

1. In verses 12:12-13, what does the crowd's response to Jesus reveal about their expectations of the Messiah? Dave said that the crowd then, like many people ever since, was looking for the Messiah they wanted rather than the Messiah who actually was. Read Psalm 118:25-26. What does this teach us about the nature and character of the Messiah sent from God to save his people?
2. In verses 14-15, how does Jesus' choice to ride a young donkey fulfill prophecy, and what does it communicate about the nature of his kingship? (See Zech. 9:9 and Matt. 21:4-5.)
3. Why did the disciples not fully understand these events at the time, and what changed later? (John 12:16; see also John 2:22; 14:26; Luke 24:25-27, 44-45.)
4. In verses 17-18, what role did the testimony of those who witnessed Lazarus's resurrection play in the crowd's response? (See John 11:43-45; Acts 4:20; Rev. 12:11.) Consider the impact of personal testimony. How can you faithfully share what Christ has done in your life to point others toward him?

EXTRA CREDIT: As Dave noted, the word for "palm tree" or "palm branch" in Greek is *phoinix*, from which we get the word Phoenix. Recall his discussion about the connection between palm seeds and resurrection, and consider the significance of the crowd waving these palms, symbolically connected to resurrection, not just to the king of Israel but to the seed of the woman come to crush the head of the serpent. What do palms represent in Scripture, and what will you be thinking about the next time you see waving palm branches? (See Ex. 15:27; 1 Kings 6:29ff.; Rev. 7:9.)