

FPFWC Christian Development



Liberating Gospels

April 2022

Spring Quarter

April 2, 2022

Lesson #1 – Triumphal Entry of the King

SCRIPTURE TEXT – Matthew 21:1-11

ICE BREAKER –

1. How does it encourage you to be with a crowd of people who are praising Jesus?
2. How should you react when God responds to your petition differently than you had wanted?
3. What does the Lord “need” from you today to accomplish His plan in your life? (Matthew 21:3)

Key Verse - Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.—Matthew 21:5

LESSON BACKGROUND

Matthew 21–28 is devoted to the final week of Jesus’ life through the resurrection and post-resurrection appearances. That week left the world changed forever.

Today’s text comes from Monday of that fateful week and covers the triumphal entry. This event is recounted in all four Gospels (see Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–44; John 12:12–19). Matthew, Mark, and Luke frequently overlap in their presentations, so we do not find ourselves surprised by the shared information. But to have an event shared also in John is less expected. Inclusion in all four Gospels speaks to the importance of the triumphal entry.

Several months before, Jesus had warned His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things, including His own death, at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and scribes (Matthew 16:21–28). Peter strongly resisted such an idea. He even rebuked Jesus. The idea of Jesus’ dying was completely foreign to what Peter and the other disciples understood Jesus’ mission to be. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the disciples must have believed that their hopes of establishing Jesus as an earthly Messiah were about to be realized.

Though the disciples did not yet understand, Jesus’ death would fulfill the Scriptures—just not as they had expected. The theme of fulfillment of Scripture permeates Matthew’s Gospel. From Jesus’ birth, Matthew both alluded to prophecy (Matthew 1:1; compare Isaiah 9:7; Jeremiah 23:5; etc.) and outright quoted it (Matthew 1:22–23). Matthew spells out in his account of the triumphal entry that this event fulfilled prophecy once again and paved the way for other fulfillments to come.

LESSON COMMENTARY

The Messiah Offered Himself to the People (21:1–11)

21:1–3. The theme of Jesus' royal identification ("Son of David," 20:30–31) continues in chapter 21 (He is "King," v. 5; "Son of David," vv. 9, 15). In spite of all that will happen to Him in Jerusalem, Jesus was still the King of the Jews.

Bethphage was probably on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. The Mount is an eschatologically important location (e.g., Zch 14:4; Ac 1:9–11) and historically important as the place from which the glory of the Lord departed from Israel (Ezk 9:3; 10:4, 18–19; 11:22–23). Jesus' triumphal entry roughly retraced this route as if to say, "The glory has returned!"

21:4–9. Verse 5 is drawn from Is 62:11 and Zch 9:9, both from eschatological contexts about the deliverer rescuing Israel. **The crowd spread their coats** (v. 8) as a symbolic act. As their coats were under His feet, so they pledged to submit to their King. The **branches from the trees** were reminiscent of the celebration when Judas Maccabeus liberated Israel from Antiochus Epiphanes IV in 164 BC (*1Mac* 10:7; *2Mac* 13:15), suggesting that the crowd expected a similar military emancipation through Jesus. **Hosanna** (v. 9) is probably a term of praise (see Lk 19:37–38), with their wish that their praise be heard in heaven (**in the highest**). The crowd shouted Ps 118:26 (cited also in Mt 23:39). The heart of Ps 118 is God's deliverance of His people (vv. 13–14) who cry out to Him (vv. 15–21). The deliverance would come through the rejected stone (v. 22), the **ONE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD** (v. 26), the Messiah.

21:10–11. This is the prophet may reflect an inadequate view of the residents of Jerusalem regarding Jesus, but Matthew offers no appraisal of their view. But Jesus did function as a prophet in this context.

LESSON NUGGET –The people were blind to their Scriptures (Zech. 9:9). They praised Him with Psalm 118:26 but overlooked verses 22-23, which Jesus quoted later (v.42). Beware of knowing the Bible but not knowing the Lord when He is at work in your midst.

Sources: *Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, and The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary*