



WEEK ONE: HELP IS ON THE WAY

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Help is on the way! Just this phrase alone instills hope. During Jesus' time here on earth the Jews were desperate for change. They wanted hope, they wanted relief, and they needed someone to rescue them. We can find ourselves in tough life situations as well, hoping each day for change. As we focus this week on the book of John, how can we glean from the experiences of those before us? What really is our hope? Is help on the way for us today? During your study time, ask Christ to open your mind to any expectations (unwise, misguided, and perhaps even foolish) you may have.

Where Am I Today?

- 1) Have you ever experienced a time in your life when you were in need of rescue? Did help come? When thinking of rescue I often imagine a child jumping into the shallow end of a pool with the parent helping them back to the surface, but it may not always happen that way. Did help come in your time of need as you expected?

Into the Bible

- 2) **Read John 12:1, 12.** Which festival were the crowds gathering for? The crowds that gathered during this time every year were massive, to say the least. An estimated 300,000 people would make the pilgrimage every year from surrounding regions, and that doesn't include the local population. Imagine something like New Year's Eve in Times Square! The Roman government viewed this as prime tourist season and would look to profit from the temple accordingly.



Read in **Exodus 12:1-14** about the historical events that took place prompting Israel to observe and remember for thousands of years, continuing through today. Can you see Jesus portrayed in these verses? In what way?

- 3) The Jews had been oppressed by Rome for over 100 years and felt misunderstood by the government who ruled them. The cost of living was by no means their only heartburn. Israel wanted its identity back. They were tired of over taxation and oppression, but they also wanted their own ruler and they wanted to regain favor with God. **Read John 12:13**. There is a word used in this verse that means "Save Us!" What is this word? The use of this word was a cry out for help! Does knowing this help you better understand what the Jews were enduring?
- 4) **Read John 12:13** and **Matthew 21:11**. Who did the Jews think Jesus was at the time? Was this assumption accurate? Why or why not?



- 5) The Jews were as familiar with the old scriptures and history of their generations as we sometimes are with the details of our favorite television show. Imagine sitting at the coffee shop two thousand years ago discussing the great Messiah that would come and rescue us. Look at the prophecies below from the Old Testament. What picture does this paint of the type of Savior and King that would come?
- a. Isaiah 9:5-7
 - b. Jeremiah 23:5-6
 - c. Zechariah 9:9-10

How Does This Apply?

- 6) **Read Matthew 1:18-21.** What is the world being rescued from? Did that take place? Acts 1:1-5 tells us of the coming Holy Spirit. What do we learn from Mark 3:28-29 that could mean eternal separation from God?
- 7) The Jews of Jesus' time were definitely looking for solutions to their life circumstances, and looking for a king that would overthrow the Roman Empire and bring stability and justice to their lives. When Jesus performed the ultimate gift of love and sacrifice on the cross, what do you think happened to the burdens the people were enduring? Similarly, do we expect Christ to do a 'hostile takeover' of some specific hardship or fear in our lives? What is wrong with these expectations that we may have?



- 8) What is the challenge of remembering life lessons? **Read Exodus 16:1-3** and look at how quickly Israel detached from what God had already done and was currently doing in their lives.
- 9) Assurance of a life with Christ, with all of our debts paid, is true peace. How can you remind yourself not to let foolish expectations remove you from God's help, plan and true rescue? He is all we need as we face trials, sacrifice, and sometimes pain. **Read** and meditate on Matthew 5:43-48 and Matthew 6:25-34.

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

- 10) Jesus came riding in to Jerusalem on a donkey as Passover was approaching and His death was near. Why do you think the transportation method of choice was a donkey instead of an armada of chariots and stallions? Do you see any resemblance of this account within the story of Abraham and Isaac? Could you have expectations of chariots and stallions in life and miss the donkey right in front of your eyes?