



## The Disappointing Entry

We call it the “Triumphal Entry.” We celebrate Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem. We remember the crowds waving palm branches and shouting “Hosanna!” as Jesus rides into town on a donkey.

We remember an atmosphere of joy and anticipation. Thousands of pilgrims traveled to Jerusalem for Passover. They were there to celebrate Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage. They were also there to pray for another deliverance: liberation from Roman domination. On the first Palm Sunday, the crowds cheered Jesus as the new Moses. They expected him to do for them what Moses had done for their forefathers.

The joyful anticipation of that first Palm Sunday contrasts starkly with the atmosphere of the days that followed. Everyone present on that day would soon be disappointed. Perhaps we should call it the “Disappointing Entry.”

Consider with me...

The people in the crowd would be disappointed. As Jesus rode into Jerusalem, they cried “Hosanna,” a word meaning “Save us!” Mark records their cry, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! *Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!*” (Mk 11:9-10) They were not crying out for spiritual salvation; they were calling for political salvation. They expected Jesus to overthrow Rome and restore the Davidic throne. A few days later, these people would be bitterly disillusioned when they learned that Jesus offered a cross, not a throne.

The disciples would be disappointed. They entered Jerusalem dreaming of political power. As they surveyed the city, they asked themselves, “Where is the best place for my office?” They were certain of favored positions in Jesus’ cabinet. The disciples would soon learn that Jesus offered a place of service, not a place of power.

Knowing what lay ahead, Jesus wept as he foresaw the tragic future of this beautiful city (Lk 19:41-44). He knew that the frustration of the crowd would lead these same people to cry, “Crucify him!” He knew that the distress of the disciples would lead them to desert him and even to deny him. He had given three years to training these disciples. Did he feel some disappointment as he realized how quickly they would run away in fear?

Nearly 2000 years have come and gone, but as we celebrate Palm Sunday, let me ask you,

-Will you follow Jesus if he disappoints you?

-Will you follow Jesus if the path leads to Golgotha instead of a palace?

-Will you follow Jesus if discipleship leads to death instead of prosperity?