

Message #72

Matthew 21:1-11

This passage of Scripture is commonly referred to as “Christ’s Triumphal Entry Into Jerusalem.” However, when we examine what is actually here, it would be better termed “Christ’s Tragic Entry Into Jerusalem.” This event is so crucial to the life of Jesus Christ that it is described by all Gospel writers (**Matt. 21:1-11**; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-42, John 12:12-14).

EVEN THOUGH JESUS WAS PUBLICALLY HONORED AS HE ENTERED JERUSALEM, THE RESPONSE OF MOST OF THE PEOPLE WAS TRAGICALLY EMOTIONAL AND NOT TRULY SPIRITUAL.

This should have been the greatest day in the history of Israel. The Davidic King, the Messiah was entering God’s capital city, Jerusalem. But as we shall see, Christ’s entrance stirs the emotions but it doesn’t change the hearts.

PART #1 – Jesus approaches Jerusalem from a specific direction. 21:1a

Bethphage is a village located about ¾’s of a mile east of Jerusalem on the south side of the Mount of Olives. This mount has significant Messianic connections (Zech. 14:4-11). Now keep in mind this is the King of Kings, who should have been carried on a cart and honored as King; but He is walking all the way to Jerusalem and the purpose of the walk is to be condemned, scourged, crucified and killed (Matt. 20:18-19).

PART #2 – Jesus sends two disciples to get Him a donkey. 21:1a-3

It was not the usual custom for a king to ride into a major city on a donkey. The normal procedure was that a king would ride in on a beautiful white horse.

(Instruction #1) - Go into the village and you will immediately find a donkey and a colt. 21:2a

Right here is a divine demonstration of omniscience and omnipresence. Only Matthew records the fact that there was a donkey and its colt.

(Instruction #2) - Untie them both and bring them to Me. 21:2b

(Instruction #3) - If anyone says anything say, “The Lord has need of them” and it will be okay. 21:3

Now the “if” clause of **verse 3** is a third class conditional clause, which is a clause of probability. Jesus is telling His disciples you probably will be questioned about what you are doing, after all, you are two strangers taking someone else’s donkey and colt. The pronoun “he” (he will send him) refers to the owner(s). Now keep in mind that a donkey and colt were valuable commodities. They were the cars and trucks of Jesus’ day.

PART #3 – Jesus did this to fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah. **21:4-5**

Zechariah predicted that when Israel's righteous King would enter Jerusalem, He would enter it in humble fashion—mounted on a donkey—in fact, a colt of the donkey (Zech. 9:9). Everything Jesus is doing is carefully predicted by God. He is fulfilling every Messianic assignment. The next time He comes, He will come from the sky on a white horse (Rev. 19:11ff.).

PART #4 – The disciples obeyed and did just as Jesus instructed them. **21:6**

Mark tells us they found the animals, untied them, were questioned, said what Jesus told them to say and were given permission to take the animals (Mark 11:4-6). Luke informs us that it was the owners who questioned them (Luke 19:33).

PART #5 – The disciples bring the animals to Jesus, put their coats on the colt and Jesus sits on the animal. **21:7**

Now Mark and Luke inform us that this colt was one on which no man had ever sat (Mark 11:2; Luke 19:30). Jesus is climbing on the back of animal that has never had a rider. It is an absolute miracle of God that Jesus just gets on the back of this animal and rides into Jerusalem.

PART #6 – The crowd responds to Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a colt. **21:8-11**

(Response #1) - Most of the crowd spread their coats on the road and others cut branches from trees and laid them on the road. **21:8**

Jesus tells us most disciples did not know what was happening (John 12:13-16*). I want you to notice that “most” of the crowd did this, but not all. In fact, some of this same crowd will want Him crucified (Matt. 27:23-25).

(Response #2) - The crowds were going into Jerusalem ahead of Christ announcing Him. **21:9**

The word “hosanna” (ὡσαυτά) is a Greek word which comes from a Hebrew word הוֹשַׁעֲנָא which means save us or deliver us from evil (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 446). Notice carefully how they identify Jesus: 1) Son of David-King; 2) He comes in the name of the Lord; 3) He is the One who can save us from the highest. Many of these words are quotes from Psalm 118:25-26—a Psalm which clearly reveals the Messiah would be rejected (Psalm 118:22).

(Response #3) - The people in Jerusalem have been stirred and want to know who is this one. **21:10**

The Greek word “stirred” is one that means they were shaken and agitated like an earthquake (Smith, p. 404). This is not repentance but agitation.

(Response #4) - The crowds identify Jesus the wrong way. **21:11**

Their response should have been “This is our great King Messiah”; “This is the Lord, worship Him.” But all they say is Jesus is the prophet from Nazareth. They missed it. They didn’t get it. **What Israel wanted to be saved from was Rome, not sin.** Luke tells us Jesus wept (Luke 19:41). Jesus was silent and His face was wet with tears because Israel missed a wonderful relationship with God.