

Mark 11:1-11

What kind of king is Jesus?

Jesus sends two of his disciples to fetch a donkey on which he will ride into Jerusalem. As Jesus rides towards Jerusalem, bystanders greet him with shouts of acclamation. Some spread their cloaks, and others leafy branches, on the road as he passes by. When he reaches Jerusalem, Jesus goes immediately to the Temple. After looking around, he and his twelve disciples withdraw to Bethany for the night.



DRAW



What does it mean for us that Jesus is a king? Find some words to describe Jesus and make a poster or banner to welcome him as king.

WALK

Go to your local park and find some leaves and branches. Gather them up and imagine waving them as Jesus arrived in Jerusalem. As you picture the event together, read the Gospel reading and talk about how the people watching Jesus's arrival may have felt.

EXPLORE

Spend some time finding out how Christians in different countries celebrate Palm Sunday. See if you can start a new tradition in your home!

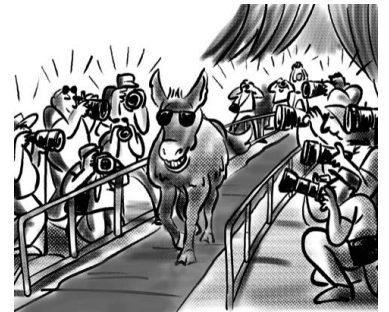
Bible notes



In their waiting for the fulfilment of the new covenant, and their anticipation of a new leader from God who will set them free in the way they experienced freedom at the Exodus, God's people have particular ideas about their expected Messiah. Mark writes for a Jewish audience who will be aware of the weight of expectation; he doesn't explain this but sets out clearly the kind of Messiah he perceives Jesus to be. An animal that is designated to be ridden by a king should not be ridden by anyone else, hence the note that the colt has never been ridden. A military leader would ride a horse, but Jesus rides a colt, a young donkey, as spoken of by Zephaniah, demonstrating that his leadership will not be overthrowing the ruling forces with an army. The spreading of cloaks on the ground was the way in which the people would declare their new king and their allegiance to him – and, by inference, a vote of no confidence in the existing ruler. The waving of palm branches was used in the celebration of victory, and to honour royalty. The shouting of 'hosanna' – 'save!' – was an expression of both deliverance and praise. The verse from Psalm 118 reinforces this. Jesus appears in control of this event; he has made the necessary plans and makes this public entry into Jerusalem with the minimum of fuss and in a non-threatening manner. He looks at the Temple, and then leaves without event or challenge. It is the response of the people that raises the stakes here, and this gives us some sense of the volatile situation in Jerusalem ahead of the imminent celebration of the Passover, the ultimate freedom festival recalling the exodus from Egypt.

First impressions

- What point do you think the cartoonist is making here?
- What different kind of king might Jesus have been?
- What kind of welcome might Jesus get in today's world?



A prayer of thanksgiving

Blessed is the king Jesus.
Hosanna in the highest! (clap three times, fast)
Who comes in the name of the Lord God.
Hosanna in the highest! (clap three times, fast)
Who proclaims love and peace.
Hosanna in the highest! (clap three times, fast)
Amen.

WATCH

Find some family films about different kings and watch them together this week. (e.g. *The Lion King*, *King Arthur*). Think about different types of kings/leaders and spend time praying together and asking Jesus to be king in your lives.