



PALM SUNDAY

Told by a child who was there

We had looked forward to our trip to Jerusalem for months. Mom and Dad had saved hard. It took us several days to get to Jerusalem, but at last we reached the Holy City. It was so beautiful and there were many, many people. Everyone was happy and excited. There was colour everywhere and music and laughter. It was festival time and everyone was enjoying themselves.

Then, one morning, something special happened. We were walking along a main street when people started getting excited. There was pointing and pushing, everyone wanting to see. A procession was making its way along the road. Mom and Dad pushed us through the crowds so that we could be close to the road. We found ourselves with lots of other children, all of them eager to see. I expected another Army Parade, with a Roman general riding his big white charger flanked by armed guards looking proud and fierce. It was nothing like that! Instead I saw a man riding a donkey and people around him walking, some even dancing, and children too, hundreds of them, and they were waving palm branches.

And something else - there were men and women running ahead of the donkey to place their cloaks on the road for the donkey to ride over. I still remember the feeling of excitement and joy that swept over me. This was different.

At the center of everything was this man. He seemed so strong and gentle; he didn't look around like the Roman generals did. And yet as he came closer and looked at us, I had the feeling that he was looking straight at me, that he *knew* me. When he looked at me I forgot everything. I forgot about Mom and Dad and I forgot I was in a strange city.

I rushed out with all the other children. From somewhere I found a palm branch and I waved it and shouted with all the others, "Hosanna!" I have never been so happy and excited in all my life. I knew that something very special was happening, and I was part of it. I shall never forget that day.

What happened then will be part of me for the rest of my life. As I saw that man Jesus riding on the donkey surrounded by those people, somehow I knew that he was coming for all people, for everyone, and that included me, a child. And something else. I also knew that what he was doing was right. He wasn't strong, or proud, and he wasn't powerful, and I knew that what he was doing was going to cost him. But I knew it was right. I couldn't explain it then, and I can't explain it now. I just know. Just like any child. All the children with me that day, we knew, and because of that, we ran, and we danced, and we sang Hosannas, and we waved our palm branches. I was glad I was in Jerusalem, that day, for just that.