

RECEIVING THE LORD AS KING

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Lesson: John 12:12-19

Today we celebrate the Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem just before His crucifixion and resurrection; and we are glad that there were so many men at that time who were willing to proclaim the Lord as King. At the same time, there is in our joy something of sadness; for only a few days later many of them cried out for His crucifixion. In recalling this story we hope and pray that we may proclaim the Lord as King, and that the truths of His Word may rule in everything of our lives. And in this, too, there is something of sadness, because we cannot but think of the times that we have not acknowledged the Lord as a King - of the times we have broken His commandments. But within that sadness there is also hope that we will do better in the future, that we will be more obedient, and that the Lord may fully become our King.

The Lord had come to the house of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, and in the evening Mary had anointed His feet with oil and wiped them with her hair. In the morning the Lord with His disciples set out for Jerusalem. As He was going He told two of His disciples to go into a village nearby and there they would find an ass tied and her colt with her. They were to untie them, and they were to take them; and if any man said ought to them they were to say that the Lord had need of them. And the disciples went, and they found the ass and her colt and they untied them. And the owner said, "Why do you loose them?" And they said the Lord hath need of them, and straightway he let them go. And then they took the ass and her colt to the Lord. They put their garments, their outer garments, on them and they set the Lord thereon.

Now there were many people who had come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. And many of them were on their way out to the town of Bethany, which was about two miles to the east of Jerusalem over the Mount of Olives, because they had heard about Lazarus, the man the Lord had raised from the dead, and they wanted to see him. And as they came, they saw the Lord on the ass with her colt, and they saw the disciples following. They joined in, and they cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the Highest." And this throng grew and increased as they went over the Mount of Olives, down the slope of the Mount of Olives to the brook Kidran, and then up the steep slope toward Jerusalem, toward the east gate, and then through the east gate. And as they went, they cut down branches of trees and strewed them in the way. And they cut down palm branches, and they went before and they came after, and they cried, "Hosanna" which means "save now, we beseech thee". They cried "Hosanna to

the Son of David, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord” So they cried out and proclaimed the Lord as a King. And as such they followed the Lord into the east gate into Jerusalem, through the streets of Jerusalem into the Temple.

And so, in general, when we think of this story and this day, as I have said, we hope and pray that the Lord may become our King and rule in everything of our lives. But the remarkable thing about the Lord’s Word is that it not only gives us general truths and not only tells us the general things, but every little particular in the Lord’s Word means something. Now we can’t consider all the particulars in this story, but especially older children should know something about what this story signified. For the Word has a spiritual sense, and that spiritual sense is now revealed by the Lord for the use of the New Church. Now you will notice the nature of the Word, the style of the Word. Apparently there is no reason for mentioning both the ass and her colt and yet there is a very important reason when we come to the spiritual sense. For the ass represents the natural mind of man and the colt is the rational mind of man. And so when the Lord was put thereon this teaches us that if we would proclaim Him as King, then with all the things of our mind, with our natural mind, and with our rational mind, we must acknowledge Him and bow those minds down before Him. The garments of the disciples are the knowledges of the truths of the Lord’s Word. The knowledges of the truths of the Lord’s Word are given to us so that we may lay them down before the Lord, which means to live according to them. Now this whole journey came from the east, which shows us that in our whole lives we must act from the Lord, from love to the Lord, and from charity toward the neighbor. And then the trees, the branches of the trees, and the palms are nothing but all the things that we know, all the things we learn. You learn many things besides the things that are in the Lord’s Word. Even these things must be used to praise the Lord. They must be strewn in the way before the Lord, and never must we allow anything that we learn or any thing that we know be in the way, calling into doubt our acknowledgment of the Lord, or in any way weaken our faith in the Lord or our love to the Lord. If we do those things, then the Lord will become our King.

Now note this: the Lord must rule in us as King before He can rule us as our Savior. The Lord rode into Jerusalem as a King. Five days later He was crucified, and then on the third day He rose again triumphant. So, if we accept the Lord as King, and if we allow the truths of His Word to rule in everything of our lives, then we may go through certain hardships, trials, temptations and tribulations. But if we have acknowledged Him as King, and if we have let the truths of His Word rule, in the end we too will rise triumphant and the Lord will take us into His heavenly kingdom where He will reign as our King and our Lord forever.