

King Jesus **John 12:12-19**

I can imagine that the air in Jerusalem was electric at this very moment. Phil Collins would have said: "I can feel it in the air tonight, come on!" It was Passover, and the city was bursting at the seams with pilgrims. Word had spread like wildfire: Jesus of Nazareth, the man who recently called Lazarus out of the tomb, was coming to town. The crowd—a massive, hopeful—did something extraordinary: they took palm branches and went out to meet him.

These palm branches weren't just decorations; they were symbols of Jewish nationalism, akin to us waving an American flag in victory. They shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord—the King of Israel!". They wanted a conqueror. They wanted a political Messiah who would overthrow the Roman empire. They wanted a king who would bring immediate material prosperity and national liberation. But what kind of King did Jesus show them?

I. The Humble Servant King (John 12:12-15)

While they expected a warhorse, Jesus chose a young donkey. This was a deliberate act, a fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9: *"Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! ... See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey..."*.

In the ancient world, kings rode horses to war, but they rode donkeys to declare peace. Jesus was intentionally rejecting the world's definition of power. He was not coming to wage war against Rome, but to bring peace between God and man.

As Philippians 2:7-8 tells us, He made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant. Jesus came to serve, not to be served.

II. The Savior that is Misunderstood (John 12:16-18)

John honestly admits that the disciples didn't understand this at first. They were just as caught up in the hype as the crowd. It was only after Jesus was "glorified"—after the resurrection—that they realized the prophecy was fulfilled. The crowd was applauding for the wrong reasons. They loved the "miracle-working" Jesus, the "resurrector-of-Lazarus" Jesus, but they would soon turn on the "suffering-servant" Jesus.

Application: How often do we do the same? We praise God when He fits our expectations, or is convenient to our schedule. When He answers our prayers the way we want, when He provides comfort and prosperity. But do we worship Him when He asks us to walk through the valley of the shadow of death? Do we follow Him when His path leads to sacrifice rather than success?

III. The Sovereign Lord of the World (John 12:19)

The Pharisees, in panic, declare: "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!".

This is the glorious irony of the gospel. The Pharisees wanted to limit Jesus to a local Jewish problem, but their despair reveals the truth: Jesus is the King of the *world*. The "world" here refers to all people, including the Greeks who will appear in the next passage seeking Him. Though the crowd misunderstood him, Jesus was in control. As Acts 4:27-28 confirms, the events of that week, including the cross, were not an accidental tragedy, but God's predestined plan for salvation.

Application

The Triumphal Entry is not just a historical event; it is an invitation. Jesus is passing by today, offering to be your Savior, not just in the way you want, but in the way you *need*.

1. He brings salvation from sin, not just political or economic freedom.
2. He offers a peace that passes understanding, not just absence of conflict.

One day, Revelation 19:11-16 tells us, He will return, not on a donkey, but on a white horse, and every knee will bow. Today, we have the chance to bow our knees by choice.

Do not be a follower who only seeks the applause of men or the benefits of the moment.

Instead, fall in love with the true story of Jesus: The King who came in humility to carry our sins, so that through His death and resurrection, we might have life.

Let us cry Hosanna not just with our lips, but with our lives.