

Joke: A man with his ever-nagging wife went on vacation to Jerusalem. While they were there, his wife passed away. The undertaker told the husband, “You can have her shipped home for \$5,000, or you can bury her here, in the Holy Land, for \$150.”

The man thought about it and told the undertaker he would just have her shipped home. The undertaker asked, “Why would you spend \$5,000 to ship your wife home, when it would be wonderful to be buried here in the holy land and would only cost you \$150.”

The man replied, “Long time ago a man died here, was buried here, and three days later he rose from the dead. I just can’t take that chance.”

Today we are continuing our Easter series with The Road To Palm Sunday: Jesus Is My King!

Show Video: Palm Sunday video skitguys.com

At the end of the video, Eddie shouts, “Jesus is my king!” This statement is worthy of shouting at the top of your lungs. Amen.

The truth about the original Palm Sunday is that there was a lot of shouting going on, so much so that the religious people got put out about it.

Let’s take a look at how the gospel of John describes it:

John 12:12–16 (NIV) - The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. 13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the king of Israel!” 14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written: 15 “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.” 16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

Can you imagine the screen?

While it maybe the shortest parade in history, it was also the most important one.

The people were crazy with excitement. They were anticipating something amazing: what is it they were anticipating. . .a new king.

And we get to see that in a few different ways. . .

First of all, the palm branches. That wasn't just an idea someone had that day. Palm branches were often used to celebrate victory; in King David's time, they honored royalty.

There were also used in Leviticus during the feast of tabernacles to celebrate the provision Israel was given during their wilderness wandering.

They were even incorporated into the design of the temple.

In Revelation a multitude of people stand before the throne holding palm branches.

So, it makes perfect sense to wave the palm branches because after all they saw Jesus as a King.

The shouting of "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

That word Hosanna means save us, liberate us, and give us favor.

Its Hebraic origin, "Yasha," means to "liberate us" or "save us from battle."

We see the word used about 200 times in the Old Testament.

Here, the crowd calls on God to bring a king to save His people.

When we look at the triumphal entry of Christ, we see a crowd of people who. . .almost get it right.

They are right to celebrate Jesus as king. He is indeed going to liberate them.

However, the passage reminds us, "At first his disciples did not understand."

You see, they thought Jesus would liberate the Israelites from Rome.

But that was not God's plan. What he did, His plan, was much more significant.

He liberated God's people and us from sin and death.

In their lack of understanding of what Jesus would do, they also misunderstood what kind of king Jesus was.

You see, kings of that day were known for the fear they struck in people's hearts.

They were known for destroying anyone who might threaten them.

They were known for the number of enemies they had slain.

There's a picture of that found in the Old Testament in 1 Samuel 18. . .

1 Samuel 18:7 (NIV) - As they danced, they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands."

But that is not the kind of king Jesus is.

Revelation tells us Jesus is the "King of kings."

In other words, there is no king above him.

In all actuality, we cannot fully grasp what King Jesus is like, but looking closer at some of the words he spoke during that original holy week, we can better understand what kind of king Jesus is.

When you picture a king riding into town, what comes to mind?

More than likely, you envision someone in an ornate carriage, possibly decorated and painted with gold.

You may envision a king riding on a mighty horse wearing his battle gear and crown as the horse seems to march down the street as if they, too, were noble.

But that is not King Jesus. Scripture tells us, “Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it.” A donkey.

Have you ever seen someone ride a donkey? It doesn’t say “majestic,” “cool,” or “mighty.” It is hard to ride a donkey and look noble and mighty.

But make no mistake: Jesus is mighty; he is the most noble. And Jesus, He is worthy of all praise and honor and glory.

And King Jesus projected humility on that day. You see, Jesus valued humility over every other characteristic someone can display.

Jesus Is A Humble King.

In fact, on the last night he was with his followers, Jesus said these words:

Luke 22:27 (NIV) - For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

What a picture of humility. Jesus always deserves to be at the head of the table. Yet he chose to serve his disciples as an act of humility.

Humility is not commonly associated with strength in the world's view, but that doesn't mean it's a weakness.

Our culture’s emphasis on pride, self-honor, and fame leads to the misconception of humility as a weakness.

The root of pride, self-honor, and seeking fame is a lack of truly knowing who you are.

Jesus did not have this problem. He was well aware of who he was. He knew that at any point, he could call down angels, put people in their place, and demand loyalty from others.

But he didn't. . .and he doesn't.

Jesus is a humble king. Jesus Is A King Of Peace

And if you're anything like me, you want to say that Jesus is a "peaceful king." That just rolls off the tongue easier. It sounds better than "Jesus is a king of peace."

But there is a difference from being peaceful and being a peaceful king.

Think about it, He overturned the tables in the temple and I don't think others found that too peaceful.

And He would tell his followers,

Matthew 10:35–36 (NIV) - For I have come to turn " 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law — 36 a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'

Now let me pause here to say this about that Scripture. Because if we are not careful that can be taken way out of context. This scripture in Matthew is not advocating for people to just walk in division. As a matter of fact Matthew will also write about blessed are the peacemakers.

What this scripture is highlighting is the reality that His message and mission can create division even among those close to us.

The gospel calls for a radical allegiance to Jesus which can sometimes cause conflict with those that don't share the same belief system.

So, Jesus is not advocating for conflict or division, as a matter of fact He calls us to be ministers of reconciliation. Instead, He is acknowledging that following Him may lead to difficult decisions which could impact even close relationships.

So, the term King Of Peace is much more appropriate than peaceful King.

And just as it is easy to see Jesus' humility as weakness, it is easy to see his peace as softness.

But don't make that mistake. Jesus is anything but soft. He was not soft with the religious leaders or the political leaders in the gospels. He was not soft with his disciples at times.

Just ask Peter about the time Jesus called him "Satan."

However, Jesus is a king who provides peace to his followers.

Again, during that very first holy week, on his last night with his disciples, Jesus told them:

John 14:27 (NIV) - Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Kings did not say, "I give you." Kings said, "You give me," as they took taxes, land, and anything else they wanted from the people.

Kings did not say, "Do not be afraid." Kings used fear as a tool to get their subjects to obey them.

But King Jesus says, "I give you peace." He even helps us understand that the peace he gives is of ultimate value. His peace cannot be found in this world. His peace is not circumstantial; it is an internal and eternal peace.

It's a peace because of the circumstances it's a peace even in the circumstances.

The apostle Paul would tell us this. . .

Philippians 4:6–7 (NLT) - Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.
7 Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Or as another translation puts it Jesus gives peace that "passes all understanding."

In a world that has always and is always lacking peace, we can hold fast to the fact that Jesus is a king of peace.

Not only is Jesus a humble King , and A King of peace, but Jesus Is also A Compassionate King

Have you ever considered the compassion of Jesus? In our "selfie-focused society," compassion isn't something we tend to see these days.

But how it is so needed. Amen!

Compassion is the act of feeling or showing sympathy and concern for others.

Jesus didn't just show compassion; he was filled with compassion.

In the gospel of Luke's account of the triumphal entry, we read these words:

Luke 19:41–42 (NIV) - As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it 42 and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.

Do not overlook these words, "He wept." The Greek word used there is, "klaíō," pronounced "klah'-yo". It means "weep aloud, expressing uncontainable, audible grief."

Don't miss that. We do not generally draw attention to this when we think about or teach about Palm Sunday.

Jesus has just finished riding in the “King Jesus” parade. It seems as if everyone but the religious leaders have joined Team Jesus. And instead of basking in the excitement, Jesus is weeping aloud, expressing uncontrollable, audible grief.

Why? He understands what everyone else does not understand.

Yes, he is a king. . .the King of Kings actually.

However, this parade, which looks like a victory celebration, is actually a king riding into battle. He knows that in less than a week, most of these people will turn on him. He knows that only one of those men called disciples will be at the foot of the cross as he is dying for them. He knows that the victory of war will come, but only after what seems like defeat to everyone else.

So he weeps. For himself? That is not what the scriptures tell us. It says, “He wept over it.” That is, he wept over Jerusalem. The capital city of God’s people. He weeps because they do not know what will bring them peace.

He weeps because they are confused as to what is about to happen.

I just have to believe that Jesus’ tears mingle with ours even today.

Because we, too, are confused most days as to what is happening.

We get caught up in the hype of what is important and what is not. Jesus is not a king who sits back and watches us with a stoic look. No, Jesus is a compassionate king.

In This World, Not Of This World

Jesus would clarify his kingship and kingdom as he spoke with Pilate right before heading to the cross to battle for our souls.

We read this in John’s gospel. . .

John 18:33–37 (NIV) - Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” 34 “Is that your own idea,” Jesus asked, “or did others talk to you about me?” 35 “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?” 36 Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.” 37 “You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

I wonder if we might listen to the words of Jesus today and take them to heart. We can stand on the edge of a cliff and shout, “Jesus is my king!” yet we still must answer the question Jesus asked Pilate, “Is that your own idea? Or did others talk to you about me?”

In other words, “Am I your king, or are you just saying that because someone else told you to?”

If Jesus is my king, then I am his subject. That is, I listen to him, I follow him, and I trust him. Because His sheep hear His voice.

Over the centuries, much has been done in the name of King Jesus, both good and bad. There have always been those who seek to make the Kingdom of Jesus about this world.

However, Jesus literally said to Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world.” He goes on to say, “My kingdom is from another place.” Jesus did not come to establish an earthly kingdom.

The liberation he was bringing was not from Rome but for our souls.

Isaiah 66:1 (NIV) - This is what the Lord says: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. . .

The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world.

However, it is in this world and as followers of Jesus, we are citizens of heaven, living on earth.

And Jesus would pray this for his followers the night before he went to the cross:

John 17:14–15 (NIV) - I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one

Did you catch that? Jesus says we are not of this world. Why? Because we are citizens of heaven. We are subjects to King Jesus.

If we are not careful, we will stop there and do everything we can to escape the world. But don't miss what else Jesus prayed, "My prayer is not that you take them out of this world."

He is not calling us out of the world. He is calling us to be in this world but not of this world. And He is asking the Father to protect us from the evil one so that we can serve him faithfully while we are in this world.

The apostle Paul would write,

2 Corinthians 5:20–21,(NLT) - So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin,* so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

We are Christ's ambassadors.

We get to spend our lives representing King Jesus in this world. And what does an ambassador do? They don't fight, they don't force people to live like them, and they don't condemn people who have a different citizenship than them.

As ambassadors of King Jesus, we have the duty and opportunity to put him on display by choosing to live like him as best we can. We choose to be the humble people of the world looking for an opportunity to serve rather than being served. Looking for opportunities to help others encounter the King of kings. So that they too can taste and see that the Lord is good.

We choose to be the peace givers of the world, looking for unity rather than demanding our way. We choose to be the most compassionate people, showing sympathy and concern for others.

If you want others to know that Jesus is your king, there is no need to find a cliff to shout from. Choosing to live out humility, with love, peace and compassion will be heard much louder.

So church go be the light and shine. Help others encounter Jesus not by your shout but by the way you live life.

Pray

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