

## Mistaken Identity

This weekend, we celebrate Palm Sunday. We remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, humbly riding on a borrowed donkey. His disciples had spread the cloaks for Him to sit on, and people along the route spread palm branches in his path. The crowd along the side of the road praised him, "the King who came in the name of the Lord." *Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).*



It was His public claim to be the Messiah. He no longer told people to stay silent about what He did for them. Certainly, He had become well known for his power to heal and His wisdom. He had done everything right, and now the masses were praising Him. But they didn't understand His purpose. They wanted a King to overthrow the oppressive Roman rule. They wanted Jesus to lead the revolt and be a conquering king.

The word "Hosanna" means to "save us." They got that part right. Jesus did come to save us, but not in the way they were thinking. As the Messiah, He didn't come to conquer by force, but by love, grace, mercy, and sacrifice. *LORD, save us! LORD, grant us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD. From the house of the LORD we bless you (Psalm 118:25-26).* He didn't come to conquer nations, but to conquer hearts and minds.

Within a few short days, the shouts of the crowds changed from saying "Hosanna" to "crucify Him." The Bible clearly states that it was the crowd who decided Jesus' fate. *Wanting to release Jesus, Pilate addressed them again, but they kept shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" (Luke 23:20-21).* They didn't recognize Jesus as the Savior who would save them from their sins. To them, He didn't fulfill their expectations.

How about you? Would you have been in the crowd, too? Do you want the Savior to do things, yet you turn away when He doesn't do what you expected? Is Jesus your everyday, worldly magician, but not your spiritual Savior? While Jesus does help us through the issues of our everyday lives, His purpose is much greater. Jesus is the perfect example of overcoming evil with love, grace, mercy, and sacrifice. Does being a person of faith change your heart and mind?

Despite not aligning with the crowd's expectations, Jesus was the sacrifice for our sins. Those outstretched arms are nailed to a cross – our cross. He is extending his arms to you.

To be sure, it was God's plan all along. What Jesus did in that final week was to fulfill Old Testament prophecy and to show us that *He is the One*. God knew what was going to happen – then, and He does today. It is because of God's love for us that He sacrificed His son – for you and me. The story continues today: do you believe? Let there be no mistaken identity. Jesus came, suffered, and died for you and for me. Hosanna. Lord, save us!

**Closing Prayer:** Lord, there is no mistaken identity. You are the Messiah, who came to earth to show us how to live and love. You gave it all so that all believers would have eternal life. Hosanna! Lord, save me. Amen.