup>8</sup> Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” <sup>10</sup> And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?” <sup>11</sup> And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.”

All four gospels cover this account:

Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-40, John 12:12-19

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### I. Examples of Donkey Transportation in Old Testament

It was customary that a king would enter the city on a white horse after a victorious battle but during a time of peace, the king rode in on a donkey.

1. What type of person rode on a light colored donkey in Judges 5:10?
2. Who owned the donkey in I Kings 1:32-34?
3. What type of person rode the donkey in I Kings 1:32-34?
4. What preparations were made for Jesus before entering the city?
5. List some of the responses of the people to His entry. What did they do and say?
6. What message do you think Jesus is trying to convey to the people by riding on a donkey?

7. What will Jesus be riding at the second coming and what is the significance of this animal?

Zechariah's emphasis upon the King's selection of a donkey for his journey into Jerusalem is by no means incidental. There is a point to be made about the **nature** of the King's conquests and administration. The Messiah would not seek to subjugate by means of military force (as Islam traditionally has done); rather, he is the "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6), and his achievements are not by means of bloody conquests (Jn. 18:36; 2 Cor. 10:4-5). Horses were instruments of war (cf. vs. 10; Isa. 2:7; 31:1; Mic. 5:10).

## II. This Triumphant Entry of Jesus is significant for 4 reasons:

- A. This was the final and official presentation of Jesus to Israel as their Messiah
- B. Many people recognized this as seen in their shouts of praise.
- C. By coming on a donkey, Jesus presented Himself as King.
- D. This presentation of Jesus was the exact fulfillment of prophecy; prophecy the Israelites would have been very familiar with. This should have confirmed without any doubt that Jesus was (and is) the Messiah.
  - a) Shouts of People – Psalm 118 Vs 25 "Save Us" = Hosanna
  - b) The donkey in Jerusalem – Zechariah 9:9
  - c) The spreading of cloaks and branches is an image of enthronement in the line of King David, going back to 2 Kings 9:13

## III. Significance of Palms

Palm branches were employed also as token of victory (Suetonius, *Caligula*, 32). Some Jewish coins from the first century had palm leaf engravings with the accompanying inscription, "the redemption of Zion." Note the "palm" symbolism that is portrayed in the book of **Revelation (7:9-10)**.<sup>9</sup> *After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,*<sup>10</sup> *and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*