



## Behind Enemy Lines Training Saints

Written by an Inmate

### Christ our King

-Palm Sunday-

Brother Eric

3/27/25

During this time of Lent when we look forward to Easter, I figured I'd get a head start on talking about Passion Week (or Holy Week) since so much of the gospels is dedicated to that one week out of Jesus' three year ministry. Passion Week begins with what we call "Palm Sunday" that is named after the palm branches the crowd spread out ahead of Him on the road to Jerusalem. This is the day where Jesus' time has come to fulfill God's great plan of salvation and to be welcomed as Israel's messiah and King before being rejected and crucified before the week's end.

Jesus is our Savior, our high priest, our Lord, and our King. On Palm Sunday, we see a glorious scene of Jesus welcomed into Zion, into Jerusalem, as King in honor and exaltation. A scene that foreshadows a similar one in **Revelation 7** with a great multitude worshipping before His throne with the palm branches in their hands. Just the day before, He was anointed with an extremely expensive perfume/oil symbolizing not only preparation for His upcoming death and burial, but also God choosing Him as King of Israel. If we look back to the Old Testament, we can read about how the kings of Israel, such as Saul, David, and Solomon, were anointed in this way.

In **Matthew (21:1-3,6)** we read, "As Jesus and the disciples approached Jerusalem, they came to the town of Bethphage on the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of them on ahead, saying 'Go into the village. As soon as you enter it, you will find a donkey tied there, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone asks what you are doing, just say, "The Lord needs them," and he will immediately let you take them.' ... The two disciples did as Jesus commanded. They brought the donkey and the colt to Him and they threw their garments over the colt, and He sat on it." This fulfilled the prophecy from around 500 years prior in **Zechariah 9:9** that says, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you: righteous and having salvation is He, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

This was another symbol of His kingship since kings during that time would enter the city riding a horse, mule, or donkey. A horse was used in times of war since it represented power and authority, and a mule or donkey was used in times of peace. Here, Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is coming into the city ushering in eternal peace with God for all who believe. We are a precursor to this in the Old Testament when King David chooses Solomon to be his successor. He has him ride on his own mule to the place where he is to be anointed king. In Jesus' second coming described in **Revelation**, He comes mounted on a white horse to bring war and judgement against the enemies of God and to begin His earthly reign.

Reading from **John (12:12-13)**, "... the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city. A large crowd of Passover visitors took palm branches and went down the road to meet Him, crying out, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!'" According to Josephus, a first-century Jewish historian, the population of Jerusalem would explode to around 3 million people! The large crowds had heard about Jesus and His miracles. The blind could see, the lame could walk, lepers were healed, spirits and storms obeyed His command, and thousands were fed from a little boy's lunch. And now word about Lazarus being raised from the dead has spread like

wildfire. The people were finally convinced: the King had come! The prophesied Messiah! The one who would set them free from the oppression of the Romans was here at last! They yelled “Hosanna,” an exclamation of praise which is Hebrew for “save us now,” wanting Him to save them from their enemies.

But the crowd misunderstood His true mission. Even the disciples did not understand until afterwards. He had to go through the cross before receiving His crown. They were shortsighted, looking to be saved from their circumstances, but the real problem was their sin and rebellion. Jesus came instead to give anyone eternal salvation rather than just temporal salvation.

He, like the sacrificial lambs of Passover, entered the city through the Sheep Gate. He would be our perfect sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sins, once for all.

The Pharisees and other religious leaders were already plotting to kill Jesus before all this. Seeing all the people go after Him and exalting Him as their king makes them all the more determined to put an end to this “false messiah.” And soon they would turn the crowd against Him. The cries of “Blessings” become cries to crucify Him.

Jesus knew what was coming and the damage their rejection of Him will cause when judgement comes upon Jerusalem. As we read in **Luke (19:41-42)**, “And when He drew near and saw the city, He wept over it, saying, ‘How I wish today that you of all people would understand the way to peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from your eyes.’” He then predicts the destruction of Jerusalem that takes place shortly after - in 70 A.D. Despite their rejection of Him, despite soon being condemned and crucified by them, Jesus wept for them. He answered their hate with love and mercy. Jesus didn’t just tell us to love our enemies. He did it. And He turned their wicked act into the salvation of the world.

As we get closer to Easter, let’s remember our King of kings and Lord of lords for who He is and for all He’s done for us. “Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere.” (**2 Corinthians 2:14**). “To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.” (**2 Peter 3:18b**).