

Welcoming the King!



The Palm Sunday story is found in four places in the Word:
Matthew 21:1-11 Mark 11:1-10 Luke 19:28-40 John 2:12-15

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Welcoming the King



Long ago, the people of Jerusalem welcomed the Lord with palm branches as He rode into the city on a donkey's colt. That is why **we call the Sunday before Easter "Palm Sunday."**

The people didn't plan or expect anything exciting to happen. **At first, Palm Sunday seemed like any other Sunday in Jerusalem.**

People from all over the land of Israel had gathered in the city of Jerusalem for the Passover feast. **Suddenly, the news spread that the Lord was coming toward Jerusalem with His twelve disciples.**

People were excited about this, because they had heard about the Lord's miracles and some had even seen Him do miracles! Many had heard His teachings. The prophets had said there would be a new king in Israel. Could the Lord be this king?

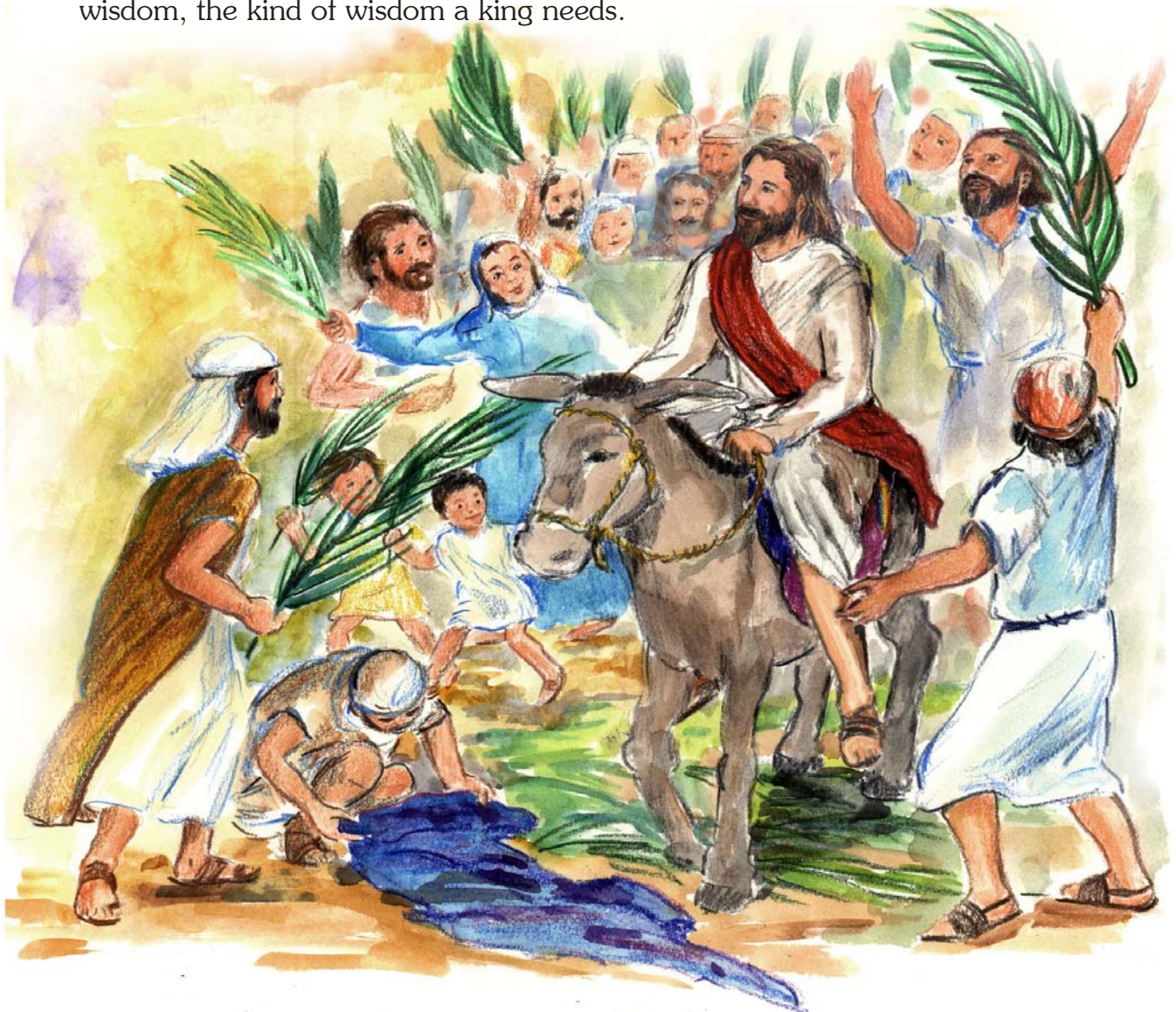
As the Lord was coming toward Jerusalem on this Sunday, He sent two of His disciples ahead into a small village along the way. Here, He said, they would find a donkey and the donkey's colt. The disciples were to untie them and bring them to Him. If anyone asked them why they were taking the donkey and colt the disciples were to say, "The Lord needs them." That would answer all questions.

You may wonder why the Lord needed the colt. Usually, He walked wherever He went, like most people in those days. But on this day, He wanted to ride the donkey's colt into Jerusalem. Do you know why? It was because kings would ride into the city that way, and the Lord knew it was time to show everybody that He was their king.



The disciples found the donkey and colt just as the Lord had said. **When they came back with the colt, the disciples laid some of their robes over its back for the Lord to sit on. Then they set Him on the colt so that He could ride it. They also spread other clothes on the road ahead of Him as He rode. Now, many people joined in spreading their clothes on the road, too. Others cut down palm branches from the trees to spread on the ground, making a pathway of clothes and leafy branches for the Lord to ride on. This was the way people welcomed kings then, showing them honor and respect.**

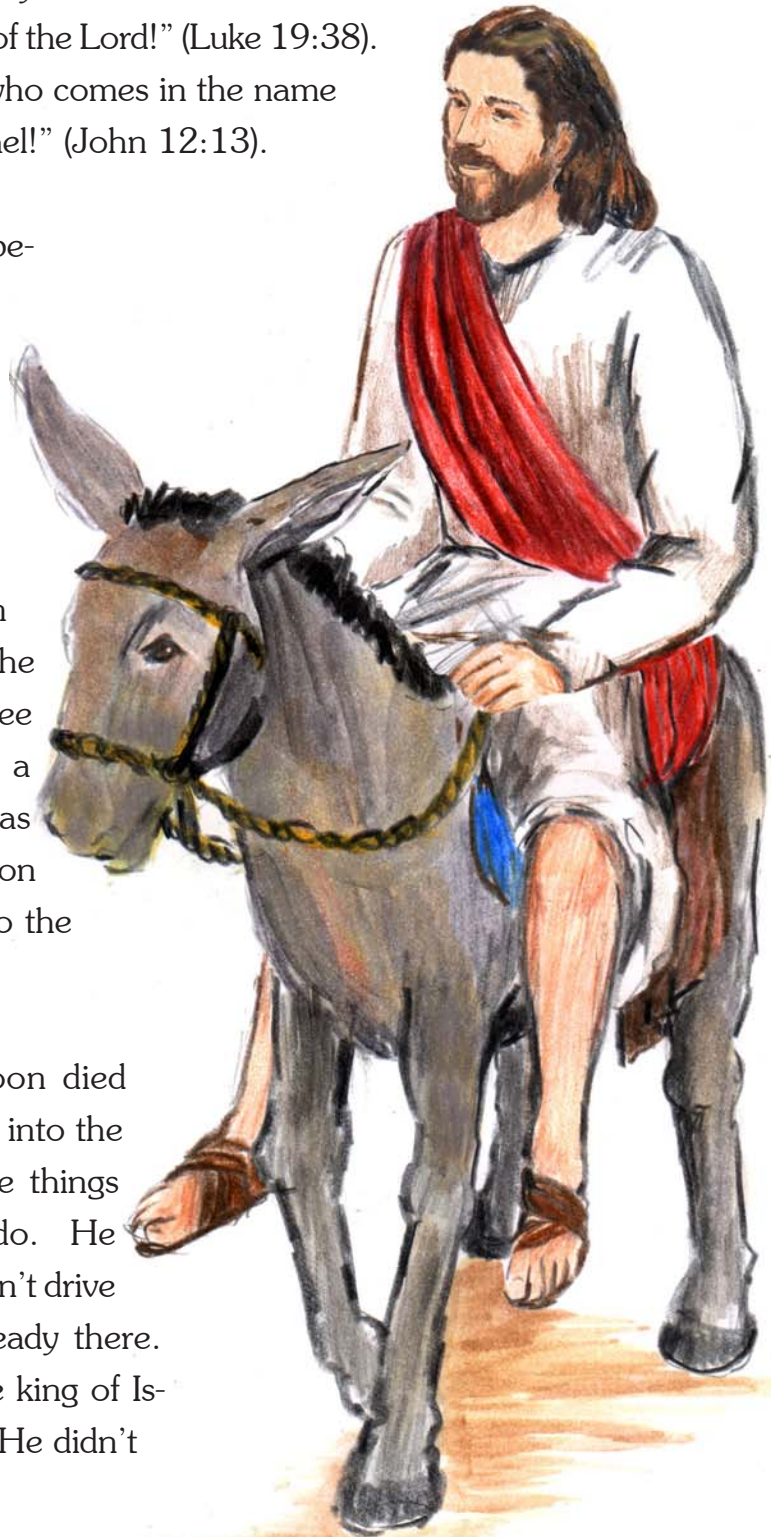
Palms have a special meaning in the Word. They stand for the Lord's wisdom, the kind of wisdom a king needs.



When people in Jerusalem heard what was happening, they, too, rushed out of the city to welcome the Lord. He was riding along the road just like a king. They cried out: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!” (Luke 19:38). “Hosanna! “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The King of Israel!” (John 12:13).

The people were glad because they thought the Lord was coming to be their new king. Powerful enemies had ruled the land of Israel for a long time. The people longed to be free, to have their own king again. They expected the Lord to gather an army to free them so they could become a great nation again. This was why the people were excited on Palm Sunday and cried out to the Lord with shouts of praise.

But their excitement soon died down. When the Lord came into the city, He didn't do any of the things they had expected Him to do. He didn't gather an army. He didn't drive out the rulers who were already there. He did not make Himself the king of Israel with a great ceremony. He didn't have to do these things.





What the people didn't understand was that the Lord was already a king—the greatest King of all! The Lord is the King of heaven, something far more important than being king over a country in this world. That is why He let the people make a pathway of palms for Him and call to Him as their king when He rode into Jerusalem.

When we celebrate this day, we think of the Lord as our heavenly King. He has more power than any king on earth. He has Divine power to conquer evil spirits and protect us from harm. **The Lord cares for all of us,** more than any earthly king possibly could. **And, day by day, He leads us toward His kingdom in Heaven.**



Let us rejoice in the Lord as our King just as the people rejoiced on that first Palm Sunday, saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” (Luke 19:38).

Places where we read about Palm Sunday:

Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-15
John 18:33-37 (Where Pilate asks the Lord if He is a king)
Apocalypse Explained 458:5, 12 (about the meaning of palms)