

CHAPTER 8

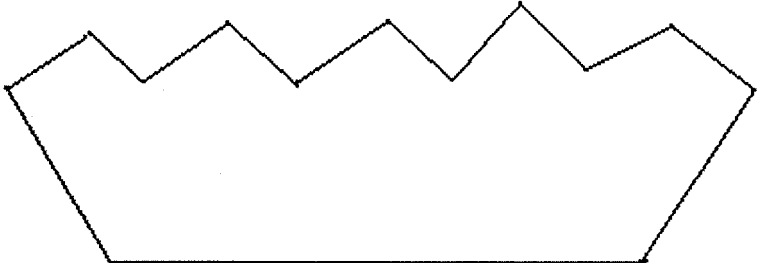
The Lord's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

(What are We Cheering About Anyway?)


What Kind of a Saviour Did They Want?

When the Lord Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem less than a week before He went to the cross, were the people very excited about having Him come (Matthew 21:9)? _____ They cried "HOSANNA" which means "**Save us now**"! What did they want Jesus to save them from? Did they want Him to save them from their sins (which is the very reason He came--see Matthew 1:21)? Did they want Him to save them from living wrongly, thinking wrongly and acting wrongly? Did they want to be saved from the terrible judgment of a righteous God who hates sin?

The Jewish people were looking for the **CROWN**.

<p><i>A King who can save us from the Romans and help make life less miserable</i></p>	 <p>THE CROWN</p>
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The Jewish people did not see the need for the **CROSS**.

<p><i>A Saviour who can save us from our sins and who can give us a new life</i></p>	 <p>THE CROSS</p>
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They wanted Christ to be King of the world, but they did not want Him to be King of their lives.

At this time the Romans ruled the world and the Jewish people wanted Jesus to set them free from the Romans. They did not really want Jesus to set them free from **sin**, which is even a more terrible bondage (see John 8:32-36).

Think of a soldier on a battlefield with bombs and bullets and hand grenades flying over his head. In desperation he cries out, "LORD, SAVE ME NOW!" What do you suppose he wants to be saved from? Consider a patient who is about to have open heart surgery. Just as he is about to be put to sleep he cries, "LORD, PLEASE SAVE ME!" Was this person really asking God to save his soul, or was he probably asking to be saved from the surgeon making a mistake with his knife? According to Matthew 10:28, what should we be more afraid of, a doctor who can hurt our body or God who has the power to send a person to the lake of fire?

_____ (being afraid of God means that I fear and respect God so much that I'm afraid not to do what God tells me to do in His Word).

A Fast Change of Tune

When Jesus entered the city, the people shouted, "BLESSED IS THE CHRIST!" Less than one week later, what did they shout (see Matthew 27:23)? _____ First they wanted Him to be King. Then a few days later they wanted Him dead! How would you like your friends to throw a surprise birthday party for you and present you with all kinds of expensive gifts, and then to come back a few days later and spit in your face and throw eggs at your house? That would certainly be strange behavior! Suppose a war hero is welcomed back into this country with cheers and parades and shouts of joy. Then less than a week later he is thrown into prison for no reason at all. Does this seem right to you?

The Jews wanted Jesus to change their world (make things better on the outside) but Jesus wanted to change their hearts (make things right on the inside). They did not understand that it is man's heart that needs to be fixed (Jeremiah 17:9). See our study, How is Your Heart?

Suppose you took a **sinner** (one separated from God) and gave him a palace to live in, a swimming pool and one billion dollars to spend on anything he wanted. Would this person still have problems? Would he still have trouble getting along with people? Would he really be happy? Suppose you took a saint (a person who has been saved and set apart for God's service) and put him in the worst section of a city in a broken down shack where rats were more numerous than people. Could this person be at peace and experience joy even in the middle of this mess? Suppose you were to put a saint in a miserable dungeon and treat him as a rotten criminal. Could this person be happy under such conditions (see Acts 16:22-25)? _____

Do you think Jesus was fooled by the excited shouts of the crowd as He entered the city? Even though the people were shouting for joy, what was Jesus doing (Luke 19:41)?

_____ The Lord knew that the people were going to reject Him (see Matthew 23:37). He knew what was in their hearts. The crowd rejoiced but the Saviour wept. The Saviour stretched forth His hands to the people of Israel to give them His very best, but because they were disobedient and rebellious they **refused**. What verse in Romans chapter 10 teaches this? Verse: _____

Let the Whole World Know!

When Jesus came into the city, He did not sneak in unnoticed. He did not enter silently by night. He did not disguise Himself. He did not try to avoid the crowds.

Read John 7:1-10 which describes another time when Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem. Did He enter openly and noisily or did He enter secretly (verse 10)?

When Jesus healed a blind man, did He want the whole world to know (Mark 8:26)? _____
 When Peter said to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ," did Jesus want the whole world to know (Mark 8:30)? _____
 When Jesus healed a deaf man, did He want the whole world to know (Mark 7:36)? _____

But when Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem in the final days before His death, He wanted the whole world to know! In fact, if people had refused to shout out, what would have happened? (See Luke 19:40.) _____

The time for Jesus to march to the cross had come, and the Lord bravely and boldly entered the city where He would soon die. Even though the people would reject Him, Jesus openly presented Himself as their King and as their Saviour. The Lord was no coward who had to act in secret.

Do we face our problems or do we run away from them? Do we try to hide from people and problems or do we trust God for the courage we need to tackle school and family and friends?

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the city was **packed with people!** The celebration of the Passover was near at hand (John 12:1) and large crowds of Jews had come to the holy city to observe this great feast or holy day. Josephus, the Jewish historian, states that during one Passover in the days of Nero (first century A.D.) 256,500 Passover lambs were sacrificed, which (if his figures are correct) would mean that over 2,700,200 (almost 3 million) Jews were in Jerusalem (WARS 6,9,3)! One lamb was sacrificed for about every 10 people. Yes, when the King of the Jews entered the city, Jerusalem was **packed with people!** The same thing was true a few days later when the true Passover Lamb was sacrificed (see 1 Corinthians 5:7). Jesus did not die in secret! The death of Christ was one of the most public events that the world has ever witnessed!

If the Lord was willing to die publicly for you, are you willing to live publicly for Him? Do any of your friends in school know that you are a Christian? Have you ever talked to your friends about your Saviour or have you been keeping your salvation a big secret? Have you ever told the people in church that you know the Lord as your Saviour, or are you keeping it a secret and letting people try to guess as to whether you are really saved? Have you ever publicly been baptized, to show others that you belong to Jesus Christ? Let us not be ashamed of our Lord (Romans 1:16).

The Royal Welcome

As the king rode on the donkey, the multitude "_____ their _____ in the way" (Matthew 21:8). Why did the people do such a thing? If the President drove down your street would you take off your coat and throw it before his car? In 2 Kings 9:13 the people took their garments and put them under Jehu and blew with the trumpets, saying, "J _____ is K _____!" Thus, in Matthew 21, the Jews by their actions were saying; "J _____ is K _____!"

The people also cut down _____ from the trees and placed them before the King as He entered (Matthew 21:8). What kind of branches were these (John 12:13)? _____ It was a custom for people in the East to welcome a King or a conqueror in such a way.

The people acted as if Jesus were really their King, but did they let Him be King? _____ Is it possible for us to say that Jesus is King and that He is Lord, and then not really do what He says (see Luke 6:46)? _____ Can Jesus help you to obey your parents? _____ Are you letting Him help you with this? _____ Can Jesus help you to be friendly to others at school? _____ Are you letting Him help you with this? _____ Can Jesus help you read your Bible and pray? _____ Are you letting Him help you with this? _____ We do not want to act as if God can help us, but then not let Him do so!

Even though the Jews welcomed the King into their city, what did they say only a few days later (John 19:15, the end of the verse)? _____

Once a Donkey; Someday a Horse

The first time the King came, He came riding on a donkey (Matthew 21:5-7 and Zechariah 9:9). When the King comes again to this earth, what will He be riding (Revelation 19:11)? _____ He came the first time to die (the cross); He will come the second time to rule and reign (the crown). **The King is coming!** When He came the first time, the Jewish people (most of them but not all) rejected Him (see John 1:11). When He comes the second time, the Jewish people will receive Him and will bless His Name (see Matthew 23:39). Will the second coming of Christ be a public event or will it be done in secret (Revelation 1:7 and Matthew 24:27)? _____

Let us not honor Christ just with our lips, but may we honor Him with our hearts and our lives also! See Mark 7:6.

“He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias (Isaiah) prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me” (Mark 7:6).