



WEEKLY STUDY

Week Six

This week we explored the significance of Palm Sunday—how Jesus rode into Jerusalem in the days leading up to his death and resurrection. He rode in as a victorious and humble king riding on a donkey. He didn't manipulate the excitement of the festival in Jerusalem but offered a different kind of freedom through a different kind of Kingdom.

During these weeks leading up to Easter, we are intentionally seeking a deeper awareness of God. To help with that, you are invited to prepare your heart for Easter by taking part in weekly prayer and journaling using the Breaking Open Journal. [Download it today!](#)

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/signup and click on Small Groups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture. Follow the daily prayer prompt and then pray this prayer written by spiritual director Sally Sharpe:

God, we want to be in control. But the more we tighten our grip, the more we manipulate situations and people, which leads to break down. Forgive us, God. Help us to break open instead, trusting that you are with us and for us. Today we let go of control and grab hold of faith in your supernatural power. Amen.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: Zechariah 9.9-10

*Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!
Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!
See, your king comes to you,
righteous and victorious,
lowly and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

¹⁰ *I will take away the chariots from Ephraim
and the warhorses from Jerusalem,
and the battle bow will be broken.*

*He will proclaim peace to the nations.
His rule will extend from sea to sea
and from the River to the ends of the earth.*

- The prophet Zechariah sets the stage for Palm Sunday hundreds of years before Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey. It's a direct affront to the way things get done in this world. The one with most chariots and the best warhorses are supposed to win. But here we have an image of a king who will rule the entire earth with peace. Is this image still challenging today? How would this kind of king be received in your town today?
- *Pray for the peace that King Jesus ushers in today.*

TUESDAY: EXODUS 7.8-13

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ⁹ "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Perform a miracle,' then say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh,' and it will become a snake."

¹⁰ So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. ¹¹ Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts: ¹² Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs. ¹³ Yet Pharaoh's heart became hard and he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

- God is preparing the way for the freedom of His people in Egypt. God interacts with Pharaoh through Moses and Aaron. When Pharaoh demanded a miracle before considering releasing the Israelites, God set in motion a series of signs that eventually led to His people's freedom. Why might God take a seemingly incremental approach to a better future for his people? Pharaoh's men try to compete with God by manipulating their way to "miracles". Where do you see this kind of manipulation in the world today?
- *Pray to the God of miracles, asking for a sign that true freedom is on its way.*

WEDNESDAY: JOHN 12.12-16

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

¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

*¹⁵ "Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion;
see, your king is coming,
seated on a donkey's colt."*

¹⁶ At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

- What stands out to you about this scene? Although Jesus' disciples witnessed the scene with their own eyes, they did not grasp the scope of it. When was the last time you saw the movement of God only after the fact?
- *Pray for the glorified Jesus to reveal the big and small miracles taking place around you today.*

THURSDAY: JOHN 12.17-19

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. ¹⁸ Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. ¹⁹ So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"

- The Palm Sunday crowd included people who had witnessed Jesus bring a dead man back to life. They were swept up in a movement they didn't fully understand. What they did know is that they would want to be brought back to life, too. The Pharisees were beginning to get frustrated by the growing popularity of Jesus. On this day, they could have gone two ways—they could have joined the parade, or ramped up their schemes to take Jesus down.
- *Pray for opportunities to witness to the miraculous power of God today.*

FRIDAY: JOHN 2.11

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

- John shows that the revelation of glory in Jesus was not a one time event. The miracle at Cana of Galilee was just the first of many signs. Some of the miracles seemed almost trivial while others changed people's lives. All of them seem to help point to the ultimate scene of a glorified Jesus on Easter. Where have you seen the glory of Jesus?
- *Thank God for the everyday miracles that reveal the glory of God.*

SATURDAY: MARK 16.17-20

And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

¹⁹ After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. ²⁰ Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

- The signs and miracles continued after Jesus' resurrection and ascension into heaven. They continued through his followers—they continue through us. How can we intentionally live in the stream of the miraculous while avoiding the temptation to manipulate these signs for our own favor?
- *Pray for the humility of Jesus as God works wonders in and through you.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Pastor Mark said this about Holy Week, *"We'll be tempted to tinker with the story this week. We'll be tempted to fast forward. In the story of Holy Week, there is loneliness, disappointment, desperation, ears being cut off with swords, last meals, betrayal, an unfair trial, and a slow death on a cross. It's not easy. But don't give in. Even in those stories there are miracles all along the way, even in your story there are miracles all along the way. And they are setting you up for the big miracle of Easter morning."*

What miracles are in your story? How often do you share them?