

Jesus Triumphal Entry

13.04.14

Text in all four Gospels

Read Matthew, then pray.

Mat 21:1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,

Mat 21:2 saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me.

Mat 21:3 If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once."

Mat 21:4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

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

Mat 21:6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them.

Mat 21:7 They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them.

Mat 21:8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

Mat 21:9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Mat 21:10 And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?"

Mat 21:11 And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

Mat 21:12 And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons.

Mat 21:13 He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

Mat 21:14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

Mat 21:15 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,

Mat 21:16 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'?"

Mat 21:17 And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there.

Mar 11:1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples

Mar 11:2 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.

Mar 11:3 If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'"

Mar 11:4 And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it.

Mar 11:5 And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?"

Mar 11:6 And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go.

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

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

Mar 11:9 And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

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

Mar 11:11 And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at

everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Luk 19:28 And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

Luk 19:29 When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples,

Luk 19:30 saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here.

Luk 19:31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'"

Luk 19:32 So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them.

Luk 19:33 And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

Luk 19:34 And they said, "The Lord has need of it."

Luk 19:35 And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it.

Luk 19:36 And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road.

Luk 19:37 As he was drawing near--already on the way down the Mount of Olives--the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen,

Luk 19:38 saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

Luk 19:39 And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples."

Luk 19:40 He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

Luk 19:41 And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it,

Luk 19:42 saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

Luk 19:43 For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side

Luk 19:44 and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Luk 19:45 And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold,

Luk 19:46 saying to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers."

Luk 19:47 And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him,

Luk 19:48 but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.

Joh 12:12 The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

Joh 12:13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!"

Joh 12:14 And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written,

Joh 12:15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

Joh 12:16 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.

Joh 12:17 The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness.

Joh 12:18 The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

Joh 12:19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him."

Introduction

Today is what is traditionally know in the Church as Palm Sunday (Referring the the Palms that where laid at the feet of the Colt on which Jesus rode. This is a week before Easter Sunday.

This is the start of Passion (to suffer) week, the week in which Jesus goes to the Cross to bear the sins of the world. We will be celebrating Easter next Sunday and so today I hope to set our minds onto Jesus and the amazing demonstration of His love for us that we are remembering over the coming week.

Today we will see Jesus public declaration of who He is. The King and Messiah and Lord God the Son. We will see the humility of Jesus as He comes riding on a young Donkey. We will see that He comes not as a conquering King in war but in peace. We will see the people acknowledge who He is, if not understanding the fullness of what they are saying. We will see the people praise Him, as rightly they should. We will see Jesus being sorrowful that they still did not know Him properly – even though declaring the truth about Him and praising Him. And we will see how Jesus begins the week in which He is to be crucified for us.

Triumph

So, this entrance to Jerusalem is often referred to as 'The Triumphal Entry'. To us in the modern world that probably does not mean much. However, to the people at the time of Jesus this referred to a very specific thing. And I think they would have found it very odd that we call Jesus arrival in Jerusalem His Triumphal entry.

The Roman Triumph

In ancient Rome, where a general had achieved a great victory or series of victories, the senate would grant that general a triumph. This was a very spectacular parade. The spoils of war, all the treasures of the defeat foe, thousands of slaves and prisoners, followed by the cohorts of the Roman legions would march through the city of Rome. The victorious general would ride in a golden chariot, pulled by four white war horses. He would wear a laurel crown on his head and receive the acclaim of the people of Rome. Behind him on the chariot would be a slave, repeating over and over again, 'momento mori' – 'remember that you will die'. This was to stop the general getting carried away with the praise of the people and trying to set himself up as king in Rome.

I suspect that those early Christians who starting using the phrase were doing so with intentional irony, to highlight the difference between Jesus and ordinary men.

In the Roman triumph, we see created human beings be praised with such acclaim that they must be reminded of their own mortality to keep them from thinking that they could be king or even consider themselves a god.

With Jesus however, we see the opposite. He is God. Praise is rightly His, yet He needs no one to keep Him humble. He enters, His city, on a young donkey, a colt.

Adam Clarke:

This entry into Jerusalem has been termed the triumph of Christ. It was indeed the triumph of humility over pride and worldly grandeur; of poverty over affluence; and of meekness and gentleness over rage and malice.

He is coming now meek, full of kindness and compassion to those who were plotting his destruction! He comes to deliver up himself into their hands; their king comes to be murdered by his subjects, and to make his death a ransom price for their souls!

So let us go through the text.

Mat 21:1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,

So, this is the beginning of Jesus formal entry to Jerusalem. It is a walk of about 2km.

Mat 21:2 saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me.

Mat 21:3 If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once."

Here we see some very strong glimpses into the divinity of Jesus. We see that geographical distant and time are no barriers to His sight and knowledge.

We see His authority in instructing the disciples and the owner of the donkey & colt or any witnesses. An authority that Jesus uses through the proxy of His disciples. He issues the commands and expects and receives obedience. For us, we should note that a mark of a true disciple is obedience to the commands of God, whether coming directly from Him (e.g. through His Word) or through our fellow disciples. We also see that if the Lord needs anything that belongs to us, the proper response, 'he will send them at once'. May we learn to have such obedience.

In Luke we are told that no one has ever ridden this Colt before and in Mark we are told that Jesus will return it. Another minor miracle that the Colt would let Jesus ride on it, never having been broken in. Also, nice to know that when Jesus asks us for something He is not being stingy and that He cares for our needs and won't leave us without something that we need.

Mat 21:4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

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

Here we see Jesus acting out the fulfilment of this prophecy from:

Zec 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.

In acting out this verse Jesus is declaring to all that He is King. Until now, Jesus constantly refuses to accept such a title. He is regularly seen in the Gospels, telling people who He has healed not to speak about it or we see Him withdrawing into the wilderness or crossing the sea of Galilee to avoid the crowds. Until this time, Jesus needed to pursue other aspects of His ministry and having adoring crowds following Him about would have gotten in the way.

Now Jesus, publicly declares that He is king, not with words but with actions. He does so, in the most unusual of ways. Where those who would be kings in the world declare themselves with riches and displays of power and grandeur, Jesus does so with humility.

Jesus selects a young Donkey as His mount, one that had never been ridden before. He is Almighty God. He could have chosen any number of magnificent ways to make His entrance to Jerusalem. Instead He chooses a young donkey, a beast of burden.

There a number of things we can see from this besides Jesus humility.

Firstly the donkey was considered an animal of peace. Rather than choosing a horse, an animal of war, Jesus shows us that He is a king of peace. That is going into Jerusalem and declaring Himself king, that He is not coming to bring war, destruction, death or judgement. Rather He is seeking to show us that His mission is one of salvation. A mission to restore peace between God and man.

Isa 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his

name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

2Co 5:18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;

2Co 5:19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

Also, we see in the account in Matthew, that the reference to the passage in Zechariah, is not a direct quote. One of the differences is term a beast of burden. I believe that in choosing a colt and highlighting that it is, 'the foal of a beast of burden', we are being shown another part of the ministry of Jesus. He is again highlighting the difference between Himself and earthly kings. While earthly kings place great burdens on their people, Jesus will be the great king who carries the burdens of His people. We saw recently in 1 Samuel, what God said to the people of Israel, through Samuel, regarding Kings:

1Sa 8:10 So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking for a king from him.

1Sa 8:11 He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and to run before his chariots.

1Sa 8:12 And he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots.

1Sa 8:13 He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers.

1Sa 8:14 He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants.

1Sa 8:15 He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants.

1Sa 8:16 He will take your male servants and female servants and the best of your young men and your donkeys, and put them to his work.

1Sa 8:17 He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves.

1Sa 8:18 And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

1Sa 8:19 But the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel. And they said, "No! But there shall be a king over us,

1Sa 8:20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."

Jesus shows us such a different model of Kingship. On the first day that He openly declares His kingship, He does so in humility, showing that He will be a king who will carry the burdens of His people.

Mat 21:6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them.

Obedience seen again. We know from Mark & Luke that they were challenged but once they mentioned it was for Jesus, they were left to take the donkey and colt.

Mat 21:7 They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them.

Here we see that the disciples were not just obedient to Jesus but that they had a great reverence for Him. They took their cloaks and placed them on the colt, making a saddle for Jesus. The colt would likely have been dusty and smelly and a bit lumpy. They placed their cloaks between the colt and Jesus as an act of reverence. In our modern world clothing is cheap. In the ancient world clothing was of great value. It took many hours over a number of days to make a cloak. Most people would have been lucky to have one. Letting it be used like this was not a trivial gesture but one of real sacrifice.

2Ki 9:13 Then in haste every man of them took his garment and put it under him on the bare steps, and they blew the trumpet and proclaimed, "Jehu is king."

Mat 21:8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

We see that it was not just the disciples who revered Jesus but the crowd as well. They had such a high view of Jesus at that moment that they would not even have the colt He was riding on touch the dusty road. Again, they wished to sacrificially worship Him.

Declaration of kingship by the people - maccabees

Mat 21:9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Hosanna – Save now – or Save, we beseech thee. The common appeal to the kings of Israel but an Israelite.

Son of David – the Messiah. The true, returning king of Israel.

Here we see the crowds proclaiming Jesus as king. More than that, they are proclaiming Him as saviour. Likely many in the crowd hoped that Jesus was coming to be a temporal king and to free the Jewish people from the oppression of the Romans. Jew's had been fighting against Roman rule for decades. There was a strong nationalistic element to Jewish culture. They viewed the Messiah as a warrior king who would lead them to victory over their oppressors and re-establish a free, independent Jewish nation. It is likely that much of the crowd who were proclaiming Jesus were thinking this way.

Also a large part of the crowd who were following Jesus as He entered the city were people who would have been a Lazarus resurrection. John tells us:

Joh 12:17 The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness.

Joh 12:18 The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

So another part of the crowd was simply following the miracles. They were not disciples of Jesus but were following Him to be wowed and entertained.

Also, the crowds at that time in Jerusalem would have been significantly higher than normal. This was the time of Passover. The normal Jewish population at the time of Christ is estimated to be about 30,000 but at Passover that number would swell to over 180,000 – conservatively.

Combinations of religious and nationalistic fervour, alongside the miracle chasing would have driven large parts of the crowd.

And yet, what they were saying was true and more than that it was scriptural. What they were saying was straight from the Psalms.

Psa 118:25 Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success!

Psa 118:26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD.

It is interesting to note that they spoke the truth and spoke scripture but many did not know Jesus or understand the truth of what they were saying.

And yet Jesus says that they were right to praise Him, at least His disciples. In Luke we see Jesus saying the following:

Luk 19:39 And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples."

Luk 19:40 He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

However, in Luke we also see that Jesus knew that the motives of much of the people were wrong and that they really did not know what was going on.

Luk 19:41 And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it,

Luk 19:42 saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

Luk 19:43 For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side

Luk 19:44 and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Which, reminds us of what Jesus says in Matthew a little later in the week:

Mat 23:37 "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 would not!

Mat 23:38 See, your house is left to you desolate.

Mat 23:39 For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

We see from Jesus own words that the people were not ready for Him. Even though they welcomed Him as King and partook in the fulfilling of prophecy, as spoke the truth and scripture, they were still not aware of what they were doing. They were blinded by their own desire for a king and national freedom, that they missed God, right in front of them. They missed the One who would save them from their real oppressor – the devil – and the One who would free them from their true bondage, to sin and death. And seeking the prize of the rebirth of the new Jewish nation, they missed the greatest treasure of all – God.

I pray that we will not ever be like that. I pray that nothing in this life would become so attractive to us and full our vision so completely, that we would miss Jesus as He is in front of us.

And we see this again in the next two verses.

Mat 21:10 And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?"

Mat 21:11 And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

Who is this? Answer a prophet. No, so much more.

Conclusion

So as we begin the week in which we remember the tremendous sacrifice of Jesus, let us do so looking at Him, as He truly is. Let us not be distracted by the things of the world. Let us look to our humble King, who came to carry our burdens. Let us worship Him, in truth and scripturally but out of a place of real relationship with Him. Let us pursue Him. Let us seek Him with all that we have and are. May we always know that nothing in this world compares with Him.

And let us look forward to the time when we will say again, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'

Then we will see Him, not on the donkey but on a white horse. If anyone does not know Jesus, then please place you faith in Him, repent of your sins, ask His forgiveness and make Him the Lord of your life. Please meet Jesus today on His mission of salvation, so that in the future you may rejoice with those others who have believed in Him and have been saved when He will appear like this:

Rev 19:11 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

Rev 19:12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself.

Rev 19:13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.

Rev 19:14 And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.

Rev 19:15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

Rev 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

END

Mat 21:12 And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons.

Mat 21:13 He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

Mat 21:14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

Mat 21:15 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,

Mat 21:16 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'?"

Mat 21:17 And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there.