

See your king comes, humble and riding on a donkey.

Bible reference Matthew 21:5:

"Tell the daughter of Zion,

Look, your king is coming to you,

humble and mounted on a donkey,

and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."



Public Domain. Frans Francken the Younger: Entry into Jerusalem second quarter of 17th century

Jesus made quite an impression by his entry into town, didn't he?

The one who came made quite a statement by his entry to Jerusalem that very first Palm Sunday.

What is this all about?

What difference does he make to you?

Jesus is greeted by the people of Jerusalem with acclamation; the crowds spread their cloaks before him and cut palm branches and spread them on the road. The crowds shout hosanna to the Son of David... blessed is he comes in the name of the Lord."

How do we receive him today?

Well, we have a procession with our beloved donkey, we lay palm branches before him, and we sing our hosannas too, don't we! Jesus comes to us too, as the Holy Spirit opens the Word of God to us. How do we receive him? How do you receive him today? Will you follow where he goes...where he leads?

The crowds who met Jesus that first Palm Sunday sing and cry and enact the words of the prophet Zechariah. In chapter 9 we read "Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter (O people, O city) Jerusalem! Look your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Jesus' entry to Jerusalem fulfils the Scripture about God's Messiah coming to rescue his people written by the prophet Zechariah hundreds of years before. And I highlight two vital things from the words of Zechariah:

1. The king comes to you. Jesus, God's messiah comes to you and to me and to the city, the town, the church, the neighbours, the family, the state of mind, the life situation, the place where you are. He comes triumphant and victorious...



2. He comes humbly; he comes in humility riding on a donkey. Triumphant and victorious but also in humility.

But what does it all mean for us?

The crowds that greet and follow Jesus branches or singing of hosanna (which actually means "Save us. We pray!") will soon be replaced by shouts of 'crucify him' in the same city and perhaps by the very same people who greet him. Perhaps by our lives and words and actions and sins. Could that be? How could that be?

Jesus enters Jerusalem precisely and we are in the crowd. Jesus enters into Jerusalem because the crowds, because we have abandoned him through our sins against God, against one another in the crowd.

And the wonderful "God given" irony is that this humble king goes to the cross for all people, even for those who abandon him through sin. The shout of crucify leads to the king saving.

Hosanna! Jesus saves? How? By giving his life and being crucified for you and for me.

The unexpected triumph and the sure victory of this king comes in the place of where of ultimate humility in sacrificing his own life to rescue the people he reigns over.

In Isaiah 50 we hear

6 I gave my back to those who struck me,

and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard.

I did not hide my face

from insult and spitting

We travel this with the king to the place of his death, of his giving of his own life in the place of you and me. Jesus fulfils the words of the prophet Isaiah who tells of the suffering servant... not the mighty king some expect or want... but the one who takes the anger and punishment of God because of human sin, yours and mine included, on his own body. This is the king who reigns on the cross.



The crowds sing "Hosanna". Save us we pray.

The crowds shout "crucify" and the king saves through his crucifixion.

Will you follow him where he goes, where he calls you? We've asked this question over the past few Sundays.

Will you go where Jesus goes?

Will you go with him to the Samaritans of today?

Will you go to the ones excluded like the man born blind?

Will you go as a community to care for the ones who grieve like Mary and Martha as Lazarus' death?

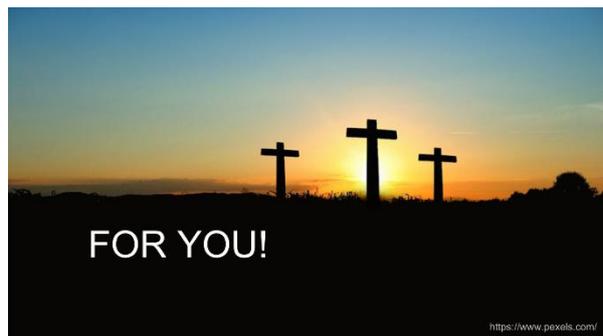
Will you follow Jesus?

Hosanna! Save us we pray. And Jesus comes and Jesus does. Good news. Sure, victory and triumph over death for you.

See your king comes to you humble and riding a donkey.

You are saved. Don't ever doubt this. The king has triumphed and won the victory in love for you.

Now you and I, we who put our hope in this one can carry this king in our hearts, in our voices, in our actions and lives when a world, a city, a town, a neighbourhood, a family, maybe the person next to you seeks someone to help



In boldness we too can follow him and live humble lives of serving as we are called by God to serve our neighbours in selfless love. Who might God be calling you this Holy Week to serve as the King serves you and commissions you for sacrificial serving of others?

One of our key themes and values identified together is

Authentic, joyful service: *Desire for serving others to move beyond a sense of duty to a genuine expression of love, compassion, and hospitality inspired by Christ's example of humility.*

How will you welcome the king today and grow in your expression of love, compassion and hospitality for others?

Please let me know your stories of humble serving in your life; of ways that you are reaching out as Jesus Carriers to others or others are reaching out to you. As Paul says in Philippians 2

“If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

These next verses are known as the Christ hymn and this hymn we sing on the Sunday of the Passion along with the Hosannas of Palm Sunday.

⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God

as something to be exploited,

⁷ but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

⁸ he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him

and gave him the name
that is above every name,

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

Sing hosanna and go where your king leads to serve. Amen.

Video of the service including the above address can be found on the St Paul's Lutheran Church Youtube page

<https://www.youtube.com/@stpaulslutheranchurchboxhi1133>

