

never read; in Ps. 8: 2. They had read, but did not understand that "if the Scriptures had already taught that even the unconscious admiration of the infant is a tribute to God's glory, how much more might children of

maturer age be suffered to join in acclamations to His Son." (Alexander.) *He left them; to spend as before the night in peace and quiet at Bethany and thus refreshed Himself for the morrow.*

APPLICATION

Then sent Jesus two disciples, v. 1. Jesus is now about to make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and the question naturally comes to us, why He took this step, so unlike the general tenor of His life. The answer may be given in the words of Professor Andrews: "This entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, 'the city of the Great King,' was a formal assertion of His Messianic claims. It was the last appeal to the Jews to discern and recognize His royal character." By thus deliberately and unmistakably fulfilling this prediction of Zechariah, which the Jewish rulers themselves recognized as applying to the Messiah, He forced them to face His claims. We are obliged to face them too. We may reject Christ if we will, but we cannot escape Him.

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken, v. 4. When Philip came to Nathanael to tell him about Jesus, he said, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write." (John 1: 45.) Among the great and true thoughts of Himself and of His dealings with the world which God gave to the prophets of Israel, was that of a coming Saviour. The thought was apprehended and expressed by them in different ways and with different degrees of clearness, but the Messianic hope runs through prophecy like a golden thread. Now Jesus declares by His conduct here that Messianic prophecy is fulfilled in Him. As we read in the Revelation: "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. 19: 10.)

Behold, thy king cometh, v. 5. Another claim which Jesus makes is to be king. This was the state entry of a monarch into his capital. When the multitude cried "Hosanna to the Son of David!", they were giving Jesus a title which more clearly than any other involved a recognition of Him as the King of Israel. All this acclamation Jesus accepts as right and seemly. It was

so right, so seemly, that it should be given, that Jesus declared to the murmuring Pharisees that, if the people should hold their peace, the very stones by the wayside would cry out. (Luke 19: 40.) Have we accepted Jesus as our King, that He may subdue us entirely to Himself, may rule and defend us, and restrain and conquer all our enemies?

Hosanna, v. 9. This is the Greek form of a Hebrew expression meaning literally, "Save now." But as it is used here it is an ascription rather than a prayer. It ascribes salvation to the Son of David: as we sing in one of our hymns, (Book of Praise, No. 616).

"Salvation and immortal praise

To our victorious king."

Now, we have just been speaking of Christ as king; and this suggests to us the manner of His Kingdom. There have been kings who regarded their kingdoms only as sources of profit and pleasure to themselves. Other kings have exercised their authority for the benefit of the realms over which they ruled. The Lord Jesus is a king of the latter type. He rules, that He may bless His subjects. As King, He brings them salvation.

Nor is His kingdom extended as earthly kingdoms generally are—by force. The wide domains of the British Empire have been won largely by the sword. But it is not upon force that Jesus depends to win territory and subjects. He wins them by love. See Him (v. 14) healing the blind and lame in the Temple. See Him (v. 15) welcoming the praises of the children. See Him, a few days later, bearing His cross and dying upon it. It is by such a life and such a death as this, that He has drawn and bound the hearts of men. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." (John 12: 32.) "The love of Christ constraineth us." (2 Cor. 5: 14.)

Yet, as a just and righteous king, He exe-

See Lesson 1