

# A Most Important Question

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Have you ever wondered why it is called “Palm Sunday?” In reality the day should be called *Triumphant Entry Sunday* because that is the day the Jesus the Messiah-King chose to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey’s colt, fulfilling the ancient Messianic prophesy of **Zechariah 9:9** "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."

In fact the account of the *Triumphal Entry* appears in every one of the Gospels – Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-40; John 12:12-19. But, let’s get back to the original question – Why is it referred to as “Palm Sunday.” Turn to Mark 11:8 "And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strowed *them* in the way." Now turn to Luke 19:35-36 "And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. 36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way."

It could have been called “Garment Sunday” or “Clothes Sunday.” However, the name comes from John 12:13 which says people, “took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

That brings me to the mystery question of Palm Sunday. Who was the one who rode in on the colt? Who were they making all the fuss over?

Turn to **Matthew 21:10** *And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?* I draw you attention to this question posed by the people of City Jerusalem. Friend, that is a **most important question**. It was an important question then and it is an important question now! ***Who is this?***

How you answer that question and how you respond to Christ will determine your eternal destiny! You dare not dodge the question. You must not ignore it. And I urge you not to follow the majority opinion! Why? Because the majority answered the question wrong! “And the

multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.” **Matthew 21:11**. Many are willing to acknowledge that Jesus was a prophet! Islam goes that far! Yet, while Jesus was a prophet, he was much more than a prophet.

Let’s look at the different ways the people associated with the first Palm Sunday answered the question.

### ✓ **The Seditious Crowd**

What is “sedition?” Sedition is seeking to undermine authority; stirring up rebellion against authority. Let me be clear, that there is no greater authority in the entire universe than The Lord Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 6:13-16). Problem is that the seditious crowd refused to recognize the innate authority of Christ because it interfered with their authority. Christ interrupted their lifestyle. When confronted with the question -- ***Who is this? Who is Jesus Christ?*** Their answer was, “we don’t care, and we just want to get rid of him so we can get back to business as usual. (see **Mark 11:18; Luke 19:47-48; John 12:10-11 & 19**).

There are a lot of people, even religious in this crowd today! They do NOT want Christ interfering with their life! They have an agenda and Christ does not fit. Are you in this crowd? If you are, John 3:16-20 & 36 is your lot. You are condemned! I would urge you to repent and follow **Isaiah 55:7** *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

### ✓ **The Skeptical Crowd**

When you pose the question to someone in this skeptical crowd, ***Who is this? Who is Jesus Christ?*** you get some strange answers. Some will say, “He was a great teacher.” Other will say, “He is a prophet.” As I mentioned earlier, that is what many were saying according to **Matthew 21:11**. While that is true, Jesus was a great teacher and a prophet; He was much more than that. He was the Son of God, the Messiah, The King of Glory, The One and Only Savior! But the skeptics just don’t want to go that far. We see this in **Luke 19:37-39**. Christ would not rebuke His disciples for telling the truth! Neither would he rebuke the children for pointing Him out as the Savior (**Matthew 21:15-16**).

In Sterling, Scotland our family encountered a skeptic. We were seeking to witness to this lady. It was her opinion that Christ was a good man and a moral teacher, but she would not believe that He was the ONLY SAVIOR! We shared **John 14:6** & **Acts 4:12** to no avail. I closed by giving the Gospel booklet and saying: “The Bible is my final authority and I believe what it says. Either Jesus was who he said he was or he was the greatest deceiver and liar who ever lived. I believe He is who He said He was!” He could not be just a good man, a great teacher and a wonderful prophet without being the Son of God and the ONLY SAVIOR of mankind.

Ponder that if you are a skeptic! You must not hedge on answering the question, *Who is this? Who is Jesus Christ?* Either Christ was who he said he was or he was the greatest deceiver who ever lived! (John 8:23-24 & 58; John 10:7-10; John 11:25-26; John 14:6-12).

### ✓ **The Spectators**

People like to be where the action is! There is something electrifying about “esprit de corps” or the group spirit as you root for your team or cheer your hero. You are not actually in the game, but you are curious and perhaps get emotionally wound up at least for the moment. When you ask spectators *Who is this? Who is Jesus Christ?* They may give Him lip service. After all on that first Palm Sunday, Christ was where the action was! We know that from **John 12:9**. Jesus and Lazarus were celebrities! After all, how often do you get to see a dead guy who had come to life and the one who raised him from the dead? They came to watch. They came to get their eyes full. They wanted to see what was going on. And yes, they did get involved outwardly in cheering on Jesus, but that was as far as it went for many of them. They got caught up in the emotions of the moment. **They cheered what Christ did but they did not accept who He was.** They had the right words on their lips...Hosanna...King...Lord, but they had no faith in their hearts! I remind you of Christ’s words recorded in **Matthew 7:21** *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven...* Christ wants more than singing the songs and saying the words. He wants your heart! (**Romans 10:9-10**).

### ✓ **The Scared or Fearful Crowd**

We read about this crowd in **John 12:42-43** *Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees*

*they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: 43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*

This is a distressing passage. They *believed* on Christ, but *did not confess him*. Were they genuine believers? That's a good question especially when you consider the words of our Lord found in **Matthew 10:32-33** *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.* Not to mention **Revelation 21:8**.

Evidently, some of them were genuine believers and they eventually made it known. The two we know of were Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea (John 7:48-50 & 19:38-39).

If you are a Christian, you need to “come out of the closet!” It is our Lord's desire that we not only believe in our hearts but confess Him with our mouths and take up your cross daily and follow Him (**Romans 10:10; Luke 9:23**).

### ✓ **The Saved Crowd**

There were many Jews that were convinced that Jesus was the Son of God and Messiah because he had raised Lazarus from the dead. We see this in **John 12:10-11** *But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; 11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.* In fact, so many Jews and Gentiles trusted Christ as Savior that “*the Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.*” **John 12:19** The religious establishment was exaggerating to be sure. But it is true Christ was making an impact and that was even before His death and resurrection. In fact, the only right answer to the “Palm Sunday” mystery question of Matthew 21:10, **Who is this?** is, this is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of Lords and MY PERSONAL SAVIOR!

Is he your Savior? If He is not, Palm Sunday 2001 is the best day to repent of your sins and receive Christ as your Savior.