

### 3.24 / The Triumphal Entry / Mark 11.1-33

Have you ever experienced something that was both wonderful and confusing?

I think these are two words that describe the events that we'll be examining in Mark 11 this morning.

**Context** – In chapter 11 the story that Mark records occurs just a few days before the Passover Festival. Passover is one of three primary festivals that the Jewish people celebrated. This occurred in the spring and it was a remembrance and celebration of the great Exodus from Egypt – God saving His people from Egyptian oppression.

These festivals involved, for many, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to participate in the celebrations and offerings. So Jesus and his band of followers were on just such a pilgrimage to celebrate the Passover. They've past through Jericho and are heading towards Jerusalem.

Jesus and the disciples would have been accustomed to walking this path, but that didn't change that fact that it was a difficult hike. Jericho is the one of lowest cities on earth (800 ft below sea level) and Jerusalem, which is only about 12 miles away, is 3000 ft above sea level. **You walk through** hot dry dessert most of the way until approach Bethany and Bethpage at the Mount of Olives and you start hiking up hill.

**Read Mark 11:1-6 - Mount of Olives...** where... quite suddenly you see vegetation, color, life – particularly at Passover Time as it came at the height of spring. After a tiring journey you come to the crest of the Mt of Olives and you get your first glimpse of the City of Jerusalem. I imagine that sometime just before that is when Jesus hops on this donkey that had either been miraculously provided or planned for very meticulously.

#### **Mark 11:7-10 – Cloaks / palm branches / singing**

**Cloaks** – royal salute – pay homage

**Branches** – suggest a royal enthronement

**Hosanna** – Save us! Praise to you!

#### **Fulfillment of prophecy**

On a donkey into Jerusalem - **Zechariah 9:9**

Singing about "He who comes" - Gen 49:10-11 & **Psalm 118:25**

Disciples didn't get it – **John 12:16**

- Some believed Jesus was the Messiah.
- Some wanted a Messiah (and were pressing Jesus to be that).
- Some... always sang and prayed for God's Messiah when they came over this hill and approached Jerusalem for Passover.

**Mark 11:11** – Nothing. This is wonderful and confusing.

**Observations** we can make with the benefit of some hindsight:

**1. Messiah is coming but not in the way they expect.**

His kingdom is much different than they're picturing. Jews thought His kingdom was freedom from oppression which it was... in part. However, the Jews thought that freedom from oppression was victory over Rome. Jesus knew that freedom from oppression is victory over sin which brings peace with God. For Jesus the aim was **always** peace with God for the Glory of God and the enjoyment of His creation. **The Kingdom of God is the rule of God amidst perfect peace in relationship with God.**

**2. Jesus has come in power and authority and will** (humbly, lovingly, graciously) **give up his life so his followers can have life which is peace with God.** This is astonishing! We know what the next couple days of Jesus' life held; He was walking into a death which would bring His followers life. That is not what they expected. It is both far more difficult and... far better.

**Mark 11:12-14** Very strange. We'll come back to it.

**Mark 11:15-16**

**Picture of Temple** – Court of Gentiles. Area for Jews. Altar and Court of Priests. Holy of Holies.

**Mark 11:17-18**

**Importance of the Temple.** Sacrifices for the whole nation to secure their identity as God's chosen people.

**Realities of the market.** Logistic challenges of bringing perfect sacrifices over many miles. Money changing. Foreign currency – Tyrian or Hebrew shekal.

**Placement of the market.** The Jews placed this market in the court of the Gentiles. Josephus - 256,000 lambs in a Passover celebration.

**Two problems:** Not being a light / Hearts aren't right

1. Not being a light

- **Isaiah 49:6** Light to the Gentiles
- **Isaiah 56:7** House of prayer for all nations!
- Den of robbers – **Jer 7:11** rob the Gentiles of this place and in so doing restrict worship to Jews

2. Hearts aren't right

- **Hosea 6:6** mercy, not sacrifice, acknowledge God, not burnt offerings

**Jesus turns the tables: This was wonderful and confusing.**

**Wonderful** – The authority Jesus displayed blew people away. He's turning over tables like He owns the place. See Psalm 69:9 – Zeal for your house consumes me.

**Confusing** – Judgement on their religious observance rather than against Rome

**Observations:**

**This is a demonstration of judgement and a direction correction.**

- **Judgment:** Not being a light and your hearts aren't right.

- **Direction Correction:** Only the Messiah can lead you to peace with God. The sacrifices are meant to show you that need saved from your sin. You need a Messiah. Only a Messiah can save you from your sin and bring you peace with God.

This was the message that the Jews were supposed to take to heart and take to the Gentiles.

**Jesus has come in power and authority and will** (humbly, lovingly, graciously) **give up his life so that his followers can have life which is peace with God.** This is astonishing.

**Mark 11:19-23**

**This miracle is actually a prophetic parable** – The fig tree is not what it seems so Jesus brought judgment on it. The Teachers of the Law are not what they seem and they will receive Judgment. They have not and will not lead you to peace with God. They are pressing you into a life of worshipping rules in order to be marked as chosen and share in God's Kingdom. But their obsession with rules and determination to achieve a place in God's Kingdom has robbed them from knowing the heart of God and accepting His salvation.

#### **Observations:**

**The withered fig tree (miracle)** is actually a prophetic parable. The Teachers of the Law are not what they seem and they will receive Judgment. They have not and will not lead you to peace with God. Only Messiah can lead you to peace with God.

**He has come in power and authority and will (humbly, lovingly, graciously) give up his life so that his followers can have life which is peace with God.** This is astonishing.

**What kind of Savior were the people expecting?** Military ruler providing for them new life through victory

**What kind of Savior were the people getting?** Sin defeater inviting them to new life that can be received through death.

#### **Questions for reflection:**

From what do you need rescued?

What kind of savior are you expecting/requesting?

What kind of Savior is Jesus?