

Mark 11:1-11 The Triumphal Entry Falls Church AM 4/2/2023

How should a King enter?

How do powerful leaders enter in our day? In a bullet-proof limousine, surrounded by secret service agents with guns and radios to call for more guns.

How did ancient powerful kings enter ancient cities? On a war horse, surrounded by strong warriors with swords and spears, and other warriors nearby with more swords.

Mohammed rode into Mecca on a warhorse surrounded by 400 men on horses, surrounded by 10,000 foot soldiers.

How did Jesus enter? On a baby donkey. Today this would be the equivalent of Jesus entering town by being pulled in a children's radio flyer wagon!

What are we supposed to learn from Palm Sunday?

We are supposed to learn what is a true king. A true king is one who serves us, and loves us, a true hero who is so willing to rescue us that he would die for us.

This theme of the Gospel of Mark was already presented in the central verse of the whole book in chapter 10:45 – that Jesus “...*came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*”

Greatness or kingship was defined not as gaining power, demonstrating power, and retaining power. Rather truly great hero is one who is involved in serving, serving, serving. The great one serves our greatest need. After Jesus taught verbally about a king who serves, next Jesus demonstrated that He Himself is that king who serves when Jesus stopped and healed the blind man. The blind man symbolized each of us!

But the question of the Gospel of Mark remained. How far would Jesus be willing to go to serve us? Jesus would do whatever it takes to serve us. **When the Lord entered, He showed His purpose in coming was to save us.**

1. Jesus prepared for His entry. (v.1-6)

v.1 – 2, Jesus sent two of His disciples ahead of Him to get the small donkey.

Why did Jesus prepare for His entry by sending for a small donkey? It was not that He was tired. Jesus had walked everywhere. Jesus prepared to ride on the donkey because that action would show that He is the king. For Jesus to ride on the donkey would fulfill prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, “*Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*”

This riding on a young donkey was not a last minute, spur-of-the-moment idea. This was a prepared and deliberate claim to be the One about whom Zechariah wrote.

By coming on a young donkey, Jesus was openly proclaiming what the blind man had shouted – Jesus was the son of David. Jesus was demonstrating, “I am Your king!”

Think of the great generals of Roman empire who came into cities, and compare them to Jesus on a young colt. What became of them?

Many Roman generals were incredible in strength, power, and splendor, but the entire Roman Empire is all gone now. Meanwhile, what Jesus did when He entered Jerusalem was to establish a kingdom that continues to this day, and that will outlast all other kingdoms of this world. Every kingdom that sets itself against the Kingdom of Christ will be broken in pieces.

Jesus came as their king, but it was not what they thought a king should be and do. He prepared Himself and entered not to purge them of being controlled by foreign kings, but rather to purge them of being controlled by their own sin.

2. Jesus entered, heading for the cross. (v.7-11)

v. 7 – Jesus actually sat on the donkey and rode on it!

v.8 – the crowds of people traveling with Jesus toward Jerusalem got into this, and began to sing and shout the words of certain psalms. They greeted Jesus as the One who came in the name of the Lord. They threw down their coats on the road, and leafy branches such as palm branches on the road. They were expressing their joy at the coming of Jesus.

The crowds did not know how symbolic this was. The crowd did not know that the donkey had never been ridden before. The Old Testament way was that only animals that had not been used in any other way could be used for worship of God. In the heart of this symbolism was the truth that Jesus had come to give His life in Jerusalem as a ransom sacrifice for the sins of men, women and children.

v.9,10 – people shouted the hymns and sang the songs.

v.11 – There were aspects of the coming of Jesus that day that looked like a king. However, there is something else in the story of Palm Sunday that draws us in. Jesus’ coming was humble and lowly. Jesus came into the city with a few songs and shouts and branches, but largely, don’t forget that Jesus that day entered the very city that had rejected Him.

What a remarkable thing – that the Son of David would enter the city of David in humility and gentleness. The humility we see in Jesus riding on a small donkey is intentional. Jesus, on purpose, was not entering WITHOUT a big parade and show of power.

Palm Sunday points us to the heart of Christianity.

Jesus did not come to get something, Jesus came to give something.

Jesus did not come to demand our loyalty. Jesus came to give us rescue. Jesus did not come to place upon us the expectation of us praising Him; instead, Jesus came to lift our burdens and give us rest.

Jesus did not come to tell us all sorts of ways we need to serve Him better. Instead, Jesus came to proclaim that He has served us the best of all.

Jesus did not come to make our lives harder – so that we cannot lift it all up. Jesus came to say that he lifted Himself up, so that you can lay all your heavy burdens down.

Lay your burdens down. Lay your burdens down!

And when we have finally are given a safe place to lay down all of our burdens, there is a wave of peace and a sense of rightness in our hearts and minds that bursts forth into praise! Worship like this is not a burden at all.

When we have rest, we naturally praise.

This Lord came to give peace, and when we have His peace, we worship Him.

3. Jesus is coming again.

When we consider the first readers of Mark's Gospel, the Christians in Rome, what an amazing contrast they must have seen! When those Christians, who were used to the generals of armies coming into cities with all the royal show of the Roman Empire, what an amazing thing it must have been to read about Jesus' entrance to the city with gentleness and humility.

Yet Jesus' Lordship is established, and all of those other generals are long gone.

Jesus established a kingdom that will outlast all other kingdoms.

Jesus had come to take His throne.

Before He went to His throne, Jesus committed Himself to go to the cross for us.

Verse 11 told us that Jesus looked around at everything. Freeze frame. Jesus in Jerusalem and verse 11 told us that Jesus went into the temple. Jesus in the temple looking around at everything. What must have gone through Jesus' own mind? We know that Jesus had been to that temple as a 12 year-old boy. Did He remember His teaching, and see fruit from it in men of the temple who now understood? Did He think about the coming destruction of that temple building, and the coming destruction of His own body on the cross?

Jesus realized it was already late, so He went out to a town called Bethany with his Twelve disciples. Jesus was determined to follow through with His mission to save us and grant us peace. And in the following chapters, Mark

reported for us that Jesus did follow through. He did die for us. He rose. He ascended and entered heaven's gates with glory that is proper for His Kingship.

Conclusion:

What we see in Jesus is being developed in us as followers of Our true king.

From verse 10, to verse 11, the crowds seem to have dispersed. The triumphal entry of Jesus was a very temporary glimpse of Jesus receiving praise.

It seems that Jesus was only king for a day.

But the truth is that He is king forever.

And He is a different leader than the leaders of this world.

Jesus is both the Lion and the lamb. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah who has triumphed. And the Lamb who has been slain for us. He is both.

Here is the one application – what we see in Jesus is being developed in us as followers of Our true king.

Meekness and majesty.

These two things seem utterly incompatible in the same person, but they are not.

Christians are strong. Majestically strong. We get that from Jesus Christ our king. We are children of God, and we have a place in God's kingdom. We have a reserved seat at the Banquet Table of Christ in His glory. Jesus is coming again to take us to the heavenly Jerusalem.

At the same time, Christians are humble. Completely humble. We get that from Jesus Christ our Passover Lamb. We would serve others. We would lay down our lives for others.

Strong and humble.

Jesus insists on justice, yet boundless in grace.

Jesus demands holiness, yet He shows us mercy.

We welcome this Lord into our lives. We pray for His Spirit to direct us.

We see growing in ourselves the evidence of His Spirit.

Daily we welcome His love, His joy, His peace, His patience, His kindness, His goodness, His faithfulness, His gentleness, His self-control?

We cherish the dominating influence of Christ, and we receive His favor and blessing, while we become more and more like Him.

We serve others sacrificially.

We take a strong stand for God, and His Kingdom, and we will not back down.

We are becoming both meek and majestic, like Christ.

We cry out Hosanna – O Lord save us, and we humbly receive His mercy.

And we would be willing to confront sin with strength, and we insist that our King be obeyed.

We bring peace. But we insist on Christ's rule.

What we see in Jesus is being developed in us as followers of Our true king.

Romans 12:1, *"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."*

What we see in Jesus is being developed in us as followers of Our true king.