

# Who do you say that I am?

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[ 0 : 00 ] Welcome. Thanks for the reading of this triumphal entry into Jerusalem. What a great event that must have been. I don't know whether you've ever been to a royal event, maybe where the queen or one of the royal family is attending to open a hospital or a school. If you have, you will know that there is always the smell of fresh paint in the air and polish, lots and lots of polish.

I've been privileged to be to a few of these, but I got paid to go there. But there's something about the crowd that gathers. There is something where people have queued for hours, maybe even slept out overnight, just to get a view or a fleeting glimpse of the royals passed by. And in the hours and minutes that precede the royal arrival, there is an energy that builds in the crowd and anticipation, expectation. And then, and then the entourage arrive. All the blue lights, the motorcycles, maybe a few black, shiny Range Rovers. And then, then the noise really rises.

People wave their flags or anything else they've got handy to hand, the noise, the clapping, the cheering that grows into a crescendo where people sing and shout as royalty arrives.

It's what you'd expect at a royal event, like the one that just David just shared with us, but maybe without the blue flashing lights and the shiny Range Rovers. But there's a difference here.

You see, the crowd haven't been waiting for just a few hours or overnight. The crowd, they have been waiting for years. They have been waiting for their Messiah and their King to come.

[ 1 : 59 ] Their expectation is through the roof. Can you imagine what the atmosphere was like on this first Palm Sunday, ripping down whatever they could, the palm leaves from the trees to wave and lay before Jesus. People were clamouring to get a glimpse of this man who had come to save them. The issue is that each of them down through the years have a different expectation of what this King, the Messiah, would do for them.

You see, some of the people thought the Messiah, Jesus, would come like a warrior to gather an army to save them from the oppression of the Romans, from the occupation. Some wanted him to be a political figure, a sort of celebrity rabbi to stir up the people and throw the Romans out. You know, that really threatened the status quo amongst the existing leaders. I mean, they just wanted him dead and buried, literally, and out of the way. But there's a clue in the story that they didn't get because they didn't know Jesus. And Russ has already given us a clue to that. It's the donkey. You see, warriors and kings arrive on a horse. They arrive with an army, an entourage. They arrive ready for battle. We all know that celebrities come with glam and glitz. But this King, this King comes in humility and peace, riding on a donkey, accompanied by a ragtag group of dust-covered disciples.

You see, we have all got a decision to make this week. You know, the people, they wanted to enthrone a king, quite rightly, but it was on their own terms. And sadly, by the end of the week, they realised that he didn't meet what their personal expectations were. And he wasn't the king that they dreamed up that they wanted him to be, rather than the saviour that had come to save them. They didn't get it.

Before they even got there, into Jerusalem, Jesus asked his disciples, before they arrived, a really, really important question. And he said, who do people say that the Son of Man is? And they replied, some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, some say Jeremiah, or maybe one of the prophets.

You see, some people have already sort of made up their mind and write Jesus off before they even really get to know him. So Jesus challenges them and says, but what about you? Who do you say that I am?

[ 5 : 08 ] Simon Peter, the hothead, I really like Simon Peter. He's the one that gets a really bad press this week. But if you read the story of this Holy Week, he's the only one that stays close to Jesus.

He's the only one, maybe, that had in his own mind that there was going to be a rescue plan. But when he was asked, before they even entered Jerusalem, he said, you are the Messiah. You are the Son of the living God.

Effectively, Jesus is asking them, do you really know me? And I think he asks us that today. In those dark days 2,000 years ago and today, Jesus gives us hope.

He says, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. You see, on this day in Jerusalem, lots of people have made their own minds up what they wanted Jesus to be without really ever getting to know him.

Maybe you have already made your mind up and you know Jesus. You know the power, peace, strength and presence through the power of his Holy Spirit that he brings into our everyday lives.

[ 6 : 25 ] But maybe you haven't made your mind up yet. And maybe a good friend has sent you this clip. And in the midst of this crisis, maybe you have been searching for hope.

So today, for us all, and maybe particularly for you, he asks that afresh. Who do you say that I am?

And maybe your response is, as it was mine many years ago, come and show me who you are so that I can know you better. There's no better way this week to get to know Jesus than to read the Bible and the story of Holy Week, to get to know the character and person of Jesus.

And if you are in the depths of challenges many of us are, I pray this following clip will encourage you and empower you to pray and ask that question.

Come now and show me who you really are in the midst of where I am at this moment. So that when you ask me the question, who do you say that I am?

[ 7 : 35 ] I can truly answer you and say that you are Jesus, the Son of God, my Saviour. It makes all the difference.

let's pray, Lord, let's let James experts go. So let's make, cole of God and be happy. the Son of God says you. Lord bless the Holy Week, Lar■■■■ days tomorrow. Amen.

We'll also have this who are people he and they live indivisible and look, Heyment people, I may ask you and see Peter, let's say Peter rolls in the mouth and receive this because they receive this, you know about theft of sins.