

## Palm Sunday—Matthew 21vs 1-10 Smarter than a Donkey?

Palm Sunday occurred just when the Jewish people were gathering together in Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, in commemoration of their delivery from slavery in Egypt, which was celebrated yesterday and today this year. All four Gospels include this account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, letting us know that something really important is happening—Matt 21:1-10, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-40, and John 12:12-19.

**Matt:21 21 When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup>saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied *there* 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 has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.”** This must have seemed strange to the disciples. Jesus stops and gives them instructions on where to get a donkey—after they've been walking around all over Israel for 3 and ½ years. The disciples had no idea what was going to happen, and they had a choice whether to obey. If God's instructions were always going to make sense to us at the time, that we need verses like Proverbs 3:5-6 **5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding.** The only way that we're going to get God's Will done is to Trust Him to work through us, and follow His instructions, even if we don't understand. If we're always trying to figure it out ourselves, then we won't be letting God be in Control. Obedience is required, and while God is patient with our suggestions and desires, He does not need our advice on how to get His Will done.

**<sup>6</sup>The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, <sup>7</sup>and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats.**

The Bible bothers to let us know that the disciples didn't come up with this, nor did they decide to improvise and do it their own way. The salvation of each and every person who comes to Christ, and the working out of the plan that He has for their lives is part of God's design. When we are obedient to God's plan by letting people know about our wonderful Jesus and fulfilling the ministries that He has given us, we cooperate and partner with God in fulfilling His Will for their salvation and the work He has for them to do.

**<sup>8</sup>Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road.**

They celebrated by rolling out the red carpet with what they had at hand—their coats.

Matthew 21:9 **<sup>9</sup>The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;**

**Hosanna in the highest!”** Mark: 11:10 adds **“Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David”**

**Son of David**—This wasn't the first time that they'd called Jesus “Son of David”, in fact they correctly do this six times in the gospel of Matthew. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 7:12-13, God had promised King David that the Messiah would be from his Kingly line and would be established forever. This is why we see in the next verse, Matthew 21:9 and several other times in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus is called “Son of David.”

It's equivalent to calling Jesus the Messiah.

**Hosanna**—Another thing that they keep shouting is Hosanna Hosanna (5614) in English is a transliteration of a Hebrew phrase composed of two Hebrew words (hoshiya + na') meaning something like “Please save!,” “Help, I pray,” “Save now,” or “Save now, I pray!” And that Hebrew phrase is found in only one solitary place in the whole Old Testament, [Psalm 118:24-26](#), **<sup>24</sup>This is the day which the LORD has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.** Which points us to Palm Sunday!

**Peace**--Another theme in what the people were crying is PEACE. In the Middle East there is a tradition that a donkey is an animal of peace, versus the horse, which is an animal of war. Therefore, a king came riding upon a horse if he meant to make war and conquer, while riding a donkey emphasized the point that he was coming in peace. Therefore, Jesus' entry to Jerusalem symbolized his entry as the Prince of

Peace. Or as Isaiah 9:6-7 puts it, **And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace.**

A lot of people were still confused about just who Jesus was, just as people are confused about who He is today. Many thought that as Messiah, he would be a political leader, and maybe a deliverer from the Romans. Many people thought that He was just a prophet. We see in Mathew 21:10 and 11 that <sup>10</sup>**When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?”** <sup>11</sup>**And the crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.”** There was excitement, but not understanding. All the city of Jerusalem was stirred, but many in the crowd had to ask “who is this?”. They didn’t know him. And many today get excited when they see the power of God, and crowds, or revivals, or miracles, but if it doesn’t drive you to come to know the Person of Jesus, and understand His work of Salvation on your behalf, what good has been done? Don’t miss the boat! Don’t misunderstand! —get to know Jesus personally as both Lord and Savior today. The Crowd was excited, but they wanted the Messiah on their terms, not God’s. Jesus knew that their real problem was Sin. Jesus came to die for our sins, to pay the price for our iniquity. Jesus as Sacrifice was the most important part—it’s why HE came, but it’s the part that they couldn’t accept, and the part that people still can’t accept today.

Yes, “Save Now”, but in Your Way, at Your Time, according to God’s Plan, Lord Jesus. Let God work out His plan in humble obedience. Just like the donkey. Just listen to the Lord and walk forward, doing what you’re supposed to do.

This was a day when the Passover lambs were being inspected, so that they could be used for Passover. On Palm Sunday, Jesus entered Jerusalem at exactly the time the Passover lambs were chosen. And this was the day when Jesus, our Passover presented Himself to Israel as their Messiah at the Temple with the other sacrifices. Jesus as sacrifice was less acceptable than Jesus as deliverer. The people just wouldn’t accept that the Messiah had to suffer and die because it meant that their Earthy problems weren’t just going to go away. They just couldn’t see the Heavenly perspective. But we must be like the Disciples, and like the donkey,: obey even when it doesn’t make sense, and fulfill God’s Plan for our lives.