

Episode #845 - Matthew 21 Part 1-The Royal Entry

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord had traveled through Jericho, healing two blind men there. We discussed the blind men of Jericho, and the fact that the different gospels record His healing of different blind men. Now, He arrives for the final time at Jerusalem, and we will study the triumphal entry.

III. The Royal Entry to Jerusalem. Matthew 21:1-11.

- A. Verse 1. Bethphage means “Fig-House.” It was between Jericho and Jerusalem, close to Bethany. *The Companion Bible*: “Now *Kefr et Tor*. According to the Talmud Bethphage consisted of some buildings and the space of ground extending from the wall of Jerusalem about a mile (or half-way) toward the town of Bethany (now *el ‘Azariyeh*). The Mount of Olives was near Jerusalem; many important events of these last days of the Lord’s ministry would take place here. It seems that the Lord would spend His last few nights at this Mount. “Sent” is *apostello*, commissioned with authority. None of the gospels give us an idea of which two disciples He sent.
- B. Verse 2. “Opposite you” means the next village along the line. Bullinger, “Facing you.” “Immediately” is a common word in Mark. This would be like getting in someone else’s car and driving it away! But the Lord would work this out.
- C. Verse 3. If the Lord has need of anything of ours, would we authorize it as quickly and willingly? This man had the *metanoia* attitude. “Send” is *apostello*, this time it means authorize. Probably the owner knew the Lord Jesus. Perhaps in the past he had offered Him any beast of his at His need.
- D. Verse 4. “Fulfilled” is the word for “filled full” or “completed.” In this case the Lord was doing exactly this. Yet it could still be that He will do this again at some point in the future during His kingdom. “Spoken by” is literally “spoken through.” These words are God’s words spoken through His servant the prophet. These words were written as well as spoken: Zechariah 9:9.
- E. Verse 5. Kings would come on some impressive animal: an elephant, a horse, etc. Yet the Lord comes lowly, riding on a donkey, the little beast of burden! Lowly is *praus*, submissive. The Lord was coming to do His Father’s will. Very unpretentious. “Foal” is *huios*, “son,” one who truly represented the donkey. This was no mule. The first time is the usual word for a donkey; the second time means “under the yoke,” and speaks of the donkey as the lowly beast of burden.
- F. Verse 6. They knew how to obey. It is good when we can say that we have done just as Jesus commanded us to do! We don’t read in Matthew if they questioned them about taking the donkey and colt; Mark and Luke tell us some did.
- G. Verse 7. The “clothes” would be the outer cloak or mantel. Kings would come riding on the finest silks, but He comes on the rough garments of His disciples. Bullinger, “He took His seat.” We wonder how a man would sit on two animals, particularly when the two were an adult and a colt? The consensus is that He must have ridden one and then switched to the other.
- H. Verse 8. Bullinger suggests this means “the greater part of the multitude,” not telling us how large the crowd was. The crowds coming into Jerusalem for Passover would always be very great. Thus they covered the road He entered on. The roads would be

made ready for a king by covering with cloth—the “red carpet.” But these straw the way with their outer cloaks and with branches from the trees. Branches figured importantly in the feast of booths: Leviticus 23:40-43, Nehemiah 8:13-18

- I. Verse 9. “Hosanna” is a Hebrew word meaning “Come save” or “Save now.” They are quoting from Psalm 118:25-26. “Blessed” is *eulogetos*: spoken well of, exalted, or extolled. “Highest” is often used of God, the Most High, ‘*Elyon* in Hebrew. Could also have the idea of “among the most exalted.”

IV. Conclusion: The Lord knew just where His disciples could find and bring Him an animal. This animal would be authorized for His use, probably by a friend of His willing to give Him what He needed. The true King of Israel entered Jerusalem, the capital, not on an impressive animal, but on the lowly donkey, the beast of burden. Yet He was greeted by the honest-hearted people, who believed that He was the coming Messiah. What of us? Do we believe?