

Palm Branches Welcome

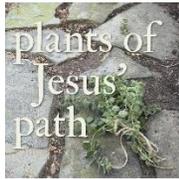
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© Shelley S. Cramm from [Plants of Jesus' Path](#), published at www.gardeninDelight.com on Feb 19, 2026

Welcome back! The award-winning Devotions Blog has been on winter break and returns now to help prepare hearts during the Lenten season with a set-apart series, [Plants of Jesus' Path](#). Palm branches begin our study, bringing us to one of the most prominent botanical encounters engaging our Savior. They heralded His arrival in Jerusalem, standing as a signpost for the events leading to His crucifixion and resurrection. They are memorialized by the name “Palm Sunday,” which begins observance of these events during Holy Week. Yet let us breakthrough the familiarity to see the palm branches welcome with revived hearts—*O Lord, open our eyes, refresh us! Wake us up to the wonder of Your Savior and Living Word!*

They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “*Hosanna!*”
“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the king of Israel!”

John 12:13 NIV



The Plants of Jesus' Path is a 7-week study of plants as a way of cultivating a deeper appreciation for our Savior in the days leading to His crucifixion.

Through the years of my work digging into plants of the Bible and the gardening metaphors in God's Word, I have related palm branches to upright leadership and the righteousness conveyed to us through faith in Jesus ([Romans 3:22](#), [Philippians 1:11](#)).

However, in this season, the Lord has impressed upon me a nuance of right-with-God standing that is hospitality: His initiative to greet His people. God offers His hand in gracious invitation; He splashes us with the love in His heart (by the way, that's what gardens are all about!). The Lord stands before us and He has prepared everything in His gracious favor. He is [the Lord of hosts](#), after all! Let's look into prophecies and backstory that reveal God's gesture of hospitality. But first, a refresher on date palm horticulture.

Palm Tree Horticulture

Quick pause to remember palm tree's growth and habit: Scriptures mentioning palm refer to date palm, *Phoenix dactylifera*, from the fancifully formed Areaceae family of trees. Date palm's towering, slender, rusticated trunks are topped by a burst of colossal branches in a fountain-like spray of gentle green, growing 6 to 9 feet long, a salute of eye-catching refreshment across an arid landscape.

...date palms have a deep connection to the Fertile Crescent and desert areas, bringing delight to weary travelers; they are a signpost of water in dry or coastal regions, for the date palm

grows near water sources, surface water or hidden aquifers, with roots reaching down six or eight feet into various soil types. The trunk grows straight and tall, up to 100 feet, in contrast to surrounding scrubby, arid vegetation. Evergreen branches or fronds soar gracefully out of the treetop, sheltering large clusters of date fruits that are harvested in the fall. New wood fibers grow from within the trunk's center, pressing older fibers outwards to compact at the perimeter, forming a thick skin and fortifying the trunk. The young, softer center tissue allows the tree to bend in breezes or torrential winds.

—quoted from “The Righteous Palm,” [God’s Word for Gardeners Bible](#), page 288

Read more about [date palms](#) in the Garden in Delight Plant Guide

Palm Tree Prophecy

Long before Jesus’ celebrated entrance to Jerusalem, a trio of palm tree appearances hinted to God’s hospitality, picturing His welcome, gracious greetings on a not-always-obvious continuum to triumph and success. His people entered into the land and life He promised them, passing by palm trees in certain places, background scenery that related His overarching grace.

[The Israelites] came to Eilim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and camped there by the water. Exodus 15:27 CJB

This palm-protected oasis was a respite after the magnificent deliverance from slavery in Egypt, the miraculous parting of the Red Sea, and their first desert testing at Marah. The Lord was leading them in a new way, wholly unfamiliar and uncomfortable. Yet the standing of 70 palms was no coincidence: 70 members of Israel’s descendants, from his family of 12 sons, originally came to Egypt ([Genesis 46:27](#)), reminding them that the Lord declared that He had already prepared to bring them home again (Genesis 46:4). *‘I see you, I know you, I am with you, come with me:’* God’s decree of hospitality in the sheltering trees.

So when the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them...the people crossed over opposite Jericho [[city of palm trees](#)]. Joshua 3:14...16
NIV

Years later, as the Israelites entered into the land that God had promised to their fathers, a reiteration of His hospitality lingered in the background: He led them to cross through the parted waters of the Jordan River opposite the ancient oasis known for its palm trees. They did not waltz into a party thrown for them, by any means; their conquest of the land would be difficult and disastrous. Yet this palm tree city related God’s encouragement, connecting them again to God’s shelter and ushering them toward the possession of the land He had prepared for them.



Date palms tower over Shields Date Garden near Palm Desert, CA, perhaps a view like the seeing the “city of palm trees?”

Still more years passed, and as the Israelites grew and prospered in the land, the Lord parked upright judge Deborah under a palm tree as a proclaimer of His reigning favor prevailing.

A prophetess named Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was judge of Israel at that time. Deborah would sit under the Palm Tree of Deborah, which was between the cities of Ramah and Bethel, in the mountains of Ephraim. And the people of Israel would come to her to settle their arguments. Judges 4:4-5 NCV



Imagine Deborah under such a monumental tree!

Palm Branches Welcome

Considering this colossal history, can you see God’s compelling move through Jesus’ followers to give a palm branches welcome to His Son? Standing along the road, the people were planted as palm trees, so to speak, greeting their Jesus with branches held overhead in joyful, prophetic calling. He would become horrifically uncomfortable in His difficult conquest of death, yet assured victory.

palm branches start out growing at ground level; maybe that is how the worshippers were able to grab them so quickly for Jesus’ path!



Happy is He—Jesus—in humility, riding not proud horse but plain donkey, approaching Jerusalem, God’s city. As the people gathered along Jesus’ path, they waved branches, singing, shouting and cheering as He passed by, devoted hearts abounding. See how they exclaimed the triumphant cries predicted by singers and psalmists across God’s story:

Lord, save us! Lord, grant us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you... With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar. Psalm 118:25-26...27 NIV

Far from the noise of archers, in the places where there is water, there they shall recount the righteous deeds of the Lord, his righteous deeds toward his villagers in Israel. Then the people of the Lord will go down to the gates. Awake, awake, Deborah. Awake, awake, sing a song. Judges 5:11-12 NCB

Both the past and the eternal realm resound the palm branches welcome.

After this, I looked; and there before me was a huge crowd, too large for anyone to count, from every nation, tribe, people and language. They were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palm branches in their hands; and they shouted, “Victory to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” Revelation 7:9-10 CJB

We can only imagine what people might have been thinking as they gathered up boughs and rushed to the road to be near Jesus. Who began the *Hallel*? How long before the chorus caught on and the air was filled with song? Did they knowingly fulfill prophecies from Deborah to a revelation not yet received, surging realms of anticipation into cheers and melody? This burst of blessing’s call glimpses the Lord’s throne room, heaping His merciful welcome upon His Son:

For this reason the Lord is still waiting to show his favor to you so he can show you his marvelous love. He waits to be gracious to you. He sits on his throne ready to show mercy to you. For Yahweh is the Lord of justice, faithful to keep his promises. Overwhelmed with bliss are all

who will entwine their hearts in him, waiting for him to help them.
Isaiah 30:18 TPT

The favor of Father and Son, extending far more expansively than the graceful, arching fronds flowing from palm treetops to the eternal realm, flashes in Isaiah's expression, revealing God's sheltering care and beckoning us to come to Him. This is the grip of His grace, the initiative of His hospitality and first love for us ([1 John 4:19](#)).

By greeting His Son, the people parading alongside Jesus also greet us, offering us a holy invitation over the ages, inspiring us as engagers of the story to welcome Jesus into our lives. By His Spirit, let us step into this gracious greeting, opening our hearts to our Holy Savior King, brushing all our cares aside to receive the Lord with bubbling exuberance and happy humility, expecting much more of His kingship to make way in our lives.

Closing Prayer

O Lord, thank You for waving me down! Thank You for drawing me to Your loving shelter and thank You for making a place for me. You are an oasis for my every day; now that is an answer to my Hosanna! cry. O Father, thank You for saving me and showing me Your welcoming heart; let me live in the grip of Your love and establish me in the pattern of approaching You about anything. O Lord of Hosts, my situations may make me uncomfortable and unfamiliar and even painful, but all of this is fertile ground for Your grace-initiative. I pray to be happy in my humility and allow Your hospitality to flow to me. Without my realizing it, You will prepare me to be the desert tree ready to shelter to the dry world around me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



Yes! Look how you've made all your devoted lovers to flourish like palm trees, each one growing in victory, standing with strength! Psalm 92:12 TPT





The Plants of Jesus' Path is a 7-week study of plants as a way of cultivating a deeper appreciation for our Savior in the days leading to His crucifixion. These botanical touchpoints are met through tangible, scent-filled, tasty or intriguing branches, fruits, roots, trees or shrubs that give us something to grasp in a story hugely ungraspable. They are planted in key places to reveal the immensity of our Savior's grace, showing us converging prophecy and backstory to understand who He is and what He has done for us. Imagine the Stations of the Cross coming to Passover Dinner! Encounter palm branches, wheat & grapes in bread & wine, fig tree, spikenard, olive trees, thorns, and hyssop with the garden as your guide to a refreshed heart, ready to celebrate the Resurrection.



Delight yourself in more poetry from this fanciful tree in [D is for Date Palm](#), from the [A-to-Z Primer of Plants from God's Word](#)



But wait, there's more! Find more date palms and ideas for celebrating them from garden-to-table in these Devotions Blogs: for garden know-how, read [Palm Branches Praise](#), [A Lenten Look at Trees: Palm](#), [Plant a Remembrance of Rejoicing](#), and [The 7 Species: A Garden-to-Table Guide](#); for delicious recipes, try infamous date shakes [Date Palm Delights](#) and [Fresh Kale and Date Salad](#)



Find [Date Palm](#) in the [Garden in Delight Plant Guide](#)



Do you enjoy connecting your garden work to God's Word? [My Father is the Gardener](#) is a devotional book for you! Makes a great gift for the gardener, too!



Read more on date palm in the devotions series **The Harvest of Righteousness** in [God's Word for Gardeners Bible](#), page a-47

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