

Matthew 21:1-11 | Dave Stough

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[0:00] Here, how about that? All right, there we go. Thought I had it on. Okay. Let's start out today with a word of prayer.!

These thoughts, whatever's in our minds now, we lift them up to you. We thank you that you're with us. And more than that, you live in us, that you love us with an everlasting love.

Help us to see you today, Lord Jesus, as we speak your word. Amen. We are starting Matthew 21 today.

We read in the first 11 verses, people call this, you read in your Bible, they'll title it the triumphal entry. The thought there is it's a triumph different than the world would consider a triumph. So it is the Sunday before Passover in Jerusalem, probably 32 AD. Our Lord Jesus is marching towards what he knows what is coming.

[1:29] It's Passover week, and he knows that he is going to be the sacrificial lamb. Meanwhile, the disciples are busy arguing about who's the greatest in the kingdom.

We've had a pretty good discussion around those topics here recently. As this time on earth winds down, Jesus has been teaching the disciples about what true greatness is in his kingdom.

Remember, he propped up a little child and said, unless you're humble and converted such as this, you will by no means enter the kingdom of God. He said, he gave the example of the Gentiles that their kingdom is the opposite of his kingdom.

He says, they lord it over you. He says, not so with you. Whoever is the greatest among you will be the servant of all. Whoever will be first will be last.

Last will be first. This is radical. Even by today's standards, right? So we've been on this journey through Matthew seeing the life of Christ.

[2:41] Remember, Matthew's writing to the Jews to show, through prophecy being fulfilled, that Jesus is the promised Messiah. We have two of those prophecies in today's text.

The sermon today is going to revolve around these two prophecies. Let's go ahead and read Matthew 21, 1 through 11. 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 up there with a colt by her.

Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord has need of them, and he will send them right away. This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet.

Tell the daughter of Zion, see, your king comes to you lowly, riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. The disciples went and did as Jesus had commanded them.

They brought the donkey and the colt and placed their cloaks on them for Jesus to sit on, and he 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.

[4:14] The crowds that went ahead of him and those 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.

Galilee. So in our text, verses 5 and 9 contain the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled this day. Verse 5 is a prophecy from Zechariah 9.

And verse 9 is a quote from the Psalms, Psalm 118. Living in this age, we have the benefit of having the New Testament, right?

It gives us the information on how God's plan unfolded. There's a lot of prophecies and promises in the Old Testament that we can look back on now and see how they were fulfilled, and we can also read Revelation and other things and see how the rest of them will be fulfilled.

[5:34] So the New Testament answers many questions we would have had if we were Jews, if we were Jewish, living in Israel the time that Jesus came. There's so many prophecies and pictures about the Messiah in the Old Testament that you're bound to have a lot of questions in your mind.

Who is this king going to be? Where is he going to come from? How is he going to deliver us? At this time, many prophecies to Israel were waiting to be fulfilled.

Got it? Okay. Good, that's a good pause for a drink. Definitely need it. So there's this big anticipation in Israel for the Messiah to come.

And don't forget, it's been 400 years since the last... John the Baptist came. It was 400 years between Malachi and him. And if people who were astute studies of the Scripture back then would have maybe even more of an anticipation if they understood Daniel's prophecy about Messiah coming and the time set forth.

But even before all this, Israel, during the time of Judges, they wanted a king, didn't they? They asked God for a king. Basically because they didn't think that God himself was a good enough king.

[7:13] But they thought it would be better for them. To have an earthly king. Everything would be sorted out if they could just have a king like the rest of the world. So God gave him this big handsome guy named Saul.

And as you know, that didn't work out. Then he brought up David. Man after his own heart. That didn't work either. David had his failures. And his line was cursed later.

Solomon, in all his glory, came. And he asked God for wisdom. And then later on, he didn't listen to it at all. And he led the nation into idolatry.

So Israel needed someone who wouldn't fail them. They needed somebody to deliver them. And primarily they're thinking, we got this Roman oppression on us.

So eventually, people were not looking for a good king. They were looking for a great king. The Messiah. This was what was in the mind of the people during the time of Jesus.

[8:20] The expectation was high. Though Jesus was and is a perfect king, most people though, back then and now, were looking for someone else different than Jesus of Nazareth.

To be sure, Jesus did make his mark though, didn't he? John the Baptist proclaimed him as the Messiah. He did many miracles that pointed to his authority and his power as the Messiah.

He himself claimed to be the Messiah in many different ways. Remember, he said before, Abraham was, I am. He called himself the Son of Man which the Jews knew that was a title for the Messiah from Daniel 7.

So he claimed to be the Messiah. But for the most part, as it says in the Gospel of John, he came unto his own but his own did not receive him.

People did not want to accept him for who he was. The perfect God-man that had much to say about sin. He came in meekness, healing people's infirmities.

[9:41] He ate with the outcasts. He did not fit in with most people's expectation. And yet, here, in Matthew 21, he fulfills even more prophecy as the Messiah.

And this time, it concerns the people proclaiming him as the Messiah. Messiah. No doubt after this. If anybody was there that wondered if he was saying he was the Messiah, there is no doubt after this.

Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. However, I don't believe that most people in the crowd fully understood what they were saying.

And we read in John chapter 6 after Jesus fed the 5,000 that the crowds wanted to come and take him by force to make him king. And then, they said of him when he withdrew and stuff, they said of him they proclaimed him as the prophet who is to come.

He departed from them. There's other times in the Gospels where he healed people and he told them don't tell other people I did this because it says his hour has not yet come.

[11:07] Well, here today in Matthew 21 his hour has come. This is the beginning of Passion Week as we call it. He rides into Jerusalem accepting worship from the crowd for being the Messiah.

In a matter of days the same crowd that's praised him now in a matter of days they will be yelling crucify him. Let's take a closer look at a few things here.

You got that map? I kind of like doing this because it kind of helps you put yourself in the place a little bit and understand a little more what's going on.

Okay. You guys see that good? You can see where Jericho is up on the right side and there's this road the Jericho road coming from there going to Jerusalem.

Now recently he healed the two blind men there as Jeffrey talked about last week and not long before that thanks for making that bigger not long before see where Bethany is down there Lazarus and Mary and Martha from there and the town he's going to be talking about today where they go get the donkeys that's at Bethphage there up on the Mount of Olives there.

[12:31] So as you can see that this is a pretty busy place there's there's a if you understand the context in Israel's worship time if you lived in Galilee or other places and it was the Passover week you would travel to come to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice and worship at the temple you can see the route coming into Jerusalem goes down the Mount of Olives and goes into that valley the Kidron Valley this was the route that that very large crowd followed Jesus praising him you can take the map down so as our Lord approaches Jerusalem on the Jericho road he sends the two disciples to Bethphage with the foreknowledge that they're going to find a donkey and her colt tied up there I found it kind of interesting when I was studying this because all the other gospels just talk about one the colt the young donkey but Matthew there's two and I would assume that if you had a young colt that you wouldn't want to separate it from its mother so they were to untie the animals and bring them to

Jesus if the owner came out and said something to them they were to explain that the Lord has need of them and Jesus told them the owner would consent now perhaps in the past this person was acquainted with the Lord and he made arrangements or maybe this is a demonstration of Jesus supernatural power his omniscience and I tend to think that it was probably the latter in light of what you see coming up next with the people here so it was the disciples who spread their garments on the animals the crowd spread their cloaks and their palm branches on the road coming into Jerusalem as the Lord got close to the city he essentially was riding on kind of like a carpet of palm branches and people's outer garments this is not that wasn't an uncommon thing in the time it was done for kings when they came back from conquering the talk of the crowd here is the buzz on the street so to speak is about

Jesus of Nazareth raising Lazarus from the dead probably just a few weeks before this it says in John 12 9 now many of the Jews knew Jesus was there and they came not only for Jesus sake but they that they might also see Lazarus the Pharisees they've been plotting how they could put Jesus to death for a while now it also says in John 12 that the chief priest made plans to kill Lazarus as well for an account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him can you imagine that you are looked up to the people as the representative designated by God in a system that God's word created in the Old Testament they changed it some with the political part of it which is Satan at work by the way just change it a little bit but people are looking up to you and hear what kind of conscience can you have like you're planning to kill people just in the name of God so you can stay in power one thing you can learn about crowds after you are in them is that most crowds are driven by emotion more than sound reasoning right that's kind of what I like about going to the baseball game have you ever been yelling a lot at the game up you're blind go home you can say stuff there to you know he wouldn't say in other places that's of course just having fun right what about some of these protests so called that turn into riots to be sure every large gathering of people has we'll just say a spirit behind it the crowd gathered here in Matthew 21 is definitely under the influence of the Holy Spirit instead of the prince in power of the air controlling the crowd

God's spirit was bringing praise out of the people's lips Hosanna in the highest blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord what does that mean blessed it's a Hebrew verb primarily means to bless and express gratitude it's used in worship and it's understood in worship to be asking God or invoking God for his favor so that's what was going on here in Matthew 21:8 a blessing to God offered in worship seeking his favor blessed Hosanna means to save to deliver to rescue to keep safe this is kind of interesting I didn't notice Hosanna the N-A on the end is a Hebrew suffix that expresses intense emotion this was used it's a shout of jubilation used in other

[18:40] Jewish festivals also Hosanna in the highest in the highest it means just what it says the most high the term emphasizes God's sovereignty his majesty his authority and to come in the name of the Lord is to come literally in the name of Yahweh Yahweh if you ever looked at that name for God many names of God in scripture but this is the one God used to name himself when he was talking to Moses I am the self-existent one and when he's telling Moses that he says I didn't appear to your forefathers as Yahweh he appeared as I think it was Adonai he came as Yahweh because he's reminding him that he's the almighty self-existent one who keeps his covenant with his people so to come in the name of Yahweh it means to come in the power in the will of and in the authority of Yahweh so the crowd gathered here in

Matthew 21 is offering some serious worship here to Jesus as the and he's receiving it right didn't in any way refuse it he even told later on the Pharisees are saying rebuke your disciples teacher rebuke your disciples they knew what was going on and he said if I tell them to be quiet the rocks would cry out if you're ever talking to somebody who's using the Bible like a Jehovah witness and is trying to tell you that Jesus is not God you can ask them the question then well how could he receive worship and not sin you can show him plenty of places in the Bible where an angel says don't worship me and he's receiving worship here no doubt so during this time this is all going on it's kind of an interesting mix of people there isn't it you have the disciples they believe they are the ones who received him they know who he is and they're learning more and more about who he is but they believe you have the people opposing him the

Pharisees and others who direct they want to kill him and then you have the crowds who are somewhere in between right and I find it interesting that the disciples it says in one of the gospels that they they didn't understand everything that was going on here but looking back on it they knew that this was a fulfillment of prophecy so they're coming in and there's all this going on and they're not even aware hosanna in the highest and we can see that probably most of them didn't believe and I'll show you that in a sec but no doubt the crowd was controlled by the spirit look at what they say though at the end of our text verse 10 and 11 and when he came into Jerusalem all the city was moved saying who is this so the multitudes traveling coming there probably mostly from Galilee come into the city doing all this and the people in the city are saying who is this and the multitude said this is Jesus the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee you really think they believed! who he was Luke 19 tells us when Jesus drew near to the city he wept over it saying if you had known even you especially in this your day the things that make for your peace but now they are hidden from your eyes and then he went on to warn the people in Jerusalem of the coming judgment that's going to come on them and then he says that they did not know the day of their visitation so no most of the people in the crowd did not believe who he was people especially in a group setting can say things they may not truly believe but in doing so they can still give praise to God I would say we even have that go on today what about Christmas carols many

[23:46] I know a number of you in this room got saved when you were older like me did you when you were younger do Christmas caroling and sing I won't sing don't worry but hark the herald angels sing glory to the newborn king peace on earth and mercy mild God and sinners reconciled think about many people who are spiritually dead sing these and these these were written by people who are physically dead that were spiritually alive in the past right and so this might be a modern day way of the rocks crying out so to speak it's not so different here in Matthew 21 however though I want to say that faith that saves a soul has to answer a question that God has I know I'm preaching to the choir here

today probably for the most part but I have a question

I should rephrase it I have a question that God has for some who may be here wondering if maybe they're saved or not or maybe they're thinking they're okay because they're doing their best to please God somehow the question is the same question that Jesus asked Peter who do you say I am how about you today who do you say Jesus Christ is have you seen your need to be saved from your sin by him do you see who he is and what he did for you on the cross are you trusting him today some in the crowd in Matthew 21 were and many were not now that that first proclamation of who he was when they they it was from

Psalms 118 and they were saying Hosanna the second prophecy we will look at is in verse 5 tell the daughter of Zion behold your king is coming to you lowly and sitting on a donkey a colt the foal of a donkey on face value this scripture from Zechariah 9 9 seems kind of odd put yourself back in the shoes of somebody who was Jewish back in that day kind of odd a king riding on a donkey according to this verse Israel's king is to come in a gentle manner riding on a colt the foal of a donkey Jesus was literally riding on a baby donkey people back then were no different than us today when it comes to using modes of transportation as status symbols horses were expensive to own to keep most ordinary income people used donkeys it was kind of the decent used car of the day we'll say but if you were conquering king a general somebody in nobility you would be riding in the

Mercedes Benz of the day a horse like a charger riding a horse certainly was fit for a king to do certainly not this lowly baby donkey now when you look at that prophecy you go back in Zechariah and you read it and you look at the verses around it it's talking about how God is going to judge the cities and the nations around Israel and by the way including Gaza and a cult of a donkey is a symbol of peace how can a king be lowly and coming in peace when judgment is coming how can a king be lowly and coming in peace when judgment is coming

Jesus has an answer doesn't he let me read you another passage of scripture that speaks of the Messiah coming Daniel 7 I was watching in the night vision this is Daniel's vision I was watching in the night visions and behold one like the son of man coming with the clouds of heaven and he came to the ancient of days and they brought him near before him and then to him he was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all the peoples nations and languages should serve him his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and his kingdom shall not be destroyed this prophecy of the Messiah speaks of the whole world submitting to his dominion how can a lowly king come in peace when judgment is needed to subdue rebellion can you see if you live back then why you might be a little confused regarding these prophecies but what stands out in this story most is [29:55] Jesus unrelenting determination to show us how his kingdom is so different it's upside down from the world around us our Lord Jesus is worthy of any kind of glory and honor and riches anything that the world could give and lay at his feet he is worthy of it he is the creator you would think that the Pharisees would in Pontius Pilate would be bowing down to him what do you see you see the weak and the needy coming to him Jesus is determined to show God's power through humility is that a challenge it is to me according to prophecy

Jesus as the king the messiah was meant to deliver Jews from the occupation of the gentiles this would require an army it would be right for him to enter Jerusalem on a horse with an army indeed one day in the future he will do just that just before the millennium but he came first for something much more important to him than delivering his fellow Jews from the Romans Jesus told Pilate that he is a king but not of a kingdom from this world he is the king who would offer himself as the sacrificial lamb he is the king of those who seek the truth he told Pilate the truth involving sin righteousness and judgment everyone who hears him is of the truth is of his kingdom

God's desire to seek and to save that which is lost is first and is high it's his highest thing Jesus came as a humble king in peace wanting to reconcile to the father those who would believe in him to come in the name of Yahweh showing his power and authority Jesus accomplished Romans 1 calls the gospel of Christ the power of God unto salvation after dying that cruel death on the cross being buried rising from the dead he told his disciples all authority has been given in heaven and on earth has been given to me go make disciples of all the nations are you thankful that this

Jewish Messiah comes to us in grace and mercy God's power to forgive and take away sin is his highest work and that power is found in this man who rode on a donkey 2,000 years ago he is the

triumphant king he triumphed over sin and death Jesus the one who created everything that we can see even created the spiritual world that we cannot see the creator of it by his own word Jesus who now sits at the right hand of the father waiting to receive the kingdoms of the world this one chose to humble himself to become the servant of all mankind by offering himself as an offering for our sin that's how serious sin is to

God are you thankful today that it says in his word that we have all received from him grace upon grace I know I sometimes get down about the past and I know that's not God he wants me to forget about what's behind and it takes grace it takes the thought to remember you know God still loves me the same way he did the day he saved me he wants me to press on he wants us to look to him because he's got it he did it I'm challenged by this if Jesus lowered himself that much to show us the love of God how much more by his grace should you and I be willing to do likewise let's pray father Lord

[35:14] Jesus when we look in your word we see that you came here you came in the most humble way you born in a trough you submitted to people that you created you obeyed them you lived a life where you sought the outcast you went to the woman at the well where no one else would be with her you ate!

with the tax collectors you healed those who came with the need to you thank you Lord that you have given us eyes to see help us to see you as we sing this song we thank you for all that you've done for us in Jesus name Amen