

# BLESSINGS ON GOD'S KING

Jesus and his friends were going to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. Jesus knew that the religious leaders were going to arrest him, beat him, and kill him, but he went anyway. Walking along the road, they approached a village just a little ways outside the city, and Jesus sent two disciples ahead with an errand. “Go into that village over there,” he told them. “You’ll see a young donkey tied there, that no one has ever ridden. Untie and bring it to me.” Maybe noticing their questioning looks, he added, “if someone asks you why you’re taking it away, just say, ‘the Lord needs it.’”

So they went into the village, and just as Jesus had said, there was the donkey. And as they were untying it someone did ask them why they were taking it away. They answered simply, “the Lord needs it,” and the villagers let them go. They brought the donkey to Jesus, one of them took off his coat and laid it on the donkey’s back for Jesus to sit on, and they continued on their way into Jerusalem.

As they got close to the city, more and more people lined the roads to see Jesus. Some of them took off their coats and shirts and laid them down on the road to make a pathway for him to ride over, and others pulled branches from the palm trees and laid them in the road or waved them in the air. Lots of the people had heard Jesus preach and seen him heal the sick, and they were starting to realize he might be God’s special chosen person: the Messiah. They yelled and cheered and called out, “Blessings on the King who comes in God’s name! Hosanna! Glory to God!”

The religious leaders who heard that weren’t happy; to them, that was using God’s name the wrong way. And they felt like *they* were the only ones who knew about God! “Teacher!” they called to Jesus. “Tell your people to stop saying things like that!”

Jesus answered, “Even if they could keep quiet, the stones along the road would be cheering!” It was a festive scene. But then, as the walls of Jerusalem came into view, Jesus’s mood changed: he started to cry. “Oh, how I wish that you, Jerusalem, would have been able to see and understand God’s plan—but it’s too late. You didn’t recognize when God was coming to you, and now before very long your enemies will destroy you.” And he continued on into the city.

## Wondering Questions

I wonder what it was like for Jesus’s friends to be walking with him in the middle of the cheering crowd?

I wonder if any of them were thinking about what was going to happen next? Was Jesus?

I wonder what the religious leaders were thinking when Jesus said the stones would be cheering if the people weren’t?