

CHAPTER 10

The Royal Entry of Christ

Our Lord's final week before the cross was marked by sharp contrasts. The multitudes cried saying, "Hosanna Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Then only a few days later they cried, "Crucify Him!" The city of Jerusalem **rejoiced** at the Lord's triumphal entry; soon thereafter Christ **wept** over the city (Luke 19:41). The people eagerly looked for the **Crown** but failed to see their need for the **Cross**. They wanted a King who would deliver them from the domination of the Romans, but they rejected a Saviour who would deliver them from the domination of sin. They cried for political freedom, but they cared little that they were in bondage to sin (John 8:33). They looked for a miracle-performing King (Luke 19:37) who could put food in their stomachs (John 6:26), but refused His personal rule over their lives.

People cried "HOSANNA" (Matthew 21:9), a Hebrew or Aramaic expression which means "SAVE NOW" (Psalm 118:25-26), but we must ask, What did they want to be saved **from**? From the Romans? From political oppression? From sin and death? Does a person want political deliverance, financial deliverance, physical deliverance or spiritual deliverance? What kind of deliverance is most important? Consider a soldier on the battlefield with bombs and bullets and hand grenades flying over his head. In desperation he cries out, "God, save me!" What does he want to be saved from? Consider a hospital patient about to undergo open heart surgery. Just as they are about to put him to sleep he cries, "Lord, please save me!" Do you think this person was concerned about being saved from the wrath of a holy God, or was he more afraid of the surgeon's knife? According to Matthew 10:28, what should we be more afraid of?

_____ What kind of deliverance do you think the Jews wanted in Matthew 21?

The Detailed Preparation

Read Matthew 21:1-3. Did the Lord know exactly what He wanted? _____ Did He give explicit and detailed instructions? _____ Do you get the impression that a plan is being carefully carried out according to God's perfect schedule? _____ Why did the Lord need these two animals (Matthew 21:3) and why was all this done (Matthew 21:4-5)?

It was absolutely necessary for Christ to enter the city of Jerusalem on a donkey because hundreds of years earlier Zechariah had predicted this very thing. Where is this important prophecy about the Messiah found? Zechariah 9, verse _____. In this verse, the people are told to rejoice and shout because "thy _____ unto thee." Thus, in Matthew 21 we are reading about a very unique and special day when **Christ the King officially came to Jerusalem**. That Christ recognized the full significance of this day is seen in Luke 19:42,44.

Matthew was careful to quote only Zechariah 9:9 (see Matthew 21:5) and **not** verse 10 which describes the Messiah's peaceful kingdom and universal rule. The **King** had arrived, but He did not occupy the King's throne. Will God someday fulfill the prophecy found in Zechariah 9:10? _____ When? _____ When the Lord Jesus presented Himself as King the first time, He came as One who was M _____ (Matthew 21:5) and

L _____ (Zech. 9:9). How will the King come the second time (Matthew 24:30)?
 _____ If Zechariah 9:9 was exactly fulfilled
 in every detail, what does that tell us about the fulfillment of Matthew 24:30?

The Public Presentation

As you read Matthew chapter 21, you can't help but be impressed with the **public nature** of this event. Jesus came **boldly, noisily** and **defiantly** (John 11:57--there was a price on His head!) into the city. As a result, " _____ was moved" (Matthew 21:10). The Lord wanted to attract attention to Himself! The time had come!

This public policy was completely unlike the tenor of our Lord's ministry prior to this time. Previously Jesus was very careful to avoid publicity and at times He would shy away from crowds (especially if they tried to make Him King--John 6:15). Compare Matthew 8:4; 17:9; Mark 7:36; 8:26; Luke 4:34-35; etc. When Peter and the other disciples understood that Jesus was the **Christ** (God's anointed KING), did the Lord tell them to announce this fact to everyone they would meet (Matthew 16:20)? _____ But, in Matthew 21, they were told to "hush" no longer! Indeed, our Lord's public policy is illustrated quite clearly in Luke 19:37-40. In verse 38, what great title did the people give to Jesus? _____ The protest of the Pharisees is seen in verse 39. Some of these leaders said, "Master, rebuke thy disciples." Perhaps these jealous and sharp-eyed religious leaders of Israel knew that on former occasions the Lord had strictly enjoined silence upon His disciples with reference to who He was. But **now**, as He rides into the city, they hear the shouts of the people acclaiming Him openly as the "**King**." Yet no rebuke came forth from the lips of Jesus! In fact, if the disciples should keep quiet, who would publicize and advertise the coming of the King (Luke 19:40)? _____

Why did Jesus want everyone to know that Israel's Messiah-King was entering the city? One important reason is as follows: In Acts 2:22-24,36; 3:13-15; 4:10 (after the death and resurrection), Peter preached to the Jewish people and accused them of murdering the Messiah. Because of the **public** entry of Christ into Jerusalem, no Jew would be able to say, "But I never knew that Jesus of Nazareth claimed to be Israel's Messiah." No, Jesus came into the city in such a way that the multitudes acclaimed Him as King. It was an event so public that no one could miss it!

When the Lord rode into the city, there were not just a few people along the side of the road. Matthew tells us there was "a _____" (21:8). Why were there so many people present on this occasion? Consider the following factors:

1) In Luke 10:1 we learn that Jesus sent _____ of His disciples (35 teams) into those cities where He Himself would be going. What was the message these men proclaimed (Luke 10:9)? _____ [The **King** is coming! The **Kingdom** is so near it is almost here!] As a result of this mission (followed up by a personal visit by the Lord Himself), many knew about Jesus and were anticipating the kingdom of God.

2) Read John 12:9-18. What great miracle had Jesus recently performed? _____ Many people " _____ that He had done this _____" (John 12:18) and the news of this great event had spread far and near.

3) The celebration of the P_____ was near at hand (John 12:1), and large crowds of Jews had come to the holy city to observe this great feast. Josephus, the Jewish historian, states that during one Passover in the days of Nero (first century A.D.) 256,500 Passover lambs were sacrificed, which (if his figures are correct) would mean that over 2,700,200 (almost 3 million) Jews were in Jerusalem (*Wars* 6,9,3)! One lamb was sacrificed for about every ten people.

When the King of the Jews entered the capital city, Jerusalem was **packed to capacity!** The same thing was true a few days later when the true _____ lamb was sacrificed (1 Corinthians 5:7).

The Stirring Acclamation

As the King rode on the donkey, the multitude "_____ their _____ in the way" (Matthew 21:8). Why did the people do such a thing? In 2 Kings 9:13 the people took their garments and put them under Jehu and blew with the trumpets, saying, "J_____ is K_____." Thus, in Matthew 21, the Jews by their actions were saying, "J_____ is K_____!"

The people also cut down _____ from the trees and placed them before the King as He entered (Matthew 21:8). What kind of branches were these (John 12:13)?

_____ According to Alfred Edersheim (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*), it was customary for people in the East to welcome a King, a conqueror, or a deliverer in such a way.

Not only did the multitudes acknowledge Him as King by their actions, but also by their words! What title did the people give to Jesus in Matthew 21:9? The S_____ (Such a title is appropriate only for the Messiah-King. The Jews knew that their promised King would be a descendant of David. Compare Matthew 12:23; 22:41-42; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; etc.) What did the people call Jesus in Luke 19:38? the K_____ What did they call Him in John 12:13? The K_____

What were the words that the crowd shouted, as recorded in all four of the gospel records (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9; Luke 19:38; John 12:13)?

These words are taken from Psalm 118:25-26 ("Save now" = **Hosanna**). This was a very familiar passage to the Jewish people. During the Passover season the Jews would recite and chant Psalms 113-118 (this group of Psalms was called the **Hallel**). Every Israelite knew these words by heart, and the Jews recognized Psalm 118 as one of the greatest of all the Messianic Psalms. As Jesus entered the city, they were essentially saying to Him, "**You are the One that this Psalm is speaking of! You are the Messiah-King who is coming in the Name of the Lord!**"

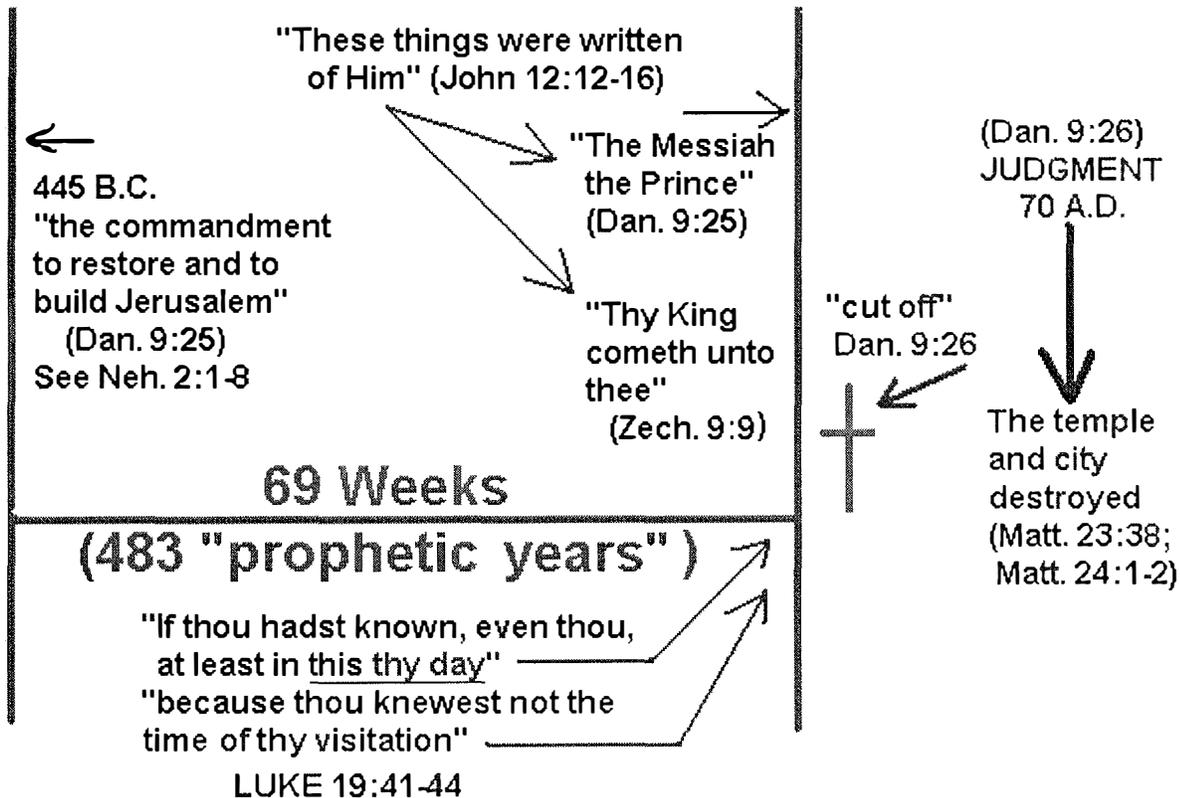
This Psalm was also very much a part of our Lord's thinking during the final days before the cross. Read Matthew 21:42 where Jesus tells of His terrible rejection by the Jewish leaders. What verse was Jesus quoting? _____ Jesus quoted from this Psalm once again in Matthew 23:37-39. When Jesus rode into the city the people acclaimed Him with their lips (compare Matthew 15:8). There is coming a future day when they will say these words from the heart (Matthew 23:39). Then shall the great King come to His people, to deliver them not only politically but spiritually (Romans 11:26)!

The Prophetic Consummation

Zechariah was not the only prophet who spoke about the coming of Israel's Messiah-King. The prophet Daniel also wrote about the coming of M_____ the P_____ (Daniel 9:25). According to Daniel 9:25, this great event (the coming of Messiah the Prince) marks the **end** (consummation) of a period of 69 (7 + 62) weeks (each "week" or "heptad" being equal to seven years with each "prophetic" year containing 360 days--compare Revelation 12:6; 11:3; 11:2; 13:5 and Daniel 9:27). **After** this period of 69 weeks (483 "prophetic" years), what important event would take place according to Daniel 9:26?

_____ Following this event the Romans would come and destroy "the _____ and the _____" (Daniel 9:26; Luke 19:41-44).

This can be illustrated by the following chart:



The royal entry of Christ was an event that God had clearly marked on His calendar, and when Christ rode into the city He was not a day early or a day late! The second coming of Christ is another event which is clearly marked on God's calendar. The Father, though, has not showed His date book to us (Matthew 24:36)! Yet we can be sure that everything is taking place according to His schedule!

The Millennial Expectation

Though the King was rejected and crucified (and "cut off") following His royal entry, He still gave the people of Israel a foretaste of what the kingdom would be like. Consider the following facts:

1. **The Messianic King was personally present in His own temple (compare Matthew 21:12,23 with Malachi 3:1).**
2. **The Greedy Ones were cast out (compare Matthew 21:12-13 with Ezekiel 34:1-10).**
3. **The Word of the Lord was going forth in instruction from Jerusalem (compare Luke 19:47 with Isaiah 2:2-3).**
4. **The Healing Hand of the King was upon all those who were suffering physical affliction (compare Matthew 21:14 with Isaiah 35:4-6).**

Such a foretaste should make the believer long for the day when Christ shall truly be on His throne in Jerusalem. Just as Christ came on the donkey the first time (that's **history**, the Scriptures **have been fulfilled**--Matthew 21:7), so He will come on the horse the second time (that's **prophecy**, the Scriptures **must be fulfilled**--Revelation 19:11) to descend to earth and establish His millennial kingdom. What a certain and blessed expectation! ***THE KING IS COMING!***

The Sorrowful Lamentation

When the King came near to Jerusalem, He beheld the city, and _____ over it (Luke 19:41). The crowds rejoiced, but the Saviour wept because He knew that within a short time the acclamation of the fickle multitude would be turned into a savage demand for His death.

Our Lord's **lament** (a strong expression of grief and sorrow) over the city of Jerusalem is recorded in Matthew 23:37. What would the Lord have done for the Jewish people if they had only let Him? _____

What three words in this verse show Israel's terrible refusal and unwillingness to let God do His gracious work? _____ Since they refused God's blessing, what must God do (Matthew 23:38; 24:1-2)?

(**Note:** This terrible destruction of Jerusalem was fulfilled in 70 A. D. by the Romans under General Titus.)

All that God would do, if His people would only let Him! The Lord stretched forth His hands to Israel to give them **His very best**, but because they were disobedient and rebellious they **refused** (what verse in Romans chapter 10 teaches this? _____). In 2 Chronicles 36:15, what did the LORD God do for His people?

_____ Why did He do this?
 _____ What did the people do
 (36:16)? _____ Since they refused God's
 message and God's mercy, how did God have to deal with them?

In Psalm 81:10, what promise did God give? _____ What was

the only thing Israel had to do (81:10)? _____
 (Note: Just think of baby birds being fed by mother bird!) How did Israel respond to God's gracious promise and provision (Psalm 81:11)?

_____ What verse shows God's sorrowful lament over His people? _____

What would God have done for them if they had only obeyed Him (Psalm 81:14-16)?

What did God do as a result of their stubborn rebellion (81:12)?

In Jeremiah 6:16 what does God promise His people?

_____ What did the people say?
 _____ Compare verse 17. What then must God do (6:19)?

_____ What did God promise in Isaiah 30:15?

_____ What three words show the people's tragic rejection of God's gracious offer? _____

In all these passages we have seen that God is very **willing**! The question is: **Are you???** Christ Jesus comes to each person, **willing** to be King of his life! Think of all that Christ would do in that person's life if he would only let Him rule and reign! Are you **willing** to let Him be your Saviour, Master and King? Or, will you **refuse** and cause the Lord to lament over you and say, "All that I would have done in (write your own name) _____'s life, but he/she **would not** (was not willing, refused His Lordship and Kingship)." Please, don't rob yourself of all that God is, and all that God has for you!

***"Living for Jesus a life that is true,
 Striving to please Him in all that I do;
 Yielding allegiance, glad-hearted and free,
 This is the pathway of blessing for me.***

***O Jesus, Lord and Saviour,
 I give myself to Thee,
 For Thou, in Thy atonement,
 Didst give Thyself for me;
 I Own no other Master,
 My heart shall be Thy throne;
 My life I give, hence forth to Live,
 Christ, for Thee alone."***

-Thomas O. Chisholm

“HOSANNA”

"Save Now!"

A literal translation of the word HOSANNA would give us a cry of supplication, "Oh, save," or "save now!" Through the years the word hosanna changed from a supplication to acclamation. It became a cry of exultation over deliverance already afforded. It is the word which is found in Psalm 118:25--"**SAVE NOW**, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity." Verse 26 goes on to say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord" (compare Matthew 21:9 and 23:39). Many Israelites knew Psalm 118 by memory and it was often sung at holiday meals. The Psalm clearly speaks of God's Messiah as can be seen by comparing verses 22-23 with Acts 4:10-12.

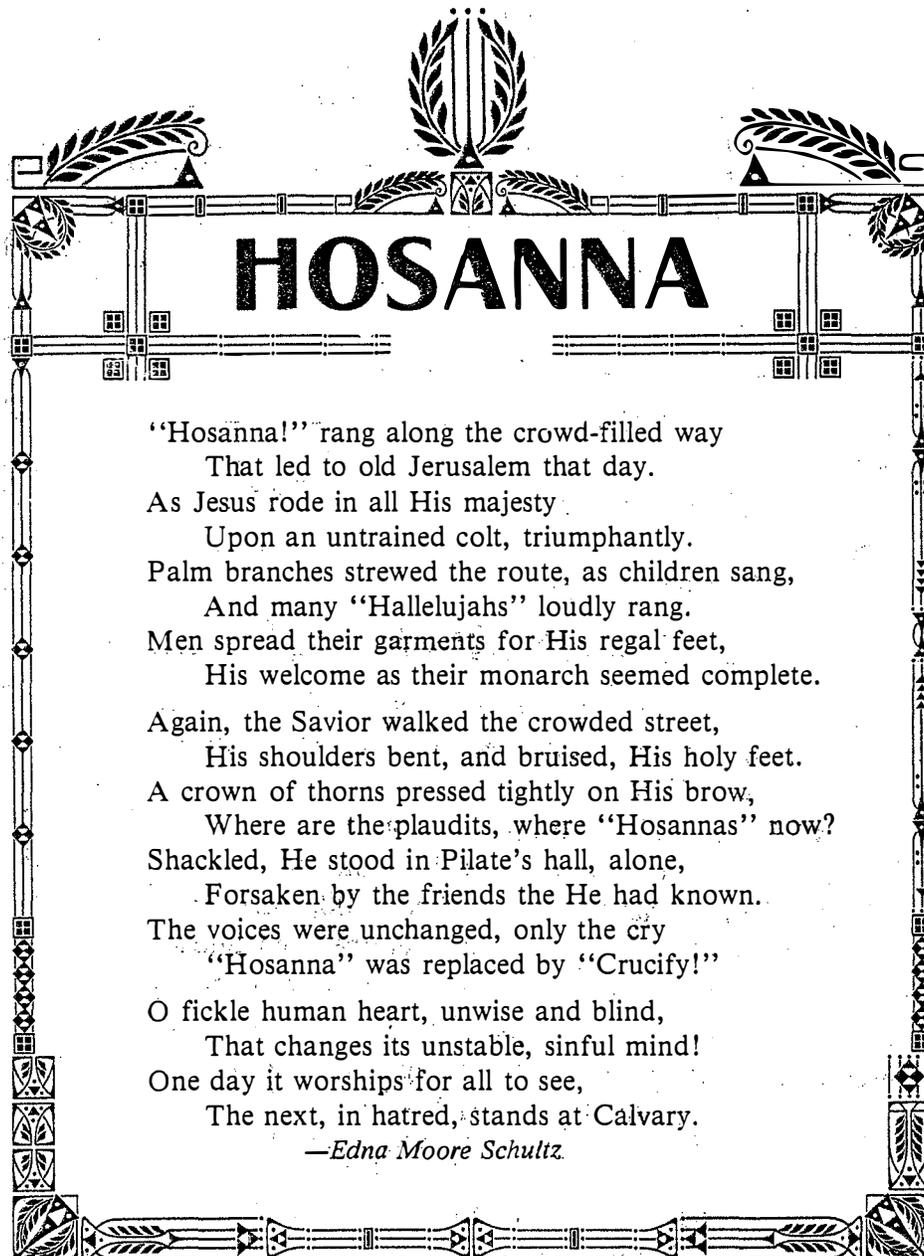
Thus the word HOSANNA was closely associated with the national hope of Israel, and was used often in the special observance of great occasions in Israel's history. It was used repeatedly in the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles and it was here that the use of palm branches was associated with it. "And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days" (Lev. 23:40). This, then, is the background of the shouts of "HOSANNA" which rang through the streets of Jerusalem as Jesus entered on that first Palm Sunday.

LORD, SAVE ME NOW!

In Matthew 21:9 the Jews cried "HOSANNA" (SAVE NOW!). When people cry out for salvation we must always ask, What do they want to be saved from? from the Romans? from political oppression? from sin and eternal death? What kind of deliverance do they want--political, financial, physical or spiritual? Consider a soldier on the battlefield with bombs and bullets and hand grenades falling and exploding everywhere. In desperation he cries out, "God, save me!" Does he wish to be saved from sin or saved from the bullets? Consider a hospital patient about to undergo open heart surgery. Just as they are about to put him asleep he cries, "Lord, please save me." Is this person concerned about being saved from the wrath of a holy God or is he merely crying for deliverance from a difficult physical operation? Compare Matthew 10:28.

The Lord Jesus, who heard these cries of "Hosanna," did not save the Jews politically. In fact, He allowed the Romans to destroy their city in 70 A.D. (Matthew 23:38). There is coming a brighter day, however, when the Jews will sound forth the true "Hosanna" and will cry out for spiritual deliverance (Matthew 23:39). It is then that "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26), not just from Gentile oppression, but from sin (Rom. 11:27).

Today God's free and full salvation is offered to every man and woman, boy and girl: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord [for spiritual deliverance] shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). Have you cried "HOSANNA" in this way?



"Hosanna!" rang along the crowd-filled way
 That led to old Jerusalem that day.
 As Jesus rode in all His majesty
 Upon an untrained colt, triumphantly.
 Palm branches strewed the route, as children sang,
 And many "Hallelujahs" loudly rang.
 Men spread their garments for His regal feet,
 His welcome as their monarch seemed complete.
 Again, the Savior walked the crowded street,
 His shoulders bent, and bruised, His holy feet.
 A crown of thorns pressed tightly on His brow,
 Where are the plaudits, where "Hosannas" now?
 Shackled, He stood in Pilate's hall, alone,
 Forsaken by the friends the He had known.
 The voices were unchanged, only the cry
 "Hosanna" was replaced by "Crucify!"
 O fickle human heart, unwise and blind,
 That changes its unstable, sinful mind!
 One day it worships for all to see,
 The next, in hatred, stands at Calvary.

—Edna Moore Schultz.