

Triumphal Entry

Introduction:

As we continue our series on “Preaching through the life of Jesus: Matthew Edition” We come Jesus’ Triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the final days before Jesus’ death. Every year on Palm Sunday Christians all over the world hear a message about how when Jesus entered Jerusalem he was met with this royal welcome and this is one of the few points in the gospels when it seems like Jesus really gets the welcome he deserves. As we will see as we look at Matthew 21 the city is in an uproar to see Jesus they see him as the answer to their problems and the new leader who will free them from oppression, but as we know this same crowd will in just a few short days turn against Jesus and instead of shouting his praises they will be shouting for his death.

So as we go through Matthew 21 one of the questions we need to ask is how did these people do a complete 180 in just a few short days. The answer is important to understanding the Gospels and its important for our relationship with Jesus today.

So lets pray and then dive into the text

As we walk through Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem and seek to understand why the people turned against him so quickly we are going to divide this passage into three sections. 1st The preparation, 2nd the welcome, and 3rd Jesus' authoritative action.

Preparation: Matthew 21:1-5

Read the word:

The place

- Easy to zip past
- Flooded with people coming to Jerusalem for the Passover
- Matthew very specific way Jesus is entering
 - Matthew Mark and Luke that Jesus is coming from this specific place
- Doesn't mean a lot to us
 - the glory of God leaves the temple through the east gate

Ezekiel 10:18-19

- The glory of God returning through the east gate
- Ezekiel 43
- Jesus planning his approach
 - Mark says that even the disciples don't connect all the dots until after his death
 - Essenes, Qumran community, division between Pharisees, and Sadducees (Temple worship corrupted)
 - Jesus definitive statement that God is coming and his glory will radically change the temple and the people who worship there

Not just the place but also the approach

- Very Odd Jesus stops
 - Gives the disciples specific instructions on getting this colt and its mother
 - Mark never been ridden
 - Not just the instructions (very close)
- Matthew doesn't make us read between the lines
 - Jesus doesn't need a ride
 - Fulfilling prophecy announcing his rule and reign
 - Orchestrating all these details with divine authority
 - Not stealing the animals
 - Foretelling the future
 - changing hearts

Transition: Jesus is carefully preparing for his entrance into Jerusalem to make a statement about who he is. He has not come just as one more person to celebrate the Passover, not has one of many good teachers, or as an exceptionally righteous man, he is coming declaring that the kingdom of heaven has come and here is the King. As we will see the people recognize the signs Jesus is showing and while they don't fully grasp who Jesus is they recognize that he is not like any other person coming into Jerusalem for Passover that year.

Welcome Matthew 21:6-11

Read the word

- The disciples do as Jesus told them
- Verses 7 sat on them
 - Weird image of Jesus balancing between the two
 - Switched mounts half way through
 - Mark colt: Never been ridden to be guided by the mother
- When he finally enters Jerusalem
 - Crowd erupts with praise
 - Stirred up = Earth quacked
 - 27:51 “51 And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.”
 - Hard to imagine
 - Excitement
 - Praise
 - Utter glorious chaos that was taking place
- Its clear they expect something revolutionary to happen
 - Maccabees 150 BC -63BC
 - Several occasions
 - Return from some victory
 - Simon Maccabees greeted in almost the exact same way
 - Clearly see Jesus has somehow acting as heir of David's kingdom
 - Military
 - Political
 - It wasn't clear but they expected Jesus to bring radical change

Show reverence>>>>

- Show their reverence
 - Throwing clothes, laying palm branches,
 - The call him the son of David
 - The one who comes in the name of the Lord
 - Hosanna
 - Previously had a more defined meaning (Please Save us)
 - Especially since the Maccabean revolt it had become more of a national cry for freedom and celebration of truly important people
 - Transliterated in 3 of the 4 gospels Ex: Hip Hip Hooray
- They don't understand who he is
 - Even his supporters call him a prophet
- See Jesus as a means to an end
 - A revolutionary who had come to free them from Rome
 - A leader to bring lift them out of oppression
- Not as the end itself
 - The Glory and presence of God returning to Jerusalem
 - Savior of not just the Jews but of the world
 - He came to bring freedom
 - Freedom that transcends political ebbs and flows
 - A freedom that's not dependent on whose army is biggest
 - Or who plays the right political games
 - He came to bring freedom from sin and death and suffering

Transition: Its clear that Jesus was not exactly the messiah they were expecting. He wasn't a Maccabee who would lead an army of men against the Romans. He is much greater. He is the God who would suffer and die so that they and us may have eternal life in the presence of God. So why would they call for his death? If he wasn't what they expected they had reason to abandon him, but not to murder him. What was so offensive about Jesus that a few days after celebrating his arrival they would be calling for his death? Lets look at the next few verses and the action Jesus took after entering Jerusalem...

Action: Matthew 21:12-14

Read the Word

- Drives out the corruption in the temple
 - A lot of corruption
 - Exploit the poor when selling pigeons
 - Cheat those exchanging currency
 - The temple and the system of sacrifice had become a vessel of greed and deceit rather than a place where God is glorified and His presence is experienced
- Jesus drove out the corruption and then healed the brokenness
 - The lame and the blind came to him and were healed
 - Jesus reclaimed the temple for the glory of God
 - Filled it with the love and healing that only comes from submitting over to the Lordship of Christ and recognizing him for who he is
 - Not just a revolutionary
 - Not just a good teacher
 - Not just a prophet
 - But the Creature of the universe come to save his creation from the suffering, brokenness, and death caused by the tyranny of sin.

Conclusion: The people didn't turn against Jesus because he wasn't the messiah they expected. They turned against Jesus because they loved their corruption too much to see it cast out by their savior and submit to the Lordship of Christ.

The people turned against Jesus because in order to recognize and welcome him for who he is they would have to loose their grip on pride and power and self desire and surrender to the Lordship of Christ.

The spirit that caused them to turn is the same spirit that caused Adam and Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. The desire to dethrone God and claim His authority for themselves was too seductive to recognize their Savior.

Unfortunately the same spirit that caused Adam and Eve to sin and the same spirit that caused the crowd at the triumphal entry to turn against Jesus keeps many people from fully embracing Jesus today.

It's easy to praise Jesus when we treat him as a means to an end when Jesus is a means to love. A means to comfort. Or the perfect archetype of our preferred political view.

But Jesus did not come into the world to fit neatly into our preferred box. He came to give eternal life and freedom from the tyranny of sin.

But in order to experiencing the blessings of being citizens of God's kingdom and members of his household we need to first recognize the King of Kings. We need to submit to his lordship so he can drive out the corruption within us and heal the brokenness.

For many people that's too much,

And that process of driving out the corruption can be painful. Often times it requires us to loosen our grip on pride, possession, and selfish desires.

But the life that Jesus brings and the healing that He brings is worth that discomfort **Challenge:**

