



4 | MARK 11:1-10

A DIFFERENT KIND OF KING

Jesus is a different kind of King. With him, the way up is the way down. Follow him in humble surrender, ready to give your life away as he did. Worship the King of kings and Lord of lords in wonder and humility.

Outline

- 1. THE KING'S PREPARATION (11:1-5)**
 - An Unlikely Presentation
 - A Prophetic Presentation
 - An Historic Presentation
- 2. THE KING'S TRANSPORTATION (11:6)**
 - A Sign of Peace
 - A Sign of Protection
 - A Sign of Invitation
- 3. THE KING'S CORONATION (11:7-10)**
 - A Lowly Coronation
 - A Costly Coronation
 - A Hopeful Coronation
 - A Joyful Coronation
 - A Sacrificial Coronation

Call to Worship

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.
²⁵ Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord. —Psalm 118:24-26

Songs

Hosanna (Praise is Rising)
Cornerstone
All Glory Laud and Honor
All Glory be to Christ
Hear the Call of the Kingdom

Announcements

WELCOME: We are glad you are here! Be sure to grab a Welcome Packet if you are visiting with us.

Introduction

YOU'RE NOT OLD ENOUGH

Sometimes we are so **eager to do something**, we can **hardly help ourselves**. During World War II, a young teenager tried to enlist in the navy. Only **fifteen** but large for his years, he told the recruiting officer in Richmond, Virginia, that he was sixteen. The officer looked at him and shook his head.

“Sorry, son, **you're not old enough.**”

Two months later, the eager young man returned. The recruiter **didn't seem to remember** him, so this time he listed his age as **seventeen**. Again, the answer was, “Sorry, **you're not old enough.**”

He waited a **few weeks and returned again**. This time, in reply to the recruiter's question, he said he was **eighteen**. The **recruiter** looked at the teenager and smiled. “Young man,” he said, “**we would really love to have you in our navy**. The only trouble is, you're **aging so fast** that I'm afraid we'd have to put you **on pension** before the war was over.”

THE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM: PSALMS OF ASCENT

Similarly, every Passover in Israel, there was excitement and eagerness. People wanted to be together and fellowship and worship the Lord. **It was such a happy occasion**. People would **stop working and journey** to Jerusalem. They would sing the Psalms of Ascent on the way to Jerusalem. The Songs of Ascent are a collection of 15 Psalms (**Psalms 120-134**) that were traditionally sung by Hebrew pilgrims. Jerusalem is 2500 feet above sea level (and **3500 feet above the rest of the territory**), so everyone going to Jerusalem ascends to the city. You can imagine them singing the old songs and Psalms of the faith with eagerness and anticipation of offering their lamb at the temple.

JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF AS MESSIAH

Even more exciting was the deep joy they experienced to see **Jesus revealing himself to be Israel's Messiah** in Jerusalem during his Triumphant Entry. His entrance into Jerusalem is going to be quite different than what the people expected. This is a most unique entrance of a king, and Jesus does **something unusual here**. Here, and here only, our Lord appears to drop his own choice to call public attention to himself. He deliberately makes a public entry into Jerusalem, at the head of his disciples.

People were so **moved by the revelation of Jesus** as the Messiah of Israel, that they **joyfully took off their coats** and throwing them down on the ground before him. They were waving palm branches. They were so excited. **Isn't it exciting to know the King of kings and the Lord of lords?**

Jesus voluntarily rides into the holy city, surrounded by a vast multitude, crying, Hosanna, like king David returning to his palace in triumph.¹

“Hosanna” is a spontaneous expression of amazement at God’s saving work.—Aurelius Augustine (354-430)²

FIVE DAYS AWAY FROM CRUCIFIXION

As we look at our text in Mark 11, it’s the beginning of Holy Week. **In five days, our Lord will be nailed to a cross.** It’s really the beginning of Jesus’ great work of redemption as King of kings. As King he is going to **stoop very low** to become our substitute and our Savior!

MASSIVE CROWD, 250K LAMBS

Many people from all over the known world are coming to Jerusalem because of the Passover. The Old Testament required **Jews to come to Jerusalem for three Festivals each year: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.** Passover had the largest attendance. According to the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, as many as **250,000 lambs would be slain for up to 1 million people.** The non-holiday population in Jerusalem was about 100,000—so this is **ten times normal capacity!**³ Imagine this **incredible multitude** of people who had made their way to Jerusalem for the Passover!

The crowds would have been too large for the city to accommodate, so many would have camped along the hillsides or stayed in neighboring villages. With so many lambs being slain, rivers of blood would fill the Kidron Valley below the temple. Jesus is the King, but he’s also the Lamb of God. On this Palm Sunday, he’s **preparing his entrance to Israel as the Messianic King.**

Palm branches symbolize strength, as well as the salvation that a conqueror brings. Both Romans and Jews used them in victory parades. When Judas Maccabaeus defeated the pagan invaders and cleansed the temple in 164 BC, his followers entered the city waving palm branches in celebration. Here, the crowds wave palm branches to welcome Jesus.

Jesus is a different kind of King. Many monarchs would be coronated amidst much pomp and pageantry. But **Jesus presents himself as King** in such a humble gentle way.

Key thought: Jesus is a different kind of King. With him, the way up is the way down. The way to life and power is death to self and weakness. Follow him in humble surrender, ready to give your life away as he did. Worship the King of kings and Lord of lords in wonder and humility.

SOME THINK HE’S COME TO CONQUER ROME

Jesus has been saying over and over again that he’s going to give his life in Jerusalem. He will be crucified and will rise again. He’s coming to conquer—yes, but not in a way that anyone thinks. **Some in the great crowd thinks he’s come to conquer Rome.**

¹ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on Mark* (London: William Hunt, 1859), 226.

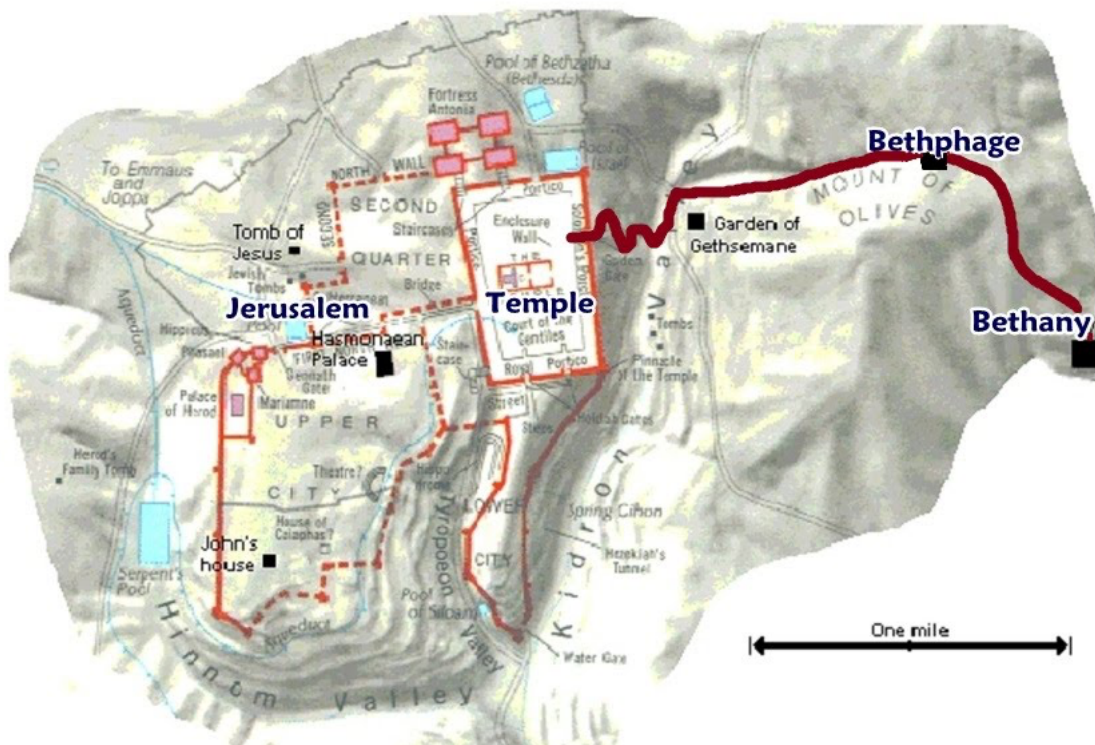
² Augustine, “Tractate on John, 51.2” from Philip Schaff et al., eds. *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. 2 series (14 vols. each). (New York: Christian Literature, 1887–1894). Reprint, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 17:283.

³ Carl Friedrich Keil. *The Books of the Kings* (London: T. & T. Clark, 1872), 136.

Others, in the crowd know that this is bigger than earthly politics. **The children in the crowd are especially cued in** and keep crying out spontaneously, “Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest.” They seem to know this is about heavenly politics. Our Lord has come to conquer way beyond Rome. He’s come to defeat sin, death, hell, and the devil.

COMING FROM JERICHO WITH BLIND BARTIMAEUS

Jesus had just healed blind Bartimaeus in Jericho, and the Lord with his disciples the the Jericho road to Jerusalem. Now he’s coming to Jerusalem to open the eyes of the blind in a different way. He’s going to **reveal to all Israel that he’s the Messiah**.



They had already climbed most of the **treacherous, mountain** pathway that **twisted and turned for 17 miles** from Jericho up to Jerusalem. They pass through **Bethany and Bethphage** and descend the Mount of Olives viewing the twin mountain, Mount Moriah, where the can see **the beautiful Jerusalem temple** in the distance from afar. The temple is one of the wonders of the ancient world. What beast is fit for a king to ride into that great city with that great temple. Jesus does choose a white stallion, but a lowly baby donkey, a weak little colt.

Jesus then gives his disciples a command to get a mother donkey and her colt.

Mark 11:1-11 | Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples ² and said to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. ³ If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.’”

⁴And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. ⁵And some of those standing there said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” ⁶And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. ⁷And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. ⁸And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. ⁹And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed he who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰**Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!**”

Jesus sent two disciples to **get a mother donkey and a young male donkey**, called a colt or a foal. We don't know which two disciples Jesus sent, but they were ready to obey. They didn't fully understand what Jesus was doing, but they obeyed.

Certainly, the disciples do not know the full impact of what is happening, but Jesus knows. ***This is one of the most important moments in human history!*** These disciples are called upon to obey and to carry out the Lord's command. And they do it.

Jesus himself is carrying out the will and instructions of the Father. He is **fulfilling prophecies that have been ordained since the foundation of the world**. It is on this day, **Palm Sunday that Jesus presents himself as the true Messiah**, the rightful king of Israel.

1. THE KING'S PRESENTATION (11:1-3)

Jesus is the rightful King of Israel, her Messiah. What we notice right away is the choice of a little baby donkey for the King of the universe to ride into Jerusalem. How peculiar!

AN UNLIKELY PRESENTATION

What are the odds that the greatest King ever would present himself on a lowly donkey? And **what a privilege for that lowly young donkey**. Look at the little donkey that is chosen by Jesus ahead of time. The disciples were to take it and let the owners know, “The Lord needs this little donkey and his mother.”

Mark 11:1-3 | Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.’”



HE CALLS UNLIKELY VESSELS

Of course, **Matthew** (21:2) tells us they also brought the mother because the colt was so young and humble. How beautiful to see the Lord has need of this little pure-bred colt of a donkey. **God loves to use unlikely vessels.** He used **the smelly shepherds** in the field—or a **young virgin** from the obscurity of Galilee. God loves to use the most unlikely.

1 Corinthians 1:26-27, 29, NKJV | Not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called.* ²⁷ But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty, ²⁹ that no flesh should glory in his presence.

God chooses. Just like he chose that little donkey to sit on for his presentation, he chooses us. He doesn't choose the brilliant or the eloquent. He elects the poor, the illiterate, and the most despised of the earth, so that no flesh would glory in his presence. God calls the unlikely.

HE CALLS THE WEAK

He calls a young colt for his inauguration as King. He loves to use the weakest and most humble. He says,

Matthew 19:14 | **Let the little children come to me** and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven

Perhaps you feel so **unworthy, and weak, and unqualified.** That's who God chooses. He doesn't call the righteous, but those who know they are sinners to repentance.

APPLICATION: GOD CALLS YOU AT YOUR WEAKEST

I want to encourage you, that **God often calls you to do the greatest things when you feel the weakest.** Don't give in to your flesh when you feel weak. Let the power of Christ rest upon you. The weight of Christ literally was upon that young little colt that day. He was so young that he needed his mama. That donkey was so young and weak, but he was called by God to carry the King of kings on his King's coronation day. He would be revealed Messiah of Israel.

Jesus **chose that little donkey and his mother to help him** in his great coronation of Palm Sunday. And **God has chosen you to help coronate him** every day of your life. Crown him King of kings. Don't hold anything back. Yes, you fail and falter. Yes, you have fallen. But the righteous fall seven times and keep getting up and going forward (*cf* Pro 24:16). **God chooses the weak so that we can give him all the glory!**

Corrie ten Boom was once asked if it were difficult for her to remain humble with all the success of her ministry. Her reply was simple.

“When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday on the back of a donkey, and everyone was waving palm branches and throwing garments onto the road, and singing praises, do you think that for one moment it ever entered the head of that donkey that any of that was for him?” She continued, **“If I can be the donkey on which Jesus Christ rides in his glory, I give him all the praise and all the honor.”**⁴

Just like that donkey was nothing, we are nothing, and we have the privilege to serve our king.

A PROPHETIC PRESENTATION

As in a drama, you anticipate a climax. **You know something great is coming**, and there are usually signs and indications that the climax is coming. Here in this passage, **the sign is the donkey**. Everybody knows that the sign of Messiah's presentation to Israel as rightful king is a donkey. According to Zechariah 9:9, **prophesied 550 years earlier**, Messiah's coronation is preceded by his presentation on a young donkey.

Matthew 21:4-5 | 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, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’”

However trivial this errand may have seemed, it was full of redemptive significance. It demonstrated that Christ had come to be the King. As Matthew explains, “This took place to **fulfill what was spoken through the prophet**” (vs 4).

This is an event prophesied some 550 years earlier in Zechariah 9:9. The people of Israel had always understood Zechariah's prophecy to refer to the Messiah, God's King for Israel and for the world. The prophet said:

Zechariah 9:9 | Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

GREATER THAN SOLOMON'S TEMPLE (HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH)

Remember Zechariah and Haggai were the prophets when this amazing temple was first built among the refugees that returned to Jerusalem. They were weeping because the temple was so pitiful and small. But remember Haggai says there's no need to weep,

⁴ Corrie ten Boom in Steven J. Lawson, *Final Call* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1994), 57.

because this temple will be greater than Solomon's temple because the one is the Desire of all nations will "**fill this house with glory**" (Hag 2:7), and "**the latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former**" (2:9). Zechariah says about this pitiful second temple, "Do not despise the day of small things" (Zech 4:10), because Jesus is going to turn this house into a house of prayer and glory. **This is the day Jesus reveals himself as King of Israel!**

When Jesus mounted the **donkey**—not just any donkey, but specifically a pure-bred colt, as Zechariah promised—he was presenting himself as **Israel's promised king**. By his actions, he was saying, "Behold, your king is coming to you." **He was announcing to Israel, "Behold, I am you're Messiah, God's King spoken of by the prophets."**

Wherever you are, whatever you've done, Jesus is presenting himself to you as your King today. Will you receive him? He comes on a lowly donkey. He's not come to conquer you but to save you.

AN HISTORIC PRESENTATION

The Jews knew their Bibles, and as they beheld Jesus coming into Jerusalem on the donkey, many people in the crowd would have remembered the words of Zechariah. They would have recognized what Jesus was doing.

Some of them may have even **remembered that when Solomon** became Israel's king, he was presented on the donkey of his father David (1 Kgs 1:38-39).

1 Kings 1:38-39 | So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada... went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule.... ³⁹ There Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!"

JESUS IS THE GREATER SOLOMON

Now the true Solomon, **one infinitely greater than Solomon was here!** One clue that the people of Jerusalem recognized this connection is that, **when they saw Jesus** riding on the foal of a donkey, they started shouting Hosanna! This is the cry for salvation to the Messiah. This is a shout of salvation! The little children cried the loudest: Hosanna!

Mark 11:10 | Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!

In any case, by using that title, they were acclaiming Jesus to be their rightful king. They recognized that the Messiah had come "in the name of the Lord!" They were quoting exactly Psalm 118:25-26. **They realized they were viewing fulfilled prophecy.**

2. THE KING'S TRANSPORTATION (11:4-7)

The second thing that Jesus revealed by riding into Jerusalem on a donkey is that he is the humble king.

Mark 11:4-7 | And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. ⁵ And some of those standing there said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” ⁶ And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. ⁷ And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it.

A SIGN OF PEACE

Although it is often overlooked, there is an even older prophecy that explains why Jesus rode a donkey. Long before Zechariah, Jacob pronounced this blessing on his son Judah.

Genesis 49:10-11 | The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. ¹¹ Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey’s colt to the choice vine.

Jacob’s prophecy meant that Israel’s true king would come from the tribe of Judah, and that he would be revealed by riding on the colt of a donkey.

ANCIENT KINGS ON WHITE STALLION

This is significant because **ancient kings came for WAR on a WHITE STALLION, but when they arrived on a donkey**, it meant they were **coming for peace**. When an ancient king rode into a city, at the very least, he would come with a show of power and wealth.

Thus, we might have expected Jesus to enter Jerusalem at the **head of a mighty army**, bearing dazzling prizes for his royal treasury. Instead of coming on a mighty war horse or a proud stallion, he rides a lowly beast of burden. He is riding a donkey, of all creatures—and a borrowed donkey, at that! The rightful king is also the gentle, humble king. Jesus comes to greet his subjects, not with pomp and circumstance, but with **all humility and meekness**.

What is only hinted at in Genesis was made plain in the Gospel: Jesus, the Son of David, from the tribe of Judah, rode into Jerusalem as Israel’s humble king on a donkey, **bringing the peace of reconciliation** with God to mankind. He is not only the King but the Lamb of God. He’s a King that’s going to give his life on Good Friday for the sins of his people. What peace he brings to all who trust in him!

A SIGN OF PROTECTION

In Matthew’s quote of Zechariah’s prophecy, he uplifts the picture of God’s people being like a young daughter. **Jesus comes to save and protect us!**

Zechariah 9:9 | Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Another indication of his gentleness is the relationship Jesus has with his subjects. He treats them as members of his own family. Zechariah’s prophecy begins: “Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!” (Zech 9:9a). The word “daughter” is

a reminder that God regards his people as his own beloved children. The Old Testament often uses this kind of family language.

God's love for his people is like the love a good father has for his own dear sons and daughters. Listen to Isaiah.

Isaiah 48:15-16a | Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. ¹⁶ Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.

Imagine a father going in to say good night to his little girl. She is already asleep, and in the darkness, he can just make out the small shape of her body under the covers. He kneels down by her bedside, kisses her soft cheek, and then rests his head against her body. He can feel her chest breathing in and out, out and in. In the silence he whispers, "You are my precious girl!" Such is the tender love God has for his people. He says, "You are my precious boy!" "You are my precious little girl!" Out of the warmth of his heart he sends his gentle Son to be our king.

THE BUS WILL STOP

There's a story of the boy who stood on a sidewalk, waiting on a bus. **A man walking** by spotted the boy and gave him some gentle instruction. "Son," he said, "if you're wanting to get on the bus, you'll need to **move to the street corner bus stop**. That's where the bus stops for passengers."

"**It's OK,**" said the boy. "I'll just wait right here, and **the bus will stop for me.**"

The man **repeated his advertisement** for the bus stop, but the boy never moved. Just then, the bus appeared. Amazingly, the bus pulled over right to where the boy stood, and the child hopped on. The man on the sidewalk stood speechless. The boy turned around in the doorway and said, "Mister, **I knew the bus would stop here, because the bus driver is my dad!**"

When you've got a family relationship with the bus driver, you don't need a bus stop.

Now, saints of God, we know we are nothing without our great Savior and king. We are like that humble donkey.

A SIGN OF INVITATION

Look at how tender Jesus is. Matthew quotes Zechariah, about how God comes to his people tenderly, like a Father would come to a young daughter. He is gentle.

Matthew 21:5 | "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

It is recorded in history that when Jerusalem's temple was torn down in 70 A.D., Pontius **Pilate entered Jerusalem with the Roman style procession—complete with a terrifying display of Rome's military might**. Pilate was perched atop a majestic stallion, and he had all the trappings of Roman wealth and prestige. His procession was **a proclamation of his and Rome's superiority**. And it came with an undeniable message directed to the pilgrims who had gathered in the city from near and far for the Passover festivities: "**Keep the peace, or we will control you by force!**" Jesus' triumphal entry was so different. It was one **not of intimidation**, but of **peace**

and invitation. Listen to the gentle call of the Savior. He has come not to condemn you, but to give you life.

Isaiah 45:22, KJV | Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

Matthew 11:28-29 | Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

3. THE KING'S CORONATION (11:7-10)

The third thing that Jesus is coronated on such a lowly animal, and that he loves to use the lowly.

A LOWLY CORONATION

We notice something incredibly interesting here. Jesus is not leading the way into Jerusalem. The mother of the colt is leading, and **he is riding on the little, lowly colt.** This is a foreshadowing of the lowliness of our Savior. He's following the mother of the little donkey he is riding. He's not just lowly riding a donkey. He's riding a colt that has never been ridden on and can't even ride into Jerusalem without the help of its mother.

Mark 11:7 | And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it.

Jesus was demonstrating that **he wasn't going to win the victory by going to war with Rome**, but by *humbling himself on the cross*.

You see, **Jesus did not win his victory on Palm Sunday.** Just several days later, **on Good Friday**, the same city that welcomed him as king would call for his crucifixion. Jesus would be **wrongfully convicted and brutally executed.**

When did the victory come? He would not win his victory until Easter Sunday, when **God coronated him by raising him from the dead.** His cross becomes the throne where he rules over death because **he defeated death on by death.**

A COSTLY CORONATION

The people there didn't have much. **They didn't have a closet full of clothes.** Not only did the disciples put their cloaks on the colt, but the people who had come spread their cloaks for Jesus' royal procession. They had one outer coat, and they gladly gave what they had for Jesus.

Mark 11:8a | And many spread their cloaks on the road

Matthew says "most of the crowd" was throwing their cloaks in front of Jesus. The crowd laid their cloaks on the ground before the king's animal (as they did for Jehu in 2 Kings 9:13), giving him royal treatment.⁵

⁵ Daniel M. Doriani, *Matthew & 2*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, vol. 2, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2008), 247.

What is it that you have that you wouldn't lay before your King? **Give him all that you are and all that you have.**

A coat might not be worth much after a donkey walks on it. In a crowd like that there was no guarantee that once you laid it down you were ever going to get it back. I believe those people probably **weren't that interested in coats at that moment** when Jesus rode by. No, these people, many of them probably very poor, weren't as concerned about coats as they were about praise. David said, "I won't offer to God that which costs me nothing!" (2 Sam 24:24). Oh, how God wants your all, but most of all, he wants your praise! **Give him the praise of a sold-out life!**

A HOPEFUL CORONATION

There was so much hope in the crowd. This was demonstrated by the palm branches they cut down and laid in his path.

Mark 11:8 | And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields.

The Hope of Monarchy. These palm branches were a sign of a victorious King. This was the way they celebrated **when the Judas Maccabeus** had defeated the Syrians, Antiochus Epiphanies, and he had driven out the enemy. The people of Israel recognize that Jesus is the Messiah. They did this by calling him the Son of David, and also by spreading their cloaks before him. The ancient custom of **welcoming a king was to throw down their garments to make a carpet** for the royal procession. We recognize his sovereignty by laying our hearts before him, throwing down our wills in absolute surrender, and asking Jesus to govern everything we think and say and do. Then we praise him as our victorious king. And now that Jesus himself has conquered death, he has the power to deliver us from death.

The Hope of Victory. They welcomed him as their victorious Savior, taking palm branches and shouting "Hosanna!" (vs 9), literally "save us!" **Palm branches were an ancient symbol of victory.** During the Maccabean revolt, the Jews minted coins with the image of a palm, emblematic of their victory over the Greeks. The word "**Hosanna!**" **is not so much a word of praise as it is a prayer.**

Originally, "Hosanna" comes from Psalm 118, where it is a cry for help: "**O Lord, save us**" (Psa 118:25). Later it became a declaration of praise to God as the Victor—"a spontaneous cry of greeting or a **cry of homage**" and worship to God as King.

The Hope of Salvation. "Hosanna!" is partly a cry of victory; it recognizes that Jesus has the power to save. But **ultimately it is also a cry of needy desperation**, the prayer of a sinner who needs a Savior. "Save me, Jesus!" Or, as the people said on Palm Sunday, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Since Jesus is the Son of David—the rightful king—submit to his sovereign rule. Since he is praised with loud hosannas, ask the victorious king to be your gracious Savior.

A JOYFUL CORONATION

What could they do that day but praise the Lord! This is the day! The Messiah is recognized as King of Israel. They had seen the miracles, the raising of the dead, the healing of the blind. They knew this was the one whom God had sent.

Mark 11:9-10 | And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!”

CHILDREN HAD THE MOST INSIGHT

The day of the triumphal entry was such a glorious occasion that even the children were shouting Jesus’ praise when he was in the temple.

Matthew 21:14-16 | And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant, ¹⁶ and they said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read, “Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise’?”

It’s interesting that when the learned Pharisees rebuked Jesus Luke tells us another of Jesus’ responses.

Luke 19:40 | He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”

We can learn so much from these children! They just speak the truth and hold nothing back. It’s good that many in the crowd and especially the children couldn’t stop shouting “Hosanna! To the Messiah! Hosanna to the King of kings!” They knew who Jesus was.

A SACRIFICIAL CORONATION

Yet even with all the worship, Jesus is weeping. He is crying because he knows that some who praise him on Palm Sunday will crucify him on Good Friday.

After these are all praising him, what is Jesus’ response?

Luke 19:41 | When he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it.

Matthew 23:37-38 | “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁸ See, your house is left to you desolate.”

See that’s where we all are! Unwilling. Dead in our trespasses and sins. We are helpless to change ourselves. We need grace. We were **not willing, but Jesus was!**

We would have never sought him, but he sought us! He called us when we “were dead in our trespasses and sins” and he “raised us up with Christ, by grace we are saved” (cf Eph 1:1-10). We were never willing, but he made us willing in the day of his power. The Spirit drew us and gave us a new heart to seek him. Oh, we were not willing to come to him, but he was willing to die for us! **He is not willing that any should perish.** So, **Jesus, the willing one, went to the cross** to die for our sin! Good Friday has to take place, because Jesus is the willing Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29).

The children of Israel crucify their Savior, and the “house of Israel is left desolate.” Or is it? **We know the end of the story.** This is a King who can conquer death. We all know that this is **the King who is also the Lamb**. Those who shout, “Save us! Hosanna!” will be saved by the King who becomes the Lamb. He will be crucified on Friday. He will take the sins of the world upon himself! **What a king!** Only the King of all kings would do that! Worship him! He is worthy!

Conclusion

There is a famous story of **Sir Walter Raleigh**, one of the great explorers during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I of England. On one occasion he was with the queen when she was walking through London and came to a place where rainwater had made the ground muddy and dirty. He quickly **took off his cloak and placed it on the ground** so the queen could walk over without getting mud on her feet.⁶

Now that was **probably not Sir Raleigh’s only coat**. But it demonstrates that when you honor and value someone, you will give them anything you have if the need would arise.

Jesus calls us here today to give him all that we are and all that we have. He deserves our worship and our lives. He’s our Savior, our God, our King, and our Redeemer. He is worthy of our worship not just this Palm Sunday, but every day both now and for eternity.

Benediction

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.—*2 Corinthians 13:14*

⁶ Tom Wright, *Matthew for Everyone, Part 2: Chapters 16-28* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 66.