

Series: **Gospel of Mark**  
Today's Title: **"Parade for a King"**

January 17, 2021 – *Mark 11:1-11* (Also: Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19)

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**Objective:** To help people follow Christ because He is Lord and Savior, not their personal 'genie'.

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Introduce and List Proposed Amendments - Discussion Meeting will be held on ***February 21*** - after the 11:00 service. Vote planned for ***March 14***.

Explanatory cover letter - and copies of the Constitution are available throughout the campus and on the app.

***Prayer***

Starting in 1890, on New Year's Day, The Rose Bowl Parade has been a part of New Year's morning for Americans for more than 100 years.

On Thanksgiving morning, November 27, 1924, one of our nation's beloved traditions was born: ***The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade***.

Parades have been popular in America on July 4<sup>th</sup>, on Veteran's Day, and other special holidays all across the country.

But parades are not an American invention.

Parades have often been military celebrations.

In more recent times, military parades included WW II Victory Parades - NYC, Paris, and London.

Over the recent decades Moscow, Russia has used military parades as propaganda – to encourage their people and to

intimidate their enemies. These parades were a blatant show of military power as thousands of soldiers marched along with an impressive display of military hardware.

Parades have been part of human civilization for thousands of years.

The Roman Triumph parades were held to honor military victories as the returning, victorious General and Roman soldiers would march through the city, along with a large number of captives from the battlefield.

Normally, the General rode a full-grown - white stallion – or he was in a Chariot pulled by Stallions – a powerful horse - as a symbol of their power - their victory!

Parades were also common in Jesus' day, and we have a parade recorded in **Mark 11:1-11** (Matt. 21:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19)

However, in this parade - there was only 1 'attraction'.

In the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, all the bands, the huge, inflated characters, the floats and singers are almost a warm-up act to the final person in the parade - Santa!

In **Mark 11**, this parade has only 1 'attraction' - Jesus.

Nothing else.

No marching bands - no floats.

Just Jesus riding on a colt (donkey / mule).

We'll also see that it was a parade where confusion reigned.

Expectations were misaligned with reality.

This parade actually led to the grim and surprising flip-flop of the people who were praising Jesus as Messiah during the parade, and a few days later, turned on Him and called for His crucifixion.

We will see 2 competing realities at work in this parade.

**First**, we'll see Jesus presenting Himself not as a conquering military or political leader, but as a Messiah who came in peace.

**Second**, we'll see the people praising Jesus as the Messiah, but *expecting* Him to fulfill their expectations of a political and militaristic Messiah.

**Read Mark 11:1-11**

**Jesus presents Himself as a peaceful Messiah.** vs. 1-7

It's difficult for us to understand and visualize how big of a deal Passover Celebrations were in ancient times.

In 2019 the population of Jerusalem was just under 1 million people. (<https://jerusalemstitute.org.il/en/blog/population-of-jerusalem/>)

It's hard to imagine that in Jesus' era Passover would have attracted well over 1 million Jewish worshippers to the city. Some estimate well over 2 million in some years!

(<https://www.bible-history.com/backd2/jerusalem.html>) (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/when-jesus-celebrated-pasover-11555685683>)

We know from **John 12** that Jesus went to Bethany, to the home of Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, to a

dinner celebrating Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead (chapter 11).

***The raising of Lazarus - and this celebration dinner were both crucial events in the religious establishment's plot to kill Jesus.*** (John 12 really makes this connection)

In both accounts we read of many people believing in Jesus - and Jesus' popularity was increasing.

People were also flocking to Bethany to get a glimpse of Lazarus. After all, how many times can you see someone who has been raised from the dead?!!

The response of the religious establishment is recorded in John 11 & 12.

**11:50, 53** – *The High Priest, speaking about Jesus*

“it is better for you that one man should die for the people... So from that day on they made plans to put Him (*Jesus*) to death.”

**12:9-11**

“When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came, not only on account of Him but also to see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.

So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.”

Crazy!! The religious leaders were plotting murder because Jesus didn't play according to their rules and their customs and His growing popularity was threatening to them.

The religious establishment was more intertwined with their political standing and power than their faith in God, The Scriptures and His promises.

***Back to Mark 11...***

vs. 1-6 - Jesus – being God incarnate - displays His omniscience.

This is often overlooked, but He knows and describes things that He has not seen - but as God, He knows every detail.

vs. 1 - They were approaching Bethany and Bethphage. Bethany is a town about 2 miles east of Jerusalem – on the eastern slope of the mount of Olives. Today, this town is in the Palestinian controlled West Bank territory, and its name is Al-Eizariya, which means ‘*place of Lazarus*’.

As Jesus approaches Bethany He gives instructions to 2 of His disciples to, “Go into the village in front of you” (*probably Bethpage*) and there will be an unriden colt (young) there – untie it and bring it here.

They found everything exactly as Jesus had described - Omniscience (all knowing).

Evidently, the owner of the colt was a follower / believer in Jesus, and when he was told “The Lord has need of it...”, he let them take it.

They brought the colt back to Jesus and they put their cloaks on it - which would make it more comfortable - and Jesus sat on it.

This is the only time in the Gospels that Jesus is not walking - but riding.

Question: Why do you think Jesus chose a young donkey / young horse?

Answer (3): 1. It was a fulfillment of prophecy about the Messiah. 2. Riding a donkey was common for royalty. 3. Jesus came to offer peace - to offer freedom from sin.

Let's look at some examples from Scripture...

When David was near death there arose a dispute over who would take his place on the throne. To counter Adonijah's plot to take the throne, David arranged for his son, Solomon, to ride David's mule, in a public display which would begin the coronation of Solomon as the next king of Israel.

**1 Kings 1:33-34, 38-39**

And the king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon.

And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'

So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites went down and

had Solomon ride on King David's mule and brought him to Gihon.

There Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!"

The donkey / mule / colt was a symbol of royalty - and of peace.

It symbolized the king / leader wanted to reign through peaceful means, not through war or military force.

The clearest prophecy of the Messiah, King riding a donkey is found in **Zechariah 9**.

**Zechariah 9:9-10**

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! 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.

I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and 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."

Jesus riding a colt / donkey / mule as He entered Jerusalem was a fulfillment of **Zechariah 9**, and it was symbolic and customary for royalty to do so.

In this act Jesus is claiming to be a King who brings peace, forgiveness and love - not war.

*He brings peace and forgiveness by dying on the cross for your sins - dying for you!*

*Opposite of earthly - human kings - who are protected and have soldiers / people die for them!*

**The people praise a political and militaristic Messiah.** vs. 8-10

As we've seen numerous times in the **Mark 1-10**, the disciple's expectations and beliefs about the Messiah were not accurate, which caused them to struggle understanding the mission of Jesus.

The disciples weren't unique in their Messianic expectations - they were typical - and most of the people celebrating this parade had the same expectations.

There was at least one instance in Jesus' ministry that the people wanted to make Him king – a political and military king – because that was the prevailing view of what the Messiah would do.

He would rise to power – defeat the Romans – and restore Israel's greatness.

**John 6:15**

When the people saw the sign that He had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!"

15 Perceiving then that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by Himself."

vs. 7 - Jesus sits on the colt and begins to ride the 2 miles to Jerusalem - and as He does, people begin to place



their cloaks on the road, along with “leafy branches” from the fields.

Why are they doing this?

In ancient times this was done to recognize the king.

We see this in **2 Kings 9** - when Jehu is anointed king over Israel.

**2 Kings 9:12b-13** - *When Jehu became King over Israel*

Thus says the LORD, “I anoint you king over Israel.”

Then in haste every man of them took his garment and put it under him (*Jehu*) on the bare steps, and they blew the trumpet and proclaimed, “Jehu is king.”

**vs. 9-10** - As cloaks and branches are placed on the road, the people are shouting various praises and proclamations.

“Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Hosanna” = ‘*save us, help us*’

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” is a quote from **Psalm 118:26**.

These are Messianic praises - proclaiming the Messiah has arrived - He will ‘*save us*’!

They’re thinking national restoration. They’re thinking political revolution - defeat of the Romans - Israel’s return to glory.

***But Jesus came to bring peace - spiritual peace.***

In His 2<sup>nd</sup> advent/coming He will bring political and military power and judgment - but in His 1<sup>st</sup> advent, this was not the case - and the people didn't understand this.

In fact, John tells us:

“His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about Him and had been done to Him.” 12:16

With the massively swelled population in Jerusalem for Passover, the crowd that gathered to proclaim and praise Jesus as the Messiah - only a few weeks after His dominant miracle of raising Lazarus - the excitement and the large crowd would have been an amazing scene. The praises and celebration were so overwhelming that the ‘establishment’ religious leaders in the crowd told Jesus:

“Teacher, rebuke your disciples.”

He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.” - Luke 19:39-40

The recognition and praise of Jesus was legitimate - it was deserved - appropriate.

But it was also destined for disappointment as a few days later the people would see Jesus not as a political and military leader - gaining strength and influence - on the verge of sending Roman soldiers back to Italy.

They would see Jesus arrested - in chains - beaten - scourged - under the control of the Roman official - Pontus Pilate - and they would turn on Him and call for

His crucifixion. In their minds, they must have been mistaken - Jesus can't be the long-awaited Messiah - because the Messiah wouldn't be held captive by the Romans and face certain, immanent death - especially not death on a cross!

Nothing could be more humiliating.

But now...as Jesus rode to the eastern or southern gate - and entered the Temple area.

### **The quiet end to the Messianic parade. vs. 11**

“And He entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when He had looked around at everything, as it was already late, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.”

You can almost hear the crickets chirping!

Jesus is not welcomed by the religious establishment.

Thousands of people have been celebrating Jesus as the Messiah - Jesus has proven His Messianic credentials by His miracles - especially the raising of Lazarus and healing of the blind beggar - Bartimaeus - but the religious leaders are nowhere to be found.

It's an interesting verse - because of what it doesn't say.

One commentator said:

*“It is not what happens when Jesus enters Jerusalem and the temple on this day that is so noteworthy but what does not happen.”* (Mark, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Robert H.

Stein, p. 507, J. Edwards 2002: 338)

The next day Jesus will make His presence known in a dramatic way in the Temple - but for now, He looks around and quietly went back to Bethany - likely to the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

The week which follows will be the most transformative week in the history of the world.

It will be the defining moment of history.

It will be the defining moment in salvation history.

***Apply it...***

Do you believe Jesus is the Messiah - God incarnate?

Will you celebrate and praise Him - worship Him?

Are you following Jesus as long as He does what you expect?

***Prayer***