

## **Palm Sunday: A peace march of the Man who comes in the Name of the LORD, to bring salvation!**

On the first Palm Sunday when Jesus rode on a foal, the colt of a donkey, into Jerusalem, the crowds that gathered for the Passover, sang from Ps. 118. They expected the Messiah to come and believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised King. When we read these words from the CEV translation, we clearly see why they chose this song of praise:

### **Psalm 118: 26 - 29 (CEV)**

*God bless the one who comes in the name of the LORD!*

*We praise you from here in the house of the LORD.*

*The LORD is our God, and he has given us light!*

*Start the celebration!*

*March with palm branches all the way to the altar. The LORD is my God!*

*I will praise him and tell him how thankful I am.*

*Tell the LORD how thankful you are, because he is kind and always merciful.*

The waving of palms and laying down of clothes were signs of achievement and victory. Jesus encouraged the honour bestowed on him. (Otherwise the stones would shout it out!) He claimed to be the One who comes in the Name of the LORD. He marched with the palm waving people to the altar in God's temple, to cleanse it from greed and to judge those who turned it into a robbers' den.

He deliberately came into the city in this manner, to fulfil the words written in Zechariah 9: 9 - 10:

*Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!*

*See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

*I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations.*

*His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.*

But did the marching crowd remember that the prophet said that under this King's rule the war horses of Ephraim (Israel) will be taken away and their bows would be broken? No, because they craved a political and military hero, they quoted the prophecy out of context. They only took from it what suited their own whims and desires.

But Jesus came to fulfil the prophecy within the framework of God's announcement through Zechariah. That being lowly, he rode on donkey and claims victory by proclaiming peace to the nations. Through the gospel of peace and reconciliation, between God and man, and man and man, his rule through granting salvation, would extend from sea to sea!

The humble donkey became a throne for not only a King, but for the Son of God himself. Jesus used what was considered of little value, in this case a donkey, to be elevated to carry even God himself, our Lord and our Saviour. For our God saves as a peace maker and triumphs through sacrifice and suffering for our sake! The Son of God came into Jerusalem in peace and humility and he rode on a donkey to symbolise the character of his victorious kingdom.

We have to believe that evil is overcome by peace and humility. We have to believe that justice is restored through sacrificial love.

Jesus liberates from all our enemies, from the source and root of our problems: sin, evil, and death itself! This is the rule and reign Jesus Christ had in mind when he allowed the crowd to hail him as the son of David, the glorious Messiah of God and to wave their palms and throw their clothes on the road before him. He entered the city to triumph over evil by being crucified, buried, resurrected, and returned to heaven.

**People of God! On Palm Sunday wave your palms! Take courage and proclaim God's victory over sin, judgement, corruption, poverty, disease, and war. Overcome the real enemy of the people - evil, sin, death, selfishness, greed and lies, in the Name of the King of peace who rides on a donkey.**

*On Palm Sunday wave your palms! Remember their call to you:*

*Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.*

*He is indeed the Prince of Peace.*

*Can you see that he brings peace? Look! The Lord of the universe rides on a donkey!*