

Read: Matthew 21:1-11

Welcome the King!

Matthew 21:7-9

The disciples brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What does your family do to welcome someone to your house? You probably clean the house. You put your toys away. You vacuum and sweep and dust and mop. You think of fun activities to do with them. You plan special foods to cook and eat with them. Why do you do all of that? Because you love them, and you are happy they are coming to visit you.

On one special day—Palm Sunday—the people of Jerusalem welcomed Jesus to their city. As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, the people put palm branches and their coats on the road in front of him. It was like rolling out the red carpet for him! They shouted out, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Matthew 21:9).

Why did they do all that? Because they recognized who Jesus is. He wasn't just a nice relative visiting for the weekend. Jesus is the Messiah. The Savior. Those special words they shouted—“Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”—those special words showed that the people understood what Jesus was coming to do: Save them!

We have a lot of needs in life. We need food. We need clothes. We need a house or apartment. We need a family and neighbors and friends and teachers. But the Bible teaches us that we need something even more than all of those things. We need someone to save us. We need someone to take our sins away. That's exactly what Jesus came to do. To save us!

Today is the beginning of a very special week. Palm Sunday is the first day of Holy Week. While we certainly talk and think about Jesus all year round, Holy Week is a time to especially focus on how Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead to save us. Just like the people of Jerusalem, we want to welcome our King! Here's a start: How about you memorize the words the people shouted on Palm Sunday and say them when you say your prayers this week? “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” Let's welcome our King!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- What did the people put on the road in front of Jesus?
- What did the people say to welcome Jesus to Jerusalem?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Why do you think Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey?
- Look up what the word “Hosanna” means. Why is it a good word for people to say to Jesus?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Compare what the crowds in Jerusalem shouted to Jesus on Palm Sunday with what the crowds in Jerusalem shouted to Pontius Pilate on Good Friday (John 19:15). Why was there such a difference?
- Sometimes people say that Jesus came to be our good example. Why is it better to say that Jesus came to be our Savior?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for coming to save us. As the people of Jerusalem welcomed you on Palm Sunday, help us to always welcome you as our Savior. Amen.