CONVERSATION GUIDE:

What specific practices do you have that help you remember God’s faithfulness?

The triumphal entry is recorded in all four of the gospels. While each describes the same story, each provides unique details that, taken together, give us a complete picture of Jesus entering Jerusalem and God’s faithfulness to his messianic plan.


Luke’s account of Jesus’ passion highlights Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem and his teaching there before his arrest. He stresses Jesus’ approach to Jerusalem and his lamentation over it. Luke’s version of the story has the effect of eliminating the triumphant spirit of Jesus’ coming and replacing it with sadness over Jesus’ rejection.

DISCUSS

1. After reading the story of the triumphal entry, what stands out to you? What would it have been like to witness this in person?

2. Why was it important for Jesus to enter Jerusalem like this? What was the Pharisees’ response?


4. In this passage, we see Jesus in various aspects of his messianic role. In a descriptive word or phrase, what concern of Jesus’ do you see as he approaches Jerusalem?

Until now, Jesus typically discouraged people from proclaiming that he was the Messiah. Now he not only allows people to identify him as Messiah but forms a plan (the colt) to encourage them to do so. The time of his official presentation to Israel as her Messiah has come.

Luke notes that the King rather than the kingdom (Mark 11:10) is the focus of the disciples’ praise. The kingdom was not yet to appear, but the King was at hand.

The cry Hosanna (lit. “give salvation now!”) was known by every Jew because of its occurrence in Psalm 118:25, for it is part of the Hallel (Psalms 113-118). The Hallel is sung each morning by the temple choir during the Feast of Tabernacles and is associated with this period of the Feast of Dedication and with the Passover.

Some of the Pharisees did not like the disciples using messianic terminology of Jesus and suggesting that he fulfilled messianic prophecy. They asked Jesus to silence them.

However, Jesus refused to silence the disciples. They spoke the truth. Jesus answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.” The stones crying out stress the appropriateness of the disciples crying out. If the disciples kept silent, the stones would need to declare who Jesus was instead of them. This verse occurs only in Luke’s Gospel, and its clear claim shows the blatant rejection by Israel’s leaders in the face of indisputable evidence that Jesus is the Messiah.

All history had pointed toward this single, spectacular event when the Messiah publicly presented himself to the nation, and God desired him to be acknowledged.

APPLY

1. In this panoramic view of Jesus as Messiah, is there anything you find hard to understand about him?

2. Paul wrote, “For I passed on to you as most important what I also received.” (1 Cor. 15:3) How will you “pass on” the gospel to someone this week? Is there someone you can invite to church on Easter? What might happen if he/she believes in Jesus?

The Unexpected King: Zechariah 9 & Luke 19

Palm Sunday, March 20, 2016

ADDITIONAL NOTES THIS WEEK:

For thousands of years, the Jewish people waited for a Messiah. They were expecting a great military leader, one who would overthrow all of their enemies and restore Israel to its former greatness and glory. What they had not expected was that their King would appear as a carpenter. They never expected that he would possess no weapons, no army and political power. Therefore, they refused to believe that Jesus was the Messiah. Time and again he revealed himself to them, and time and again, they rejected him.

"He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him." (John 1:11)

In every gospel account, the triumphal entry reminds us that God often fulfills his promises in ways we don’t expect: here was Israel’s promised king, but riding on a donkey, not the noble warhorse one might expect. He was a king, but not the one Jerusalem thought it needed - instead of liberating them from Roman oppression through military might, Jesus intended to liberate his people from the oppression of sin. God fulfilled his promise but confounded human assumptions about how he would do so – this King would die.

Jesus’ triumphal entry made abundantly clear Jesus’ claim to be the promised Messiah and Savior. The seemingly odd choice of a donkey was a specific fulfillment of a prophecy in the Old Testament book of Zechariah:

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!  
Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!  
See, your king comes to you,  
righteous and victorious,  
lowly and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

As we approach Easter, it is important to remember that Jesus had an absurd claim: He is God. Jesus claimed divinity. He gave eternal life to those who came to him (John 5:21). He said that to know him was to know God (John 8:19). Jesus claimed titles exclusive to God (John 8:56-59). He claimed he and the father were one (John 10:30).

Jesus faithfully represented God, the one who sent him, and his hour has come.

READ of Jesus’ triumphal entry in all four gospels:

Matthew 21:1-11  
Mark 11:1-11  
Luke 19:28-44  
John 12:12-19

PRAY

For your Heart: Ask the Holy Spirit to cultivate a greater sense of astonishment at the truth of Jesus as King, over death and in your life.

For our Church: Pray for the Holy Spirit to move in our people, to increase our joy and participation.

For our City: Pray that the Lord will raise up gospel-centered churches in every neighborhood of our city.