

4.05.20 ~, **Matthew 21:1-17,**  
**Jesus' Last Trip to Jerusalem Before His Death...**

Today we begin what is called Passion Week, for it was on a Sunday that Jesus rode into Jerusalem. The Biblical narrative records many of the events of the following days leading up to His death, as He shared God's message of love and forgiveness with those in and around Jerusalem on Monday and Tuesday.

Wednesday's narrative in the Gospel accounts is basically silent, for it seems that Jesus stayed outside the city, resting, preparing for the next two very long days.

Thursday was Passover, when Jesus taught His disciples that He would be God's Sacrificial Lamb, and that His blood, shed for them, would be the new Covenant.

On Friday, Jesus was arrested, and subsequently He was put to death on a cross; at the end of the day, His body was taken down and placed in a tomb, where it remained until Sunday morning, when Jesus came out of the tomb alive!

Next Friday I will share a message with you about the events that occurred during Passion Week, on a day that we call Good Friday. But for today, let's turn to Matthew's account (**Matthew 21:1-17**) of what occurred when Jesus entered Jerusalem.

Read **Matthew 21:1-7...** Jesus and the 12 approached Jerusalem, coming to the village of Bethphage, on the SE side of Olivet [Mt. of Olives], just east of Jerusalem, a short distance from Bethany (home to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus).

Jesus sends two of His disciples into Bethphage to find a young donkey that is tied there with its mother. The disciples find the donkey, and when they are asked why they are untying the colt, they responded as Jesus had told them, and so received permission from the owner to untie it and bring it to Jesus.

The people in that area knew Jesus as "the Lord," and His disciples as "the Twelve," for they visited there many times during the time of Jesus' ministry.

Look again at **Matthew 21:4-5**, "This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold your King is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'" This prophecy had been proclaimed by Isaiah and Zechariah, and was now being fulfilled:

**Isaiah 62:11**, "Behold, the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth, say to the daughter of Zion, "Lo, your salvation comes; behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense [*punishment for the guilty*] before Him."

**Zechariah 9:9**, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Read **Matthew 21:8-11...** This display of praise and honor (on the part of the

people) was normally reserved for royalty, and was an ancient practice of showing homage to a new king (**2Kings 9:12-13**). The people here are recognizing Jesus as the long awaited Messiah, the King of the Jews (cf **Matthew 2:1-2; 27:11**).

The people in Jerusalem were excited, as is seen by their display of praise and honor, even throwing down their outer garments and fresh cut branches (according to **John 12:13**, these were palm branches). Note: That is why we call today Palm Sunday. The people are directing their praise toward Jesus, expressing their hope and desire for their Messiah-King to save them, to free them.

The people are shouting (**Matthew 21:9**) "Hosanna! to the Son of David; Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!" Hosanna comes from the words *save* and *please*, and so this is an expression of desire, adoration, praise, and joy, it it comes from **Psalms 118:25-26**, which says, "O LORD, do save, we beseech You; O LORD, we beseech You, do send prosperity! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD; We have blessed you from the house of the LORD."

Jesus' Hebrew name [*Yeshua*] means "God's salvation." The people call for God's Son, the Messiah [the Holy One] to save them. The Jews had been waiting centuries for the Messiah to come, but they wrongly believed He would liberate them from Roman [Gentile] oppression and prosper them; they didn't understand that He was coming to free them from the penalty of sin (as Jesus made clear during His last Passover meal).

**Matthew 26:26-28**, "While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.'"

**1Corinthians 11:23-25**, "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.'"

Back to **Matthew 21:10**... Many of the people are asking, "Who is this?" And yet, many seem to be aware (**Matthew 21:11**) that, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee." Why the confusion (cf. **Mark 4:35-41**).

The OT foretells the arrival, the suffering, and the death of God's Son, the Servant of God, the Messiah [Holy or Anointed One] Who fulfills God's purpose and plan by providing forgiveness for sin and eternal life to all who will receive Him.

**Zechariah 9:9**... He will enter Jerusalem on a donkey's colt.

**Zechariah 11:12...** He will be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

**Psalms 22:16...** He will be pierced for our transgressions.

**Psalms 16:10...** He will rise from the dead.

He will ascend back into heaven.

Everything God said, happened just like He declared it would. His Word is Divine and Sovereign Truth, bringing either the Reward of Eternal Life, or the Judgement of Eternal Death, to all the people of the earth.

Read **Matthew 21:12-13...** Jesus enters the Temple and begins to clear out all those who are desecrating the House of God.

The Outer Court of the temple had become a market place and stockyard; worshippers had come long distances, some from outside of Israel, in order to offer sacrifices and pay their temple tax. These believers in God were being forced to pay high exchange rates (as foreign coins had to be exchanged for Jewish currency); and also, high prices for sacrificial animals (which had to be approved by the Priests, who were getting kickbacks from the market vendors).

The Outer Court, where all this was taking place, was for the Gentiles; they were not allowed to enter any other part of the Temple, and so, this area was set apart for Gentile converts to Judaism to pray and worship.

It is here that these vendors, under the supervision of the Jewish religious leaders, had turned a place of prayer and worship into a robbers den, where criminals were being protected by the Chief Priest and Teachers of the Law, who should be arresting them and bringing them to judgment (cf. Jeremiah 7:11).

These Religious leaders were members of the Sanhedrin (Supreme Court of Israel presided over by the High-Priest), it met daily in the Temple to pronounce judgments in all matters of Jewish Law.

In Mark's narrative of this event we are told (**Mark 11:17-18**), He began to teach and say to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a robbers' den.' The chief priests and the scribes heard this, and began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching."

The crowds had been amazed of Jesus teaching since the beginning of His ministry (**Mark 1:22**), "They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Jesus's words were the words of God, not men!

Jesus taught as one with authority, whereas, knowledge, like that held by the scribes, doesn't equal authority; for authority is granted, not acquired.

Read **Matthew 21:14-16...** The blind and lame came to the Temple to beg for money and to seek healing; they were ignored and despised by most people, especially the religious leaders, who considered their infirmities and ailments to be

the result of sins either they or their parents committed.

The religious leaders showed very little, if any, mercy toward the poor and afflicted; where as Jesus healed all who came to Him and even received the praise of children; this infuriated the religious leaders who had earlier (cf **Matthew 12:24**) accused Him of casting out demons by the power of the devil.

Jesus condemns these self-righteous hypocrites (who are indignant that the children are praising Him and He is receiving their praise). Jesus says to them, "Yes; have you never read, i.e., don't you teachers know what the prophets have written (**Psalms 8:2**), 'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have prepared praise for Yourself?'"

God knew full-well that unbelieving mankind would reject His Son, that the Jews would show contempt for Him, and that evil men would seek to kill Him; but according to God's sovereign plan, Jesus would lay down His own life as payment for our sins (at the time He chooses), after which, He would rise from the grave (by His own authority) proving He is both Lord and Savior, as we will study next week (cf **Isaiah 53:3-6; John 10:17-18**).

The Jewish Religious Leaders and the majority of His own people (the Jews) would not believe in or receive Jesus as their Messiah; for they were waiting for a Messiah-King to enter Jerusalem on a white stallion, a war horse, not a donkey's colt (a beast of burden). They wanted a Messiah who would destroy Rome's army, freeing Israel from Gentile rule, not this Jesus who allowed Himself to be captured and crucified like a common criminal.

Read **Matthew 21:17...** Jesus came to offer full payment for the penalty of sin and eternal life in heaven with God; but the Jews adamantly rejected Him and His offer, and so Jesus "left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there."

Do you remember who lives in Bethany? Jesus' dearest friends - Mary, Martha, and Lazarus who Jesus had recently raised from the dead. Jesus left those who rejected Him, in order to be with those who received Him, those who believed in His name; and He continues to give Himself to anyone and everyone who trusts and believes in Him for the forgiveness of sin and eternal life.

Only a born-again believer and follower of Christ is able to genuinely understand, experience, and celebrate eternal life.

**John 1:11-13**, "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

**John 3:1-8**, "Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that

You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus \*said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?' Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

So, as we begin Passion Week begins please consider the following:

When Peter was proclaiming the message of Christ to those in Jerusalem, on the Day of Pentecost, the people realized that Jesus was God's Son, the Messiah, and that they had rejected their only hope of salvation.

**Acts 2:36-38**, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.' Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' Peter said to them, 'Repent, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and each of you be baptized.'"

If you have never trusted in Jesus Christ, asking God to forgive your sins and save you, please consider doing that right now, right where you are; there is no better time to make things right between you and God.

**2Corinthians 6:2**, "At the acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you. Behold, now is 'the acceptable time,' behold, now is 'the day of salvation.'"

**Admit** to God that you are a sinner, for we all are (**Romans 3:23**).

**Ask** God to forgive your sins, for He loves you and He turns no one away (**Romans 5:8; 6:23; 10:13**).

**Confess** Jesus as Lord, for He alone conquered Sin, Death, Judgement (**Romans 8:1; 10:9-10**)

**Demonstrate** your New Life in Christ (**2Corinthians 5:17**)

**1Thessalonians 5:16-18**, "Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

If you belong to God through Christ, praise the Lord by telling others about Him. Let's pray...

*Pastor Mike*  
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