# Entry into Jerusalem

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Figure From the Department of Christian Education, Orthodox Church in America

*John 12:12–16*

12The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord—

the King of Israel!”

14Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

15 “Do not be afraid, daughter of Zion.

Look, your king is coming,

sitting on a donkey’s colt!”

16His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. [[1]](#footnote-1)

## Opening questions

1. Who is the most famous person you’ve ever been close to?
2. Were there any honors being bestowed on this person? What were they?
3. What famous person has disappointed you the most?

## Two observations

1. Jesus, of course, comes as a king, and is welcomed as a king. But if he were a king of war, he would arrive on a war horse. But he arrives on a donkey, which is certainly a humble animal to ride. But it signals the arrival of a king of peace, as Zecharaiah prophesied:  
   Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!

Lo, your king comes to you;

triumphant and victorious is he,

humble and riding on a donkey,

on a colt, the foal of a donkey. [[2]](#footnote-2)

1. Quotations of Scripture bring the past into the present, into the climax of history. And we have a ‘future past.’

## A lectio

Read the passage again.

1. How many people do you “see”? What do they look like? How many are men? Women? Children? Who looks happy? Unhappy? Indifferent?
2. What sounds do you hear?

## A litany

What kind of king does Jesus prove to be?

When I say what kind of king, respond with *Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.*

1. King over death (who has raised Lazarus)  
   *Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.*
2. King who comes in peace (who arrives on a donkey)
3. King who fulfills time (who is the object of the prophecies)
4. King who will be glorified (in seven days, and at the end of days)
5. King who accepts humble homage (the palms and cloaks of the poor)
6. King who is close to his people (as he rides the donkey through the crowds)
7. King who is faithful, even to the faithless (the “crowd” turns against him in the end)
8. King who is opposed by those who fear the loss of their own power (the leaders who fear they cannot stop him)
9. A middle-eastern king (who is the King of the World)
10. King who fulfills the cry that literally means “Save us” (Hosanna in the highest)
11. King who speaks to women (the daughter of Zion, and the sisters of Lazarus)
12. King who speaks to men (his male disciples follow)
13. King who speaks to children (who spread their cloaks and raise the palms)
14. King of Jerusalem and Israel (the spiritual Israel and the physical Israel, says Paul)
15. King of blessings (Blessed in his coming)
16. King who is the Passover lamb (soon will come his death)
17. A King triumphant and victorious (as Zephaniah tells us)

1. *Revised Common Lectionary*. (2009). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*. (1989). (Zec 9:9). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)