

RTS Women's Study: The Gospel of Mark

#23: Mark 11:1-11: The Return of the King

Intro: "Christianity is the story of how the rightful King has landed, you might say landed in disguise, and is calling us to take part in a great campaign of sabotage" --C.S. Lewis

I. The Location of the Triumphal Entry: Jerusalem

A. Jerusalem is Where Israel's King Dwells

- Historically, Jerusalem functioned as the political capital of Israel
- Thus, the Kings of Israel typically dwelt there

B. Jerusalem is Where God Dwells (in the Temple)

- God's special presence was manifested in the temple/tabernacle
- Thus, the temple was the central place for Israel's religious life

C. Jerusalem is Where All God's Prophets Die

- Jesus' whole ministry is focused upon his coming death in Jerusalem (Mark 10:32-34)
- "Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.' 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! Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'" Luke 13:32-34

D. Jerusalem Will Be the Focus of God's Coming Judgment

- Jesus predicts that Jerusalem and the Temple will be destroyed (Mark 13:1-37)
- Jerusalem and the Temple are actually destroyed by the Romans in AD 70

Key Point: Jesus is Israel's True King (he will bring a new kingdom)

II. The Timing of the Triumphal Entry: Passover

A. The Passover Feast

- Jesus chose a very special week where Jerusalem is packed with pilgrims. Passover commemorates the deliverance of Israel from Egypt where an angel of the Lord "passed over" Egypt, taking the lives of the firstborn, except those homes with the blood of the lamb on the doorposts

B. Jesus is the True Passover Lamb

- "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)
- Jesus will offer himself as the great sacrifice for sins

Key Point: Jesus is a Saving King (he offers himself as a sacrifice)

III. The Method of the Triumphal Entry: A Colt

A. Riding on a Colt Fulfills Prophecy

- The future Messiah would be revealed by riding on a colt
- Zech 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."

B. Riding on a Colt Corrects Misconceptions

- People expected a warrior/military messiah
- But a military leader rides on a horse, not a colt, with armies and chariots
- In contrast, Jesus is "humble and mounted on a donkey"—a donkey he didn't even own

Key Point: Jesus is a Humble King (he comes in peace)

IV. The Response to the Triumphal Entry: Praise

A. Spreading of Cloaks/Waving of Palm Branches

- These were expressions of honor and respect to Kings (2 Kings 9:13)
- Other ancient texts mention palm branches as marks of triumph (1 Macc 13:51)

B. Expressions of Praise

- "Hosanna" and "Hosanna in the Highest" are expressions of worship
- "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" is a quote from Psalm 118:26
- "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David"
 - This shows they understood Jesus to be David's son, the messiah
 - Blind Bartimaeus just said the same: "Son of David" (Mark 10:47)

Key Point: Jesus is a Divine King (he is worthy of Worship)

Application: Jesus is a mix of characteristics that no ordinary king can combine: he is might and meek, strong and humble, glorious and accessible.

Discussion Groups

1. We often talk about Jesus as savior or redeemer, but maybe we don't talk about him as "King" as much. Why do you think that is? And why is it important to remember Jesus is a King?
2. At the same time, Jesus also emphasizes his own humility: riding on a donkey. Why is it important to recognize that Jesus is a humble, accessible, and peaceable King? Why do we need to remember he is both Lion and Lamb?
3. If Jesus is the kind of King that is mighty and yet willing to die for his people, what implications does that have for those that follow him? What should we expect our lives to look like if we follow a king like this?