

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
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Sermon title: Who's Your King? Mark 11:1-11

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INTRODUCTION: The title of my sermon today is: Who's Your King? This passage relates to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem at Passover. My points today are:

1. It was a set-up.
2. It was a time to rejoice!
3. It was a time to reflect.

SCRIPTURE: Mark 11: 1-11¹ *As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples,² saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.³ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"*

⁴ *They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it,⁵ some people standing there asked, "What are you doing, untying that colt?"⁶ They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go.*

⁷ *When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it.⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields.⁹ Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted,*

"Hosanna"

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord"

¹⁰ *"Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!"*

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

¹¹ *Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.*

EXPLANATION: This passage relates, of course, to what is known as the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem during the Passover, just prior to Jesus' crucifixion. It is one of the most amazing passages of Scripture in terms of the importance of the event and the fulfillment of prophecy. It is a struggle to put into words the wonder, the majesty, and the significance of all that is going on in these few verses. But let's give it a try!

First, IT WAS A SET-UP (Verses 1-6)

- Up to this point, Jesus had avoided being declared a king, and he had told his disciples his time had not yet come (John 2:4; John 7:6). But, today he actually arranges it and orchestrates it. Why? To fulfill the ancient prophecies and to fulfill his destiny to march to the cross and give up his life as a ransom for the sins of the world.
- The primary emphasis of this passage is the revelation of Jesus to Israel as her long-awaited king and Messiah. Centuries before, Zechariah wrote the words, *“Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon a donkey, and upon a colt of the foal of a donkey.”* (Zech. 9:9). This prophecy was literally fulfilled on this day. Jesus set it up. He sent his disciples to find the colt, so he could ride into the city on it because he knew the prophecy. He also ascertained that those who knew the Scriptures and remembered the prophecy would note the significance of it. (By the way, when we were in Israel we were told that “Bethpage” is pronounced Bet-pah'-gay. You probably knew this.)

And there's another prophecy that seems to point to this day as well.

- In a corresponding passage in Luke 19:44, Jesus predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and tells the people what would happen because they did not recognize the day of God's visitation to them. They should have known. They knew the Scriptures. They should have recognized him. And some say the very familiar Scripture; “This is the day the Lord has made, we will rejoice

and be glad in it,” (Psalm 118:24) refers to this very day as well. It’s really exciting when we see the pieces of Scripture fall into place.

Second, IT WAS A TIME TO REJOICE! (Verses 7-10)

- We see in this passage that Jesus accepts the praises and adulation of the people. They were exuberant in their praise, spreading palm branches in front of him. Have you ever wondered what the significance of those palm branches was? Together with the spreading of the cloaks in front of the donkey, it was simply a multi-cultural symbol of good will and praise—a putting out of the red carpet. The Romans used palm branches to signify victory for returning soldiers. The Hebrews used palm branches to symbolize rejoicing during one of their feasts.
- In the Luke passage, the Pharisees tell Jesus to rebuke his disciples for lavishing this praise on him. We can always count on the Pharisees to put a fly in the ointment, can’t we? The Pharisees had planned to have Jesus arrested before the Passover, but now here he is riding into the city, heralded by the people as their king. Can’t you imagine their consternation at the roadblock of their plans? Jesus responds in Luke 19:40, “I tell you that if these keep silent, the very stones will cry out!” (Habakkuk 2:11).

I know a man who picked up a rock near this site and put it on his desk when he returned. He told people it was one of the stones that Jesus said would cry out if we didn’t praise him. 😊

- The term “Hosanna,” shouted by the people in verse 9, is a term of rejoicing, but it also means to “save” or “rescue.” The people were also quoting Psalm 118:26, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”

What role would you have played?

1. Exuberant worshipers – These are the ones who waved the palm branches and spread their cloaks on the road for the Savior to ride by on. They shouted “Hosanna!” and sang songs and Psalms to the Messiah. They weren’t afraid to let their praises ring out over that crowd.

2. Reticent worshipers - These are the people who are intrigued, but they are not quite sure yet. They might pick up a palm branch and then put it down, not wanting to appear radical. They don't want to do anything wrong. They might smile and sing along quietly with the traditional Psalms, but no shouting for them. They just followed along behind and watched. They are good people—just reticent.
3. Nay-Sayers – These are the Pharisees who don't like a thing about what's going on here. Blasphemous! Undignified! Radical! They try to get the leader to rebuke his enthusiastic followers and tone it down.

I would like to say that I would have stood among the exuberant worshipers --- but I'm afraid I might have been among the more reticent ones— perhaps even a nay-sayer. We've all been there, haven't we? I wonder if when we get to heaven, the worship might be a little rowdy for some of us.

I don't want the rocks to take my place in praising Jesus.

Third, IT WAS A TIME TO REFLECT (Verse 11)

- This is a very curious verse. Jesus goes straight to the Temple—which is not curious in and of itself—but, he simply “looked around,” and because it was late, he left. He went to Bethany with his disciples. The Amplified Bible says he “surveyed and observed everything,” but he didn't say anything. I'm sure he saw much which dismayed him in the condition of the Temple because we know later on, he cleanses it for the second time. But he remained silent.
- How many times does the Lord observe conditions in our “temple,” the temple of the Holy Spirit and is dismayed at what he sees? He might not say anything—yet? The Lord may not have said anything yet about your condition, but there will be a time of reckoning. Just because he is silent now, doesn't mean he will remain silent forever.
- I think the same thing is true of our country. I think a time of cleansing is around the corner for the United States of America. God has let things slide for many years now. We made him unwelcome in our culture back in the

sixties with free love, drugs, the ban on prayer in schools in 1963, the legalization of abortion in 1973, the break-down of the family, and the expansion of the welfare state. These all have contributed to the downward spiral of America. God Almighty has remained silent for decades, but a time of reckoning is coming.

Vote!

CONCLUSION:

1. It's all a set-up. God has set it all up in advance. We don't have to worry or be anxious or fearful about what is ahead. He's already made provision. All we have to do is follow his directions.
2. He really likes exuberant praise. Are you going to let the rocks take over your job? Our job is to rejoice always and to give him thanks, no matter what happens to us individually, our families, or our country.
3. God won't remain silent forever. Judgment is coming ... and has already started actually. Let's be sure our individual temples are cleansed and our church is in order. The world is encroaching upon the truths of Scripture constantly. Is the world offering an alternative lifestyle? Nope, it's sin. Pro-choice? Nope, it's murder. More and more, we are called upon to draw a line in the sand and say, "I belong to Jesus, and I just cannot do that."

APPLICATION: So, what is the Lord saying to you today? Do you need to reaffirm your faith in God's "set-up?" He's got it all under control.

Or, do you need to check the temperature of your praise? Are you thankful in all things? Are you an exuberant worshiper? Or, perhaps you are a reticent worshiper? Or, are you a nay-sayer? Don't let the rocks take your job away from you!
The altar is open.

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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