

Matthew 21:1-11

Dress as a donkey...

Who thinks I look slightly ridiculous?

Today we're thinking about donkey. Aside from Jesus, he's the main character in our reading today. But if you think about it, wouldn't the sight of Jesus riding a donkey have been slightly ridiculous? It's Palm Sunday and we call Jesus' ride into Jerusalem 'the triumphal entry' but the guy is riding on a donkey!

I can imagine the crowd on the route getting excited as they hear that Jesus is riding into Jerusalem. "Here comes our man!" "Here's the coming King!" "He's coming to save us!" All this excitement. They're laying down their cloaks, they're waving palm branches, the authorities are getting nervous, the soldiers are getting prepared for a riot and as Jesus comes into view – they do a double take.

A donkey! He's riding a donkey! Could they not have found him a horse? And it's a tiny baby donkey as well!

What is going on?

Let's have a think. I've got some things here for different jobs.

Dinner time, you need some cutlery... tiny fork and spoon

Need a new phone... toy phone

New glasses... safety glasses

Clean your teeth... hamster chewy stick

Going on holiday and need to pack... purse

These are all ridiculous items for those jobs. But look at them in a fresh light and what are they actually for? In the right context, they are the exact right thing. Wrong context, wrong thing.

The donkey was the right thing for Jesus to ride. Yes, he is the coming king but, no, he isn't the type of king that the crowd expected. The crowd were expecting a king to conquer and lift up the Jewish nation. A war horse would have been a great symbol for that.

But a king on a donkey? That's the sign of a king coming to bring peace, not war. Jesus was riding into Jerusalem to bring God's peace, not to bring conquest and destruction. In Jerusalem, his

weapon wasn't the sword to spill others blood, but the cross for his own blood to be spilled. Jesus wasn't here to get rid of people from the Jewish nation but to invite the nations to experience the peace of God.

And that peace is offered to us. Whatever the turbulence in our own hearts and our own lives, however we may feel broken or hurt, whatever wars and rages within us – Jesus offers us his peace.

He offers us peace with God.

He offers us healing from hurts.

He offers us fresh hope.

Blessed be our King riding on a donkey.

So lets have a moment of silence and I'd like you all to hold your palm cross.

If today you're thinking you'd like to experience anew the peace of God in whatever way, then hold that cross up. Speak silently in your hearts to Jesus, the one who brings peace and ask him today to help you...

Father, we thank you for Jesus and we thank you that he is the king who comes not to divide and conquer but rather to bring peace. We ask for that peace in our hearts today, we ask for the healing that we need today. We ask for the forgiveness that we need today. May your Holy Spirit fill us afresh and renew us in the name of Jesus. Amen.