

All Hail King Jesus

Matthew 21:1-11

¹ Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them at once.” ⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, ⁵ “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’ ” ⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. ⁸ Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” ¹⁰ And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?” ¹¹ And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.” ¹

Setting the stage

Three events immediately precede Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and help explain what occurs.

Matthew 20:17-19 – For the third time, Jesus predicts his imminent death.

Matthew 20:20-28 – In a discussion on rank and privilege, Jesus explains that greatness is based on service.

Matthew 20:29-34 – In a nation of spiritually blind people, Jesus gives sight and salvation to the blind.

¹ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version.* Wheaton : Standard Bible Society, 2001

The King enters triumphantly

Weaving the four gospels together, here is a chronology of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem².

1. Jesus makes preparations for his entrance into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-3, 6, 7a; Mark 11:1-7a; Luke 19:28-35a; John 12:2, 12).
2. Jesus starts riding toward Jerusalem (Matthew 21:4, 5, 7; Mark 11:7b; Luke 19:35b; John 12:14, 15).
3. People accompanying Jesus from Bethany spread their outer garments on the path, while other cut branches from the trees to help pave the way (Matthew 21:8; Mark 11:8; Luke 19:36).
4. Pilgrims already in Jerusalem who had heard about the raising of Lazarus join in the celebration (John 12:1, 12, 13a, 18).
5. As the two groups meet, the enthusiasm mounts (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9, 10; Luke 19:37, 38; John 12:13b).
6. The excitement reaches a climax as those who had seen the resurrection of Lazarus bear testimony (John 12:17).
7. Beside themselves with envy, the Pharisees appeal to Jesus to stop the celebration (Luke 19:39, 40).
8. Jesus, upon seeing the city, weeps for Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44).
9. As Jesus enters Jerusalem, the entire city is stirred (Matthew 21:10, 11; Mark 11:11, 12).

On Palm Sunday, the question is asked, "Who is Jesus?" (Matthew 21:10). Some think he is the Messiah (Matthew 21:9). Others believe he is just a prophet (Matthew 21:11). What the people missed is that Jesus had already presented his credentials.

Jesus is the Sovereign King who brings salvation.

² Adapted from *Matthew: New Testament Commentary*. William Hendriksen, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1973, p. 760-762.