

John 12:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Analysis

The crowds take palm branches, symbols of Jewish nationalism and military victory. Their cry 'Hosanna' (save now) blends Psalm 118:25-26, a messianic psalm. 'Blessed is the King of Israel' explicitly identifies Jesus as Messiah, but their understanding is political, not spiritual. The palm branches suggest they expect military deliverance from Rome. This demonstrates how right confession can rest on wrong foundation. They acknowledge Jesus as King but misunderstand His kingdom. Their fickle loyalty will soon shift to 'Crucify Him.'

Historical Context

Palm branches symbolized Jewish nationalism, featured on Maccabean coins. Psalm 118 was sung at Passover. The crowd's actions constituted potential sedition from Rome's viewpoint, explaining Pilate's later nervousness.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How can correct confession coexist with fundamental misunderstanding?
2. What does the crowd's nationalism teach about projecting political hopes onto spiritual realities?
3. In what ways do we reduce Christ's kingdom to earthly categories?

Interlinear Text

ἐλαβον τὰ βαΐα τῶν φοινίκων καὶ ἐξῆλθον εἰς
Took G3588 branches G3588 of palm trees and went forth to
G2983 G902 G5404 G2532 G1831 G1519

ὑπάντησιν αὐτῷ καὶ ἔκραζον, Ὁσαννά· εὐλογημένος ὁ
meet him and cried Hosanna Blessed G3588
G5222 G846 G2532 G2896 G5614 G2127

ἔρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ
that cometh in the name of the Lord G3588 is the King G3588
G2064 G1722 G3686 G2962 G935

Ἰσραήλ
of Israel
G2474

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 15:3 (Kingdom): And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

Revelation 7:9 (Parallel theme): After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

Matthew 23:39 (Blessing): For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

John 1:49 (Kingdom): Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

Hosea 3:5 (Kingdom): Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.

John 19:15 (Kingdom): But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

Zephaniah 3:15 (Kingdom): The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

Revelation 19:16 (Kingdom): And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Isaiah 44:6 (Kingdom): Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

Leviticus 23:40 (References Lord): And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.