

King of the Jews

Triumphal Entry - *Matthew 21*

series: The Jesus I Follow

week 9



As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: *"Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"*

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!"
"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"
"Hosanna in the highest!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

- Matthew 21:1-11

In church services we sometimes casually sing a familiar tune, *"He is King of creation and King of my life..."*

Stop right there.

What in the world are we talking about?

Do I really get up in the morning and say, "you know, my day doesn't really belong just to me, since Jesus is the Lord of my life. My mind, my money, my time, my possessions—I'm really just a steward who's been entrusted with these things temporarily. I need to check in with Him before I go off and make all sorts of plans on my own."

Jesus came to the Jews as their long-awaited King, fulfilling the promise made long before to King David. But when he showed up, they rejected him. *"He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."* Through Israel's national rejection, he became available to anyone who would respond to his gracious offer.

"He was King of the mountains before there was time, and King of all kings he will be."

Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

• Matthew 2:2

Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

"Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied.

• Matthew 27:11

They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said.

• Matthew 27:29

When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

• Matthew 27:37

The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

• John 19:21

Matthew 21:1-11

- Read this account and make as many observations as you can:
- What prophet is Matthew quoting from in verse 5?
- How does the “mood” or atmosphere of the day change (see verses 12-17)?
- Is this the only time Jesus drives money-changers out of the temple?
- This scene is recorded in all four gospels. What additional details are found in Luke 19:39-44?
- What historic event is Jesus referring to in Luke 19:43-44?
- How much of what was going on did Jesus’ followers comprehend (see John 12:16)?
- What major miracle had just happened before Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem (see John 12:9-10,17)? What did this add to the emotional factor at the time?

Life Responses

1. In the Old Testament, God offered Himself to Israel as their national king (the “theocracy”), but they rejected Him in favor of an attractive but shallow and sinful human king (Saul). Do you ever find yourself subtly rejecting God’s kingship in your life, and replacing him with other things? On a scale of 1-10, where would you say you are in terms of allowing God to reign in your life?

2. In the famous little booklet My Heart Christ’s Home the author compares our lives to a house with many rooms, some of which are open to God, others being closed to Him. If there were one part of your life you could open to God this week, what would it be?

“From the descent of the Mount of Olives there is a magnificent view of Jerusalem with the whole city fully displayed. As Jesus came to a turn in the road he stopped and wept over Jerusalem. He knew what was going to happen to the city. The Jews were even then embarking upon that career of political maneuver and intrigue which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, when the city was so devastated that a plough was drawn across the midst of it.”

William
Barclay