

Read: Mark 11:1-10

Jesus, Save Us!

Mark 11:1-10

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"

They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,

"Hosanna!"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

"Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

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

About a week before Jesus was put to death on the cross, he entered the city of Jerusalem in a most interesting way. He rode on the back of a donkey. But not only did he enter in an interesting way, the people who welcomed him said a most interesting thing. "Hosanna," they said, which in their language meant, "Save us."

By saying "Hosanna," the people were counting on Jesus to be the one that God had long promised would come to the world and put an end to the power and rule of sin and death. They were hoping for nothing less than an entirely new world. They made this clear by connecting the arrival of Jesus with the arrival of the kingdom of David.

David was an ancient king in the Old Testament whose reign was a glorious one. King David was a picture and promise of the even greater king who would one day come to rule not just a little piece of land, but the entire world forever. Jesus was called the "Son of David" because he was an actual descendant of David and because he would complete God's promises to David. Jesus was the great king who would save the whole world.

And that's what Jesus did. He answered the cry, "Hosanna! Save us!" by not only dying on the cross for the sins of the world, but also by rising again to bring the promise of new life to all who believe in him. That's why "Hosanna! Save us!" is something good to cry out before Christmas. We're crying out to the Lord who has died and risen again, and we know our cry will not go unanswered. In Jesus we have God's answer, "Yes, I will save you. I have saved you."

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 shout as Jesus came into the city?
- What kind of animal did Jesus ride as he came into the city?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What does the word "Hosanna" mean?
- When the people said "Hosanna," what were they saying about who they thought Jesus was?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- The people didn't just invent their opinion of Jesus. How does what they said connect their understanding to God's written promises from the past?
- If Jesus had died but not risen again, he could not have been the promised Savior. Why is his resurrection so important?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, together with the people outside of Jerusalem we cry out to you, "Hosanna! Save us!" You are the king we've been waiting for—a king who rules by dying, rising, and saving. Bless us as we put our trust in you. Amen.