

The Honored Eternal King

If you read the gospel of Luke 19, you would find that Jesus had been traveling from Jericho toward Jerusalem when He met a man named Zacchaeus. Because he was short, Zacchaeus had climbed up in a tree in order to see Jesus. Zacchaeus was a very wealthy tax collector. It appears that after he met and finished talking with Jesus, he became a disciple or follower. We are told in Matthew 21 that Jesus is near Bethany. The city of Bethany was a very small town located on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. Jesus is near Jerusalem. At this point Jesus had been ministering for about four years and is at the end of His earthly ministry.

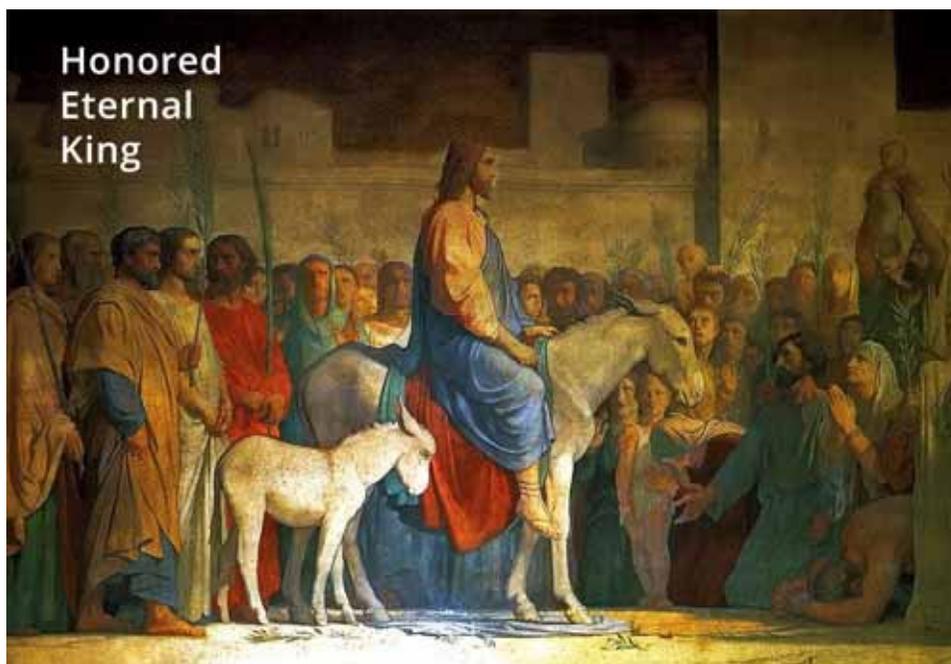
CHRIST IS MOVING TOWARD JERUSALEM. At this point Jesus is near Bethany and walking towards Jerusalem. Bethphage is closer to Jerusalem. This is the last week before He dies. If you were to read Daniel 9:24-26, you would find a prophecy that pinpoints the time of Jesus' death. In that prophecy we are told 483 years would elapse from the issuing of a decree to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah's death. In our lesson, the end date of the prophecy occurred on the past Thursday. It is now what is known as Palm Sunday, the day of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Although celebrated now on a Sunday, it happened on a Monday, Nisan 10 A.D. 33.

In four days Jesus is going to die. The Triumphal Entry is a significant event because it is the day on which He is honored as the rightful king. He deserves to be honored as king. He started His ministry announcing that the kingdom of Heaven was at hand. In fact, the angel announced that He would sit on David's throne and rule forever. Now He is approaching Jerusalem and will be cheered as the king of the

Jews. But four days later He will die.

TWO DISCIPLES SENT. As they approached Jerusalem and were at Bethphage at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples on an errand. Mark 11:1 tells us that the small town of Bethany is nearby the Mount of Olives.

As they approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples . . . Mark 11:1 (NASB)



We are told that Jesus sends two disciples on an errand; we do not know which ones. Our story continues in Matthew 21:1-2.

When they had approached

Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me." Matthew 21:1-2 (NASB)

Now Jesus tells us why the disciples were to bring both

the donkey and its colt to Him. Imagine what would happen if Jesus sat on an animal that was not accustomed to someone sitting on it, especially a young one? Apparently the idea is that the presence of the mother donkey will help to calm the colt so that Jesus can sit on it. In verse 3 we are told that Jesus gave additional instructions.

If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, “The Lord has need of them,” and immediately he will send them. Matthew 21:3 (NASB)

Jesus tells them to get the donkey and the colt, and if somebody says, “What are you doing?” they are to respond, “The Lord has need of them.” I wonder, did Jesus tell whoever owned the colt and the donkey that some of His disciples would be taking them away and they were to ask this question? Did Jesus prearrange for this to happen? We are not told.

In Mark 11:4 we are given some additional information.

They went away and found a colt tied at the door, outside in the street; and they untied it. Mark 11:4 (NASB)

Here we are told that the disciples find this colt tied up at a door opening to the street. Verse 5 informs us that some in the crowd wonder why they are taking the animals.

Some of the bystanders were saying to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” Mark 11:5 (NASB)

Their question was, “Why are you doing this?”

They spoke to them just as Jesus had told them, and they gave them permission. They brought the colt to Jesus and put their coats on it; and He sat on it. Mark 11:6-7 (NASB)

In John 12:12 we are told that the crowd was very large. It was Passover time. It has been estimated that at the time of the Passover Feast, Jerusalem had at least a million people visiting from surrounding regions because Passover was the highlight of the year. Can you imagine what it would

have been like to walk up to Jerusalem from Jericho with the mass of people making the journey? Imagine the crowds that would have been on the road! When the disciples got the colt and the donkey, they apparently did not meet with the owner, just bystanders. Consequently, the bystanders are wondering, “What is going on?! Why are you doing this?!”

THE KING IS COMING. In Matthew 21:4 we are told that the donkey and colt were part of fulfilled prophecy.

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.’” Matthew 21:4-5 (NASB)**

The gospel of Matthew tells us that this event fulfills the prophecy found in Zechariah 9:9. I want you to notice what the prophecy says. It says, “Behold your king is coming to you.” Zechariah was written in 470 B.C., which is roughly 500 years before this event occurred. Israel did not have a king at that time. Israel has never had a king since then either. In fact, when Jesus was walking to Jerusalem, they did not have a king. Rome was in control. The prophecy is incredible because it states, “Behold, your king is coming to you!” The question is, “When was the king to come?” He is coming now! He is walking up to Jerusalem. He is coming on a colt, on a foal of a donkey. It is the fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, “Behold, your king is coming.” This is an exciting fulfillment of prophecy.

When was the last time you saw a king riding on a colt? Typically, a king rode on a horse. Jesus is not riding on a horse; He is riding on a colt, the offspring of a donkey. In Revelation 19:11, the second coming of Jesus is described. When Jesus the Christ comes in the future, He comes riding on a white horse. He does not ride on just any old horse. He will come on a white horse. His return entry into the pages of earth’s history will not be on the back of a humble donkey, but mounted triumphantly on a white steed, a mount fit for a king!

The colt in this account has not had anyone sit on it yet.

What an honor to have the God of the universe in the person of Jesus Christ sitting on its back! What an honor for Jesus, that He is sitting on a colt that has never had anybody yet sit on it. But notice that Jesus was sitting on a donkey, not a horse. This is an example of Jesus' humility. He asked for this animal. It is important to notice this. Jesus could have insisted on a horse.

Why didn't He ask the two disciples to bring a horse, a white one? It is a sign of His humility. It was not the time for His entry on a white horse. He is waiting until His second coming. Our God was humble. Jesus demonstrated His humility when He took on human flesh (Philippians 2:6-8).

Have you ever thought about becoming a grasshopper and hopping around in your yard? You might respond, "It would be demeaning to be a grasshopper." I would agree and I would be terribly insecure—you could get stepped on! Do you realize what Jesus did? Jesus, our God, stepped down from His glory in heaven to become like us. That would be like us becoming grasshoppers. We are told in Hebrews 2 that He was not ashamed to do that. He was willing to become like us so that He could die for our sins. What a humble Savior! Yet, what does the prophecy say? "Behold, your king is coming!"

JESUS SITS ON A DONKEY. Next, we are told the disciples followed Jesus' instructions. They brought the donkey and the colt and laid their coats on the colt, and Jesus sat on the young donkey. Verse 6 gives us a description of the events.

John 12:12 also tells us there was a large crowd. John 12:13 tells us that they cut some palm branches and laid them on the road. In Matthew 21:8 we are told that they took off their coats. It says most of the crowd spread their coats on the road. Others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them on the road. Imagine taking your coat off to put it on the ground for Jesus and these animals to walk over.

In 2 Kings 9:13 we read this,

Then they hurried and each man took his garment and placed it under him on the bare steps, and blew the trumpet, saying, "Jehu is king!" 2 Kings 9:13 (NASB)

That was a Jewish custom in Bible times. If you encountered a king traveling, you took a piece of your clothing off and put it on the road so that your king could walk across it. Do you know what they were doing for Jesus? They were honoring him as king, after His four years of ministry, after many healings, casting out demons, and listening to His incredible teaching. They were honoring Jesus as king. They threw their coats on the ground, and cut palm fronds and branches from the trees of the fields. They were honoring Jesus and He deserved it.

Mark 11:9-10 are our next verses.

Those who went in front and those who followed were shouting:

"Hosanna!

BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David;

Hosanna in the highest!" Mark 11:9-10 (NASB)

I want to be technical for a minute because in verse 9 we are told the crowds were going ahead of Him and those who followed were shouting Hosanna! There are three verbs which are present participles in this passage, and one verb is in the imperfect tense. These verbs make this verse come alive. One present participle is the word "going." It says the crowds were continuously moving ahead. Then we are told, "and those who followed." Now, that does not sound like a present participle, but it should read "they were following." The crowds were moving ahead, and some in the crowd were following Him. They were all moving together.

Next, in the New American Standard Bible, it just says "were shouting." The Greek word that is translated as "shouting" is the word *karzo*. It means to cry out or to shout. Here is the picture. Jesus was walking along and the crowd was moving with Him. As they were going along, the crowds were shouting and shouting! They did not just shout once. The imperfect participle of the word shouting implies that they were repeatedly shouting. Do you understand the scene being described? The people were excited! This is great! The crowds were engaged, they were shouting and shouting! It is unbelievable what was happening. As I was thinking about

this, I could almost feel the energy and the excitement in the crowd. Their king is coming to rule in Jerusalem. That was what they were thinking. Luke 9:37-38 tells us the crowd was joyful. They were engaged. They wanted this to happen. In Mark 11:9-10 we are told that they were shouting that Jesus was their king. He was being honored as the king in the line of David. Jesus deserved this honor, and it was being given to Him.

In Matthew 21:9 we read,

The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David;

BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;

Hosanna in the highest!” Matthew 21:9 (NASB)

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” is a quote of Psalm 118:26. The word hosanna means “save us now.” This reveals that they were shouting part of a messianic psalm. In fact, Zechariah 9:9 and Psalm 118:26 are messianic prophecies. A messianic prophecy is a statement about the coming Messiah, who would become king of Israel. Both psalms are prophecies about what was going to happen. What is amazing is that the rabbis understood these two statements to be messianic prophecies. What the people were shouting is exactly what the rabbis had taught them, and the people understood what they were saying. They believed that this man, Jesus Christ, was their messiah, and they were honoring Him as their king. This was an incredible event; Jesus was being honored as king!

JESUS CHRIST, THE PROMISED MESSIAH. If you think that the reaction of the people was wonderful, what is amazing is the fact that the prophecy said Jesus would be their king. When the angel Gabriel announced that Mary would have a child, he said Jesus would be the one who would sit on the throne of David and reign forever and ever. We know in Matthew 2 that when the magi came looking for Jesus, they asked, “Where is He who is king of the Jews?” Upon hearing their question, the rabbis searched to find Old Testament passages about where the messiah would be born.

They found Micah 5:2.

In Micah 5:2 we are told that God would take on human flesh in Bethlehem. That is the passage that they quoted as being the place where the Messiah would be born. Then the wise men went to Bethlehem and found Jesus. Both the prophecy and the angel spoke of Jesus as being the king. The scriptures according to the rabbis pinpointed Bethlehem as the place where the king would be born. Then when Jesus started His ministry at the age of about thirty, he said, “Behold the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” What did that mean? That meant the kingdom of Heaven was near because He was there. Jesus was offering the kingdom to them, and all they had to do was accept it.

The crowd wanted Him to be king. John 6:15 is a significant passage of scripture. Jesus had just finished feeding the five thousand. We believe there were not just five thousand people, but scripture says there were five thousand men. More than likely their wives, single women and many children were also present. That would mean multiple thousands more may have been present and fed when Jesus fed five thousand men from just two fish and five loaves of barley. Verse 13 says that after they were done eating, there were twelve baskets of fragments left from the five barley loaves and the two fish. That is a lot of food left over from just two fish and five loaves of bread! Twelve baskets full. That is a lot of food. What was the people’s response? Verse 14-15 tells us that they wanted to make Him king.

Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.” So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone. John 6:14-15 (NASB)

This verse tells us that Jesus withdrew to “the mountain.” He got away from the people. He went up to the mountain by Himself. Why did He do that? Did you notice what the verse said? They wanted to force Jesus to be their king. Their reason is found in verse 26. The verses we are skipping tell us that Jesus walked on the water. The disciples were in a boat out on the Sea of Galilee and a storm came up at night.

When the storm became very fierce, Jesus came walking on the water and calmed the sea. We are told that immediately the boat was at the shore. Boom! Just like that. Like snapping your fingers, the boat was at the shore. In the meantime, the people were looking for Jesus. They did not know that He had walked on the sea and ended up on the other side of the shore at Capernaum.

Verse 26 makes a surprising statement,

Jesus answered them and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.” John 6:26 (NASB)

Why did the people want Jesus to be their king? The answer is that they wanted Him to fill their stomachs. They were not interested in Jesus being king because He deserved to be king. They were not really interested in Jesus. They were interested in themselves. They wanted their stomachs filled. Yes, they wanted a king, but they wanted a king—like our politicians today. Our politicians determine what the people want, and that is what they promise. These people wanted a king who could multiply the loaves and multiply the fishes and fill their stomachs. That was their kind of king. That is why they wanted to force Him to be their king. At the triumphal entry to Jerusalem, Jesus Christ was truly honored as king.

JESUS WAS REJECTED. He was also declared to be a king at His death. Four days later He died. What a quick change. On Monday He was honored as king, and on Friday they murdered Him. Scripture tells us that someday when He returns at His second coming, He will be rule as king over the entire world. He will come on a white horse, not on the foal of a donkey. He is going to come as king and rule here on earth during a one-thousand-year earthly kingdom.

The sad news is that the people murdered their king. John 12:16 says,

These things His disciples did not understand at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him. John 12:16 (NASB)

The people who were with Jesus when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to talk about Him. We are told there were two kinds of people at the triumphal entry: one group were the disciples, and the group were non-disciples. I want to focus on the non-disciples for a minute. The non-disciples were there because of the miracles. If you go to Luke 19:37, you will find it says the same thing: they were there because of the miracles Jesus performed. Watch this! These people were interested in Jesus because of the “tricks” that He did, because of what He could do for them, because He could heal them. This group was not really interested in Jesus. They were self-centered and unbelieving people. The people who wanted Him as king did not want Him to be their king because He deserved to be king. They wanted him to be king because of what He could do for them.

The second group of faithful disciples did not understand what was going on. I am sure they were excited about all that was happening. Can you imagine the massive, shouting crowd and the excitement? Then there was yet another group — the hateful Pharisees. Verse 19 reveals the attitude of the Pharisees,

So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are not doing any good; look, the world has gone after Him.” John 12:19 (NASB)

They were alarmed that “everybody” was going after Him. Unbelievable! Over in Luke 19:40 we are told that the Pharisees told Jesus, “Get everybody to calm down. Tell everybody to stop praising you.” Jesus replied, “If they do not, the stones are going to cry out.” Do you know what that means? The triumphal entry was going to happen! Jesus deserved to be king. He deserved to be honored as king. It was going to happen because He deserved it, whether they wanted it to happen or not. If the masses were quiet, the stones would have cried out! 1 Timothy 6:15 says this about Jesus,

. . . which He will bring about at the proper time — He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords . . . 1 Timothy 6:15 (NASB)

That is who He is. Jesus Christ is the King of kings for all eternity. He will rule during the millennial kingdom (Zechariah 14:9-21; Revelation 20:4-6) and into the eternal heaven (Revelation 21-22).

I have a question for you: Which group are you like? Are you like the mass of the people? Are you like the disciples? Are you like the Pharisees? The question is, which of the three are you like? Is Jesus really your king and are you ready to serve Him as Lord and Master, or is there another reason that you want Him as part of your life such as He will forgive your sins, take you to Heaven, fix your marriage, give you a good job, take care of all your anxieties, struggles, and worries? Why do you want Jesus? Do you want Jesus just for the “tricks” that He might do in your life? Why do you want Jesus? That is the question. Are you ready to honor Jesus because He deserves to be honored? Why do you worship Jesus?

CONCLUSION. Listen to what Jesus said after the crowds dispersed, and He was alone with His disciples.

[He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. John 12:25 \(NASB\)](#)

Is that true of you? He who loves his life loses it, and he who

hates his life in this world will keep it to eternal life.

What is true of you? Do you hate your life? You say, “What does that mean?” That means you realize you are a sinner and your sins need to be forgiven. Jesus is God; He is King of kings and Lord of lords. You need to repent of your sins and let Him take control of your life. Now, if you are a proud person and you really love your life, you will never acknowledge that because you are too proud. Your decision is all about what you want to get *from* Jesus. It is about honoring Him.

So the question is, are you just like the masses of unbelieving, self-centered people who wanted their stomachs filled? Or are you like the faithful disciples who did not quite understand everything, but knew who Jesus was and were following Him?

If you are not sure about your relationship with Jesus, then we would like to talk with you. If you claim to be a Christian but your life has been all about yourself, you have not been interested in truly following Jesus, then tell Jesus, “God, I am sorry that I have been running my own life. I want you to take control of my life. Here is my life.” Tell Him you want Him to be King of kings and Lord of lords in your life.