

The Meek and Majestic Saviour, Jesus

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Date: 24 February 2019

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[0 : 0 0] With me to Mark chapter 11, Mark 11 and page 847 of our church Bibles. I'll read again from verse 7.

And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks in it, and he sat in it. Many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they'd cut from the fields.

And those who went before 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.

And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. When he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. I'm sure as we were reading that passage, you'd say, well, I'm sure we've read this many times.

I'm sure we've pondered it many times. We've even heard it preached. This passage preached many times. But it's a passage that we do have to return to again and again, because in this passage we see something wonderful, something, we might even say amazing, but something just of great notice about the Lord Jesus.

[1 : 1 8] Because, you know, we're here to gaze, to see Jesus, to worship God in and through the Lord Jesus. And what do we see here? We see the meek and majestic King Jesus in these crucial days before his arrest, his trial, and his crucifixion.

And, you know, although we've been looking at in our thoughts in Mark's gospel, certainly the last few weeks as we've, you know, focused on Jesus, well, we've seen him as he's coming towards Jerusalem, as he's about to come to the very place where he's going to fulfill all that his father had given him to do, and being that once for all sacrifice for sin.

And, you know, as we come to this passage, we're here to worship God. We're here in this building to worship God.

So we're here to listen to the words of Scripture. We're here to listen to and to grasp, to take into our hearts what it cost Jesus for the salvation of his people.

And I think even in these days leading up to his giving of his life, we see Jesus wholly committed to going into Jerusalem. He's not going to turn back.

[2 : 3 7] We're seeing Jesus here knowing that he's going to face the wrath of man against him. But above all, he's going to face the wrath of his father against sin.

Jesus is going to, the sinless one is going to become sin for us. But he has that complete commitment to go to Jerusalem. And we see him in this passage entering into that very place where he will suffer for us.

Now, as I said, I have to stress this. This is a worship service. Don't ever forget that. You know, we're not here to somehow get our senses, you know, lifted to some kind of spiritual high.

No, we're here this morning. I'm here, you're here to worship the living and true God. We're worshipping him as he's made himself known to us through his word.

We read his word. We preach his word. You focus your hearts on the Lord Jesus as we engage with the word of God. So we're here to know God, to know him more and more.

[3 : 46] We're here to, you know, to adore the Savior. And to be, and therefore to be strengthened in your faith. In order, yes, to follow him, to know him, to serve him and to love him and to love one another.

To put your faith in practice as we, as we focus our hearts on, yes, on the Lord Jesus. And what he's done for sinners such as ourselves. But if you don't know the Lord Jesus as Savior, as yet you don't know him, well, you're still hearing the word.

You're still listening to the proclamation of the word of God. You're still hearing the name of Jesus. You're still listening to what Jesus has done for sinners and giving of himself.

So we're not here to close our eyes to Jesus. We're not here to close our ears to shout. We're not here to close our hearts to the love of Jesus.

No. We come to worship. We come to bow before God for the giving of the Lord Jesus for us.

[4 : 53] And, you know, as we read here in this chapter, then what do we find? We find Jesus, as we said, coming towards Jerusalem. He's coming from the northwest of the city.

That's where the first verse tells us. So, you know, just outside the city walls is where Jesus now is approaching from the northwest. Okay.

Now, the other side of Jerusalem where Jesus will be crucified, the northeast, just outside the city wall in the northeast of the city. But, you know, as we're seeing here Jesus coming towards Jerusalem, it's a triumphal entry.

He's entering in triumph, as we see recorded for us here. And there's four things then I want you to look at with me. To help us.

Help me. To help you in your worship of God. To help you to give thanks to the Lord Jesus. You know, as we're led by the Holy Spirit to worship him.

[5 : 55] To glorify him. And the four things you've got there in your notes. The preparation for the king. The poverty of the king. The public act of the king. And the praise of the king.

Four things that are fairly easy, I think, to remember. But first of all, the preparation for the king. And our chronology tells us it's only five days. Now, before Jesus' trial and crucifixion.

Five days. And in these five days, there's that, we might say, that most intense preparation that Jesus has. For giving of himself and death for sinners.

So these five days, there's so much happening. And, you know, in these five days, Jesus is going to do things. He's going to say things. He's going to make observations.

All in relation to his coming death for sinners. And it's fascinating because, you know, the gospel writers who've written about Jesus. Who've given a spread of time, as it were, to tell about Jesus.

[7 : 02] And his work of preaching and teaching and healing. When they come to this point, they all slow down. And even Mark, you know, who's such a, you know, racy-pacy teller of Jesus' life.

He slows this down. Because he wants us to see exactly the importance of Jesus and his preparation for his death. And the actual death itself of Jesus.

So all this is leading to that death on the Friday. This is the Sunday that Jesus enters Jerusalem. I said, well, you know, these five days before the Friday. So much happening.

Because, you know, it's for us to grasp the importance and the intensity of the servant nature of Jesus in his suffering and his sacrifice for you.

And so it's this Sunday that Jesus arrives in Jerusalem. That's what we're just focusing on that particular day. That day when Jesus is hailed as the one who's come in the name of the Lord.

[8 : 04] That Sunday of his triumphal entry before, well, tens of thousands of people. And it's, you know, it's quite a staggering thought. Looking at the Sunday that Jesus comes into Jerusalem.

The following Sunday. The following Sunday. Is the day that Jesus rises from the dead. Not before thousands. Not before tens of thousands.

But he rises. In the concealment of a tomb. And appears, well, appears initially anyway, just before a handful of people. So the events of that week, you know, have such eternal significance.

It has eternal significance for your eternal well-being. And so, well, what do we find when we realize this has eternal importance?

And yet we find it, you know, the start, in fact, went a few verses in chapter 11. Then we think, well, what's going on here? You know, if you read from verse 2, Jesus saying, giving instructions to two of his disciples, go into the village in front of you.

[9 : 11] Immediately as you enter it, you'll find a colt tied in which no one has ever sat. And tie it, bring it. If anyone says to you, why are you doing this? Say, the Lord is need of it. And we'll send it back here immediately.

And you might think, well, in the scale of things, you might think, well, this is just unremarkable. You know, I mean, Jesus is about to give his life for the salvation of many. And in the beginning of that week, that week that Jesus gives his life, we might say, well, this is such a basic piece of information.

If there's anything but basic in what we read there, there is anything but unremarkable about the instructions that Jesus gives here.

Because, you know, when we look at the detail, it is wonderful. Jesus is asking for a particular kind of animal, for a particular beast that he's going to sit on as he rides into Jerusalem.

And he does this deliberately because he's going to reveal his humble majesty. And he's going to point, even in the selection of that animal, he's going to point to himself as the sacrificial offering on behalf of his people.

[10 : 24] And again, we have to say, well, how does that work out? Well, let's look at the kind of animal that Jesus asked for, a colt on which no one has ever sat. In other words, an animal that's never been used.

An animal that's never been broken. An animal that's never been used for any kind of ordinary business. And that was exactly the conditions that were laid in so many of the Old Testament sacrifices.

You go to the book of Numbers, for example. Numbers 19. Tell the people of Israel to bring you a red heifer without defect, in which there's no blemish, and on which a yoke has never come.

And you'll give it to Eliezer the priest, and it shall be taken outside the camp and slaughtered before him. So, what Jesus is showing by taking this, you know, this animal that's never been bridled, an animal that's never been used before, Jesus is actually identifying with the sacrifices of the Old Testament.

He's identifying with these animals that were reserved for sacrificial use. Animals that were taken outside the camp and offered, as the whole burnt offering offered as the Holocaust, for the sake of sinners.

[11 : 40] So, the colt, the colt of the donkey, that colt which Jesus is going to ride into Jerusalem, is deliberately chosen to point to the imminent sacrifice of Jesus there outside the city, outside the city wall.

So, Jesus chooses that particular animal. He's making known that he's about to give his life as a sacrifice. Well, Jesus knew that.

He knew that in a few days' time, he'll be that sacrifice for sin. So, even in that preparation, that preparation for his offering up of himself, he prepares himself.

He prepares himself for that sacrifice, even in the very choosing of the animal that is going to carry him into Jerusalem. And we have to say this, that Jesus has divine knowledge.

He knows that there's going to be an animal there in the nearby village. Jesus has full control of events. And that will mean, of course, the animal will be given to him.

[12 : 44] And, I mean, even the detail returned to its owner after the animal's been written on in Jerusalem. We're seeing here the sovereign, the precise, sovereign control of Jesus over every event in his life, every detail, even in his preparations for his death.

So, the purposes of God have to be fulfilled. And Jesus is going to fulfill these purposes. He's going to do it in every detail, even in the choosing of that apparently insignificant animal that will take him into Jerusalem.

And for that, we give thanks. We give thanks to Jesus for even the very details of his preparation. He will be that sacrifice for sins.

He will be slaughtered outside the city wall. He will give his life for others. And he's not going to turn back in that mission of salvation. That cult's going to carry him into the city because he's going to, in that city, face his accusers.

I mean, he's told his disciples just a wee while before that he must go to Jerusalem. He must be put on trial. He must be killed and three days later rise again. So, even choosing the very means that's going to take him into that, well, this is his final entry into Jerusalem.

[14 : 07] It's all happening for the sake of others. He must do his Father's will and do it for your sake. So, worship God. Worship God for that great plan of salvation in the Father's giving of the Son for us.

And give thanks to God the Father. Give thanks to the Lord Jesus for Jesus' willingness to come for us. And you're seeing that willingness even in the very precise detail of their preparations there in Jesus that journey to Jerusalem.

So, the preparation of the King but then secondly, the poverty of the King, the poverty of the King. I mean, we're still with Jesus in that cult there. He chooses this, you know, this animal that's never been broken, never had any use for itself in ordinary business.

He's chosen this unused cult to go into Jerusalem on his way to be that sacrifice for sin. But there's more. There's actually more. There's more to say about this riding of the cult by Jesus into Jerusalem.

There's this symbolic action of the Lord Jesus who came in meekness as the servant of God. Jesus about to accomplish that great act of service by his death on the cross.

[15 : 34] And so, it's not for Jesus to come as a, you know, to come into Jerusalem with a grand entry as a conquering king, you know, riding on a magnificent horse.

And it's not for Jesus all the pomp and ceremony of other leaders, other emperors, other rulers who would do just that kind of thing. No. Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a humble cult and a borrowed animal.

As we said, the kind of animal that would be used by ordinary, humble people. And so, Jesus reveals in that journey into Jerusalem what we might call the voluntary poverty of the Savior.

The one who became poor so that you might become rich. That's what, of course, Paul tells us. The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9, For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor so that you by his poverty might become rich. The Lord Jesus, the one who left the glory of heaven to come to the sin-stained world who came in human flesh.

[16 : 46] the one who was born in human circumstances to point to that. In the very circumstances of his life, revealing his greatness.

The one who came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as that ransom for many. So it's the poverty of the king that we see here represented in riding on that humble cult as Jesus makes his triumphal entry into Jerusalem and this is the saviour before whom you bow.

This is the humble servant of God. This is the suffering saviour. Well, this is the one we noticed even last Lord's Day morning. The one who had time for a poor blind man to be healed as Jesus was journeying towards Jerusalem.

So Jesus will come into Jerusalem in meekness. He'll come to reveal that he's fulfilling all that God had commanded him to do to perform his work of salvation for you, for me.

And, you know, that, I'm going to dig a little deeper here because that revealing of his, of his meekness, you know, riding there and on that cult into Jerusalem, well, of course, it's summed up not just that particular moment, it's summed up the whole of his ministry.

[18 : 08] You see, it's often commented on that, you know, the coming of Jesus into Jerusalem and that cult was a direct fulfillment of a prophecy that was made some 500 years before, the prophecy of Zachariah.

Chapter 9, verse 9, Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you righteous and having salvation, humble and mounted on a donkey on a cult the foal of a donkey.

Yes, direct fulfillment of prophecy. fulfilled, you know, Jesus riding on that cult to show that he is the king arriving in that humble manner.

But, you know, comments that, you know, are made that, you know, this event was the only fulfillment of that prophecy. Well, no, because the whole of Jesus' life, the whole of our Lord's life was characterized by meekness.

He was and is that the meek, humble Savior. Savior. And he showed that by his words. He showed that by his witness. He wasn't the kind of ruler that the Jews expected of their Messiah.

[19 : 15] You know, they wanted that popular leader who'd get rid of the Romans, set up a kingdom, a kingdom free from these imperial conquerors.

No, Jesus' ministry showed he wasn't that kind of king. His kingdom isn't of this world. He's emphasized that again and again in his ministry.

And he's fulfilling that even in riding into Jerusalem in that humble cult. He's riding into Jerusalem not as a conquering hero of men, but he's coming into Jerusalem to show that he's the triumphant hero who's about to give his life in sacrifice.

And if that's Jesus just a few days before he gives himself in sacrifice. What about you? What about me? What about our witness as Christians?

Do you live? Do I live? My life, your life in a spirit of meekness. Those of you who were at the prayer meeting on Wednesday remember we were thinking of true wisdom and you know one of the characteristics of true wisdom is meekness, humility.

[20 : 27] Other traits as well of grace but you know meekness. Giving of ourselves pointing others not to self but to God and Jesus.

Meekness, humble, the humble service that's demanded of the Christian. Or, or are we those who seek power and status, the world's acclaim, positions of authority, things that have nothing to do with the servant nature of the Lord Jesus.

No more to live in meekness. To follow the Lord Jesus, to follow him, to have that attitude of heart that seeks not glory for self but the glory to God. He must be glorified, not me, not ourselves.

And that's, you see, true wisdom that comes from following the humble servant, the Lord Jesus. Jesus who came from heaven to earth in meekness. And Jesus who entered Jerusalem on that final week of his life on earth before his death and resurrection, he came in meekness.

And he bids all who follow him to follow in meekness, a servant, the King of kings. And remember this, the same meek Saviour, the Lord Jesus, he'll return to, he promises his return to earth and he promises he's coming in all the splendour and power of the glorious King.

[21 : 58] And all the world will see this. All the world will see him and bow before him. It'll be the greatest public display of all when Jesus returns when every eye will see him.

Because every eye must see the King. Bring in those who bring in his people, bringing them into the new Jerusalem. But there in the old Jerusalem, well there's a very public display of Jesus entering to Jerusalem.

It's witnessed by all kinds of people, this public, the third point, the public act of the King. I mean, Jesus is seen by many, and deliberately so.

Many are seeing Jesus coming to Jerusalem there in that triumphal entry. You might think at first that's quite surprising. I mean, you know, when you think of Jesus' three-year ministry, so much of what Jesus did was actually done before a relatively few number of people.

I mean, often when Jesus taught, often it was just his disciples only, or else even the miracles that did happen, yes, there were occasions when there were several thousand people, but it was mainly in Galilee.

[23 : 09] It was away from the hub of Jerusalem. But here now, Jerusalem, things are really happening. This is Passover time. There are going to be hundreds of thousands of people in that city in that short space of time.

And what's going to happen in that week? As we know, the greatest act of sacrifice, the greatest act of giving is about to take place. Something's going to happen of world importance. The Saviour is about to show that he's Saviour of the world.

He's about to give himself as that offering for the sin of the world. So his death will be, his death, it's going to be a public action, a public death. It's going to happen in a few days' time.

So his coming into Jerusalem is a public act. It's going to be seen by thousands upon thousands people, people from all over the Jewish world who've come to Passover week to Jerusalem.

So we see the importance of Jesus' death. He's going to make a great public display of his coming to Jerusalem to die as the Saviour of the world.

[24 : 20] You know, in Jesus' life, he often withdrew from public notice. After particular miracles. I don't want anyone to remember to be seen merely as a miracle maker only.

But as Jesus has entered his final week, if he's about to face the hour of his death, he's not going to withdraw himself from public view. He's going to enter Jerusalem in public, and he's going to die in public.

As we said, Passover week in Jerusalem, well, estimates vary, but some reckon up to two million people in that one week.

And Jesus is going to enter Jerusalem in full gaze of the many, many pilgrims there. He's going to draw attention to himself, because he's going to reveal his great purpose in coming to earth as king, as Messiah, as servant.

And of course, by his public death, he'll reveal the importance, the great importance of that death, that death for all peoples, from every tribe and language and people and nation.

[25 : 28] So, many witnesses arrival on that quote, many witnesses death on the cross, but all, when he returns, all will see his glory. that includes you.

I mean, even now, even now, many see Jesus by faith. We see his glory. We read that in his word. And you who see him and know him by faith have put your trust in him.

Did Jesus say after he rose from the dead, when he spoke to Thomas, have you believed because you've seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen, not physically seen. And yet, have believed.

The question is direct. Do you believe in Jesus? Are you seeing him for who he is? Do you see him as the saviour of the world? Do you see him as the one who came for you?

Who gave himself for you? Do you see the one who even at that moment there coming into Jerusalem knew that his hour had come to fulfil everything his father had asked him to do for your sake?

[26 : 42] Or are your eyes still blind to the saviour? Open his eyes. See the one who came in these humble circumstances, the humble nature of a servant, so that you might be exalted to the glorious presence of God.

Praise him, praise him, praise him from a heart that welcomes him as king. Praise him for who he is as ruler, as king in your life.

When we come to this passage here of course we've seen praise certainly in the lips of those who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem or fourth and final point, the praise of the king.

Hosanna, all the crowds cry out, that word that means save. Blessed he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David. Hosanna in the highest.

We said that as we've noticed, these pilgrims are so excited and they're using one of the psalms, they're using Psalm 118 and one of the psalms that was traditionally sung at this Passover time.

[27 : 49] So these pilgrims, they're exclaiming, well, they're saying Jesus is the one who's come in the name of the Lord, he's the promised Messiah. They reckon he's come to establish King David's kingdom forever, the kingdom that they've been looking for.

I mean, the people are in such already a state of excitement, they're coming to Jerusalem for Passover week, they're even now more ecstatic as they see the one that they've pinned all their hopes for and establishing a kingdom of power.

But of course that praise isn't going to continue there in Jerusalem a few days later, the same crowd are going to cry out crucify him. The same people, no doubt, who hail Jesus as the hope of Israel, the one whom they reckon would restore the kingdom of Israel to its former glory.

They'll have their political hopes dashed by the same Lord Jesus. Because a few days after Jesus' triumphal entry, Jesus is going to say to Pilate, my kingdom is not of this world.

that crowd that prays Jesus one minute and condemn him the next. Hosanna, but misdirected Hosanna, they have no bearing on Jesus' true purpose to bring in his eternal kingdom.

[29 : 13] And that's important because when we read verse 11, there is, I think, a connection. We're told there that he entered Jerusalem, went into the temple, and when he looked around at everything as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Why is this important, this seemingly add-on verse? Well, remember the temple. The temple was that place, that central place of worship.

It was the focus of all the Passover celebrations. It was the place of sacrifice. It was the place where God and his people met. It was where a sinner man met with a holy God.

But in the Lord Jesus, because of Jesus, death and resurrection, Jesus is the new temple. Jesus is that meeting place between God and man. It's where God and man are reconciled through Jesus.

So Jesus has come to be our temple. Remember what he said to those who put him in trial. In John's gospel, destroy this temple, and in three days I'll raise it up.

[30 : 21] Jesus, speaking of his body about to be killed, three days later, rising from the dead. So by Jesus' death, by his destruction, three days later, his resurrection, Jesus becomes our temple.

He's now that supreme meeting place between God and sinners. sinners. So in just a few days' time after Jesus has looked at the temple, he is going to become the great meeting place, the great temple, enabling you, enabling me, enabling sinner man to come before God through him.

And one more thing before we finish. Jesus looked at that temple. Some decades later in AD 70, that temple was destroyed by the Romans.

But the kingdom that Jesus had come to bring in, the kingdom that Jesus came to bring in by his death, by reconciling God to man, by Jesus becoming the new temple, that kingdom, his kingdom, is an eternal kingdom.

Never going to be destroyed because Jesus allowed his body to be destroyed so that you might not be destroyed eternally. And so give glory to God.

[31 : 41] Even in this act of worship, give glory to God because you've gazed on the Saviour. You've seen him in his entry into Jerusalem. You've seen him in the manner by which he entered.

And you've gazed on Jesus even there in that temple. The temple he's going to replace in a few days' time. Remember, he's done all this for your sake. I deserve nothing.

You deserve nothing. Of his grace. But yet you receive that grace freely because of the cost that Jesus paid for your salvation with his very life.

So give praise and give thanks to God for Jesus our Saviour. Amen. Let us pray. Lord, we do indeed give thanks and praise for your love towards us.

Even as we've seen in the preparations that Jesus made before his death and before that resurrection, we give thanks that he is Lord, that he is Saviour, that there is no other Saviour but the Lord Jesus.

[32 : 46] Lord, enable us then to worship him, to glorify him, to give thanks for him, to express that thanks through obedience in our life. So hear us as we continue in worship before you now.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, let's close in Psalm 24 on page 230 in the Scottish Psalter.

We'll sing the well-known verses from verse 7 to verse 10. Ye gates, lift up your heads on high, ye doors that last for you, be lifted up, but so the King of glory enter me.

But who of glory is the King? The mighty Lord is this, even the same Lord that great in might and strong in battle. In 70 to 10 tune St. George's, Edinburgh.

Amen.