

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Coronation of the King

Matthew 21:1-11

Most people today have little, if any, knowledge of a genuine monarchy. Very few of those who hold the title of king or queen in modern societies actually rule...with most typically having little, if any, power or responsibility...only influence. They often rule in name only and are only ceremonial.

Yet, the coronation of a monarch...even today...involves great splendor and pageantry. Always dressed in the most expensive and elaborate robes and jewels...they are paraded through their capital city usually in an ornate carriage drawn by stately horses. Accompanying the royalty would be both domestic and foreign dignitaries...members of their military...along with the religious leaders of their country.

Matthew 21:1-11 portrays the most significant coronation the world has ever seen...but in marked contrast to the kind just described. Even though it was a *true coronation* of a *true king*...there was no pomp, no splendor, and little pageantry.

Traditionally, this coronation has been called Jesus' *triumphal entry*... and it was His last major public appearance before His crucifixion.

I. **THE FINAL PREPARATIONS: (vs. 1-3)**

When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives (vs. 1a)...

After healing the *two blind men* and drawing **Zaccheus** to Himself, the Lord was approaching **Jerusalem** for the final time...about to end His *three year* earthly ministry.

But before He and the apostles entered **Jerusalem**, they stopped at **Bethphage**...a very small village...closely associated with the **Mount of Olives** and **Bethany (Mark 11:1; Luke 19:29)**. Other than what is written in these passages, nothing else is known about it. There's no other *biblical, historical, or archaeological* evidence of its existence.

John recorded that Jesus visited **Mary, Martha, and Lazarus** in **Bethany** "*six days before the Passover*" (**John 12:1-3**)...making it probably the **Saturday** before His crucifixion. As He was about to face the coming week of *trials, confrontations, betrayal, pain, and death*...He sought out His three beloved friends. This is when **Mary**

anointed His feet with costly perfume and wiped them with her hair.

Then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me (vs. 1b-2)... Only in His omniscience could Jesus have known that the **donkey** and her **colt** would have been where they were... waiting for the **two disciples**. Jesus also knew that they would be questioned about taking the animals. Therefore, He instructed them as to how they should respond and what they should say.

If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." (vs. 3)...

Mark stated that "*some of the bystanders*"...who **Luke** says were the owners...did indeed ask... "*What are you doing, untying the colt?*" And "*they spoke to them just as Jesus had told them*" to do...and "*they gave them permission*" (**Mark 11:5-6; Luke 19:33**).

By the owners giving the **two disciples** permission, it seems likely that they were believers in Jesus.

II. **THE FULFILLED PROPHECY: (vs. 4-7)**

This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet (vs. 4)...

Jesus' entire life and ministry were marked by *two* overriding purposes...

- *To do the will of His heavenly Father (Matthew 26:39, 42; John 4:34; John 5:30).*
- *To fulfill the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah's first coming (Matthew 5:17; Luke 13:33; Luke 24:25-27; Acts 3:18, 21).*

"Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold your King is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden'." (vs. 5)...**Zechariah 9:9.**

The daughters of Zion...refers to the inhabitants of **Jerusalem**... which was sometimes referred to as **Zion**...because **Mount Zion** is the city's highest and most prominent hill.

Behold your King is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden...This prophecy is from the prophet **Zechariah**...who **500 years** earlier had predicted that the people of **Jerusalem** would hail the **Messiah** as their **King** as He was **coming** into the city **mounted on a donkey, even a colt.**

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

~Zechariah 9:9

It seems totally inappropriate that any king...much less the **King of kings**...should make His **triumphal entry mounted on a donkey**. But actually, nothing could have been more appropriate than *“the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”* would enter God’s holy city of **Zion** riding on a lowly **beast of burden**.

- Jesus didn’t come in *wealth* but in *poverty*.
- He didn’t come in *grandeur* but in *meekness*.
- And He didn’t come to *slay Israel’s enemies* but to *save all mankind*.

The **incarnation** was the time of His **humiliation**...not the time of His **glorification**.

Although **Matthew** was speaking specifically of **Zechariah’s** prophecy concerning Jesus’ entry into **Jerusalem**...it’s significant that the **triumphal entry** also fulfilled another prophecy. Through **Daniel**, the Lord predicted that the time from **Artaxerxes’s** decree ordering the rebuilding of the **Temple** until the coming of the **Messiah**...that it would be *“seven weeks and sixty-two weeks”* (**Daniel 9:25**)...**483 years**. That marks the date of Jesus’ **triumphal entry** into **Jerusalem**.

The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them (vs. 6)...Not only the **two disciples** that were sent for the **donkey** and its **colt**...but none of the **disciples** understood the Lord’s purpose in this or any of the other events of the coming week...but they obeyed.

“These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.”

~John 12:16

And brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats (vs. 7)...Because they had no blankets to pad the animals’ back...and weren’t sure which one He would ride...they **laid their coats on them** both.

Jesus chose the **colt**...the *smallest* and *lowliest* of the two, and mounted it with the help of the disciples.

“They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Jesus on it.”

~Luke 19:35

III. **THE FLEETING PROCLAMATION:** (vs. 8-9)

Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road (vs. 8)...This was an ancient custom for citizens to **spread their coats in the road** for their monarch to ride over (**II Kings 12:13**)...symbolizing their *respect* for him and their *submission* to his authority.

Others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road...From **John 12:13**, we learn that the branches were *palm trees*...symbolic of *salvation* and *joy*.

This is a prelude to what **Revelation** says will happen one day before the **Messiah**.

“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God.”

~Revelation 7:9-11

The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!” (vs. 9)...

Hosanna...This is a **Hebrew** word and it’s *an exclamatory plea* meaning “*save now.*” But the **crowds** that day weren’t interested in Jesus *saving their souls*...they were only interested in Him *saving their nation.*

Jesus didn’t come to *conquer Rome*...He came to *conquer sin* and *death.* He didn’t come to *make war with Rome*...but to *make peace with God* for man.

The **crowds** would have numbered in the *many thousands* since they were there to celebrate **Passover**...which commemorated the Lord’s deliverance of **Israel** from **Egyptian** bondage.

To the Son of David; blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord...The multitude acknowledged Jesus as the **Son of David** and **Lord**...both **Messianic titles.**

They were *right* in their belief that He was the **Messiah.** But they were *wrong* in their belief about the sort of **Deliverer** He was.

The *words* of the multitude were *right*...but their *hearts were not.*

IV. **THE FICKLED PERPLEXITY:** (vs. 10-11)

When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?” (vs. 10)...

They were just shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!”...now we see elements of **perplexity.**

They had barely finished proclaiming Jesus as the **Messiah**...the **Son of David**...the One who comes in the name of the Lord... when there arose those who were saying, “Who is this?”

And the crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.” (vs. 11)...They no longer called Him the **Son of David** or praised Him as the *great Deliverer*...He was now no more than a **prophet.**

They were interested only in the *kingdom of this world*...not the *kingdom of heaven.* They were willing to accept Jesus as an *earthly king*...but they wouldn’t have Him as their *heavenly King.*

WHAT CAN WE LEARN:

- If we aren’t careful...our **preconceived ideas about what the Lord is at work doing** (*or what we think He should be doing*) can be **wrong**...and *we will miss God.* Ie. A God that owes (promised) me health, wealth, and prosperity!
- **We can say all the right words...even sound religious...but our hearts can be far from God.** This is a great illustration showing the contrast between *one worshipping with their lips* verse *one worshipping with their heart.*
- **WORSHIP GOD in His majesty!** He is King of kings and Lord of lords!