

Hope in Times of Crisis: sermon delivered on April 5, 2020

by senior pastor **Dr. Josh Moody**

Bible text explored: John 12:12–19

¹²The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna!^[a] Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” ¹⁴And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

¹⁵“Fear not, daughter of Zion;
behold, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey’s colt!” ^[b]

¹⁶His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. ¹⁷The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. ¹⁹So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.”

^[a]A Hebrew expression meaning “Save!” which became an exclamation of praise. ^[b]Zechariah 9:9

Review and application:

1. Why was a people occupied by the Romans converging on Jerusalem this week? (See *John 12:1*.)

While they longed for a Passover-like deliverance from oppression, what potent symbol of that deliverance may they have overlooked? (See *Exodus 12:3, 6-7.12-13*.)

2. How (*verses 14-15*) did the surprising mount on which Jesus made his entry into the city affirm his divine credentials? (See *Zechariah 9:9-11*.)

But how did it also signal that his mission was neither military nor political?

Responses of groups watching Jesus’ entry—Pharisees, disciples, the crowd—were inverted from what one would expect.

3. What (*verses 17-18*) motivated the crowd to arrive waving palm-frond victory symbols? On what (*verse 13*) was the crowd’s chant based? (See *Psalms 118:25-26*.)

4. At this beginning of Passion Week, why (*verse 16*) had Jesus’ own disciples not yet grasped its significance?

5. What (*verse 19*) was behind the hostility of the Pharisees? (See also *John 11:47-48*.)

6. The shift in one week of much of the crowd’s original enthusiasm is conveyed in “My Song Is Love Unknown” written by 17th century author Samuel Crossman:

*Sometimes they strew his way, and his sweet praises sing,
resounding all the day hosannas to their King.*

*Then “Crucify!” is all their breath,
and for his death they thirst and cry.*

What could explain this abrupt change? (See *Matthew 27:20-22*.)

7. Pastor Josh quoted a response to an earlier pandemic by another 17th century Puritan, Samuel Crossman:

“These things . . . are but momentary . . . The plague has swept away a great many . . . There is no resting in the things of this world. Yet the Lord has made with me an everlasting covenant. I find disorder in my heart and in my family. But the everlasting covenant is ordered in all things, and it is *sure*.”

8. How (*Revelation 7:9-10*) did the triumphal entry preview a greater, lasting celebration?