

Who is This?

Matthew 21:1-11

Palm Sunday

- > This entrance into Jerusalem is recorded in all 4 gospels
- > In Matthew – this is the first time Jesus enters the city – How will the city receive him?

The Context

1. Jesus' servant heart is emphasized (20:28)
2. Jesus' healing of 2 blind men and their response of following him (20:34)
3. How do I respond to the Servant King?

Preparations for the King

Matthew 21:1-3

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, "The Lord needs them." And he will send them immediately.'

Matthew 21:1-3

Securing of Two Animals

- i. Chaotic: ambiguous
Instructions – go look, speak if needed, etc. – speaks to the general confusion surrounding Jesus' entrance to the city

Securing of Two Animals

- ii. Calm: God is in control
 - Go and trust in the process & God's leading – simply say 'the Lord needs them'

A Growing Community of Followers

- > 'Two blind men following'
- > The animal caretaker – implicitly recognized
- > The growing crowds

A Prophetic Description

Matthew 21:4-5

The Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, 'See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.'

Isaiah 62:11

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey, on
a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Zechariah 9:9

Three Themes

- i. A King – one riding the animals is a King – royal status – the donkey as the coronation animal

Three Themes

- ii. A King characterized by humility – humble riding a donkey not a war-horse

Three Themes

- iii. A King who brings salvation – a victorious king – ‘he will save his people from their sins’ (Matthew 1:21)

Christological Focus

- > Jesus is more than a wise teacher
- > Jesus is more than a model to follow
- > Jesus is the one in whom we find life

... so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:10-11

A Praise Response

Matthew 21:4-5

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!'

Matthew 21:6-9

Jesus' Processional

- > Jesus makes his way down the valley
- > Crowds respond by waving and laying down branches (palms)

Three Acclamations

- i. Hosanna – literally 'save now'; also a praise term like 'hallelujah'
- ii. Son of David – a messianic phrase looking to the return of the Messiah and God's reign on earth

Three Acclamations

- iii. 'Blessed is the one coming in the name of the Lord' – a phrase repeated in the Hallel Psalms (Psalm 113-118)
 - a focus on God's name – looking forward to the coming One

Jesus: The Coming One

- > Jesus fully represents the Lord
- > Jesus is the One in whom God is fully pleased

A Perplexed Response

Matthew 21:10-11

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, 'Who is this?' The crowds were saying, 'This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.'

Matthew 21:10-11

A Shaken City

- > Confusion – Who is this?
- > Perplexed – Don't know what to do
- > Leads ultimately to rejection & crucifixion

Choosing Status Quo

- > The city chooses to maintain the existing power structures
- > Even as the contemporary church often chooses the values of comfort and success over service and passion for God

Many people come to church to have their needs met, and they will choose the church that best suits their tastes and the needs they perceive. It is often about satisfaction at the least cost.

Paul Louis Metzger

Going Forward

A Gentle, Humble Messiah

- > Jesus rejects the aggressive militarism & power politics of his day
- > He presents himself as a peacemaker & calls us to follow his model of leadership

A Path of Suffering

- > Jesus follows his own teaching of loving one's enemies
- > The red carpet ends in rejection

Jesus' End Point

- > His journey rises with resurrection and new life