

Exegetical Notes, John 12:12-19

“The Triumph Begins”

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John 12:12-19

Verse 12

The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

- This event happened five days before the Passover, on the day after Jesus had arrived at the house of Lazarus in Bethany.
- The great crowd mentioned was the crowd that had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover.
- The people heard that Jesus was coming into the city and were excited by the news.

Verse 13

They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel!”

- Palms were waved to celebrate victory.
- “Hosanna” means “save” or “save us.”
- “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” is a quotation from Psalm 118:26.
- “Blessed is the King of Israel,” is the cry of the people added to the words of the Psalm. It is recorded only here in the Gospel of John.
- On this day, the people received Jesus as the Messiah, as Israel’s king.

Verse 14-15

Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, “Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”

- The quotation comes from Zechariah 9:9.

- To acknowledge the crowd's claims, Jesus acts out Zechariah 9:9. By so doing, he proclaims that the crowd is correct. He acknowledges that he is Israel's king.

Verse 16

At first his disciples did not understand all of this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

- This verse tells us that the disciples did not immediately connect the events of the first Palm Sunday to Zechariah 9:9. It was only later, after Jesus' resurrection, that they looked back on the events of this day and understood what had happened.

Verse 17-18

Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him.

- See John 11:1-43 for the story of Jesus' raising of Lazarus.
- News of this event motivated people to seek out Jesus. They wanted to see the man who could raise the dead.

Verse 19

So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him."

- The Pharisees realized that they are losing the crowd. Jesus' popularity was rising among the people. They now know that their plan to discredit him was not working.

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