

# OUR LORD AND KING

by Rev. Norbert Rogers

What we celebrate with joy, and thanksgiving, and worship at Easter is the wonderful miracle of the Lord's having risen again from the sepulcher on the third day, as He had said He would.

Just the Friday before, on what we now call Good Friday, evil people had seized the Lord, condemned Him falsely, and crucified Him like a common criminal. But the Lord Himself did not die. He rose again on the third day as He had said—as the living God in Human form whose power was so great that no evil could harm Him. Indeed, His power was so great that He could rule over heaven and earth.

That the Lord had power to rule—that He was a triumphant king—was prophesied, as it were, by the events which took place just a week before, on what we now call Palm Sunday. On that day the Lord sent two of His disciples into the village to bring Him a donkey and her colt. And when they brought them to Him, the disciples put their clothing on them as a saddle for the Lord to sit on; and the Lord rode on the donkey into Jerusalem.

When the people saw Him coming toward them, riding on a donkey, they rejoiced greatly. For from ancient times, riding upon a donkey was a sign of being a judge and king. The people rejoiced because they thought that the Lord would proclaim Himself king and that He would raise a great army to drive out the Romans and all other enemies of the Jews, to make them the most powerful nation in the world. So they strewed their garments on the roadway, and cut down palm branches which they waved to the Lord, and sang "Hosanna". This is the way, in those days, people welcomed home their kings after winning glorious battles. And so it was that the Lord entered Jerusalem as a triumphant king.

In a way, the Lord's triumphant ride into Jerusalem as king, was a prophecy that was fulfilled at His resurrection on Easter morning. For although the Lord does indeed rule the natural world—although He governs the whole of the universe, keeping all things in perfect order—His Kingdom is not of this world. His kingdom is the Kingdom of Heaven—the Kingdom of hearts and minds. The Lord does not force anyone to enter into His kingdom; He does not force His rule upon anyone. We, ourselves, must want to be ruled by Him and to be protected from spiritual enemies by His great and merciful power. By our own will we must go out to seek Him as He comes to us—even as the people of Jerusalem went out to seek the Lord on the first Palm Sunday.

The Lord comes to us in the Word. He is brought to us through the knowledges of good and truth that we learn from the Word, even as He came to the people of Jerusalem riding upon a donkey. And just as the people of Jerusalem welcomed the Lord as king, by spreading their garments and waving palm branches and singing "Hosanna" to Him, so we must *willingly* and *joyously* make a way for Him into our hearts and minds by offering our faith and love to Him, by letting Him see the things we believe in and love. We do this whenever we compare the things we believe and

love with what we learn that the Word teaches, and willingly change what we believe and love in keeping with what the Word teaches.

When we do this, then—from the stories we read in the Old and New Testaments—we'll come to see the perfect love and wisdom and great power of the Lord. We'll be able to form a vision of Him as the risen Lord, real and living, even as the women and disciples saw Him on the first Easter day. And, as from the doctrines of the New Church we come to understand the *spiritual meaning* of the stories of the Old and New Testaments, we will come to have a more perfect and clearer vision of Him, and a clearer vision of how we are to think and live according to His will. Then, indeed, the Lord will be able to establish His Kingdom in our hearts and minds, and He will be truly our Lord and King.