

OUR LORD'S ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM

TEXT: MARK 11:1-11

Introduction:

1. This event is recorded by all four of the Gospel writers.
2. It is often referred to as "our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem."
3. PB Fitzwater, in his book *Preaching and Teaching the New Testament*, says, "This should not be designated the triumphal entry for it was so only in outward appearances. The shouts were empty and meaningless...Back of the cry, 'Hosanna,' the awful cry, 'Crucify,' was taking form, and doubtless this awful word, 'crucify,' was uttered by some of the same persons who cried, 'Hosanna.'"
4. Many people were coming to Jerusalem for the Passover feast, and this would be our Lord's last trip into the city.
5. Our Lord had come to Jerusalem to die on the cross (cf. 10:33, 34, 45).
6. The next time our Lord will come to visit Jerusalem it will be in judgment. We read about that in Zechariah 14.
7. Now as we continue in our study of the Gospel of Mark, we see our Lord is getting very close to the cross. We are only a few days away from His crucifixion.
8. It appears that our Lord was constrained to make a final appeal in the city of David, to let His people know that He was the promised Son of David, their King and their Messiah. There would be one final appeal before He went to the cross.
9. John 1:11 says, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."
10. In preparation for His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, our Lord instructed two of His disciples to go ahead and get a colt and bring it back to Him (11:1-3). This was according to the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9.
11. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."
12. It is easy to understand how most Jews would associate this Scripture with the establishment of the Messianic kingdom.
13. They did not comprehend the cross.
14. When the disciples returned from their errand, our Lord rode into Jerusalem on the donkey (Mark 11:7-11).
15. Many churches, especially those that are of the Romish persuasion, commemorate this historical event and call it "Palm Sunday," the Sunday before Easter Sunday.

16. John 12:13 says they “took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet Him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord” (from Psalm 118, a Messianic psalm).
17. John alone mentions that the branches were from palm trees. And only John records these words, “Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord” (John 12:13).
18. Mark 11:10 says they cried out, “Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.”
19. They praised Him as the King of Israel (John 12:13), but it would be only a few days later that these same people would be crying out, “Crucify Him... We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15).

I. OUR LORD’S COMMAND (11:1-3)

1. The two disciples (we are not told their names) were instructed to go into the next village and bring back a certain colt (11:1-3).
2. John 12:16 says, “These things understood not His disciples at the first...”
3. They could not understand what was going on at the time – the fulfillment of prophecy, our Lord’s rejection by Israel, His betrayal by Judas Iscariot, His trial, His crucifixion, His resurrection, etc.
4. There are many things that we may not understand down here, but when we get to heaven we will have plenty of time to figure it all out. In the meantime, we are to trust God and obey Him.

II. THE DISCIPLES’ OBEDIENCE (11:4-7)

1. By definition, a “disciple” is one who is obedient to his Lord and Master. Otherwise he is not really a true disciple.
2. Salvation is very important but so is discipleship. What concerns me is we often see people come forward to get saved who soon disappear and we never see them again (cf. Matt. 28:16-20).
3. I remember years ago, I used to preach down at a rescue mission downtown. Scores of men would come forward at the invitation but I often wondered, “What about the follow-up? Who is going to disciple them?” This bothered me.
4. Allow me to make an analogy with a physical birth. We do not bring a baby into this world and then ignore him. We must feed him and clean him and take care of him until he is grown and able to take care of himself. And so it is with a spiritual birth.

5. To be a disciple, one must learn “discipline.” Yet many Christians today lack discipline. Many Christians don’t even wake up in time for Sunday School.
6. This is where many churches have problems – lack of discipline.
7. We read in Mark 11:4, “And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door...” These unnamed disciples obeyed our Lord.
8. The disciples obeyed the Lord and everything worked out the way He said it would (11:2-6).
9. If we obey God and do things His way, everything will work out.
10. Many Christians say they love God, but Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). His commandments are clearly laid out for us in the Bible – commandments concerning baptism, Bible reading, prayer, tithing, church attendance, etc.
11. First John 5:3 says, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”
12. Jesus said, “Go your way into the village” (Mark 11:2). “And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them” (Matt. 21:6).
13. I will tell you where many Christians are not obedient. Jesus said: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...” (Matt. 28:19), but many Christians just make up excuses.
14. Notice also that to make a saddle for the Lord, the disciples put their clothes on the colt (Mark 11:7). They were not told to do this; they did it willingly, voluntarily, and gladly because they loved the Lord.
15. Before we move on, let us also consider the obedience of the man who owned the colt. We do not know who the others were (“certain of them that stood there” – 11:5), but once they heard the Lord needed the colt, “they let them go” (11:6).
16. The Lord knew this ahead of time because He is omniscient (11:3; cf. John 11:14; Mark 14:12-16; Matt. 17:24-27).

III. OUR LORD’S ENTRANCE

1. Matthew Henry says our Lord’s entrance was remarkable because he came into town “to show that he was not afraid of the power and malice of his enemies in Jerusalem. He did not steal into the city *incognito*, as one that durst not show his face; no, they needed not send spies to search for him, he comes in with observation. This would be an encouragement to his disciples that were timorous, and cowed at the thought of their enemies’ power and rage; let them see how bravely their Master sets them all at defiance.”

2. Furthermore, He came “to show that he was not cast down or disquieted at the thoughts of his approaching sufferings. He came, not only publicly, but cheerfully, and with acclamations of joy.”
3. John says there were “much people” in Jerusalem that day (John 12:12). The reason for this great crowd was that Jews from all over had jammed into Jerusalem for the feast of Passover.
4. The city was crowded with visitors for the annual Passover. Some Bible teachers estimate that two or three million people had crowded into the city.
5. The crowd was shouting out, “Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (11:9; cf. Psalm 118:26).
6. “Hosanna” means “Save now!”
7. For a short time the people held our Lord in high honor (Mark 11:8-11). But soon these same people would be shouting, “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:15), and demanding His crucifixion.
8. It is amazing how fickle people can be. Phocion was a great Greek statesman and general. He ruled the city of Athens from 322 to 318 BC. When Phocion was returning home from a successful military campaign against Philip of Macedon, huge mobs of people crowded the streets of Athens to cheer him. When an aide remarked that Phocion did not seem very pleased at their enthusiasm, he replied, “They will cheer just as loudly when I am hanged.” His words proved to be prophetic for later on the people of Athens deposed him, convicted him of treason, and then executed him. Then shortly after he was buried they put up a big statue in his honor.
9. At Caesar’s funeral the mob cheered Brutus. But not long after Brutus finished his eulogy they chased him out of Rome.
10. Scofield refers to this mixed-up mob as “an unthinking multitude” (p. 1028, bottom of page).
11. W.A. Criswell suggests that our Lord’s entry into Jerusalem was not so much the triumph of a king but the procession of a victim to the sacrifice. Indeed the shadow of the cross hangs over these festivities.
12. Spurgeon said: “Alas! How soon this gleam of sunlight gave place to black darkness. The day of palms was closely followed by the day of crucifixion. Thus fickle are the sons of men.”
13. W. Graham Scroggie, who was trained at Spurgeon’s college and pastored Spurgeon’s church during WWII, wrote these words, “There is something sad about this welcome given to the Christ, for too soon the crown was of thorns. It is always easier to shout for Christ with the crowd, than to stand alone for Him at the cross.”

14. Matthew 21:9 says the people cried out, “Hosanna to the son of David.” Like blind Bartimaeus, the crowd acknowledged our Lord as “the son of David” (cf. Mark 11:10; 10:47, 48), but apparently they did not truly understand the full significance of that term.
15. As the son of David, Jesus was the promised Messiah (cf. Mark 10:47, 48; 12:35-37).
16. Jesus was not merely coming “in the name of the Lord” (Mark 11:9). Jesus is the LORD (cf. 11:3).
17. The people did acknowledge Jesus as “the king of Israel” (John 12:13), but their concept of the kingdom was worldly and political, not spiritual (cf. John 6:15). Unfortunately today too many Christians have a worldly and political concept of the kingdom of God.
18. In John 18:36, Jesus said to Pontius Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world.”

CONCLUSION:

1. We read in Matthew 21:15 that when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that Jesus did, and when they saw the children shouting out, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they “were sore displeased.”
2. This should have brought joy to a true servant of God, but that is not how the chief scribes and priests reacted (cf. Matt. 21:15; Luke 19:39).
3. When these men “saw the wonderful things” that Jesus did, they should have repented and received Him as their Lord and as their Saviour, but instead “they were sore displeased” (Matt. 21:15).
4. Beloved, when we see how wonderful Jesus is and how sinful we are we should be sore displeased at ourselves, not at Him.