

Turning point

Notes on the Bible readings

- Every year at this time, Jerusalem was filled with pilgrims arriving for the Passover. It would have been a chaotic time, more like a demonstration or a march than a pilgrimage walk. The inevitable strains on law and order would have drawn in extra soldiers to keep the peace, which only heightened the pilgrims' hopes for freedom.

- When Jesus went on this pilgrimage, his disciples may have anticipated him acting differently. Would he turn the stones of popular expectation into the bread of political freedom? Was he willing to risk everything to show the crowds who he was? Instead he entered the city as a peacemaker, on a donkey, hungry only for righteousness and mercy.

- A man and his followers coming into the city on a donkey would have been a tiny part of this chaos. Would he have even been noticed? What would the Romans and bystanders have thought of this? As some were shouting 'Hosanna to the Son of David', would they have been heard above the noise of the crowds?

- But Jesus was making a peaceful statement about the kind of king, prophet and leader he was. The reading from Isaiah foreshadows Jesus' suffering by reminding us that a prophet's vocation is costly. Would we, as a community of faith, rejoice and celebrate Jesus coming to us as this kind of king?

Make your own palm cross

Listen to a Palm Sunday hymn or song, while you make a palm cross from a long strip of paper, e.g. cut from a newspaper or magazine.

Remember that, just as the cross is shaped and folded, so our lives are shaped and folded by the difficult and dry times, as well as those that are more joyful times.

Instructions for making a palm cross:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcmeCOF-b4k



Questions for reflection

- ▶ Joining with others is not an option right now, but when have you experienced the effects, the power, of being part of a 'crowd'?
- ▶ Without being able to gather, how can your church community show that it is 'on the move'?



A prayer of approach

Lord God, let us approach with shouts of praise:

Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna!

Let us draw close to you

on this day that caused disturbance and disruption.

Let us approach the throne

of the one who came as a humble servant,

who came to set us free, to change things for ever.

Hosanna to the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Amen.

A prayer for others

Lord Jesus, during this time of pandemic crisis,

we pray for all who give of themselves sacrificially,

for those whose lives are dedicated to serving others:

parents, carers, doctors, nurses, support staff, key workers...

those caring for children or elderly relatives.

We pray for people all over the world, working together

to find solutions in the war against the virus,

those in hospitals, missions and NGOs and charities,

medical researchers, engineers and equipment makers...

those who bring food, shelter and healing to those in need,

often putting their lives on the line.

We pray for the people of our own communities

who need our unconditional love, especially now:

those struggling with the effects and consequences of the virus,

those who have lost loved ones, or are close to death themselves,

those who are lonely, or finding it difficult to meet basic needs,

for children and adults looking for signs of love and hope. Amen.

A personal prayer

Lord, whatever this week brings, be to me - and help me be

to others - a source of love and a sign of hope. Amen.

Live your faith

Make your journey of Holy Week at home using the free ROOTS' resources available at www.rootsontheweb.com

FREE [worship at home](#) resources, including up-to-the-minute reflection on this week's Bible reading, available at: www.rootsontheweb.com