

DATE of MESSAGE: March 20, 2016

MESSAGE TITLE: Behold, Our King!

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 21:1-17

GETTING STARTED

At his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus was openly declaring that He is the King of all people, not just a good prophet as some thought. Today, we celebrate King Jesus and consider whether or not we are living in submission to His reign over us.

OBSERVATION

To what town has Jesus come? Why?

Jesus told his disciples to bring him a donkey and her colt and to explain to anyone who questioned them that the Lord needed them. How does this command underscore Jesus' authority and rule over creation?

King Jesus arrives on a colt and not on a stallion. What does this image communicate?

What do the people begin to shout as Jesus enters the city? What did their praises mean?

Who did the people say Jesus was (verses 10 and 11)? How did their assessment of Jesus differ with who He really is?

What upset Jesus so much about what He saw happening in the temple? What did He do about it?

How did Jesus view the temple? What had the money changers turned it into?

Who approached Jesus in the temple for help? How did the chief priests and scribes respond to Jesus' healing? What did their response reveal about their hearts?

Why were the religious leaders angry with Jesus for not silencing the children who were crying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David?' How did Jesus respond to their criticism?

APPLICATION

Jesus arrived in Jerusalem as the King but the crowd considered Him a prophet from Nazareth (verse 11). We of course have the full story and know that Jesus is in fact the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He has the right to rule in our lives, just as He had the right to request use of the animals in today's story (verses 2-3). But do we truly see Him as our King? Are we demonstrating through our obedience to Him that He really is who He claims to be? Or are we merely giving Him lip service? Prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you King Jesus. Submit to Him as the One who has the right to rule in your life and who demonstrated His love for you by going to the cross.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help me see you as the King of Kings who has the right to sit on the throne of my life. I readily confess that Jesus is Lord (Philippians 2:11) and want so much for my life to reflect that truth! Please bring my attitudes and actions in line with your will. Show me areas of my life where I have disregarded your right to rule in me. And grant me the gift of repentance that leads to honoring you as my King.

SHARE POINT

Read Matthew 2:1-17 and review the application questions. Share with someone in your life how God's Word is changing you into a growing disciple. Encourage that person to do the same. That person could be a family member, a friend, a co-worker or a neighbor.

COMMENTARY NOTES

21:1 Jerusalem is the city of the Great King, the center of Israel's religious life and messianic expectations. Bethphage is traditionally located less than a mile east of Jerusalem on the southeast slope of the Mount of Olives which rises 2,600 feet above sea level and lies to the east of Jerusalem, directly overlooking the temple area.

21:2 Jesus and the disciples were approaching Jerusalem from the east as they came up the road from Jericho. When they reached the town of Bethphage, He sent them ahead to find a donkey and her colt. Jesus told the disciples to bring the animals to Him. If anyone questioned their actions, they were to explain that the Lord needed them. As Messiah, Jesus had the right to request whatever He needed.

21:3 Jesus plainly refers to himself as the Lord, the sovereign orchestrator of these events.

21:4-5 Matthew specifies that Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem upon a colt fulfills the prophecy of Zec. 9:9. Jesus' action is an open declaration that he is the righteous Davidic Messiah, for the prophecy says, 'your king is coming to you.' Matthew could also be alluding to Gen. 49:8-12 where Jacob prophesies about a kingly descendant of Judah whose rule will extend to the nations. The first line of the OT quotation, however, is from Isa. 62:11 and uses the phrase daughter of Zion to refer to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

21:6-7 Matthew alone mentions two animals, which Zechariah's prophecy allows. Having the mother donkey move alongside her unbroken colt would be the best way to calm it during the noisy entrance into Jerusalem. Jesus sat on cloaks which were draped over the colt on which he rode.

21:8 Cloaks on the road symbolized the crowd's submission to Jesus as king. The palm branches symbolized Jewish nationalism and victory. They were connected with prominent Jewish victories and with the Festival of Tabernacles; palm motifs were common on both Jewish coinage and synagogue decoration.

21:9 Hosanna means 'O save.' The crowd acknowledges that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah by calling him Son of David.

21:10 Just as 'all Jerusalem' was troubled in 2:3 when the King of the Jews was born, so here the religious establishment is once again stirred up, fearing that Jesus may usurp their power.

21:11 Although Moses had predicted the coming of a 'prophet like me' to whom you shall listen, there is no indication that the crowds here in Jerusalem recognized Jesus as that prophet.

21:12 This verse might seem to suggest that this cleansing of the temple took place immediately after Christ's entry into Jerusalem on Sunday (vs. 1-11), but Mark clearly places the incident on Monday morning (Mark 11:12-19). At times Matthew condenses some of the narrative of Jesus' activities during Holy Week and arranges it topically, which is the case here. Once Matthew tells readers that Jesus entered Jerusalem, he recounts what else Jesus did in Jerusalem without specifying that it was the next day. Within the temple was a sort of market where commercial activity enabled pilgrims from throughout the Diaspora to participate in temple activities, exchange their own currency for temple currency, and purchase animals and other items for sacrifices.

2:13 Jesus compares the temple and its keepers to a den of robbers. Thieves often used caves to store their ill-gotten wealth and to plot future crimes.

21:15-16 Hosanna to the Son of David! Jesus acknowledges the children's praise and links it to Psalm 8:2 which the religious leaders should have known applied such praise to God, thus confirming Jesus as the divine Messiah.

21:17 Bethany is a village about two miles from Jerusalem on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. Perhaps Jesus lodged at the home of Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha, with whom he had close association.

SOURCES CONSULTED

The ESV Study Bible

The HCSB Study Bible

Serendipity Bible for Personal and Small Group Study

The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament