



Tomorrow, throngs of Christians around the world will be walking in solemn processions, waving palms or olive branches, and shouting “Hosanna.” The political theater being acted out when Jesus entered Jerusalem centuries ago was a precursor of conflicts that have remained with us to the present day.

It was Passover and hundreds of thousands of Jews from all over the Roman Empire had come together to celebrate at the Temple in Jerusalem. The Romans were control freaks and saw enormous challenges to their oppressive rule in such crowds of freedom-loving Jews. So up from their comfortable city on the Mediterranean came the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, and a large cohort of soldiers and cavalry. Real Hollywood stuff meant to intimidate the populace: horses, armor, military formations, trumpets, drums, lots of metal and gold — power, power, power. Entering the western gate, their presence proclaimed the Roman Empire and the Emperor Tiberius, who was the stepson of a god.

Then at the same time entering from the eastern gate comes a rag-tag peasant mob with Jesus riding on a donkey. What were those ordinary folks proclaiming? The Kingdom of God, not Rome,

symbolized by telling the Passover story of God's deliverance of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. Probably there were people following Jesus who didn't know much about him but were simply in favor of anything that was not Roman.

Which procession would we have been in then? Now?

From Brother Toby's STEPPING STONES: Daily Reflections by an Unconventional Monk.

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