

# Hosanna-Save Now

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**HOSANNA** is a word that we hear frequently in worship services, for it is found in many great old hymns and modern spiritual songs. Indeed, it is a word we should hear often, singing loud "Hosanna's", even "Hosanna's in the highest" to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and yet do we all understand what we are singing?

I like what Isaac Watts said in his "Short Essay toward the Improvement of Psalmody"...

Let us begin at the song of Moses, Exodus 15 and proceed to David and Solomon, to the song of the virgin Mary, of Zecharias, Simeon (Lk 2:25-29, 30), and the Angels (Lk 2:14), **the Hosanna of the young children** (Mt 21:15), the praises paid to God by the disciples in the Acts, the doxologies of Paul, and the songs of the Christian church in the book of the Revelation: Every beam of new light that broke into the world gave occasion of fresh joy to the saints, and they were taught to sing of salvation in all the degrees of its advancing glory. (The Works of the Rev. Isaac Watts, Vol. 9)

## HOSANNA DEFINED

**Hosanna** (5614) ([See the 6 uses below](#)). The word **hosanna** in English is a transliteration (not a translation) of a Hebrew phrase composed of two Hebrew words (**hoshiya** + **na'** - spelling varies depending on resource consulted) used only once in Ps 118:25 ([See below](#)>). The meaning of the original Hebrew phrase is something like "*Please save!*," "*Help, I pray,*" "*Save now,*" or "*Save now, I pray!*" (the exact wording depends on source consulted). As **John Piper** explains more fully [below](#), in Jesus' day the word **Hosanna** while originally signifying a cry for help, over time was not only a prayer for help (salvation), but also an invocation of blessing, an exclamation of praise, and/or a shout of celebration. As discussed below, in the context of Jesus' "Triumphal Entry" into Jerusalem, the shouts of **Hosanna** from the crowd seem to have had all three nuances. **Hosanna** would have been a term familiar to everyone in Israel which accounts for the crowds shouting "Hosanna" at the time of the Triumphal Entry of the Messiah into Jerusalem.

The modern Webster's Dictionary defines **Hosanna** as "a cry of acclamation and adoration." The 1828 Webster's Dictionary adds that **Hosanna** is "an exclamation of praise to God or an invocation of blessings. In the Hebrew ceremonies, it was a prayer rehearsed on the several days of the Feast of Tabernacles, in which this word was often repeated."

**Hosanna** is similar to **Hallelujah**, **Sabbath**, **Sabaoth**, **Amen** in that all these words represent transliteration of Hebrew words or phrases. **Hosanna** is composed of two transliterated Hebrew words (aN" = **na** - [see below](#) + h[ʹyviAh = **yasha** - [see below](#)). **TWOT** adds that "The Greek **hosanna** is a transliteration of the Hebrew phrase "O save us," even including the phonetic doubling of the *n* of the particle **nā** ([below](#))."

**J A Motyer** explains that **hosanna** represents a

transliteration from Aramaic **hōša' nā'** (Heb., **hoshiya** + **na'**), meaning "O, save". The precise OT equivalent to the NT cultic shout "Hosanna" is to be found in the **hoshiya** + **na'** of Ps. 118:25. Here **Septuagint (Lxx)** does not view it as a cultic cry of the "hallelujah" type, and produces the translation *sōson*. There is general agreement that we should find in Ps. 118 a liturgy for the Feast of Tabernacles, but beyond that interpretations vary as to who the "coming one" of v. 26 is. The view that it is the Jerusalem pilgrim who is so "blessed" by the welcoming priests (see, e.g. IDB II, S.V. Hosanna) is singularly unimpressive. The whole movement of the

Psalms, and certainly its exalted tone of spiritual elation, is better suited if we imagine the Davidic king, in his role as the → Melchizedek priest, leading his people in procession to Yahweh's house (cf. NBCR). In this context the cry "O, Save" would indicate an imploring cry to Yahweh to bring to reality that which the liturgy has depicted. Judaism later followed out this thought by making the great cry focus on the expectation of the messianic king.

NT By NT times Hosanna had become a full "cultic cry", exactly as is reflected in in **Lxx** use of → **allelouia**. The Greek of Mt. 21:9; Mk. 11:9; Jn. 12:13 **transliterates but does not translate**. The sight of Jesus fulfilling the kingly prophecy of Zech. 9:9, coupled with the strewing and waving of branches reminiscent of the ceremonial fronds which had come to characterize the **Feast of Tabernacles**, prompted the shout appropriate to that occasion and, all unwittingly, they greeted the true → David with the Davidic welcome. All the NT "hosanna" verses above centre their thought on the "**son of David**", the "**kingdom of David**" and the "**King of Israel**". ([New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology](#) - online)

**Friberg** says **hosanna** is...

transliterated from the Aramaic; strictly, a cry expressing an appeal for divine help save! help, we pray! in a liturgical usage, a shout of praise and worship hosanna, we praise you (BORROW [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#))

**W E Vine**...

Ps 118 was recited at the Feast of Tabernacles in the great **Hallel** (Psalms 113 to 118) in responses with the priest, accompanied by the waving of palm and willow branches. "The last day of the feast" was called "*the great Hosanna*;" ([Note](#)) the boughs also were called *hosannas*. ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

**William Hendriksen** notes that Psalm 118

is also one of the six Psalms most often quoted or referred to in the New Testament; the others being Ps 2; Ps 22; Ps 69; Ps 89; and Ps 110. Ps 118 is distinctly Messianic. It speaks about the Stone rejected by the builders but destined to become the Cornerstone (Ps 118:22, cf. Mt. 21:42; cf. Mk 12:10; Lk 20:17; Acts 4:11; and 1Pe 2:7). Note the words immediately following "**Hosanna**," namely, "to the Son of David," and compare 2Sa 7:12, 13 (**Ed**: This is a prophecy of a "Son of David" [Messiah] Who would rule forever) . (Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew: Baker Book House)

**NET Note** says that **Hosanna**

probably by this time (New Testament times) a familiar liturgical expression of praise, on the order of "Hail to the king," although both the underlying Aramaic and Hebrew expressions meant "O Lord, save us." In words familiar to every Jew, the author is indicating that at this point every messianic expectation is now at the point of realization. It is clear from the words of the psalm shouted by the crowd that Jesus is being proclaimed as messianic king... **Hosanna** is an Aramaic expression that literally means, "help, I pray," or "save, I pray." By Jesus' time it had become a strictly liturgical formula of praise, however, and was used as an exclamation of praise to God.

While the word **Hosanna** is not found in English translations of the Old Testament, in the transliterated Hebrew text of Psalm 118:25, we find the phrase "**hōšî' â nnä'**". Ps 118 was in a collection of psalms (Ps 113-118) which the Talmud and later rabbinical writings referred to as the "Hallel." The **Hallel** is a term not found in Scripture but derived from the Hebrew verb **halal** meaning to praise (e.g., Ezra 3:11 and 2Chr 7:6 record the transliterated form **Bühallël**). **Tyndale Bible Dictionary** adds that...

Psalms 113–118 were known as the **Egyptian Hallel**, and first-century AD Jewish tradition assigned them to Moses. During the temple period, this **Hallel** was recited on 18 days in the year, but only once at night, on the Passover. For that occasion it was recited in parts. Psalms 113–114 preceded the meal, prior to drinking the second cup, and Psalms 115–118 were recited after the last cup was filled. This is probably the song that is meant in the reference to the Last Supper of Jesus and his disciples, when they sang a "hymn" (Mt 26:30; Mk 14:26). This **Hallel** was also used for the feasts of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Tabernacles, and Dedication.

## OLD TESTAMENT USE OF "HOSANNA"

**Hosanna** (הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא) is used only once in the OT in Ps 118:25, a psalm which in context thanks God for deliverance but in this specific verse is actually a petition for deliverance.

**Psalm 118:25** O LORD, **Do SAVE** (Hebrew = הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא = **hoshiya na**); **Lxx** = **sozo** in the aorist imperative), we beseech You; O LORD, we beseech You, do send prosperity! **26** Blessed is the **ONE** who comes in the name of the LORD; We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

In Psalm 118:25, the two Hebrew words for "**Do SAVE**" are as follows:

**Do** (04994) (**na**) is a Hebrew particle of "incitement and entreaty, which may usually be rendered: "I pray," "now," or "then"" (Strong). **Baker** adds that "The most common use of this word is similar to the antiquated use of pray as in "pray tell.'**Semantic Domains** adds "that "**na**" means "Please!, I beg you!, I pray!," i.e., a marker of emphasis, with a focus on the desire of the speaker, used to heighten a sense of urgency, intensity (Ge 12:11)"

**Save** (03467) (**yasha'** or [v;y]) (See also **yeshua** from which we get our word "Jesus") is an important Hebrew verb which means to help, to save, to deliver. The root in Arabic is "make wide" which underscores the main thought of yasha' as to bring to a place of safety or broad pasture in contrast to a narrow strait which symbolizes distress or danger.

In light of the crowd's cries of **Hosanna** to Jesus hailing Him as King (Mt 21:9, 15, cf Jn 12:13NIV), it is interesting to not that yasha' (the root verb of Hosanna) was addressed to kings in the Old Testament...

Now when the woman of Tekoa spoke to the king, she fell on her face to the ground and prostrated herself and said, "**Help**, (Hebrew = yasha; Lxx = sozo ~ save, deliver, help) O king." (2Sa 14:4)

And as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall a woman cried out to him, saying, **Help**, (Hebrew = yasha; Lxx = sozo ~ save, deliver, help), my lord, O king!" (2Ki 6:26)

**TWOT** adds that the concept of "wide" "connotes freedom from distress and the ability to pursue one's own objectives. To move from distress to safety requires deliverance. Generally the deliverance must come from somewhere outside the party oppressed. In the OT the kinds of distress, both national and individual, include enemies, natural catastrophies, such as plague or famine, and sickness. The one who brings deliverance is known as the "savior." ([Here is a link to the TWOT](#) = Harris, R L, Archer, G L & Waltke, B K Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

Thus **yasha'** connotes protection that produces freedom from a present danger (2Sa 22:3, Job 5:4), salvation or deliverance in a religious sense (Ps 51:12), a title of God (Savior - 2Sa 22:47; 1Chr 16:35; Ps 18:46; Ps 24:5; Ps 25:5; Ps 27:9; Ps 65:5; Ps 79:9; Ps 85:4; Isa 17:10; 62:11; Mic 7:7 Hab 3:18), victory as an act or a result of conquering (2Sa 22:36; Ps 18:35) It is notable that almost 20% of the uses of yasha' are found during the dark days of Judges (dominated by the heart attitude of Jdg 21:25), which surely speaks of the undeserved lovingkindness of God!

Below are the 198 verses that use **yasha'**

**Might I suggest a simple exercise? Consider observing the OT uses of this great Hebrew verb yasha', asking God to apply the truths to your own life. If time is limited, consider meditating especially on the uses in Psalms.**

**Yasha** - 198 verses in OT and translated (**NAS**) as: avenged(1), avenging(2), brought salvation(2), **deliver**(27), delivered(8), deliverer(3), deliverers(1), deliverers who delivered(1), delivers(2), endowed with salvation(1), gained the victory(1), help(9), helped(5), preserve(1), safe(1), **save**(85), saved(33), saves(5), **savior**(13), surely will not save(1), victorious(1).Exod 2:17; 14:30; Num 10:9; Deut 20:4; 22:27; 28:29, 31; 33:29; Josh 10:6; 22:22; Judg 2:16, 18; 3:9, 15, 31; 6:14f, 31, 36f; 7:2, 7; 8:22; 10:1, 12ff; 12:2f; 13:5; 1 Sam 4:3; 7:8; 9:16; 10:19, 27; 11:3; 14:6, 23, 39; 17:47; 23:2, 5; 25:26, 31, 33; 2 Sam 3:18; 8:6, 14; 10:11, 19; 14:4; 22:3f, 28, 42; 2 Kgs 6:26f; 13:5; 14:27; 16:7; 19:19, 34; 1 Chr 11:14; 16:35; 18:6, 13; 19:12, 19; 2 Chr 20:9; 32:22; Neh 9:27; Job 5:15; 22:29; 26:2; 40:14; Ps 3:7; 6:4; 7:1, 10; 12:1; 17:7; 18:3, 27, 41; 20:6, 9; 22:21; 28:9; 31:2, 16; 33:16; 34:6, 18; 36:6; 37:40; 44:3, 6f; 54:1; 55:16; 57:3; 59:2; 60:5; 69:1, 35; 71:2f; 72:4, 13; 76:9; 80:3, 7, 19; 86:2, 16; 98:1; 106:8, 10, 21, 47; 107:13, 19; 108:6; 109:26, 31; 116:6; 118:25; 119:94, 117, 146; 138:7; 145:19; Prov 20:22; 28:18; Isa 19:20; 25:9; 30:15; 33:22; 35:4; 37:20, 35; 38:20; 43:3, 11f; 45:15, 17, 20ff; 46:7; 47:13, 15; 49:25f; 59:1, 16; 60:16; 63:1, 5, 8f; 64:5; Jer 2:27f; 4:14; 8:20; 11:12; 14:8f; 15:20; 17:14; 23:6; 30:7, 10f; 31:7; 33:16; 42:11; 46:27; Lam 4:17; Ezek 34:22; 36:29; 37:23; Hos 1:7; 13:4, 10; 14:3; Obad 1:21; Hab 1:2; Zeph 3:17, 19; Zech 8:7, 13; 9:9, 16; 10:6; 12:7.

Some notable uses of **yasha** are...

Ex 14:30 Thus the LORD **saved** Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians

dead on the seashore.

Nu 10:9 "And when you go to war in your land against the adversary who attacks you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, that you may be remembered before the LORD your God, and **be saved** from your enemies.

(Ed: Is not this truth still applicable in principle all of us today? How often do I sound the trumpet alarm, in effect crying out to my Deliverer, when the enemy of anger, envy, lust, greed, pride, etc is attacking the castle doors of the heart of God's temple, my body (1Cor 6:19-20, cp Pr 4:23)? Sad to say, too often I open the castle gates, rather than sounding the trumpet alarm to close them tight and draw up the bridge!)

Deut 20:4 for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, **to save** you.'

Deut 33:29 "Blessed are you, O Israel; Who is like you, a people **saved** by the LORD, Who is the shield of your help, And the sword of your majesty! So your enemies shall cringe before you, And you shall tread upon their high places."

Jdg 2:16 (Ed: There are many similar uses in Judges -- Why? Because Israel continually forsook their Jehovah, yet He continually came to their deliverance! Amazing mercy and great grace! Exactly what He does for His children today! Hosanna! Save us, we pray!) Then the LORD raised up judges who **delivered** them from the hands of those who plundered them.

1Sam 4:3 When the people came into the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us take to ourselves from Shiloh the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that it may come among us and **deliver** us from the power of our enemies." (Ed: Notice the subtle, deceptive shift in focus - from Jehovah to a symbol of Jehovah! Do not we do the same thing, beloved? We trust in some counselor, some accountability group, etc, instead of wholly leaning on Jesus' Name! Forgive us, O Lord. Amen).

While this exact Hebrew phrase transliterated "Hosanna" (הוֹשִׁיעָנוּ = **hoshiya na'**) occurs no where else in the Old Testament (except Ps 118:25), there are a number of other Psalms which use the main verb **hoshiya** (lemma = [yasha!](#)) in the context of "**cries for salvation**" (help, deliverance).

**Psalm 12:1** For the choir director; upon an eight-stringed lyre. A Psalm of David. **Help** (Imperative in Hebrew = **hoshiya** ~ **yasha**; **Lxx** = **sozo** in the aorist imperative) , LORD, for the godly man ceases to be, For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.

**Psalm 20:9** **Save** (Imperative in Hebrew = **hoshiya** ~ **yasha**; **Lxx** = **sozo** in the aorist imperative) , O LORD; May the King answer us in the day we call.

**Psalm 28:9** **Save** (Imperative in Hebrew = **hoshiya** ~ **yasha**; **Lxx** = **sozo** in the aorist imperative) Your people and bless Your inheritance; Be their shepherd also, and carry them forever.

**Psalm 60:5** That Your beloved may be delivered, **Save** (Imperative in Hebrew = **hoshiya** ~ **yasha**; **Lxx** = **sozo** in the aorist imperative), with Your right hand, and answer us!

**Psalm 108:6** That Your beloved may be delivered, **Save** (Imperative in Hebrew = **hoshiya** ~ **yasha**; **Lxx** = **sozo** in the aorist imperative) with Your right hand, and answer me!

**Robert Morgan** has an interesting acrostic for "Hosanna" which summarizes the various elements of worship and praise to the Lord...

**H**— Heart. Real worship must bubble up from a sincere heart.

**O**— Offering. Worship should be rendered sacrificially as an offering. The Bible talks about the sacrifice of praise.

**S**— Singing. Worship in the Bible was often accompanied by song.

**A**— Appreciation. Real worship involves thanksgiving and gratitude.

**N**— Now. Every moment of life is an opportunity for praise.

**N**— New. The Bible tells us to sing to the Lord a new song. This means that our worship should always be fresh. Every time we sing to Him, it should be as though we were singing that song for the first time.

A— Adoration. Only those who are in deepest love with Jesus can richly worship Him.

Morgan's acrostic begs the question:

**Is my life a continual clarion (clear) cry of loud (not cacophonous - cp "sweet aroma" 2Cor 2:14, 15, 16) "Hallelujah's" and "Hosanna's" to my King Who will soon return in His ultimate glorious "Triumphal Entry"?**

### **NEW TESTAMENT USES OF "HOSANNA": ALL ASSOCIATED WITH JESUS' "TRIUMPHAL ENTRY"**

**Hosanna to our conq'ring King,  
All hail, incarnate Love!  
Ten thousand songs and glories wait  
To crown Thy head above.**

-Isaac Watts

**Hosanna** is found 6 times in 5 verses in the New Testament - Mt 21:9, 15; Mk 11:9, 10; Jn 12:13. Every occurrence of Hosanna is in the context of **Jesus' "Triumphal Entry" into Jerusalem** (Luke also describes this event - Lk 19:35-36, 37, 38, 39-40). Clearly, the Holy Spirit's goal was to clearly testify to the supreme importance of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem on this specific day! If one interprets Scripture literally (not dispensational, reformed, etc, but literal), there is strong support that this day was the very day of which Daniel had prophesied in Daniel 9:25 (Note especially the time phrase - "*Until Messiah the Prince.*" See Discussion of "The Triumphal Entry" as it relates to Daniel 9:25; see also the tabular summary of the Countdown to Messiah's First Advent). Through the prophet Daniel, God had placed this great day on Israel's calendar of "coming events" some 483 years earlier.

Indeed, the fact that Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem was carried out overtly, in full public view, shows that all Jerusalem would have been able to hear of the "coronation" of Jesus as the **King of Israel** (cf Lk 23:2, 3, Mt 27:42, Mk 15:32, Jn 1:49), the **King of the Jews** (Mt 2:2, 29:11, 29, 37). In light of the clear revelation in every Gospel regarding this specific day we can better understand **Jesus' passionate weeping** followed by His **prophetic warning** in Luke 19...

And as He was now approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, saying, "BLESSED IS **THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD**; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." And when He approached, He saw the city and **wept** over it, saying, "**If you had known in this day**, even you, the things which make for peace! But now (striking contrast) they have been hidden from your eyes, for (term of explanation) the days shall come upon you (Israel, Jews, Jerusalem) when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and will level you to the ground and your children within you (a prophecy fulfilled by the [Roman Siege and Conquest of Jerusalem in 70AD](#)), and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you (Israel as a nation) did not recognize the time of your visitation (episkope - see word study)**. (Lk 19:41, 42, 43, 44, clearly part of the reason Jesus' wept as He looked over the city in ).

The key phrase is Jesus' explanation of why this horrible fate would fall on Jerusalem - '**because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.**' **Now think with me for a moment. What is the implication of Jesus' dire declaration?** Clearly, Jesus is saying that the Jews could have and should have recognized His final entry into Jerusalem on the final week of His life. It is also worth noting that Luke's description of the "Triumphal Entry" (Lk 19:37, 38) omits the word "Hosanna" presumably because he was writing primarily to a Greek/Gentile audience which would not have readily understood the Hebrew phrase "Hosanna." (albeit this is conjecture)

### **BACKGROUND OF THE "TRIUMPHAL ENTRY"**

Jesus' final approach to Jerusalem is usually celebrated as Psalm Sunday although some sources place the actual entry date as Monday. In any event, Jesus' route was first to [Bethphage](#) ("House of figs" between Jericho and Jerusalem, near [Bethany](#) and the [Mount of Olives](#) - Mt 21:1, Mk 11:1, Lk 19:29) which was about 2 miles from Jerusalem, and at an altitude of 2,600 feet provided a panoramic overview of the Holy City.

Prior to the day of Jesus' "Triumphal Entry", the Scriptures emphasize that His time (to be presented to the nation of Israel as their

"Passover Lamb" Jn 1:29, 1Cor 5:7) had not yet come (Jn 2:4, Jn 7:6, 30 Jn 8:20 contrast with Jn 12:23 Jn 13:1, Ec 3:1). But on this day, Jesus was fully aware that His time had come and therefore He allowed the Jews to publicly ascribe adoration, praise and honor to Him as their King.

As **C H Spurgeon** paints the picture of Jesus' final entry into His beloved City, try to imagine yourself as one of the bystanders in this swelling multitude...

AFTER the miracle of the raising of Lazarus, a great fame went abroad concerning our Lord (Jn 11:39-42, 43, 44). He rested still at Bethany, and the people who came up to the feast in great number went out — an easy walk from Jerusalem to Bethany — to see Jesus, and to see Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead. These people, on a certain day, formed a company, and marched with Jesus towards Jerusalem. On the way our Lord sent two of his disciples to fetch a donkey and its colt; and upon this last he rode into the city. Another crowd, coming out of Jerusalem, met the company attending upon Jesus, and, forming one great procession, the whole multitude marched into the city escorting the Lord Jesus in humble state, and paying him honor as King in Zion. Upon no stately war-horse, but riding upon a colt the foal of a donkey, the meek and lowly King entered the city of David attended by vast and enthusiastic crowds, who strewed the fronds of palms, and the branches of trees, and their own garments in the way along which he rode. Our Lord thus received a right royal and popular reception to the metropolis of His Nation. This was a strange event, so very different from anything else that happened to our Savior, that one wonders at it with great wonderment. That it is to be viewed as an important event is clear, since every one of the four Evangelists takes pains to record it (see Matthew xxi., Mark xi., Luke xix., and John xii.). Certainly the Holy Spirit has not preserved us four accounts of all of the great events of our Lord's life, but since He has done so in this case, He thereby calls us to give the more earnest heed to it. Herein is a mine of teaching; let us be motivated to dig into it. Assuredly, this honor paid to our Lord was somewhat strange, as a gleam of sunlight in a day of clouds, a glimpse of summer-tide in a long and dreary winter. He that was, as a rule, "despised and rejected of men" (Isa 53:3), was for the moment surrounded with the acclaim of the crowd. All men saluted Him that day with their **Hosannas**, and the whole city was moved. It was a gala day for the disciples, and a sort of "coronation day" for their Lord.

**Luke** writes...

And as He was now approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen (Luke 19:37)

With this background, let us study the passages that mention "Hosanna."

### THE FIVE HOSANNA PASSAGES

| COMPARISON OF THE ACCLAIM<br>OF THE CROWDS<br>AT JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| Matthew 21:9, 15  | Mark 11:9, 10  | Luke 19:38  | John 12:13                                      |
| Multitudes (were) going before Him, and those who followed after (v9)   | Those who went before, and those who followed after (v9) |   |   |
| <b>Hosanna</b><br>(vv 9, 15)  | <b>Hosanna</b><br>(vv 9,10)                              |   | <b>Hosanna</b>                                  |
| Son of David<br>(vv 9,15)   |  |   |   |
|   |  |   | Branches<br>of the palm trees                   |
| Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord (v9)                    | Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord (v9)     | Blessed is the King Who comes in the Name of the Lord | Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord |
|   |  | the<br>King   | the<br>King of Israel                           |

|   |   |                          |  |
|---|---|--------------------------|--|
|   | Blessed is the coming kingdom<br>of our father David (v9) |                          |  |
|   |   | Peace in heaven          |  |
| Hosanna<br>in the highest (v9)                  | Hosanna<br>in the highest (v10)                           | Glory<br>in the highest! |  |
| Children were crying out in the<br>temple (v15) |   |                          |  |

HOSANNA to King David's Son  
Who reigns on a superior throne;  
We bless the Prince of heav'nly birth,  
Who brings salvation down on earth.

HOSANNA to the Prince of grace;  
Zion, behold thy King!  
Proclaim the Son of David's race,  
And teach the babes to sing.  
--Isaac Watts

### (1) MATTHEW 21:9

**Matthew 21:9:** (For context read Mt 21:1-7) Mt 21:8 Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees (= Palm trees in Jn 12:13, cf Jewish celebration of the defeat of Antiochus Epiphanes in the apocryphal book 1Macc 13:51) and spreading them in the road. **Mt 21:9** The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, "**Hosanna** to the **Son of David** (A well known Messianic title - Mt 1:1, 9:27, 12:23, 15:22, 20:30, 31, 22:42, Lk 18:39); **BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna** in the highest!"

**Comment:** Jesus' entry on a donkey was a clear fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy given almost 500 years earlier...

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! (**Ed:** Exactly what the multitudes were doing as they shouted "Hosanna!") **Behold**, your King is coming to you. He is just (righteous - Jer 23:5-6; **Lxx** = **dikaios**. Zech 9:9NET interprets this description as "legitimate and victorious") and endowed with salvation (Hebrew = **yasha'**; **Lxx** = **sozo**), humble (meek, gentle, lowly; **Lxx** = **praus**), and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Zechariah 9:9 - This Messianic prophecy was fulfilled in Mt 21:5, 6, 7)

When a military figure entered a town on a donkey, it was a sign of **peace**, but when he entered on a white horse it was a sign of **triumph** over his foes. In Jesus' **First Coming** He offered peace to all men (Lk 2:14, Lk 1:79, Jn 14:27, Ps 85:8, Isa 9:6b, Micah 5:5, Jn 16:33, Ro 5:1-note, Eph 2:14-note, Col 1:20-note), but in His **Second Coming**, He triumphs over His enemies and brings **judgment** for all who have rejected Him (cf Heb 9:27, 28-note). Indeed, the Messiah will finally have His true triumphal entry as John records...

And I saw heaven opened, and **behold**, a **white horse**, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness **He judges and wages war**... And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, '**KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**' (Rev 19:11, Rev 19:16-note)

As the Jewish crowd cried "**Hosanna to the Son of David**" they were quoting the Messianic passage in Psalm 118:25 and in so doing they were recognizing Jesus as the "greater David," the long awaited **Messiah**. However they failed to recognize that while He was indeed a Deliverer (from the power of sin and Satan), He was not the genre of Deliverer they desired, as the next five days would soon reveal (Mt 27:20)!

Earlier in His ministry Jesus had quoted Ps 118:26 declaring...

**Lk 13:35** "**Behold** (Strictly speaking this is a command [aorist imperative] The idea is "Listen Carefully"), your house (addressing Israel as a nation) is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until (time phrase indicates a terminus will occur in the future) the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

**Comment:** Notice Jesus did not say "**King**" at this time, but Luke later substitutes **King** for "**He**." This subtle alteration undoubtedly reflects the fact that in Luke 13, Jesus knew that His time had not yet come, whereas in Luke 19, clearly His time had come! This prophecy

was partially fulfilled when the crowds shouted Ps 118:26 at His "Triumphal Entry." However, the truth is that at that time, the religious leaders did not accept Jesus as King, nor did the majority of the nation as proven by His crucifixion at the end of the week. In fact Jesus repeats Ps 118:26 AFTER His "Triumphal Entry" (see Mt 23:39), indicating that Ps 118:26 will be proclaimed some day in the future by the regenerate Jews (Ro 11:26, 27-note, cf Zech 13:8-9) who are present when Jesus returns (Second Coming) and enters Jerusalem to the shouts of loud Hosanna's as He begins His righteous rule as King of kings for 1000 years (Millennium).

**HOSANNA to the Son  
Of David, and of God,  
Who brought the news of pardon down,  
And bought it with His blood.**

**Hendriksen:** It was deplorable... that by far most of these people did not go one step farther: they should have combined Ps 118 with Isa 53 and with Zech 9:9; 13:1. Then they would have recognized in Jesus (that He clearly was) the Messiah Who saves His people from their sins (Mt 1:21). (Hendriksen, William; Kistemaker, Simon J.: Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew; Baker Book House)

**Comment:** Note that the phrase "**Hosanna in the highest**" is similar to the angelic song announcing Jesus' birth, proclaiming "**Glory to God in the Highest**" (Lk 2:13, 14). **R C Sproul** comments that "Men are now singing angels' songs. Heaven is coming to earth." As we contemplate this triumphal scene, may we too sing loudly "**Hosanna in the highest!**" as we anticipate the final and ultimate **Triumphal return of the King of kings!**

**Spurgeon:** Numbers still flocked together till there was not only a *multitude*, but *multitudes*, some that went *before*, and others that *followed*. The crowds preceding and following the Lord were of one mind concerning Him, and, indeed, they seemed to have but one voice. Scarcely knowing what they did, probably dreaming of an earthly kingdom, they lifted up one and the same loyal shout of "**Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.**" They quoted an ancient Psalm (Ps 118:25), and applied it to Jesus; and in every way expressed their delight and expectation. Alas! how soon this gleam of sunlight gave place to black darkness. The day of palms was closely followed by the day of crucifixion. Thus fickle are the sons of men. "*Vox populi*" is anything but "*Vox Dei*." ([The gospel of the kingdom: a commentary on the book of Matthew](#))

**Spurgeon:** "*Vox populi, Vox Dei* they used to say; but the saying is false: the voice of the people may seem to be the voice of God when they shout '**Hosanna in the highest**'; but whose voice is it when they yell out, 'Crucify him, crucify Him' (Mt 27:22, 23, Mk 15:13, 14, Lk 23:21, Lk 19:6)?"

**Spurgeon:** Promise but not Service. Too many professing Christians resemble these people. They are willing enough to receive all the benefits of religion, but are unchanged in heart and purpose; easily moved in this direction or that, like the waves of the sea, driven by the winds and tossed; fickle and passionate; crying "Hosanna" to-day and "Crucify" to-morrow; no real love, though much speech; quickly yielding the produce of the shallow soil, but beneath hard as adamant. They take the solemn sacrament in the morning, but have violated the solemnest sanctions of human life by night-fall. Of such the verdict of our Lord is only too true. "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." (Mt 15:8-9, Mk 7:6, Isa 29:13, cf 1Jn 3:18) They remind us of those who gathered round the Master during His earthly ministry, attracted by the eloquences of His teaching and the splendour of His miracles, but to whom He would not trust Himself, because He knew what was in man (Jn 2:24, 25).

**MacArthur:** As Jesus began to ride into the city on Monday, most of the multitude spread their garments in the road. It was an ancient custom (2Ki 9:13) for citizens to throw their garments in the road for their monarch to ride over, symbolizing their respect for him and their submission to his authority. It was as if to say, "We place ourselves at your feet, even to walk over if necessary."... More than a hundred years earlier, the Jews had hailed Jonathan Maccabeus with the same psalm after he delivered the Acra from Syrian domination... Many people today are open to a Jesus who they think will give them wealth, health, success, happiness, and the other worldly things they want. Like the multitude at the triumphal entry, they will loudly acclaim Jesus as long as they believe He will satisfy their selfish desires. But like the same multitude a few days later, they will reject and denounce Him when He does not deliver as expected. When His Word confronts them with their sin and their need of a Savior, they curse Him and turn away (MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Matthew)



**Ray Pritchard:** By shouting these words, the people were in effect explicitly identifying Jesus as the promised Messiah. No other meaning could reasonably be construed from their exultant shouts. These people believed that at long last the Messiah had come. They were right. In the days to come some would look back and say, "If only we had known." **But after Palm Sunday no one could truly use that excuse. They knew! No one could ever say, "He didn't make Himself plain." How could He have made it plainer? He made Himself so clear that no one could miss it. On Palm Sunday no one was under any compulsion. The nation had a clear choice to make. So did the rulers. The Romans did nothing to interfere. The priests stood by and watched it all happen. Every man had a choice to make that day. For better or for worse, the die was cast. Jesus called for a decision and the nation rendered its verdict.**

**Greg Laurie:** Without question this was the high point of Jesus' human popularity. And few could miss the deep significance of this event... However, the people's cries of "Hosanna!" were misdirected. He was not coming at that time to establish an earthly kingdom; He was coming to die on a Cross... **How about you? Do you cry out, "Hosanna!" when things look promising, but, "Crucify Him!" when they don't? Or are you committed to Jesus of Nazareth whatever your personal circumstances? The answer you give will determine the quality of your entire spiritual life.** John Wesley said, "If I had 300 men who feared nothing but God, hated nothing but sin, and were determined to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, I would set the world on fire." Would you be one of those 300? (Every day with Jesus: First Steps for New Believers)

**Hosanna to his glorious name,  
Who saves by diff'rent ways:  
His mercies lay a sov'reign claim  
To our immortal praise.  
--Isaac Watts**

## **(2) MATTHEW 21:15**

**Matthew 21:15** But (Strong contrast) when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done (His miracles provoked admiration from the crowd but envy from the Pharisees!), and the **children who were shouting in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David,"** they became indignant (angry, displeased, annoyed, vexed) **16** and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'OUT OF THE MOUTH OF INFANTS AND NURSING BABES THOU HAST PREPARED ([katartizo](#)) PRAISE FOR THYSELF?'"

**Children a sweet Hosanna sung,  
And blest their Saviour's name:  
They gave him honour with their tongue,  
While Scribes and Priests blaspheme.  
--Isaac Watts**

**Comment:** Jesus quoted David's psalm describing God's teaching children and nursing infants to give Him praise...

O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Thy name in all the earth,  
Who hast displayed Thy splendor above the heavens!  
**From the mouth of infants and nursing babes  
Thou hast established strength,**  
Because of Thine adversaries,  
To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.  
-Psalm 8:1-2

Note that Jesus is not quoting the Hebrew text but the Greek **Lxx** of Ps 8:2 which reads "*Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou prepared praise.*" (See other references to *children* in Mt 18:3, 4, 5-6, Mt 19:13-14, cf Jn 1:12-13).

Matthew explains that people knew the phrase "**Son of David**" was a title for the Messiah (Mt 22:42 where "Christ" = "Messiah"). Therefore, even in their unregenerate state, the religious leaders undoubtedly understood the significance of the children's cry of "**Hosanna to the Son of David**". Jesus accepted the praise from the children and associated it with Psalm 8:2 which referred to praise given to God, thus clearly implying that Jesus was God! In short, the religious leaders knew that the children's praise was reserved for the Messiah!

**So while children proclaimed Messiah's Name,  
Proud Pharisees impugned His glory and fame!**

As **Paul** writes...

there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world (**Ed**: Like children singing "Hosanna!") to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, that no man should boast before God. (1Cor 1:26-31).

**May we all continually be like little children  
shouting loud Hosanna's to our King!**

**Spurgeon**: The text which Jesus quoted seemed to say to them—God is most glorified in weak things. If praise shall come out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, then is God greatly honored. If the heavens are telling of His Glory, that is something—but if babes are doing it, that is somewhat more! There is more of power displayed in the Lord's raising up the weak things to confound the mighty than in His using the great things to set forth His majesty!

**J H Jowett**: CHILDREN'S voices mingling in the sounds of holy praise! A little child can share in the consecrated life. Young hearts can offer love pure as a limpid spring. Their sympathy is as responsive as the most sensitive harp, and yields to the touch of the tenderest joy and grief. No wonder the Lord "called little children unto Him"! They were unto Him as gracious streams, and as flowers of the field. Let the loving Saviour have our children. Let there be no waiting for maturer years. Maturity may bring the impaired faculty and the embittered emotion. Let Him have things in their beginnings, the seeds and the saplings. Let Him have life before it is formed, before it is "set" in foolish moulds. Let us consecrate the cradle, and the good Lord will grow and nourish His saints.

**Spurgeon comments on Psalm 8**: Not only in the heavens above is the Lord seen, but the earth beneath is telling forth His majesty. In the sky, the massive orbs, rolling in their stupendous grandeur, are witnesses of His power in great things, while here below, **the lisping utterances of babes are the manifestations of His strength in little ones. How often will children tell us of a God Whom we have forgotten! How does their simple prattle refute those learned fools who deny the being of God!** Many men have been made to hold their tongues, while sucklings have borne witness to the glory of the God of heaven... Did not the children cry "Hosannah!" in the temple, when proud Pharisees were silent and contemptuous? and did not the Saviour quote these very words as a justification of their infantile cries? (Mt 21:16, Ps 8:2)

Early church history records many amazing instances of the testimony of children for the truth of God... In a postscript to one of his letters, in which he details his persecution when first preaching in Moorfields, **George Whitefield** says, "I cannot help adding that several little boys and girls, who were fond of sitting round me on the pulpit while I preached, and handed to me people's notes—though they were often pelted with eggs, dirt, etc., thrown at me—never once gave way; but on the contrary, every time I was struck, turned up their little weeping eyes, and seemed to wish they could receive the blows for me. God make them, in their growing years, great and living martyrs for him who, out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, perfects praise!"

**He who delights in the songs of angels is pleased to honour Himself in the eyes of His enemies by the praises of little children.** What a contrast between the glory above the heavens, and the mouths of babes and sucklings (Ps 8:1,2)! Yet by both the Name of God is made excellent.

**Children amidst Thy temple throng  
To see their great Redeemer's face;  
The Son of David is their song,  
And young Hosannas fill the place.**

**The frowning scribes and angry priests  
In vain their impious cavils bring;  
Revenge sits silent in their breasts,  
While Jewish babes proclaim their King.  
--Isaac Watts (Psalm 8:1-2 Paraphrased)**

**John Butler:** The reaction of a person towards Jesus Christ reveals that person's soul and predicts his destiny. In our verse is the reaction of the chief priests and scribes to Jesus Christ. These men were the religious leaders of the day, yet they rejected Him in spite of His goodness... What a great thing to have children praising Jesus Christ. Christ certainly deserved the praise because of the "wonderful" things He did. If we had more children praising Jesus Christ, we would have a whole lot less juvenile delinquency. The problem with our day is that the children are praising Hollywood stars and sports stars and political stars who do not deserve praise, but they are not praising the "Star out of Jacob" (Numbers 24:17) Who deserves praise more than anyone else. (Daily Bible Reading, Volume 2: Sermonettes)

**Theodulf of Orleans'** beautiful hymn [All Glory, Laud and Honor \(full hymn\)](#) has been sung every Palm Sunday for over 1,000 years in churches around the world:

**All glory, laud, and honor  
To Thee, Redeemer, King,  
To whom the lips of children  
Make sweet hosannas ring:  
Thou art the King of Israel,  
Thou David's royal Son,  
Who in the Lord's name comest,  
The King and blessed one!  
Thou didst accept their praises;  
Accept the prayers we bring,  
Who in all good delightest,  
Thou good and gracious King.  
[Gloria, laus et honor](#)**

### **(3-4) MARK 11:9-10**

**Mark 11:9** Those who went in front and those who followed were shouting: "**Hosanna!** BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; **10** Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David; **Hosanna** in the highest!"

Hosanna in the highest strains  
The Church on earth can raise:  
The highest heavens in which He reigns,  
Shall give Him nobler praise.

Hosanna to the King  
Of David's royal blood;  
Bless him, ye saints: He comes to bring  
Salvation from your God.

**-Isaac Watts**

**Comment:** Notice that they were two crowds, one "in front" (those that came out of the Eastern Gate of the city upon hearing Jesus was coming) and the other that "followed" Jesus (this crowd had been with Him at Bethany). **Take a moment to ponder this unrestrained, tumultuous scene of two swelling crowds converging like huge waves crashing into each other at one point, the Person of Jesus!** The Jewish historian Josephus says there upwards of 3 million people present in Jerusalem during Passover. As the crowd cried out seemingly with one voice "**Hosanna,**" they were on one hand offering praise and on the other were saying "**Save us now**", not asking for spiritual but physical salvation from the Romans. In His First Coming Jesus' objective was not to remove Roman oppression but to become the sacrificial Lamb, to take away the sins of the world. As **John MacArthur** says "Jesus did not come to conquer Rome but to conquer sin and death. He did not come to make war with Rome but to make peace with God for men."

**The coming kingdom of our father David** - This description alludes to the so-called "Davidic Covenant," in which God promised King David that he would have a Son Who God would "establish the throne of his

kingdom forever." (2Sa 7:12-13) Clearly the people were under the impression that Jesus was to bring in the kingdom immediately.

**Warren Wiersbe:** (In His "Triumphal Entry") Jesus accomplished two purposes: (1) He declared Himself to be Israel's King and Messiah; and (2) He deliberately challenged the religious leaders. This set in motion the official plot that led to His arrest, trial, and crucifixion. The Jewish leaders had decided not to arrest Him during the feast, but God had determined otherwise. The Lamb of God must die at Passover (1Co 5:7)... What were the Romans thinking as they watched this festive demonstration? After all, the Romans were experts at parades and official public events. We call this event "the Triumphal Entry," but no Roman would have used that term. An official "Roman Triumph" was indeed something to behold! When a Roman general came back to Rome after a complete conquest of an enemy, he was welcomed home with an elaborate official parade. In the parade he would exhibit his trophies of war and the illustrious prisoners he had captured. The victorious general rode in a golden chariot, priests burned incense in his honor, and the people shouted his name and praised him. The procession ended at the arena where the people were entertained by watching the captives fight with the wild beasts. That was a "Roman Triumph." Our Lord's "triumphal entry" was nothing like that, but it was a triumph just the same. He was God's anointed King and Saviour, but His conquest would be spiritual and not military. A Roman general had to kill at least 5,000 enemy soldiers to merit a Triumph; but in a few weeks, the Gospel would "conquer" some 5,000 Jews and transform their lives (Acts 4:4). Christ's "triumph" would be the victory of love over hatred, truth over error, and life over death. ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary - New Testament. 1989. Victor](#))

**Hendricksen:** "**Hosanna in the highest**" shows that Messiah was regarded as a gift from God, the One who dwells in the highest heaven and is worthy of the prayers and the praises of all, including even the angels. One cannot help thinking of Ps 148:1, 2 and of Luke 2:14... **Never shall we be able to understand Palm Sunday unless we perceive that, viewed from the aspect of many of the shouters, it was a Tragedy! Nevertheless, it was also a Triumph, namely, of Christ's love!** Did He not deliberately evoke a demonstration? He fully realized that the enthusiasm of the masses would enrage the hostile leaders in Jerusalem, so that they will now carry out their plot to put Him to death. But He had actually come from heaven to die, to die the most cruel and painful death—in fact, eternal death—in the place of those given to Him by the Father! So intensely did He love sinners that He came from heaven to earth—yes, to hell on earth—in order to save them! From the aspect of Jesus, therefore, and of all those who, by sovereign grace, adored Him for what he really was and is, Palm Sunday was a **Triumph!** (Ibid)

## (5) JOHN 12:13

**John 12:13** (For context read John 12:1-19+; Jn 12:12+ describes "The large crowd" who) took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "**Hosanna!** BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel."

**Comment:** Observe that the crowds proclaimed Jesus as the **King of Israel**, (cp Lk 19:38). The multitude waved palm branches in anticipation of Jesus bringing salvation from their Roman oppression (cp similar "victory parade" described in the apocryphal book 1Macc 13:50, 51). Indeed, here is a victory celebration coming when **palm branches** that will again declare salvation wrought by the King of kings. John records that...

After these things (time phrase) I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and **palm branches** were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."... These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev 7:9, 10, 14-[note](#))

**Dictionary of Biblical Imagery:** The palm tree produces large leaves, or fronds. These fronds found use in the religious ceremonies of ancient Israel. On the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, worshipers celebrated with the fruit of trees, leafy branches, poplars and the frond of the palm, all symbolizing the fertility of harvest. The booths in which the Israelites were to live during the festival were constructed of palm leaves, as well as branches from other trees (Neh 8:15). In the NT Jesus' entry into Jerusalem took on the shape of a religious festival as the crowds waved palm branches in acclamation (Jn 12:13).

**Larry Richards:** The raising of Lazarus seems to have convinced the crowd that Jesus truly was the Messiah,

the Ruler promised by the prophets (Jn 12:9). They greeted Him with shouts acclaiming Him Israel's King. Even "Hosanna" suggests the thought, for it means "Save Now!" While the Triumphal Entry did fulfill prophecy, it also showed that even the many who had come to "believe" in Jesus accepted on their terms, not His. They *believed* what they wanted to believe about Him—that He would free them from Rome and set up God's kingdom on earth. It's not unusual for folks today to *believe* Jesus will act in ways they expect or want Him to. Not unusual, but still a mistake... **Don't Try to Use Jesus. Follow Him!** (The 365 Day Devotional Commentary)

**Spurgeon:** May this day be to your spirits a day of **palms** and **psalms**, of **prayers** and **praises**, of **Hallelujahs** and **Hosannas**.

## **JOHN PIPER ON THE HISTORY OF HOSANNA**

**John Piper** does an excellent job in explaining the "maturation" (or shift in emphasis) of the meaning of **Hosanna** from the time it was originally penned in Psalm 118:25 to the time it was proclaimed in the procession of the King in the Gospels...

Wherever the word "**hosanna**" occurs in the New Testament, do you know what the Greek word is? Right! It's "hosanna." All the English translators did was use English letters (h-o-s-a-n-n-a) to make the sound of a Greek word. But if you look in a Greek dictionary to find what it means, you know what you find? You find that it is really not originally a Greek word after all. The men who wrote the New Testament in Greek did the same thing to a Hebrew word that our English translators did to the Greek word: they just used Greek letters to make the sound of a Hebrew phrase. I know this sounds sort of complicated. But it's really not. Our English word "hosanna" comes from a Greek word "hosanna" which comes from a Hebrew phrase **hoshiya na**.

And that Hebrew phrase is found one solitary place in the whole Old Testament, Psalm 118:25, where it means, "Save, please!" It is a cry to God for help. Like when somebody pushes you off the diving board before you can swim and you come up hollering: "Help, save me ... **Hoshiya na!**"

But something happened to that phrase, **hoshiya na**. The meaning changed over the years. In the psalm it was immediately followed by the exclamation: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" The cry for help, hoshiya na, was answered almost before it came out of the psalmist's mouth. And over the centuries the phrase hoshiya na stopped being a cry for help in the ordinary language of the Jews. Instead it became a shout of hope and exultation. It used to mean, "**Save, please!**" But gradually, it came to mean, "**Salvation! Salvation! Salvation has come!**" It used to be what you would say when you fell off the diving board. But it came to be what you would say when you see the lifeguard coming to save you! It is the bubbling over of a heart that sees hope and joy and salvation on the way and can't keep it in.

So "**Hosanna!**" means, "Hooray for salvation! It's coming! It's here! Salvation! Salvation!"

And "**Hosanna to the Son of David!**" means, "The Son of David is our salvation! Hooray for the king! Salvation belongs to the king!"

And "**Hosanna in the highest!**" means, "Let all the angels in heaven join the song of praise. Salvation! Salvation! Let the highest heaven sing the song!"

**Two Kinds of Hosannas** - Picture a Super Bowl game, and (believe it or not) the Vikings are three points ahead of the Pittsburgh Steelers. The Steelers are on their own 35 and have no more time outs. There are two seconds remaining on the clock. The Vikings' fans are going wild. The Steelers line up, fake a pass to the receivers on the left sideline, and run a wide sweep around the right end, and the quarterback breaks into the open and heads down the right sideline—40—45—50—45. The only hope for the Vikings is Willie Teal, the safety, cutting a diagonal across the field. And out of the Vikings' grandstand come two kinds of hosannas, the old kind and the new kind. One part of the crowd is yelling: "Catch him! Catch him, Willie!" (That's the old hosanna.) The other part of the crowd is yelling, "You got him! You got him, Willie!" (That's the new hosanna.) **The word moved from plea to praise; from cry to confidence.**

**So when we sing "Hosanna" now, let's make it very personal. Let's make it our praise and our confidence. The Son of David has come. He has saved us from guilt and fear and hopelessness. Salvation! Salvation belongs to our God and to the Son! Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest! ([Hosanna! Palm Sunday - Desiring God](#))**

**Greg Laurie** notes that...

CHARLES DICKENS created one of literature's most memorable first lines when, in his novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, he wrote, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." He was writing about the French Revolution, but he might as well have been describing the events surrounding Jesus' final visit to Jerusalem (Ed: As the crowd went from the "best" Hosanna to the "worst" Crucify Him). (Every day with Jesus: First Steps for New Believers)

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**Jon Courson** comments on **Hosanna in Mt 21:9...**

Because the word 'Hosanna' means 'Save now,' the crowd was essentially saying,

'Overthrow the Roman yoke politically. Save Now!'

'Help us economically. Save Now!'

'Lead us militarily. Save Now!'

No wonder that, as the week went on and they realized none of that was His intent, they turned against Jesus.

I see the same thing happen today. I listened as a young man sat in my office a few days ago and said, 'Since I became a Christian, my brother contracted a disease. I prayed for him, but nothing happened. My parents have been down on me ever since you baptized me a few summers ago. My friends no longer want to hang out with me. I don't sense God is using me. And so, even though I know Jesus is real, even though I know there's a heaven, I'm choosing not to walk with Him.'

I tried to reason with him, spent time talking with him, and cried for him. I know the Lord is not through with him. But I was reminded once again that the tendency is within the heart of each of us to cash it in when things don't work out. Once we were in church on Sunday singing, 'Hosanna. Bless the Lord, O my soul.' But then something—or a series of things—went wrong, and our songs turned to sighs.

If you are expecting Jesus to be a 'good luck charm' for you, if you expect Him to help you financially or physically, socially or vocationally, you will be disappointed when things don't go the way you thought they should or hoped they would.

We need to realize that Jesus Christ came to die for our sin and to pay the price for our iniquity. If He never does anything else in this life presently, that is more than enough to merit our loyalty, our affection, our devotion. If He never does another thing for me, if He never gives another blessing to me, I owe Him my life because of what He did on Calvary. (A Day's Journey: 365 Daily Meditations from the Word)

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**Octavius Winslow** - We also learn how empty and evanescent a thing is the bubble of popular favor. When Jesus was come into Jerusalem, "all the city was stirred." But before many days elapsed, the air that rang with His acclaim echoed with His execrations; the voices that then sang "Hosanna!" now shouted "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" and from that very city they led Him out to die. O my soul! bid low for the world's applause; set light by man's favor; be not ensnared by creature smiles. Fill not your censer with the incense, and shape not your sail to catch the breath of, human popularity; still less the favor and adulation of the saints. Their idol today, you may be their object of ridicule tomorrow. 'Hosanna' now, 'Crucify Him' then! Walk humbly with your God. Cling to the faithfulness of the unchanging One, to the friendship of the loving One, to the strength of the Almighty One, and to the compassion and sympathy of the crucified One, and let your Jesus be all in all.

Earthly friends may fail or leave us,  
One day soothe, the next day grieve us,  
But this Friend will ne'er deceive us  
Oh, how He loves!

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**Thomas Watson** - Let our ingratitude be deeply laid to heart. This puts an accent upon sin, and makes it sinful out of measure. How many are the worse for God's mercies? They make a dart of God's mercies—and shoot it at Him! He gives them understanding and they serve the devil with it; He gives them an estate and they feast their lusts with it. Are these worthy to be guests at the Lord's Table—who lift up the heel against Him? Will God welcome such into His presence, as do not know how to use His kindness? Oh, that this sin may fill our faces with blushing! Let us take heed for the future, that we do not follow this bad example in the text. Let us

turn all our murmurings into hosannas. Let us praise God for His mercies—and serve God with His mercies.

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**John MacDuff** - Reader, are you ready to glorify Christ? Are you ready to strew the palm-branch on His path, and to greet Him with the Hosanna? Remember if you will not glorify Him, He will get others to do so. "If these hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." 'Attempt not,' He says still, as He said of old, 'to rob me of my Hosannas. The rocks around--dumb nature--would enter her protest--the stones would become vocal, and shout my praise.' I repeat, if we refuse to honor Christ, and to join the willing multitude who do Him homage, He will get others more loyal to take our place. His glory will not suffer--out of the mouth of babes and sucklings He will perfect praise--yes, from the mute creation, He will raise up a special seed--He will put a tongue and a song into the insensate stone.

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**F B Meyer** comments on the "hypocritical" use of **Hosanna** by the Jewish crowd in the Gospel accounts. He states that they speak of...

Promise but not Service. Too many professing Christians resemble these people. They are willing enough to receive all the benefits of religion, but are unchanged in heart and purpose; easily moved in this direction or that, like the waves of the sea, driven by the winds and tossed; fickle and passionate; crying "**Hosanna**" to-day and "**Crucify**" to-morrow (Mt 27:22-23); no real love, though much speech; quickly yielding the produce of the shallow soil (Mk 4:5-6, 14-17), but beneath hard as adamant. They take the solemn sacrament in the morning, but have violated the solemnest sanctions of human life by night-fall. Of such the verdict of our Lord is only too true. "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." (Mk 7:6) They remind us of those who gathered round the Master during His earthly ministry, attracted by the eloquences of His teaching and the splendour of His miracles, but to whom He would not trust Himself, because He knew what was in man (Jn 2:23, 24, 25). (Exodus Commentary: Devotional - Ex 24:18)

**Comment:** It should be noted not everyone agrees with Meyer's (et al) interpretation. For example **Warren Wiersbe** writes "You sometimes hear it said that the same people who cried "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday ended up crying "Crucify Him!" on Good Friday, but this is not true. The crowd that wanted Him crucified came predominantly from Judea and Jerusalem, whereas the Galilean Jews were sympathetic with Jesus and His ministry." I'm not sure that one can make make this statement dogmatically. I agree with the consensus opinion that the Sunday applause soon turned to Friday cries to crucify Him. Those same lips that uttered His praises on Sunday were soon saying, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matthew 27:25).

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**Jennette Threlfall** was an invalid English woman who was known for her cheery disposition which undoubtedly led her to pen poems like Hosanna, Loud Hosanna...

**Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang;**

Thru pillared court and temple the lovely anthem rang;  
To Jesus, who had blessed them close folded to His breast,  
The children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.  
From Olivet they followed 'mid an exultant crowd,  
The victor palm branch waving, and chanting clear and loud;  
The Lord of men and angels rode on in lowly state,  
Nor scorned that little children should on His bidding wait.  
"Hosanna in the highest!" That ancient song we sing,  
For Christ is our Redeemer, the Lord of heav'n our King;  
O may we ever praise Him with heart and life and voice,  
And in His blissful presence eternally rejoice!

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**HOSANNA (Read Jn 12:12-19, Mt 21:9)** - It's Sunday morning, time for the electronic church in America. Thousands lounge in their living rooms watching television. Almost every channel carries a religious program. Some preachers proclaim a clear-cut gospel message. Others, however, pace before an enraptured audience, telling them that Jesus will heal all their diseases and make them rich. "He wants you well! Poverty is of the devil!" shouts the preacher. And the swelling of applause picks up where he leaves off. People love the "gospel" of prosperity and deliverance from sickness.

Now turn back the calendar to a Sunday morning around 33 A.D. The city is Jerusalem. There's no TV, but there is a preacher who stirs the hopes of an excited crowd. For three years He's been going about Judea and Galilee, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and even raising the dead. Now He rides into Jerusalem on a colt, gladly receiving the acclaim of the crowd. But those who shout "Hosanna!" are accepting Him for what they think He will give them, not for who He is and what He came to do. They want an earthly Messiah who will provide for their material welfare, not a suffering Messiah whose death on the cross will expose their sin, provide forgiveness, and call for a life commitment.

Jesus didn't promise release from all the suffering in the world. But He did offer forgiveness, peace, eternal life, and a cross. Anything less than taking up that cross in serving Him is shallow allegiance.—D. J. De Haan

**The word easy appears only once in the New Testament,  
and then in connection with yoke.**

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**From Hosanna to Crucify** - (John 12:12-13). Sometimes I wonder how many of those who enthusiastically cried, "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday were shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" a few days later. People must have been disappointed, even resentful, that Christ didn't overthrow the Romans and set up an earthly kingdom. He had had a golden opportunity to rally support as He rode into Jerusalem. In contrast to His earlier actions, He didn't try to dampen this jubilant demonstration. Yet neither did he capitalize on the fervor of the crowd and issue a call to arms. Those who longed only for release from foreign domination were disillusioned. The Messiah had not fulfilled their expectations.

Jesus' contemporaries failed to recognize that before He could assert His outward sovereignty, He had to rule the inner citadel of their hearts. The Jews' greatest need was not freedom from Caesar's legions but release from the chains of their own sin. Jesus would rule in power and glory one day, but first He had to pay sin's penalty on the cross. The key to His kingdom was not revolution but repentance.

Through the centuries the issue has not changed. If we follow Christ only because we think He'll shield us from life's hardships, heal all our sicknesses, and guarantee prosperity, we're headed for disillusionment. But if we renounce sin, take up our cross, and live for Him because He is our God, our Creator, and our Redeemer, we will never be disappointed in Him. —D. J. De Haan

**Putting Christ first brings satisfaction that lasts.**

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**Matthew 21:16 (READ: Matthew 21:1-17)** - THE religious leaders were wrong about Jesus. They knew a lot about theology, but they knew nothing about Christ.

The children, however, were right. They were the ones in the temple who shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" They believed that the person riding that unbroken colt was the promised Son of David. They fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 8:2 by giving praise to the Lamb who was about to die for the sins of the world. It was the children who responded with wholehearted joy, even though they couldn't fully understand Jesus' mission of human redemption. Children can teach us a vital lesson about faith. Their innocence makes it easy for them to believe and trust in the one who is truth, goodness, and love all in one.

Adults think they know so much. We try to be so mature, so correct, so religious. But I wonder if we would even recognize the Savior if He walked among us. Or would we, like those people long ago, be deceived because He doesn't fit our preconceived ideas of how He should behave and what His agenda should be?—D C Egnor

Lord, grant me the faith of children, who are able to believe so easily in Your goodness because they have seen so little of this world's evil. May I not be deceived by Satan's empty promises when he offers me something that looks good, but rather trust You, the author and possessor of all true goodness.

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**ISAIAH 9:6** - When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, the crowds cried out, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" (Mt 21:9). Later that same week, however, a mob called for His crucifixion (Mt 27:22). Few people recognized Him as the one Isaiah described as Wonderful (Isa 9:6).

If there is anyone who deserves that name, it is Jesus. He is wonderful in His deity and in His selfless love that led Him from the



shining glories of heaven into the darkness of this sin-cursed world. He is wonderful in His virgin birth, wonderful in His overcoming, sinless life of service, wonderful in His teachings, wonderful in His vicarious death, wonderful in His astounding resurrection, and wonderful in His ascended glory.

Someone has observed, "In Christ we have a love that can never be fathomed, a peace that can never be understood, a rest that can never be disturbed, a joy that can never be diminished, a hope that can never be disappointed, and a spiritual resource that can never be exhausted." —H. G. Bosch

### THE VICTIM OF CALVARY BECAME THE VICTOR OF EASTER.

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The multitudes ... cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! `Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!" Mt 21:9

I have often wondered how many of those people who enthusiastically cried, "**Hosanna!**" on Palm Sunday shouted, "**Crucify Him! Crucify Him!**" a few days later. Some may have been keenly disappointed, even angry, that Christ didn't use His miraculous power to establish an earthly kingdom. Hadn't He created a golden opportunity to rally popular support by parading into Jerusalem and offering Himself as King? **Many Jews failed to recognize that before Jesus would openly assert His sovereignty He had to rule in their hearts. Their greatest need was not to be freed from Caesar's rule but to be released from the chains of pride, self-righteousness, and rebellion against God.**

The issue is the same today Christ does not offer immunity from life's hardships, a cure for every disease, or the promise of financial success What the King offered then is what He offers today—Himself as the sacrifice for our sins, and a challenge to serve Him. If we accept His offer, we will not be disappointed.—D. J. De Haan

### PUTTING CHRIST FIRST

#### BRINGS SATISFACTION THAT LASTS

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**ZECHARIAH 9:9** - Parades have traditionally been celebrations of great achievements. In American history, the greatest parades focused on people such as pilot Charles Lindbergh, the Apollo 11 astronauts, and war heroes. These celebrations were marked by ticker-tape showers and adoring crowds lining the streets of a major city as bands and celebrities passed in review.

But the greatest parade of all time was quite different. It happened in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago. It was a simple one-man donkey ride. Instead of ticker tape, the way was lined with garments and palm branches.

Perhaps the most remarkable element of Jesus' ride into the Holy City was its prophetic significance. In Zechariah 9:9, the prophet described the scene that would unfold more than 500 years later. When Jesus rode that donkey into Jerusalem, fulfilling prophecy as He went, He was giving us one more reason to shout, "**Hosanna!**" He was, and is, the promised Messiah. --J D Bronon

### IF WE BELIEVE IN JESUS' KINGSHIP, WE'LL BOW TO HIM IN WORSHIP.

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**THE JACKAL OR THE LAMB** (Read Mt 27:21) The crowd had gathered, and they wanted someone released. In Jesus' day, it was customary during Passover for a prisoner to be set free in commemoration of the Jews' deliverance from bondage in Egypt.

Pilate was no political novice. So he gave the mob a choice: the One who raised Lazarus from the dead or the one whose sword had probably sent many to an early grave. The choice seemed obvious. But the people chose the murderer Barabbas. Mob rule always prefers the wild, the rebel, the maniacal. It chooses the jackals: the Barabbases, the Stalins, and the Hitlers of the world. It rejects the lowly, the humble, the servants, the lambs. What if we had been there? Whom would we have chosen? We would like to believe that we would have chosen Jesus. But would we? The voice of the crowd is so powerful. A few days before the trial, the crowd had shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Now the people were crying out, "Crucify Him!" The pressure of the multitude can confuse us, frighten us, and carry us away.

**O God, help us. Sometimes in the crowd, in spite of all that we know, we're still tempted to choose the jackal. Help us to choose the Lamb.**-- David C. Egner

The world will try to pressure us  
To fit into its mold,  
But with God's help we can resist  
If to His truth we hold.  
--Sper

**To resist the pressures of the world,  
rely on the power of the Lord.**

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**JAMES COOPER on HOSANNA (אֲנָנָה, Gr. σαββά).**—One of the Hebrew words which (like Amen, Hallelujah, Sabbath, Sabaoth) have passed, transliterated and not translated, from the vocabulary of the Jewish to that of the Christian Church. In the NT it occurs only in three Gospels: in them it is found six times (Mt 21:9 bis, 15, Mk 11:9, 10, Jn 12:13), but only in the history of our Lord's triumphant entry to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, and only as a vocal cry uttered, either by the palm-bearing multitude who met Him, or by the children who hailed Him thereafter in the Temple (Mt 21:15). Among the Jews, however, the word came to designate not alone the cry, but also the branches of palms, myrtle, or willow which on their joyous feast of Tabernacles, and especially on its seventh day, the people were accustomed—for the Law did not enjoin this ceremony—to carry in procession with the priests to the fountain of Shiloah and thence again to the Temple, where these 'hosannas' were piled up and beaten against the altar. It is only with 'Hosanna' as a cry that we are here concerned; but we cannot forget that when, in honour of our Lord, the multitude raised the cry, they 'took branches of palm trees' (Jn 12:13) as well; and therefore, besides expounding the meaning of the cry, we must consider how a ceremony customary at the feast of Tabernacles came to be adopted, popularly, on an occasion when the worshippers were assembling at Jerusalem to celebrate a feast of a widely different character, that of the Passover.

Philologically, the word Hosanna is explained as a derivation from or contraction of Ps 118:25 (Heb.): *ānnā Jahweh hōshī'āh-nnā* ('I beseech thee, O Lord, save now'). This Psalm was sung, and this verse of it used as a refrain by the people, at the feast of Tabernacles; and the refrain was abbreviated, through constant popular repetition, into *Hōsha'nā*, just as the old Canaanitish cry *Hoi Dod* (= 'Ho Adonis') was turned into a common interjection, *Hedad*.

The vocal 'Hosanna' was used by the Jews at the feast of Tabernacles when the branches also were employed; and on this account it has been asserted by Mr. Lewis N. Dembitz (in the Jewish Encyc. vol. vi. p. 276, s.v. 'Hoshana Rabbah') that 'the Gospels by a mistake place the custom in the season shortly before the Passover, instead of in the feast of Booths.' To this it may be answered, (1) that, according to another writer in the same Encyclopedia, Rabbi Kaufmann Kohler (vol. vi. p. 272), Hosanna 'became a popular cry used in solemn processions wherewith was connected the carrying of palm branches as described in 1 Mac 13:51 and 2 Mac 10:7.' But (2) the procession in 1 Mac 13:51 was not at the feast of Tabernacles, which was kept on the 15th day of the 7th month (Lv 23:34), but at a wholly different season, 'on the three and twentieth day of the second month'; while the celebration in 2 Mac 10:7, though 'the procession was after the manner of the feast of Tabernacles' (v. 6), was somewhat later in the year. Thus there was historical and uninspired (for the Jews did not hold the Books of Maccabees to be inspired) precedent for the employment both of the palm-bearing and the shout on other suitable occasions besides the feast of Tabernacles. And (3) was not the occasion of Christ's entry into Jerusalem one that must have seemed eminently suitable alike to His disciples who began it (Lk 19:37) and to the candid (Mt 21:15) and grateful (Jn 12:17) Israelites who joined them in the celebration of it? The Jews, we know, were accustomed to associate with the feast of Tabernacles the highest of those blessings which Messiah was to bring. It was as Messiah that Jesus now presented Himself. He had chosen to ride that day upon the ass's colt, in accordance with Zechariah's prophecy (Zec 9:9), just on purpose to make an offer of Himself to Jerusalem as her promised King (Mt 21:4, Jn 12:14). What, accordingly, would the people look for at His hands? What would they ask from Him? Salvation; but salvation not on its negative side alone, of deliverance, but on its positive side as well, of fruition. If the approaching feast of the Passover would remind them of the former, how their Egyptian oppressor had been smitten (Ex 12:29), it was the feast of Tabernacles which pre-eminently supplied illustrations of the latter: its branches and its booths were redolent of that first night of freedom which their fathers had enjoyed under the cool booths of Succoth (Ex 12:37). so refreshing after the dust and heat of the brickfield and the furnace. Both sides—the negative and the positive, the smiting and the booths—were in one chapter (Ex 12): they could hardly remember the one without the other. The form, therefore, which the celebration of our Lord's entry into Jerusalem is described by the Four Evangelists as assuming, is not such as to require us to suppose that they made a mistake in placing it at the season of the Passover. On the contrary, it was neither unprecedented nor unnatural; and the fact that it was not a legally prescribed but only a popular ceremony, left them quite free to use it when they thought fit. It is not as if the Evangelists had transferred the unleavened bread of the Passover to the Feast of Tabernacles.

Hosanna is rendered in both AV and RV (cf. Ps 118:25, whence it is taken) 'Save now.' The now is not here an adverb of time, but an interjection of entreaty, as in 'Come now': the word means 'Oh! save' (Jewish Encyc.), or 'Save, we beseech Thee.' As given (1) absolutely, as in Mk 11:9 and Jn 12:13, the natural meaning of this would be an address to Christ, as Messiah, asking Him to

bestow the salvation expected of Him; or, as our English hymn expresses it, 'Bring near Thy great salvation.' We can understand how, in this sense, 'Hosanna' should be followed by salutations or acclamations, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD (Ps 118:26, Mt 21:9, Mk 11:9), 'Blessed is the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord' (Mk 11:10), or 'Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord' (Jn 12:13). All the different forms may have been used, for there was a multitude of speakers. The sequence of the thoughts is natural: for if Jesus be once conceived of as able to save (either by His own power or by that of Him that sent Him), the next thing, obviously, for His people to do, after asking Him to exert His power in their behalf, is to rejoice that He has come, and to bless Him for coming.

But (2) it is not only in this absolute construction that the Evangelists use the word Hosanna. St. Matthew employs it with a dative, 'Hosanna to the Son of David' (Mt 21:9); and both St. Matthew and St. Mark give us 'Hosanna in the highest.' Both these variations have been censured by Dr. Kaufmann Kohler (Jewish Encyc. i.e. supra) as 'corruptions of the original version': the addition 'in the highest,' he declares to be 'words which no longer give any sense.' But in a connexion which seems to justify St. Matthew, the dative is used alike in the OT (Ps 3:8 'Salvation belongeth unto the Lord') and in the NT in a passage based upon that Psalm (Rev 7:10 'Salvation unto our God; and unto the Lamb'); while there is surely nothing 'senseless' in the thought that the salvation which God gives, or sends, to men should fill the highest heaven with rejoicings in His praise. We have the idea in the OT (e.g. Ps. 8:1) and in the NT (Lk 2:14, Eph 3:10). To some Christian commentators, however, and those of no mean weight,—e.g. Cornelius à Lapide and Dean Alford,—St. Matthew's use of Hosanna with the dative has seemed to render requisite a different interpretation of the word. Hosanna was, says Alford (on Mt 21:9), 'originally a formula of supplication, but [became] conventionally [one] of gratulation, so that it is followed by a dative, and by "in the highest,"—meaning "may it also be ratified in heaven,"—and he cites 1 K 1:36, where Benaiah answers David, saying, 'Amen: the Lord, the God of my lord the king, say so too.' Cornelius à Lapide takes 'Hosanna to the Son of David' as a prayer for Christ, offered by the people 'asking all prosperous things for Him from God.' Now, this would, in itself, be admissible enough. Of Messiah, even when thought of as Divine and reigning, the Scripture says, 'prayer also shall be made for him continually' (Ps 72:15). But it seems unnatural to postulate so violent an alteration in the meaning of the word—from 'supplication' to 'gratulation,' when, taken in its original meaning, it yields a sufficient sense: 'Save now, for it is to thee, O Son of David, that the power to save us has been given.' It was not unnatural that the people should speak in this sense: as Jews they knew already that 'salvation belongeth unto God' (Ps 3:8). This view derives considerable confirmation from the parallel passage in the Apocalypse, where the whole scene in ch. 7:14, and even the very words—the multitude before the throne and before the Lamb ... with palms in their hands' (Rev 7:9, cf. Jn 12:13), who cry with a loud voice (cf. Lk 19:37), saying, 'Salvation to our God ... and to the Lamb'—seems to be based on what happened at Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday; as if the Seer were beholding the salvation come which that day was asked, and recognized that the palm-bearers of the earthly Jerusalem were precursors of the hosts of the redeemed. St. John, it will be remembered, has, in his Gospel (12:16), the remark, 'These things understood not his disciples at the first, but after he was risen they remembered,' etc. If, as seems clear, the vision is expressed in figures drawn from that event, then the acclaim in heaven must be held to settle the meaning of those Hosannas upon earth: the dative of the Apocalypse is the dative of the Gospel: it is the dative not of a prayer for Jesus, but of an ascription of salvation to Him as its Mediator and Bestower.

It remains only to be added that the Third Evangelist, while recording the same Triumphal Entry, and mentioning the acclamations of the people, omits alike the palm-branches and the word 'Hosanna.' The explanation, no doubt, of both omissions lies in the fact that St. Luke wrote especially for Gentiles: his readers would not have understood the Hosanna, and would have misunderstood the palms. To Greeks the palm-branch would have been, inevitably, the palm of pride and victory: not, as to the Hebrew mind, an emblem of peaceful rest, and freedom, and household joy. 'Hosanna' would have meant nothing at all. Therefore the Evangelist to the Greeks paraphrases the word, and paraphrases with it St. Matthew's and St. Mark's addition to it, 'in the highest'; rendering the whole by 'Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest' (Lk 19:38). And, as St. Matthew had the dative of ascription, 'Hosanna to the Son of David'—as looking for salvation to Him who had come to Jerusalem in this capacity; so St. Luke, in his paraphrase of the Hosanna, employs what we may call a dative clause: his 'Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest,' are introduced so as to show us these as the result of Christ's coming as King in the name of the Lord: it is for these ends that He has come; and on this account the people call Him blessed. It was for these ends that He was born: wherefore the angels sang the same strain over Him at His Nativity (Lk 2:14); it is for these ends now that He paces forward to His cross: and therefore men, though as yet they understand it not (Jn 12:16), are moved, by a Power they know not, to bear Him record. (A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels: Aaron-Zion),