

Triumphal Entry

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 10 September 2017

Preacher: Eric Tully

[0:00] Well, good morning. Will you turn in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 21? If you're using the paperback, yeah, the children are dismissed. If you're using the paperback Pew Bible, it's page 916.

And we're going to work through a story this morning that is often called the triumphal entry, but I think a better title might be the not-so-triumphal entry, because as we'll see, it isn't really that triumphant at all.

It's actually a bit of a letdown. We're in the middle of a series on the book of Matthew, and I'm really grateful to continue with the series this morning.

Last week, Matt Sear led us through the rest of chapter 20, and today we're in chapter 21. Let's do this. We'll start by reading the story, verses 1 through 11, and then we'll go back and take a look at it more closely.

It says in 21, verse 1, Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her.

[1:13] Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, The Lord needs them, and he will send them at once. This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from trees and spread them on the road.

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!

And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, Who is this? And the crowd said, This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.

You know, it seems like in this country we're facing elections all the time. As soon as we're done with one election cycle, then we have a new election cycle coming on, and with all those pesky radio and television election commercials.

[2:27] And the question always is, Who should we accept as our leader? And the answer to that question depends on how we diagnose the problems. Who we want to fix the problems depends on what we think the problems are.

And in this chapter, the question is, Should we accept Jesus or not? Is he going to be solving the problems that we think he should be solving? The passage comes at a critical point in the book of Matthew.

The first 20 chapters of the book of Matthew, from chapter 1 to chapter 20, cover 33 years of time. Jesus' miraculous birth, his baptism, his teaching, and his parables, and his miracles.

He has announced that he is going to be killed and raised to life again. And his disciples aren't so sure what they think about that, but they're willing to go along with it. And then he turns his face toward Jerusalem.

He's up in Galilee, up in the north, and he turns toward Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the cultural and political and religious capital of the nations. And the Jewish leaders who have been coming up to Galilee to test him and to resist him and to try and cause trouble for him have come from Jerusalem.

[3:43] And when Jesus says that he's going to Jerusalem, his disciples say, What? That's where the Jews are who are trying to kill you. We're going there.

And Jesus says, We're going there. Because his whole life and his whole ministry have been directed to this moment. When he comes to Jerusalem to accomplish the task that the Father has for him.

And at this point, once he arrives in Jerusalem, Matthew begins to slow down to get into more detail, and he starts to cover less time with more chapters.

At this point, from chapter 21 to chapter 28, from the time Jesus enters Jerusalem until he rises from the dead, it only covers one week of time.

Because this is the climax of the book of Matthew. And this is the climax, in fact, of all of the Bible and all of world history. This is the point upon which everything turns.

[4:43] Every person, every kingdom, every event that the world has ever known, this is Jesus in Jerusalem. So let's look at this story. It seems like a simple story at first, but there's a lot going on here.

Look back at verse 1. It says, When they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples. See, they've made their way down from Galilee. It's been a long distance over many, many days of walking. He stopped along the way to teach and to do some miracles. And they've come to the outskirts of Jerusalem to a series of these small villages.

There in Bethphage, nearby is Bethany, where he raised Lazarus from the dead. Jerusalem is up in the hill country, and it's surrounded on three sides by deep valleys.

And then on the other side of those valleys are hills. And on the east side of Jerusalem is the Mount of Olives. And up on the Mount of Olives is this little village that Jesus and his followers were coming to as they made their way to Bethlehem.

[5:47] As they come to the outskirts of that little village, Jesus tells his disciples, okay, in verse 2, okay, 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. So he gives his disciples some very specific instructions. And he says in verse 3, if anyone says anything to you, you shall say the Lord needs them and he will send them at once.

Here's our first little stop where we think, well, this is a little bit odd because a donkey was worth a lot of money. This would be a little bit like Jesus saying to one of his disciples, go into Kenosha and at the pick and save, you will see a BMW parked there, bring it to me.

And if the owner is there standing by his car, then you just simply say to the owner, Jesus needs this and he'll hand you the keys. And the disciples say, well, a BMW costs, you know, maybe \$40,000.

And Jesus will be like, that's okay, he'll send it along. So Matthew doesn't tell us how this worked. He doesn't tell us if this was a miracle and Jesus knew that the donkeys would be there and he's miraculously causing the guy to just give up not only one donkey but two just simply by being asked for it or if Jesus had set this up in advance somehow and arranged this in advance.

[7:16] We're just not told by that but we know that Jesus is being very specific about what he has in mind here. The point is that Jesus is not just tired and he's walking along and oh, there's a donkey by the side of the road.

I think I'll just hop on that for a little while. He's doing something very intentional here. There are these animals and he is causing his disciples to go and get them.

Now another reason that this is unusual is because this is the only time in the entire book of Matthew or any of the gospels where Jesus rides on an animal. He walked everywhere or if he was up at the Sea of Galilee he rode a boat.

In fact, he had walked from Galilee to these villages outside of Jerusalem 100 miles all the way down there and now he only has one mile to go.

So if he has already walked 100 miles why does he need a donkey for just that last mile? That seems strange. And in fact, it's even stranger than that because we're so familiar with this story that we don't often think about this but everyone else would have been walking into Jerusalem.

[8:23] In fact, there was a Jewish tradition that if you were a pilgrim coming to Jerusalem for one of the feast days you were supposed to walk and not ride on an animal. So all of the rest of the crowd, all of these pilgrims coming from different parts of Israel would have been coming to Jerusalem and they all would have been walking and here would be Jesus the only one sitting on a donkey riding into the city.

Talk about drawing attention to yourself. And then, as his disciples had said, Jerusalem was not the safest place for him. Jerusalem was where everyone was looking for him to try and kill him.

So instead of Jesus and his disciples just sort of blending in with the crowd, pulling their hood over their face and sort of keeping their heads down and going into the city that way, instead Jesus props himself up on a donkey.

He's the only one and here he comes. Talk about conspicuous. He's intentionally drawing people's focus to himself.

Now in verse 4, Matthew tells us that Jesus is doing this as a symbol to make a claim about himself in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

[9:30] He doesn't ride a donkey because he's tired of walking. He rides a donkey because he is making a claim about himself through the symbolism that most Jews who knew their Bibles would have instantly recognized.

And we may not know the significance of riding a donkey into Jerusalem, so Matthew helps us out a little bit and in verse 5, he quotes from the Old Testament prophecy that Jesus is triggering here. He says in verse 5, Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, full of a beast of burden. That comes from the book of Zechariah, chapter 9, verse 9.

And Matthew says in verse 4 that this was to fulfill fulfill what had been said by the prophet. The prophet Zechariah had predicted that Jerusalem's king would come into Jerusalem riding on a donkey and now Jesus is riding into town on a donkey to fulfill that prediction, to realize what Zechariah had foretold some 500 years before.

Would you turn in your Bibles to Zechariah 9, 9? Why don't you hold your finger in Matthew 21? It's only a few pages back. You've got to go back into the Old Testament before Matthew, then through Malachi, just a short book, and into the book of Zechariah.

[10:55] So Matthew, and then go back to Malachi, and then go back to Zechariah. Zechariah 9, verse 9. Let's look at that. When New Testament authors like Matthew quote from Old Testament prophets like Zechariah, they usually have in mind more than just that verse.

They usually have in mind more than just that one statement. Usually, they have in mind the entire context of the Old Testament prophet. When they cite an Old Testament prophecy, people like Matthew are connecting the two passages together.

They're connecting Matthew 21 and Zechariah 9, 9, and they're inviting us to go back to Zechariah 9 and to look at the entire passage there and all the ideas that are back there in Zechariah 9.

And then, they invite us to import all of those ideas from that Old Testament passage back into the book of Matthew. Think about something like a hyperlink.

Think about when you're on a webpage and you see a sentence underlined and you know that that's a hyperlink on the internet. It's not just that hyperlink that's in view. You're supposed to click that link and you go to an entire webpage and that webpage is supposed to inform what you're reading on the first one.

[12:11] Think about this example. Let's say that it's in mid-December and my friend is really being anti-Christmas and so I say to him, look, don't be a Scrooge.

Well, I'm obviously alluding to the character Scrooge in Charles Dickens A Christmas Character. But then, why don't I just say to my friend, don't be grumpy? Isn't it just the same thing to say to someone, don't be grumpy as it is to say to them, don't be a Scrooge?

It's not the same thing, not at all because when I call him Scrooge, I'm making a connection to Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol and I'm importing all of the associations from that book all at once and directing them at my friend.

I'm calling my friend a miserly, isolated man who doesn't care about people in need. I'm calling him a man who doesn't just ignore Christmas but he hates it and ruins it for everyone else around him. I'm saying that my friend has fundamental flaws and blind spots. And I'm referring to my friend as someone who everyone else fears and avoids because of his sour attitude.

[13:22] When I call myself, when I call my friend Scrooge, I'm importing all of those associations from Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol in that one statement. It's actually very efficient communication.

When Matthew quotes from Zechariah 9.9, it's like a link on a webpage and it's like Matthew is saying, I'm not just bringing this here for your convenience, I'm inviting you to go back to Zechariah and check that out.

So let's do that. Let's look at Zechariah 9. Zechariah was a prophet in the time after the exile. God had punished his people by sending them into a foreign land and when he had brought them back from exile, even though it was a time of temporary restoration, it was a time that was very difficult. The Persian Empire who ruled them was incredibly unstable. Emperors kept dying, they kept dying in battle and every time an emperor would die, these little revolts and rebellions would rise up and the Persian Empire would send their military there and stamp out the revolt and kill people and burn down a city.

The land of Israel was now a Persian province called Yehud, which is where we get the word Jew from. It was a much smaller territory than Israel had been before the exile.

[14:40] It was only about 50 square miles. There were only about 50,000 people that lived in the entire province. The temple that had symbolized God's presence and sort of the headquarters of his power on earth was in ruins.

There was no more priesthood. The relationship with God had been fractured. There was poverty and social problems. The people were beginning to return to their old sins.

They were marrying non-believers outside of the community. The leaders were oppressive and corrupt. False prophets were rising. Everyone was marked by incredible immorality.

They were abusing the poor and taking advantage of those people in need. And this was supposed to be the restoration from exile. And so everyone is sitting around thinking, what hope is there for us?

What hope is there for the future? What could God's plan possibly be moving forward? We are the people of God, but we are mired as the nobody subjects of the mighty Persian Empire just out of the way and just crumbling and decay.

[15:53] What hope could God possibly have for his people in the future? And then Zechariah comes along and he announces that the coming kingdom of God is yet in the future.

That God is in charge of the world and he calls his people to repentance and into relationship with himself and someday he is coming to defeat the enemies of his people and to rule over a peaceful earth everywhere and he is going to set everything right.

And this was the message of Zechariah. And throughout the book of Zechariah there is a focus on Jerusalem. In chapter 1 he says God is going to restore Jerusalem.

In chapter 2 he says God is going to restore Jerusalem. In chapter 4 in Zechariah he says God is going to rebuild the temple and that is going to be a symbol of his relationship with you.

In chapter 6 he says God is going to rebuild the temple and in chapter 8 he says God is going to dwell in Jerusalem and someday all the peoples of the earth will be pilgrims to Jerusalem and they will come to worship God in Jerusalem because the temple is the place of God's special presence and power unlike anywhere else on earth.

[17:06] It's his headquarters. And so the Old Testament prophets state that at the end of time God is going to again take up residence in Jerusalem and all the peoples of the earth will come there to worship him.

And so when we get to Zechariah chapter 9 this is all in the background. Look what it says in Zechariah chapter 9. In verses 1 through 8 God the mighty warrior is coming to make war on his enemies and he marches from north to south down the coastland of the Mediterranean Sea laying waste to his enemies.

He starts in verse 1 with Hadrach and Damascus. Do you see that? Zechariah 9.1 The oracle of the word of the Lord is against the land of Hadrach and Damascus for the Lord has an eye on mankind and on all the tribes of Israel.

Just like an ancient ruler or even a modern day one for that matter has his eye on his subjects looking for whoever might be opposed to him or any rebellion that might be starting up.

The Lord has his eye on all mankind. He rules over the entire earth. He is everywhere and he knows everything and he has total control of everything not just of Israel but on all mankind.

[18:23] And he starts up in Syria up in Damascus. He starts in the north in Syria the ancient enemies of Israel and he begins to work against them and to defeat them.

And then in verse 2 he moves south down to Tyre and Sidon. Tyre and Sidon were major enemies of Israel as well. They had a reputation of being so powerful and so wealthy.

Look what it says in verse 2. Tyre and Sidon though they are very wise they were cultured and significant and intelligent. Not only that but they were well fortified.

Look at verse 3. Tyre has built herself a rampart. Tyre was well known because they had a fortress in the ocean and it was so difficult to attack that fortress in the middle of the ocean that one time Nebuchadnezzar with the mighty Babylonian army came to attack Tyre and he put it under siege for 13 years and then he limped home.

He was unable to conquer them so they became very proud. They thought they were invulnerable to attack. And not only that look at the rest of verse 3. They have heaped up silver like dust and find gold like the mud of the streets.

[19:38] Not only are they well fortified but they are wealthy. But look what it says in verse 4. Behold the Lord will strip Tyre of her possessions and strike down her power on the sea and she shall be devoured by fire.

Think about some of the enemies of God. Think about some of the enemies in our own world who are opposed to God and to Christ. Institutions in our own culture governments all across the world who are well resourced intelligent we sometimes wonder is there any hope is there any hope against institutions like that?

There is. He moves from Tyre after demolishing Tyre down to verse 5 in Ashkelon and Gaza and Ekron these are the cities of the Philistines ancient enemies of Israel.

He says Ashkelon will be afraid and Gaza will writhe in anguish and Ekron also because its hopes are confounded. Look at verse 8. Then I will encamp at my temple my house as a guard so that none shall march to and fro no oppressor shall again march over them for now I see with my own eyes.

So God is coming as the warrior from Aram and Syria to Tyre and Sidon to the Philistines and then he comes to encamp at Jerusalem at his temple that is his place those are his people and he is the powerful God.

[21:16] His eyes are on Jerusalem and he will cleanse it and he will protect it and he is going to make sure that nothing is ever the same again. And then he says in verse 9 rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion now it is time for celebration rejoice 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.

God is going to establish his rule on earth through this special messianic king. Zion is another name for the temple mount that is the symbol of God's presence and power.

He says that this king in verse 9 is going to be humble but humble doesn't mean wimpy. Humble means dependent upon God that the king is going to be victorious because he because God has his back and he's mounted on a donkey which at first glance that seems a little odd because maybe we would like him to be mounted on a mighty stallion maybe a war horse that would be much more impressive than a donkey.

But there's a long tradition in the Bible that a donkey means royalty. In Genesis 49 a donkey was a part of the blessing of Judah who was in the messianic line.

David rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. Solomon rode on a donkey when he was going to be made king. A donkey in the ancient world symbolized wealth and royalty and respect.

[22:55] And here comes the king of Zion after God has laid waste to his enemies riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. And then he concludes look what he says in verse 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem and the battle bow shall be cut off.

He is going to destroy the weapons he is going to bring peace. Look what he says in verse 10 he shall speak peace to the nations his rule shall be from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.

And in chapter 14 at the end of the book God announces that he will be king over all the earth and Jerusalem will be safe and secure and everyone who survives in all the nations will go up to Jerusalem to worship the king the God of hosts.

So let's go back to Matthew chapter 21 can flip back to where you've got your finger all that is in the background and all that is being triggered by Jesus getting on a donkey. Matthew has imported by relating this story and Jesus has imported by climbing on that donkey all that Zechariah had prophesied about this coming king the victory of God over his enemies and the restoration of his people and interestingly in Matthew the next thing that Jesus is going to do is go into the temple and cleanse it.

Fascinating. He is playing out the script that Zechariah had predicted. When Jesus climbs on that donkey and rides into Jerusalem in the full sight of everyone he says I am the king I am the king that was foretold in the book of Zechariah.

[24:28] Before this Jesus had always kept his identity a secret. Remember that? He healed a leper and after he healed the leper he's like don't tell anyone. He healed two blind men he said make sure no one knows about this I don't want anyone to know who I am.

It says later that Jesus healed many people and he told them all don't tell people who I am I'm not ready for that yet. When the disciples went up on the Mount of Transfiguration and they saw Jesus glorified and the voice from heaven Jesus said to his disciples don't tell anyone about this not yet. But now on the outskirts of Jerusalem he climbs on a donkey and he makes a statement in full view of everyone in full view of the city of Jerusalem I am the king I am the one that the Old Testament people of God were waiting for to transform and restore them I am the king who will do battle with the enemies of God's people and vanquish them I am the king who demands your worship and allegiance I am the king of all the earth over all nations and all peoples I am the son of David the Messiah that is his intention in climbing on a donkey so now in verses 6 through 11 in Matthew 21 Jesus enters Jerusalem and what we are going to see is two different reactions to him from the people it says in verse 6 the disciples brought the young colt and its mother they put their clothes on them there was no saddle they put their clothes on the donkey and Jesus sat on the young colt that had never been ridden before the mother was probably there to give comfort because it is a busy crowded place and the donkey was probably nervous the colt was nervous and as Jesus begins to go into Jerusalem we see the first of two responses first of all is the crowd of people who were entering

Jerusalem with Jesus they had probably come also from Galilee they were entering Jerusalem with Jesus they were fellow pilgrims of his and they knew Jesus already they had heard of him and there were people walking in front of Jesus and people walking behind Jesus as he makes his way into Jerusalem and they begin an extravagant celebration they're pulling their clothes off and throwing them on the road they're cutting down palm branches and laying them like a red carpet for the king and as they go along in this procession into Jerusalem these people from Galilee are shouting Hosanna to the son of David blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest the phrase son of David is a clear messianic reference and the rest of what they say comes from Psalm 118 which is a messianic psalm about the king leading pilgrims into Jerusalem so they aren't just calling Jesus a king they're calling him the king this is the Messiah that they have been waiting for foretold by the prophets their response isn't done yet we'll come back to them but in the meantime we go to group number two that's the Galileans we'll go to the people of Jerusalem group number two in verse ten and it says when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was stirred up stirred up isn't a fantastic translation because what that word stirred up means is terrified they were terrified they were shaking when they saw Jesus coming up the hill on the donkey and all the people coming into the city with him shouting it's the Messiah it's the son of David save us they were like oh no oh no what's happening here they were shaking and terrified

and they said who is this and then the crowds who were entering with Jesus will go back to group number one then they say this is the prophet

[28:30] Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee that's an odd thing to say it's odd for two reasons first of all they call him a prophet which is a bit inadequate given what they were just shouting on the road that's a little bit inadequate and second look what they say they say he's from Nazareth of Galilee there was tension between the people of Jerusalem and the people of Galilee you know in our culture it's this way too you know I like to listen to country music and you know in country music there's all these songs about how the city is bad the city is dangerous the country is better then the people in the city think that people in the country are weirdos and that they're simpletons and the people in LA and in California talk about Nebraska as flyover country so there's this tension between the people in the city and the people in the country right even in our own culture a little bit and that's how it was back then there was tension political and cultural tension between the people in

Jerusalem who thought they were kind of big stuff and the people of Galilee who were kind of in the flyover country and so when the people of Jerusalem say who is this who is this who's coming to our city then the people of Galilee say he's from Nazareth he's from Galilee he's one of ours we got this see they're claiming him they like that they like the prestige they like that this guy coming into town on a donkey he's from Galilee we got this and so this triumphal entry is a little bit of a dud because Jesus climbs on this donkey and at first everyone's saying all the right things they're quoting scripture they're saying it's the Messiah it's the Messiah it's the Messiah but once he gets into the city then one group says I like the sound of this it kind of terrifies me and the other group is sort of claiming him in some sort of turf war and then the story ends and it's just kind of a dud it's not a triumphal entry it's a not so triumphal entry interesting so the story revolves when you think about the story as a whole it revolves around one key contrast and that is the contrast between who Jesus is versus who everybody wants him to be on the one hand Jesus makes a clear claim to be the king foretold in Zechariah in that passage he rules for a conquering God who defeats his enemy and saves his people in victory and he brings peace peace by trusting in God's plan but then on the other hand there are these groups of people who have two different two different perspectives about who he is and what they want from him let's look at those first of all the crowd with Jesus they shout and cheer and throw their clothes and then but then when they're asked who he is they say well he's on our team they're looking only for glory maybe they feel marginalized or they don't have the same kind of influence that Jerusalem has they're from that flyover country and this is their chance this is their chance to be somebody maybe Jesus can raise their status raise their political profile kind of put them on the map a little bit but Jesus is not coming to take sides he's not coming to gather support in local politics he hasn't arrived in

Jerusalem to settle disputes or to raise up one particular constituency he is coming to Jerusalem to die on a cross he is in Jerusalem for suffering and for humiliation there will be a crown but it will be a crown of thorns there will be worshippers but they will be soldiers pretending to bow down to him to make fun of him he will accomplish his goal but that is going to be his own death as a sacrifice and then later he will come back in victory to vindicate his people and ruin his enemies forever but that's later so this first group of people the people of Galilee they want him to be king but that's for them that's so that he can solve some of the local problems that they have the other group is the people of Jerusalem they don't recognize Jesus you know they say you know you get so many people coming to Jerusalem for Passover you get so many people

I don't know they don't recognize the claims that he's making but the fact that everyone is proclaiming Jesus as the king that's just going to cause trouble that's going to rock the boat that's going to mess up the status quo I mean think about it things with Rome are sensitive it's a delicate political balance you cause too much of a too much you stir things up too much here come the Roman soldiers they're going to kill some people they're going to throw some people in jail they're going to clamp down on the freedoms of the people in Jerusalem there's this uneasy balance and the people in Jerusalem are like oh great we're calling him a king this is just going to upset the status quo I mean things are already bad but they could be a lot worse in our relationship with Rome but the problem for these people is that Jesus is coming to rock the boat he's coming to call

people into a new kingdom the kingdom of God and that is going to require on their part a new allegiance the people in Jerusalem need to let go of their political power of their political structures of the influence that they have of their nice neat tidy little lives they need to let go of those uneasy alliances that they formed and they need to join the king the irony is that Jesus is their true victorious messianic king coming into

[34:34] Jerusalem and Rome is their oppressive ruler but they're so afraid that Jesus is going to get them in trouble with Rome they're like you know what no no and so the people from Jerusalem are ultimately in just just a couple of days are going to kill Jesus in order to avoid all that trouble in the book of John in chapter 19 Pilate says to the chief priest shall I crucify your king and the people of Jerusalem say we have no king but Caesar so Pilate delivered him over to them to be crucified so here I think is the main point of the story accept Jesus as the true king even if he may not be what you're looking for what do we want in a king someone to solve our problems someone to lower our taxes someone to support our values someone to raise our status or maybe someone to just sort of leave us alone or who isn't going to ask very much or is going to support my life as it is right now or someone is going to let me keep what I have my pride my resources but the problem is we don't always do a very good job of knowing what our real needs are we have bigger problems than high taxes and government corruption and terrorism we need something a lot more significant than that the problem is that we misdiagnose what we need we search for the wrong kind of king and then we miss

God's true king instead we need to accept Jesus as the true king even though he may not be what we were originally looking for we need our sins forgiven we need freedom from the destructive patterns to which we've committed ourselves we know if we're honest that our own hearts are dark and that we need transformation we need peace with God we need hope for the future we need hope that wherever sin is not ultimately cured that it will be destroyed and Jesus presents himself to us as God's king and so here's the call of this simple story to accept God's king instead of the one that we would make for ourselves to repent of our sins and to repent of our old allegiances and to let go of our own kingdoms so that we can join his behold your king is coming to you humble and mounted on a donkey he is

Christ the king amen let's pray father father we stand on this side of the cross after you had gone to the cross and given yourself over to death after you had raised victoriously from the grave and seated yourself at the right hand of the father interceding for us lord we praise you we praise you as our great king and we look forward to the time you come back in the future to defeat your enemies to destroy sin once and for all to reign in peace and justice from sea to sea we pray in the meantime before between the time of your humiliating death and your future victory that we would follow you with all of our hearts and souls we would accept you and that this passage would strengthen our faith in who you are and warn us against missing you we accept you as our great king and we praise you father son and holy spirit amen