

PALM SUNDAY

NO OTHER KING

2023-04-02

Leader Notes

OVERVIEW:

Welcome to our study, “No Other King.” When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey the crowds who greeted him were looking for a king. They had expectations of what kind of king he would be. Many people that day hoped Jesus would be a warrior king, one who would conquer their Roman oppressors and set them free. But Jesus was a different kind of king. The palm branch waving crowd that day were blinded by their expectations of the Messiah. The same can happen for us. Our hopes for who Jesus will be in our lives can easily be distorted by our expectations of him. What kind of king is Jesus to you? Is your view of him accurate? Allow today’s study to sharpen your focus on Jesus, our king who came to give his life on the cross for you.

ICEBREAKER: My Easter Memories

What was the Easter season like for you growing up? Is there a key memory or two that you have of your experience of Easter as a child? What part, if any, did Jesus have in your early years of Easter? Share your story with the group!

STUDY:

13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

Revelation 5:13 NIV

READ: Mark 11:1-11 The Triumphal Entry

Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem took place on Palm Sunday, a week before his resurrection. His triumphal entry marked the beginning of what is often called the "passion week", 7 days of intense ministry culminating with his death on the cross and rising from the grave 3 days later.

1. Read back through the scene of the crowd's response to Jesus. (vs. 8-10). Try to put yourself in the scene. What would it have been like to be there?

LEADER NOTE: Imagine what it would have been like there that day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem! The air was electric with excitement and anticipation. The noise would have been deafening as the crowd shouted out praise and petition to Jesus. The atmosphere was charged with the hope.

2. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem, the crowds shouted, "Hosanna"! (Lord, please save us!). What do you think the people were expecting of Jesus?

LEADER NOTE: When the crowds shouted "Hosanna"! they were quoting Psalm 118:25, 'O LORD, save us; O LORD, grant us success.' The people hoped Jesus would be a warrior king, one who would defeat their Roman oppressors. They may have been thinking about king Jehu, a warrior king of the past, and hoping for more of the same. (see 2 Kings 9-10)

3. We might say that the crowds that day were actually blinded by their palm branches. Why might that be true?

LEADER NOTE: In a very real sense, the crowds at Jesus' triumphal entry were blinded by their palm branches. For them, the branches represented homage to a warrior king. Their adoration of Jesus was based on their distorted vision of the kind of king Jesus came to be.

4. Why is it so easy to be blinded about the kind of king Jesus really is? In what ways do you see this happening today?

LEADER NOTE: In our day, just as in Jesus' day, it is easy to be blinded to the kind of king Jesus really is. Like the crowds at the triumphal entry, we can shout (or sing) out praises and prayers to Jesus, but be blinded about Jesus' true intention for our lives. Our vision can be distorted by what we want Jesus to do for us, rather than what he asks us to do for him.

5. What are the palm branches for you? In other words, what about your perception of Jesus might be blinding you about who he really is?

LEADER NOTE: We are blinded when we have a distorted view of who Jesus is to us. For example, we may view Jesus like a genie in a bottle, someone we call on only when we have a problem or a wish. We may view him as a remote religious figure, someone we pray to on Sundays but who has little to do with our everyday lives. We may not yet see Jesus as our king, one who is worthy of the surrender of our lives and deserving of our highest love.

READ: Philippians 2:5-11 Our Servant King

This passage is likely a hymn sung by the early church, a reminder to them and to us of what our king gave up to live among us and his exalted position in heaven today.

6. What do you notice about Jesus' position before he came to earth?

LEADER NOTE: In vs. 6 we read that Jesus' is "in very nature God." In heaven, Jesus is all powerful, all knowing and everywhere present. His position is kingly. Jesus is seated on the throne. (see Revelation 5:13)

7. What does this passage tell us about what he gave up while he was here on earth?

LEADER NOTE: In verse 7 we read that Jesus "... made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant." Jesus did not cling to his heavenly privileges and position while he was here on earth. He willingly laid them aside so he could serve us and give himself for us.

8. What does this passage tell us about Jesus' position now?

LEADER NOTE: In vs. 9-11 we read about Jesus' position now. Jesus is "exalted to the highest place" (vs 9) and has a name that is above every other name (vs. 9). Every knee shall one day bow to him and every tongue will confess that he is Lord. (vs. 10-11)

9. How does reading about our servant King inspire you to be like him?

LEADER NOTE: In Philippians 2:5 we read, “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.” Jesus took the nature of a servant. We should aspire to serve others as Jesus has served us. Jesus humbled himself. We should strive to be humble like him. Jesus sacrificed for us. We should sacrifice for him.

READ: Ephesians 1:18-23 Jesus Our King

18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength 20 he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. 22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

10. What do you notice here about the authority Jesus has as king?

LEADER NOTE: As King, Jesus authority is “ ... far above all rule and authority power and dominion, and every name that is invoked...” Jesus is the ultimate King. There is no king, past, present or future, that has the authority that Jesus has as king.

11. What does this kingly authority mean for the church today?

LEADER NOTE: In verse 22 we read that as our king, Jesus is “ ... head over everything in the church.” He is our ultimate authority and ruler. In vs. 23 we read that we “ .. his body”. We are Jesus’ hands and feet here on earth, commissioned by our king to carry out his mission and will. (see Matthew 28:18-20)

12. How does today’s study help your resolve to have no other king but Jesus?

PRAY:

Listen to the song - No Other King <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSqPcZzTRDE>

Spend some time today worshiping King Jesus for what he has done for you by dying on the cross.

Ask him to sharpen your vision to see him more fully as your king.