

The Crowd at Jerusalem
John 12:9-19
November 21, 2021

Three Crowds at Jerusalem

First, was the enemy - John 12:10 - *But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;*

Second, the believers - John 12:11 - *Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.*

Third, the nationalists - John 12:13 (they) *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.*

We have three groups of people represented in this story.

1. A group of believers - many probably had been impacted by Jesus' ministry.
2. The nationalists - they want Christ to conquer Rome and rid the nation of the occupiers.
3. The religious leaders - they see Jesus as a threat as to their way of life.

Big idea - Jesus is our Savior not a personal fix-it companion.

The crowd at Jerusalem consisted of:

I. Believers in Christ

John 12:9-11

⁹ *Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.* ¹⁰ *But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;* ¹¹ *Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.*

- The miracle convinced many that Jesus was the Christ.
- The ones he had touched were there.
- The ones that had witnessed His miracles were there.
- The ones that heard His preaching were there.

Because of Lazarus, many of the Jews believed in Jesus.

The crowd at Jerusalem also consisted of:

II. Nationalists of Israel

John 12:12–16

¹² On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, ¹⁵ Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. ¹⁶ These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

It is difficult to know exactly what this multitude thought about Jesus. Did they really understand that He was the Son of God and the Messiah of Israel? Or did they merely look upon Him as a King who would deliver them from Roman oppression?

Were they carried away with the emotion of the hour?

Doubtless some in the group were true believers, but the general impression is that most of the people had no real heart interest in the Lord.

Palm branches are a token of rest and peace after sorrow (Rev. 7:9). The word “Hosanna” means “Save now, we pray you.”

It would seem as if the people were acknowledging Jesus to be the One sent from God to save them from Roman's cruelty and to give them rest and peace after the sorrow of their long years of Gentile oppression.

In John 12:14, 15 Jesus rode into the city on a young donkey, a common mode of transportation. More than that, however, the Lord was fulfilling prophecy in riding in this manner.

This quotation was taken from Zechariah 9:9. There the prophet predicted that when the King came to Israel, He would be sitting on a donkey's colt.

So, some in this crowd were basically singing save us now from the Romans.

This group of Jews was in turmoil!

Most wanted Christ as some type of nationalistic leader to free them from Roman bondage. His message was one of forgiveness not of conquering, but they heard and believed what they wanted to. They made Jesus into what they wanted Him to be.

Lastly, the crowd at Jerusalem consisted of:

III. The Enemies of Christ

John 12:17–19

¹⁷ The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. ¹⁸ For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle. ¹⁹ The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

As the report of this notable sign spread, a great throng of people came out to meet Jesus. Unfortunately, their motive was curiosity rather than true faith.

As the crowd grew, and interest in the Savior mounted, the Pharisees were beside themselves. Nothing they could say or do had the slightest effect.

With frenzied exaggeration, they cried out that the whole world had gone after Jesus.

Which crowd are you in?

Are you a believer, nationalist, or an enemy of Christ?

The amazing thing is that He loves all three groups and offers forgiveness to all!

Do you know Jesus?