

woman... the one mediator... the man Christ Jesus" etc, see Galatians 4:4, 1 Timothy 2:5, John 1:14, Romans 8:3, Hebrews 2:17.

### 9 Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name...

"Exalted Him" — 'exalted' translates a rare Greek word to draw out how the resurrection overturned Christ's death with a complete reversal, from worldly weakness and shame to heavenly highest honour, authority and power.

"The name that is above" — there were moments in Jesus' earthly ministry of His deity being recognised, e.g. Matt. 14:33. Jesus was not then generally addressed as "the Lord" as Paul calls

Him now (v.11), 15 times in Philippians alone. "Lord" is a divine title of God representing the OT name Yahweh.

### 10-11 ...that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

"Every tongue acknowledge" — God's plan is for people everywhere, and all creation and all spiritual powers, to worship and serve Jesus as Lord, acknowledging His authority.

• **For further study**, see Isaiah 45:23, Romans 14:9, Ephesians 1:9-10 and 21, Colossians 1:20-25, 1 Peter 3:22.

**SUMMARY** Paul reminds readers in the new churches of Jesus' more unexpected qualities. He is writing about 30 years after the Resurrection: time enough to reflect, but still a close memory. Jesus, who had everything, gave that up to enter the world with nothing. His teaching was often followed by extraordinary signs and wonders — delivered by someone of provincial accent and manners.

**APPLICATION** Jesus' way of emptying Himself of "self" is not the world's way, and it is not an easy path for us, but if we are sincere in believing Him we will want to follow His way. Any kind of call to spiritual leadership calls for, first, putting aside "self" to be a good follower.

**QUESTION** "Think of yourself the way Christ Jesus thought of Himself" - what for you is the hardest part of that?

**PRAYER** Lord, You remind us that we are made in Your image.

Yet we persist in trying to make You conform to our image.

Forgive us.

Help us to shrug off the need for position and recognition and to grow a servant heart, with Your help.

Amen.

The Living Word online, with active links, an article and a video, is published early in the week for the following Sunday

<https://www.thelivingword.uk>

also on Medium [www.medium.com/the-living-word](http://www.medium.com/the-living-word) and on Facebook

See also our new site <https://www.freshbread.today> which offers a less structured approach around one verse or short passage

# The Living Word

Find the full version ONLINE at [www.thelivingword.uk](http://www.thelivingword.uk)

PRINT EDITION

Bible readings for April 10, 2022 commentary & references

Non-denominational Bible study for Sunday, April 10 (Revised Common Lectionary readings)

Prepare: read the Bible passages beforehand. Reflect: re-read to think about the message preached

Theme: **The Lord of the unexpected – a king who serves**

Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29

Isaiah 50:4-9 – An unexpected view of the Lord's special servant

Luke 19:28-40 – Jesus enters Jerusalem in a way no one anticipated

Philippians 2:5-11 – Christ the Messiah was not as people expected

## Isaiah 50:4-9 – An unexpected view of the Lord's special servant

*Faithful obedience will bring Him contempt, hatred and false accusation*

This third of four 'servant songs' or prophecies, pictures the faithful and suffering Servant who experiences rejection as a prophet. Early hearers saw the Servant as personifying a purified Israel. Much later the unmistakable allusions to Jesus Christ became apparent.

**4 The Sovereign Lord has given Me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens Me morning by morning, wakens My ear to listen like one being instructed.**

"The Sovereign Lord" – The majestic title Adonai Yahweh is used four times as the One who has given the prophet the ability to hear and speak forth for Him.

**5 The Sovereign Lord has opened My ears; I have not been rebellious, I have not turned away.**

"My ears" — well versed in the Word of God (v.4) the Servant is also an obedient listener, Isaiah 1:19, Psalm 40:6.

**6-7 I offered My back to those who beat Me, My cheeks to those who pulled out My beard; I did not hide My face from mocking and spitting. Because the Sovereign Lord helps Me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set My face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.**

"Mocking and spitting" — the hateful rejection of the servant grows more intense as the Servant Songs progress, Isaiah 49:7, 50:6, 52:14-53:9.

Psalms 118:1-2, 19-29

**1 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever.**

**2 Let Israel say: "His love endures forever."**

**19 Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the Lord.**

**20 This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter.**

**21 I will give You thanks, for You answered me; You have become my salvation.**

**22 The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;**

**23 the Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes.**

**24 The Lord has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad.**

**25 Lord, save us! Lord, grant us success!**

**26 Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless You.**

**27 The Lord is God, and He has made His light shine on us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.**

**28 You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, and I will exalt You.**

**29 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever.**

"I offered My back... I will not be disgraced" — the connection to Jesus' trial and crucifixion cannot be a coincidence, Matt. 27:27-31.

• **For further study:** Prov. 10:13; 19:29; 26:3; Matt. 27:26; John 19:1, 2 Sam. 10:4-5; Neh. 13:25, Job 30:10, Deut. 25:9; Job 17:6; Matt 27:30.

**8 He who vindicates Me is near. Who then will bring charges against Me? Let us face each other! Who is My accuser? Let him confront Me!**

"Vindicates Me" — the Lord will find Him righteous, Isaiah 45:25, 1 Tim. 3:16. Christ, being

**SUMMARY** At this time of year we are graphically reminded how God allowed unspeakably bad things to happen to His incomparably good Son. It's a prophetic picture of rejection and hatred that many of the OT prophets would have related to. The parallels with what actually happened at Jesus' trial cannot be ignored.

**APPLICATION** The enemy of love and truth is Satan, and he works through fear, bullying control, deception and confusion. God's way for us to break that hold is by choosing the opposite spirit. The Suffering Servant, Jesus, was the first to do this and we can do the same in His name — but be ready for the rejection.

**QUESTION** *How ready are you to face rejection for telling people about Jesus?*

### Luke 19:28-40 — Jesus enters Jerusalem in a way no one anticipated

*His Messianic entry is victorious yet righteous and lowly, on a donkey colt*

**28 After Jesus had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.**

"After Jesus had said this" — this was on the Sunday of what we call Passion Week.

**29-30 As He approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.**

"Bethphage" — on the Jerusalem side of Bethany, on the road from Jericho.

"Two of His disciples" — messengers were commonly sent in pairs.

"You will find" — a prophetic insight (word of knowledge) or possibly by prior arrangement.

"Colt... which no one has... ridden" — a donkey colt, with its mother, John 12:15, Matt. 21:7. As an unriden animal it was available for sacred service, Mark 11:2.

**31 "If anyone asks you, 'Why are you**

sinless, also nullifies charges brought against those who believe in Him, Romans 8:31-34.

**9 It is the Sovereign Lord who helps Me. Who will condemn Me? They will all wear out like a garment; the moths will eat them up.**

"Who will condemn Me?" — Paul uses similar language in Romans 8:34. The servant did not suffer because He was guilty, but as Isaiah 53:4-6 brings out, for the guilt of others. Those falsely accusing the righteous are destroyed, as moths cause a garment to fall to pieces, Isaiah 51:8.

**untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'"**

"If anyone asks you" — religious or political leaders, or Roman soldiers, might borrow property for a short time; and Jesus was a king (v.38).

**32-33 Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as He had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, 'Why are you untying the colt?'**

**34 They replied, "The Lord needs it."**

**35 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.**

"Put Jesus on it" — a grown man on a young donkey looked like a peacemaker, not a conqueror. Onlookers would have been reminded of Zechariah's prophecy, Zech. 9:9, "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."

**36 As He went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.**

"Spread their cloaks" — an act of homage, before a king, 2 Kings 9:13.

**37 When He came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:**

"All the miracles" — Lazarus raised from the dead and Bartimaeus having his sight restored were recent events; people would remember others, both in Jerusalem and Galilee, Matt. 21:14, John 12:17.

"Whole crowd of disciples" — impacted by the miracles, and Jesus' teaching, praised God without understanding what they were seeing in Jesus entering the city, Luke 20:9-18.

**38 "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in**

**SUMMARY** Jesus, with legs near the ground on a small donkey, was not an authority figure but a recognisably prophetic one. He did the unexpected, but this was how Zechariah's Messiah had been depicted. His priority was to show Himself in a way people could recognise and believe.

**APPLICATION** That's all that is required of us — to turn to the king and believe in Him. The church has often made salvation complicated, and found ways for people to 'earn a good report' on death. But Jesus bypasses all of that in one very straightforward question: "Do you now believe?" John 16:31.

**QUESTION** *How might you be pursuing a complicated route to faith, when Jesus may be asking something unexpected — to simply believe and trust Him?*

### Philippians 2:5-11 — Christ the Messiah was not as people expected

*Making Himself nothing to suffer a shameful death, He was exalted above all*

This early Christian hymn declares Christ's divine nature. His preexistence, incarnation, death, subsequent exaltation and present lordship.

**5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus...**

"Have the same mindset" — in The Message, "Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself". Christians are to have Jesus' self-sacrificing deferral to the Father and love for others.

**6 ...who, being in very nature [or in the form of] God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage...**

"In very nature" — not appearance, but form reflecting reality. Before appearing as man, Christ was a divine part of the Godhead.

"Equality with God... to His own advantage" —

**heaven and glory in the highest!"**

"Blessed the king who comes..." — see Psalms 118:26, 148:1. Psalm 118, the last of six psalms festival-goers sang on their way to Jerusalem, was a messianic proclamation. The crowd added the word 'king', to the annoyance of the Pharisees.

**39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"**

**40 "I tell you," He replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."**

"The stones will cry out" — if the disciples were silenced, God would bring out His truth another way, e.g. by a miracle.

Jesus, the second Adam, chose to divest Himself of divine status, vv.7-8 by contrast with Adam, made in God's image, and wanting to acquire divine status, Genesis 1:26-27, 3:5.

**7 ...rather, He made Himself nothing by taking the very nature [or form] of a servant, being made in human likeness.**

"He made Himself nothing" — *kenōō* meaning empty, or pour out, or give up a privilege. Jesus relinquished that part of being God, to fully identify with humankind, born as a Jewish baby destined for Roman execution: without giving up any of His true deity.

**8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death — even death on a cross!**

"Found in appearance" — or human likeness — not just looking like a man; without ceasing to be God, He clothed Himself in authentic humanity.

• *For further study on "God sent His Son, born of a*