

Matthew 21 Commentary

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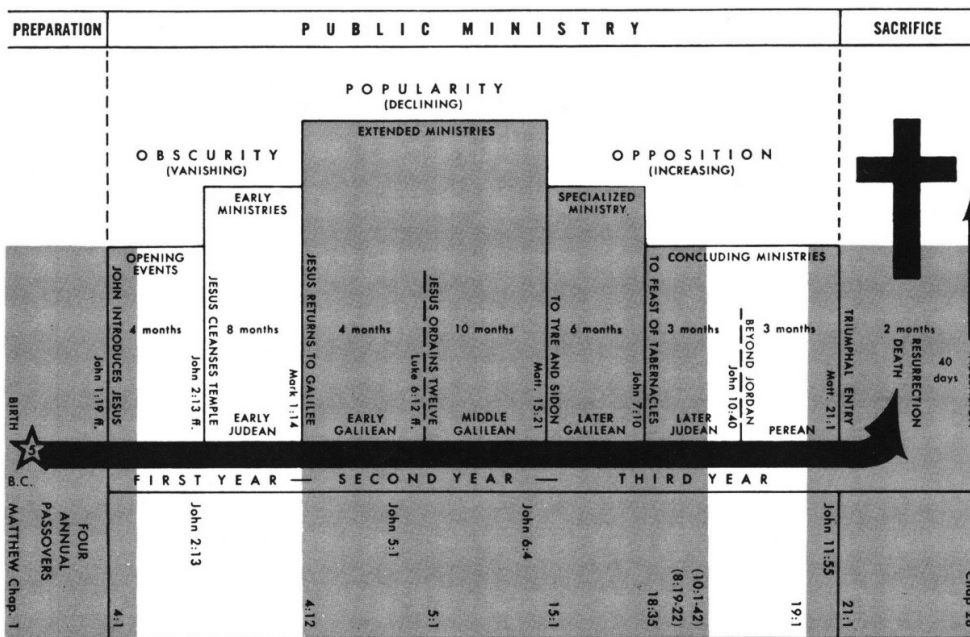
[Matthew 21:46](#)

MATTHEW CONTAINS 15 PARABLES 20 MIRACLES KEY VERSES: 1:1 "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." 2:2 "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

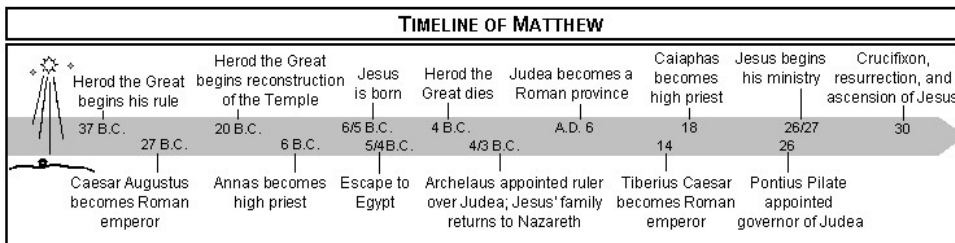


Click chart to enlarge
Charts from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission
Another Chart from Swindoll

THE LIFE OF JESUS AS COVERED BY MATTHEW (shaded area)



Click chart to enlarge



Source: Borrow Ryrie Study Bible

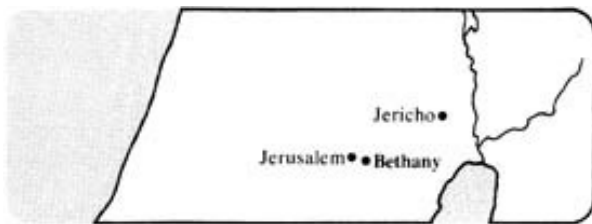
PLEASE NOTE - THIS PAGE IS INCOMPLETE AND IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION - JULY, 2024 EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 2024

Matthew 21:1 When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,

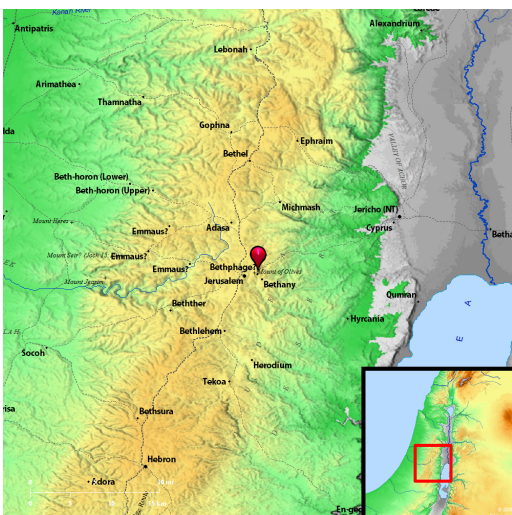
- when: Mk 11:1 Lu 19:28
- the Mount of Olives Mt 24:3 26:30 Zec 14:4 Lu 19:37 21:37 Joh 8:1 Ac 1:12

Related Passages:

Mark 11:1-11+ As they *approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He *sent two of His disciples, 2 and *said to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. 3 “If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ you say, ‘The Lord has need of it’; and immediately he will send it back here.” 4 They went away and found a colt tied at the door, outside in the street; and they *untied it. 5 Some of the bystanders were saying to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” 6 They spoke to them just as Jesus had told them, and they gave them permission. 7 They *brought the colt to Jesus and put their coats on it; and He sat on it. 8 And many spread their coats in the road, and others **spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields.** 9 Those who went in front and those who followed were shouting: **“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!”** 11 Jesus entered Jerusalem and came into the temple; and after looking around at everything, He left for Bethany with the twelve, since it was already late.



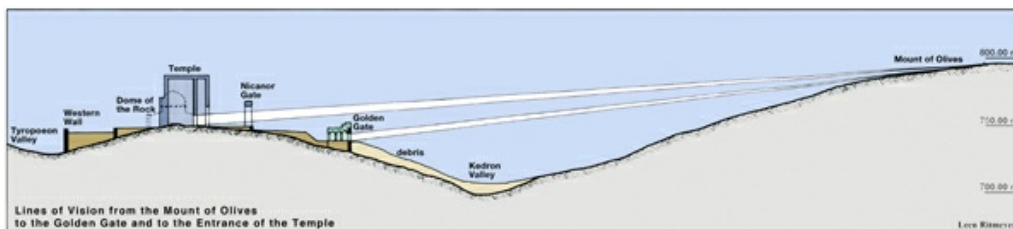
Luke 19:29-38+ When He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples, 30 saying, “Go into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. 31 “If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of it.’” 32 So those who were sent went away and found it just as He had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?” 34 They said, “The Lord has need of it.” 35 They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Jesus on it. 36 As He was going, they were spreading their coats on the road. 37 As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, 38 **shouting: “BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”** 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.” 40 But Jesus answered, “I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!” 41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. 43 “For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, 44 and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”



JESUS ON THE "LAST LAP"

When they had approached ([eggizo](#) - drew near) Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage (Mk 11:1, Lk 19:29), at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent ([apostello](#)) two disciples ([mathetes](#)) - Mark 11:1+ adds "and Bethany (only in Gospels), near the Mount of Olives" Both villages are east of Jerusalem on the other (east) side of the Mount of Olives [picture](#) (which is east of Jerusalem, directly opposite Temple Mount [picture](#)) and about 280 feet higher [Mount of Olives - Wikipedia](#) = Highest point = 826 meters or 2,710 ft versus [Temple Mount - Wikipedia](#) = Highest point = 740 m 2,430 ft) separated by the Kidron Valley ([picture](#), [picture 2](#)) (John 18:1). The exact location of Bethphage ("house of unripe figs" but some sources actually give this as the meaning of "Bethany"!) is not known. Most put it on the southeast side of the Mount of Olives and northwest of Bethany (beth = Hebrew for house; several meanings noted - "house of misery," "house of the poor," "house of dates," "house of Ananiah"), about 1.5 miles (3 km) east of Jerusalem. Bethany was two miles southeast of Jerusalem on the road to Jericho (John 11:18+) and was the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus whom Jesus had just recently prior raised from the dead (John 11:11-45+) and Jesus would stay there during the final week of His life (Mk 11:11+). (Related - [What happened to Lazarus after Jesus raised him from the dead?](#))

Two disciples ([mathetes](#)) - We are not told who Jesus dispatched, or "commissioned", on this mission. What is stated in the following section is that the two who were sent went in obedience even though it was surely to them somewhat of a strange order by Jesus. There is a possible clue in Luke 22:8 (which mentions Peter and John sent on a mission) but we cannot be dogmatic.



Significance of city of Jerusalem – everything in the Gospel of Mark has been targeted towards this entrance into Jerusalem – Jesus had to avoid publicity in his earlier healings and instruct people to keep quiet so he didn't draw too much attention to himself ... because he was not yet at Jerusalem for this final passion week ... but no longer; He doesn't tell Bartimaeus to be quiet; he doesn't try to hush the crowd; the time has come for open confrontation with the Jewish leaders in the city of God -- Jerusalem ([Paul Apple](#))

Stein - Mount of Olives lies directly east of Jerusalem 2,660 feet above sea level. To reach Jerusalem one would proceed west down the Mount of Olives, through the [Kidron Valley](#), and into the temple area through the **Eastern Gate**, later called the Golden Gate ([see picture](#)). (See [Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition](#))

Alan Carr: Historians tell us that the population of Jerusalem was around 80,000 at this time. During the Passover, between two and three million people would crowd into the city for the celebration. The people came in anticipation; they were looking for God to do something while they were there. God would do His greatest work of all during this Passover, but most people would miss it altogether. ([Behold Thy King Cometh Unto Thee](#))

William Barclay on Bethphage - We know from the Jewish law that Bethphage was one of the circle of villages which marked the limit of a Sabbath day's journey, that is, less than a mile, while Bethany was one of the recognized lodging places for pilgrims to the Passover when Jerusalem was full.

NET NOTE - The exact location of the village of Bethphage is not known. Most put it on the southeast side of the Mount of Olives and northwest of Bethany, about 1.5 miles (3 km) east of Jerusalem (SEE MAP ABOVE). "Mountain" in English generally denotes a higher elevation than it often does in reference to places in Palestine. The Mount of Olives is really a ridge running north to south about 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) long, east of Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley. Its central elevation is about 30 meters (100 ft) higher than Jerusalem. It was named for the large number of olive trees which grew on it.

Now imagine the scene - Jesus is leaving Jericho and heading toward Jerusalem which meant that soon Messiah's feet would be touching the Mount of Olives as He went up the backside of that mount and descended down the other side to begin His "**Triumphal Entry**" into Jerusalem. Jesus knew the crowd would be at a fever pitch for they were convinced He was the King who had come to establish His Kingdom and defeat the Romans. These Jews knew the Old Testament prophecies that spoke of a coming Messiah

Who would establish His Kingdom, such as the prophecy in Zechariah, but did not understand the TIMING, for Zechariah 14 will be fulfilled not at His first but at His Second Coming....

In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives (HIS FEET WOULD SOON TOUCH THE MOUNT!), which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south....And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one. All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security. (Zechariah 14:4, 9-11[±])

Matthew Henry Concise - Mt 21:1-11. This coming of Christ was described by the prophet Zechariah, Zechariah 9:9. When Christ would appear in his glory, it is in his meekness, not in his majesty, in mercy to work salvation. As meekness and outward poverty were fully seen in Zion's King, and marked his triumphal entrance to Jerusalem, how wrong covetousness, ambition, and the pride of life must be in Zion's citizens! They brought the ass, but Jesus did not use it without the owner's consent. The trappings were such as came to hand. We must not think the clothes on our backs too dear to part with for the service of Christ. The chief priests and the elders afterwards joined with the multitude that abused him upon the cross; but none of them joined the multitude that did him honour. Those that take Christ for their King, must lay their all under his feet. Hosanna signifies, Save now, we beseech thee! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! But of how little value is the applause of the people! The changing multitude join the cry of the day, whether it be Hosanna, or Crucify him. Multitudes often seem to approve the gospel, but few become consistent disciples. When Jesus was come into Jerusalem all the city was moved; some perhaps were moved with joy, who waited for the Consolation of Israel; others, of the Pharisees, were moved with envy. So various are the motions in the minds of men upon the approach of Christ's kingdom.

Sent (649)(**apostello** from **apo** = from, away from + **stello** = to withdraw from, avoid) means to send off, to send forth, to send out. To send out; to commission as a representative, an ambassador, an envoy. The idea is to send forth from one place to another. But the meaning of **apostello** is more than just to send because it means "to send off on a commission to do something as one's personal representative, with credentials furnished" (Wuest) To send upon some business (Mt. 2:16; 10:5; 20:2). To send away in the sense of to dismiss (Mk 12:3, 4). To send or thrust forth as a sickle among corn (Mk 4:29). Uses in Mark - Mk. 1:2; Mk. 3:14; Mk. 3:31; Mk. 4:29; Mk. 5:10; Mk. 6:7; Mk. 6:17; Mk. 6:27; Mk. 8:26; Mk. 9:37; Mk. 11:1; Mk. 11:3; Mk. 12:2; Mk. 12:3; Mk. 12:4; Mk. 12:5; Mk. 12:6; Mk. 12:13; Mk. 13:27; Mk. 14:13

QUESTION - [What is Palm Sunday? WATCH VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - Palm Sunday is the day we celebrate the [triumphal entry](#) of Jesus into Jerusalem, one week before His resurrection (Matthew 21:1–11). As Jesus entered the holy city, He neared the culmination of a long journey toward Golgotha. He had come to save the lost (Luke 19:10), and now was the time—this was the place—to secure that salvation. Palm Sunday marked the start of what is often called "[Passion Week](#)," the final seven days of Jesus' earthly ministry. Palm Sunday was the "beginning of the end" of Jesus' work on earth.

Palm Sunday began with Jesus and His disciples traveling over the [Mount of Olives](#). The Lord sent two disciples ahead into the village of Bethphage to find an animal to ride. They found the unbroken colt of a donkey, just as Jesus had said they would (Luke 19:29–30). When they untied the colt, the owners began to question them. The disciples responded with the answer Jesus had provided: "The Lord needs it" (Luke 19:31–34). Amazingly, the owners were satisfied with that answer and let the disciples go. "They brought [the donkey] to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it" (Luke 19:35).

As Jesus ascended toward Jerusalem, a large multitude gathered around Him. This crowd understood that Jesus was the Messiah; what they did not understand was that it wasn't time to set up the kingdom yet—although Jesus had tried to tell them so (Luke 19:11–12). The crowd's actions along the road give rise to the name "Palm Sunday": "A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road" (Matthew 21:8). In strewing their cloaks on the road, the people were giving Jesus the royal treatment—King Jehu was given similar honor at his coronation (2 Kings 9:13). John records the detail that the branches they cut were from palm trees (John 12:13).

On that first Palm Sunday, the people also honored Jesus verbally: "The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' / 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' / 'Hosanna in the highest heaven!'" (Matthew 21:9). In their praise of Jesus, the Jewish crowds were quoting Psalm 118:25–26, an acknowledged prophecy of the Christ. The allusion to a Messianic psalm drew resentment from the religious leaders present: "Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples!'" (Luke 19:39). However, Jesus saw no need to rebuke those who told the truth. He

replied, "I tell you . . . if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out" (Luke 19:40).

Some 450 to 500 years prior to Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, the prophet Zechariah had prophesied the event we now call Palm Sunday: "Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! / Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! / See, your king comes to you, / righteous and victorious, / lowly and riding on a donkey, / on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9). The prophecy was fulfilled in every particular, and it was indeed a time of rejoicing, as Jerusalem welcomed their King. Unfortunately, the celebration was not to last. The crowds looked for a Messiah who would rescue them *politically* and free them *nationally*, but Jesus had come to save them *spiritually*. First things first, and mankind's primary need is spiritual, not political, cultural, or national salvation.

Even as the coatless multitudes waved the palm branches and shouted for joy, they missed the true reason for Jesus' presence. They could neither see nor understand the cross. That's why, "as [Jesus] approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, 'If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies . . . will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you'" (Luke 19:41–47). It is a tragic thing to see the Savior but not recognize Him for who He is. The crowds who were crying out "[Hosanna!](#)" on Palm Sunday were crying out "Crucify Him!" later that week (Matthew 27:22–23).

There is coming a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10–11). The worship will be real then. Also, John records a scene in heaven that features the eternal celebration of the risen Lord: "There before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were *holding palm branches in their hands*" (Revelation 7:9, emphasis added). These palm-bearing saints will shout, "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb" (verse 10), and who can measure sum of their joy?

Palm Sunday Calendar:

2024 — March 24

2025 — April 13

Question - [What is the significance of Bethany in the Bible?](#)

Answer: Bethany was a village in Judea about two miles east of Jerusalem ([John 11:18](#)), a distance considered a "Sabbath day's journey" ([Acts 1:12](#)). Bethany was situated on the well-traveled road to Jericho. Some scholars think Bethany was more like a modern subdivision or a neighborhood rather than an entire town. The edges of Bethany reached to the [Mount of Olives](#) and also bordered Bethphage, a suburb of Jerusalem.

Bethany is probably best known for being the hometown of Jesus' good friends, Mary, Martha, and [Lazarus](#). Bethany was the place where Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead ([John 11:1, 41–44](#)), it was the home of Simon the leper ([Mark 14:3–10](#)), and it was the place where Mary [anointed Jesus' feet](#) with perfume ([Matthew 26:6–13](#)). Other references to Bethany are [Mark 11:1](#) and [Luke 19:29](#), which describe the preparations for Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the cursing of the fig tree in [Mark 11:11–13](#), and the place where Jesus stayed overnight during His final week of earthly ministry, between His [triumphal entry](#) and His crucifixion ([Matthew 21:17](#)).

The name *Bethany* is translated by some to mean "house of figs," as there are many fig trees and palms in the area; others translate it as "house of misery," speculating that Bethany was a designated place for the sick and those with contagious diseases.

Bethany is also significant as the place near which Christ ascended back into heaven ([Luke 24:50](#)). Forty days after His resurrection, Jesus gathered His eleven disciples to give them final instructions before He left the earth ([Luke 24:50–51](#)). He took them to the Mount of Olives, in "the vicinity of Bethany" (verse 50), where He blessed them and commissioned them. The Lord was then lifted up into the clouds ([Acts 1:9](#)). As the disciples stood staring upwards, two angels appeared to them and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" ([Acts 1:11](#)).

Bethany has an exciting future prophesied. [Zechariah 14:4](#) says, "On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east." When Jesus returns to set up His kingdom, it will be to the very place He left: the Mount of Olives near Bethany. Though the ancient town of Bethany may have been small and seemingly insignificant, it will be the scene of a world-changing event: the glorious return of Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords ([Revelation 19:11–16](#)). (Source: [GotQuestions.org](#))

Mark Akin on the Mount of Olives - We should also take note, without running past it too quickly, of the importance of the Mount of Olives (v. 1) in biblical and redemptive history. – The **Mount of Olives** is a ridge about two and a half miles long. It rises to a height

about 2700 feet, 200 feet higher than Mount Zion. The view from its summit is breath-taking. Its crest is less than a mile directly east of Jerusalem. It is known for its many olive trees. Significant historical events:

1. Its slopes were the path of David's retreat from Jerusalem to escape capture by Absalom (2 Sam 15:30-32).
2. On this mount Solomon grieved God by erecting idols for his foreign wives to worship (1 Kings 11:1-10).
3. On this mount Jesus wept over the disobedience and blindness of Jerusalem (Lk 19:41-44).
4. Ezekiel witnessed the Glory of God on the Mount of Olives (Eze. 11:23).
5. Jesus, the Son of David made his royal entry into Jerusalem from here. (Mk 11:1-10; Luke 19:28-40; Matt 21:1-10; John 12:12-13).
6. The disciples witnessed Jesus' ascension into glory on this mount (Lk 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-12).
7. In Acts 1:10-11 Jesus said He would come again in the same way you have watched him go. Zechariah 14:4-5 tells us what will happen when those holy feet touch down once again where He left, "On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him."

Matthew 21:2 saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me.

- Mt 26:18 Mk 11:2,3 14:13-16 Lu 19:30-32 Joh 2:5-8

Related Passage:

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

saying to them, "Go ([present imperative](#)) into the village opposite you, and immediately ([euthus](#)) you will find a donkey tied there and a colt ([polos](#)) with her; untie ([luo](#)) them and bring ([aorist imperative](#)) them to Me Don't get confused. The donkey is called a colt in Mk 11:2+. Go is a command in the [present imperative](#) which they promptly obey. While they may not fully understand why they are being sent on this errand for Jesus, they do not question Him. John 12:16+ says "These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him."

THOUGHT- When Jesus tells us to "Go" through His Word and Spirit and prayer, then we need to heed without hesitation, doubt or questioning. Like these first disciples we may not fully understand in this life why we are to go (cf Jn 12:16), "for now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known." (1 Cor 13:12+).

Henry Morris - colt with her. The parallel accounts in Mark 11:2 and Luke 19:30 mention only one donkey, but that does not mean they deny that two were involved. Also, Matthew is the only one who mentions that this incident was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, although the others must have known this reference.

Brian Bell - His Going Public: He was purposely *going public*. He was promoting a public demonstration. Never before. He had repeatedly withdrawn from the crowds. But now He invited it. He courted danger & did it with calculated purpose. Jesus was demonstrating His omniscience/His all-knowingness. He was in control of the whole situation. I like that. That brings me comfort today. He has all the details of my life figured out. (AND) We can all find encouragement from the fact that Jesus enlisted the donkey in His service!

The Donkey,

G.K.Chesterton

When fishes flew and forests
walked And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born.

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me:
I am dumb, I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

Colt (4454)(**polos**) is a young animal, a foal, the young of the horse or donkey colt, foal. It refers to an animal that is old enough to use. In the NT a donkey's colt young donkey for Matthew says "a donkey tied there and a **colt** with her." (Mt 21:2). John 12:16 says "a donkey's **colt**." **BDAG** says **polos** can then refer to "any 'young animal' [Aristot. et al.], the term being applied to any young animal born of its kind, from an elephant to a locust, depending on context." Gilbrant says in Classical Greek "The word *pōlos* occurs in classical Greek as early as Homer (Eighth Century B.C.) and appears on inscriptions and in papyrus documents of the New Testament world. In most cases it denotes the colt of a horse. Standing alone, the word does not indicate whether the animal is male or female. It is also used in the Septuagint where it usually translates 'ayir, "the stallion of an ass.'"

Polos - 12x in 11v - Matt. 21:2; Matt. 21:5; Matt. 21:7; Mk. 11:2; Mk. 11:4; Mk. 11:5; Mk. 11:7; Lk. 19:30; Lk. 19:33; Lk. 19:35; Jn. 12:15

Polos in Septuagint - Gen. 32:15; Gen. 49:11; Jdg. 10:4; Jdg. 12:14; Prov. 5:19; Zech. 9:9; Most of these OT uses refer to a donkey.

Untie (loose, untie, unbind) (3089)(**luo**) means to loose, release, dissolve. The basic meaning is to **loose** that which is fastened or bound and thus to unbind or untie. **Literally** to untie something (colt = Mt 21:2, = Mk 1:7_±, Lk 3:16_±, Jn 1:27_± = sandal thong, man [**Lazarus**] wrapped in bandages = Jn 11:44 = "Unbind him, and let him go."), break the seals of a scroll (Re 5:2 - secular use described "broken seals of a will", or "of the opening of a document" or "a letter"), release from prison (Ac 22:30_± cp release of angels and/or the devil = Re 9:14,15_±, Rev 20:3, 7_±).

Matthew 21:3 "If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."

- **The Lord** (**kurios**): 1Ch 29:14-16 Ps 24:1 50:10,11 Hag 2:8,9 Joh 3:35 17:2 Ac 17:25 2Co 8:9
- **immediately**: 1Sa 10:26 1Ki 17:9 Ezr 1:1,5 7:27 2Co 8:1,2,16 Jas 1:17

If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord (kurios**) has need of them,' and immediately (**euthus**) he (the owner) will send (**apostello**) them**

Brian Bell - The Lord had need of it & He has need of you. Like Philip & the Ethiopian Eunuch. The Lord had need of Philip. In His sovereignty & grace God has given you & me the privilege of being used to tell other people about the Lord. Riding a donkey was a kingly act which identified Him with the royal line of David. It was a royal animal during King David's reign. After him, the Hebrew kings switched to horses, & the donkey was considered unsuited to the dignity of Kings.

NET NOTE - The custom called *angaria* allowed the impressment of animals for service to a significant figure.

THOUGHT - Jesus' **omniscience** and absolute control extend to every detail of our lives, yea, even every hair of our head (Mt 10:30,31_±), so why should we worry, fret or be anxious (Beloved, I am speaking to myself on this one!) Play **God is in Control by Twila Paris**. (Related topics- **The Providence of God** and **God is In Control**)

We worship a Lord Who is ever in complete control of every situation!

Lord (master, owner)(2962)(**kurios** from **kuros** = might or power, related to **kuroo** = to give authority) primarily means the

possessor, owner, master, the supreme one, one who is sovereign and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership rights and uncontested power. Kurios is used some 489 times of Jesus. Jesus is referred to as **Lord** (Kurios) more frequently than by any other title. Therefore it behooves us to understand the truth concerning **Jesus as Lord** and not allow ourselves to become side-tracked in debate over so-called "[Lordship salvation](#)". The indisputable Biblical facts are that faith in Jesus saves and Jesus is Lord (Ro 10:9,10+) This confession of "Jesus is Lord" became a direct affront to the practice of Roman [emperor worship](#). Certain cities even built temples for Caesar-worship as was the case in [Smyrna](#) where the command was to honor the emperor by confessing "Caesar is Lord". To declare "Jesus is Lord" became a crime punishable by death, resulting in the martyrdom. I think the first century believers understood "Lordship" in a way modern believers would find it difficult to comprehend! (cp Jesus' "prophetic" warning in Mt 10:22, 23, 24, 25+ where "master" is kurios)

James Montgomery Boice adds that "Citizens of the (Roman) empire were required to burn a pinch of incense to the reigning Caesar and utter the words *Kyrios Kaisar* ("Caesar is Lord!"). It is this that the early Christians refused to do and for which they were themselves thrown to the wild lions or crucified. It was not that Christians were forbidden to worship God. They were free to worship any god they chose so long as they also acknowledged Caesar. Romans were tolerant. But when Christians denied to Caesar the allegiance that they believed belonged to the true God only, they were executed. (See Boice's [Daniel: An Expository Commentary- Page 69](#))

Wayne Detzler writes that **kurios** - In the earliest Greek this word meant "to have power or authority." Later it came to describe one who is in control. As classical Greek developed, it became a title for men of importance. Since the gods of ancient Greece were neither creators nor lords of their fate, pagan deities were not called "lord" until much later. By the time of Christ, kings had come to be called "lord." This was true of the Roman Emperor Caligula (A.D. 37-41). It was also true of Candace, the fabled queen of upper Egypt (Ac 8:27). So too Herod the Great, Herod Agrippa I, and Herod Agrippa II were called "lord." (BORROW [New Testament Words in Today's Language](#))

Kurios in Matthew's Gospel - Matt. 1:20; Matt. 1:22; Matt. 1:24; Matt. 2:13; Matt. 2:15; Matt. 2:19; Matt. 3:3; Matt. 4:7; Matt. 4:10; Matt. 5:33; Matt. 6:24; Matt. 7:21; Matt. 7:22; Matt. 8:2; Matt. 8:6; Matt. 8:8; Matt. 8:21; Matt. 8:25; Matt. 9:28; Matt. 9:38; Matt. 10:24; Matt. 10:25; Matt. 11:25; Matt. 12:8; Matt. 13:27; Matt. 14:28; Matt. 14:30; Matt. 15:22; Matt. 15:25; Matt. 15:27; Matt. 16:22; Matt. 17:4; Matt. 17:15; Matt. 18:21; Matt. 18:25; Matt. 18:27; Matt. 18:31; Matt. 18:32; Matt. 18:34; Matt. 20:8; Matt. 20:30; Matt. 20:31; Matt. 20:33; Matt. 21:3; Matt. 21:9; Matt. 21:30; Matt. 21:40; Matt. 21:42; Matt. 22:37; Matt. 22:43; Matt. 22:44; Matt. 22:45; Matt. 23:39; Matt. 24:42; Matt. 24:45; Matt. 24:46; Matt. 24:48; Matt. 24:50; Matt. 25:11; Matt. 25:18; Matt. 25:19; Matt. 25:20; Matt. 25:21; Matt. 25:22; Matt. 25:23; Matt. 25:24; Matt. 25:26; Matt. 25:37; Matt. 25:44; Matt. 26:22; Matt. 27:10; Matt. 27:63; Matt. 28:2;

Send (649) **apostello** from **apo** = from, away from + **stello** = to withdraw from, avoid) means to send off, to send forth, to send out. To send out; to commission as a representative, an ambassador, an envoy. The idea is to send forth from one place to another. But the meaning of apostello is more than just to send because it means "to send off on a commission to do something as one's personal representative, with credentials furnished" (Wuest) To send upon some business (Mt. 2:16; 10:5; 20:2). To send away in the sense of to dismiss (Mk 12:3, 4). To send or thrust forth as a sickle among corn (Mk 4:29). **Apostello** summarized - 1. send someone out, implying for a particular purpose (Mk 1:11; 1Co 1:17); 2. send a message, send word (Ac 28:28, Mt 14:35, Mt 27:19); 3. (apostellō to drepanon), begin to harvest, place the sickle (Mk 4:29) (**Ed**: literally "send the sickle" = begin to harvest)

Apostello in Matthew - Matt. 2:16; Matt. 8:31; Matt. 10:5; Matt. 10:16; Matt. 10:40; Matt. 11:10; Matt. 13:41; Matt. 14:35; Matt. 15:24; Matt. 20:2; Matt. 21:1; Matt. 21:3; Matt. 21:34; Matt. 21:36; Matt. 21:37; Matt. 22:3; Matt. 22:4; Matt. 22:16; Matt. 23:34; Matt. 23:37; Matt. 24:31; Matt. 27:19

Alan Carr - One of the most amazing statements in the Bible is found here in verse three in verse 3, and it has to do with that little beast. It says, "The Lord hath need of him." When did God ever "need" anything? Here is what God had to say about His Own needs, Psa. 50:9-12. But, that was the paradox of our Lord's earthly life. He was rich, yet He became poor, 2 Cor. 8:9.

·He owned all things, yet He possessed nothing. He created the stars, yet He had nowhere to lay His Own head, Matt. 8:20.

·He fashioned everything there is out of nothing, yet He had to borrow a boat from which to preach His Gospel.

·He created every drop of water that exists in the world, yet He cried "I thirst" as He was dying on the cross, John 19:28.

·He created every tree, but He died on a borrowed cross.

- He created every rock, but He had to borrow a tomb in which to be buried.
- He used the clouds as His chariots, Psa. 104:3, yet He had to borrow a donkey on which to ride.
- That is the paradox of His life!
- He was rich, yet made Himself poor so that those who believe on Him might enjoy His riches!

The Lord could save sinners and accomplish His work on earth just fine without us. Yet, He chooses to use frail, human instruments for His glory. When we are like that donkey, Redeemed, Released and Ruled, He can use us too. Being a little donkey isn't so bad when Jesus is your Master. Look at what that donkey did. He got to carry the King of Glory into Jerusalem. The Lord used Him as His vehicle to get glory to His name. That's what He wants to do with you and me! Let's yield to Him and let Him rule us as He sees fit. By the way, when that little Redeemed, Released, Ruled donkey walked by with Jesus on his back, nobody saw the donkey! All eyes were on the Lord Jesus. That's how it should be all time. If the Lord has spoken to you on any level through this message, you need to respond to Him. There are some here that need to be Redeemed. You need to come to Jesus. There are some here that need to be Released. Sins and the flesh hold you captive. Come to Jesus, He specialized in delivering the captives, Luke 4:18. There are some here that need to be Ruled. You need to submit to the Lordship of Jesus in your life. When you do, you will have no trouble submitting to the authorities the Lord has placed in your life. If Jesus has spoken to you on any level, you need to hear Him and heed Him today. Will you do that right now?

Wanted!

Read: Luke 19:29-40

The Lord has need of him. —Luke 19:34

As Jesus approached Jerusalem for the last time, He sent two disciples into the city to bring Him a donkey. He told them, "If anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing it?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it'" (Luke 19:31).

As we approach our sunset years, we may ask ourselves, "Can I still be useful to God? Is there some service I can render that will fill my days with significance? Am I needed?"

Of course you are! God needs you just as He needed the donkey to carry Him through the streets of Jerusalem. He has always needed something or someone to get His work done. He still has useful work for you to do.

Perhaps your work will be one brief task, like the donkey's single act of service. Or it may be some activity that will fully occupy your years until your Master calls you home. It may be an opportunity to share your faith with someone, to intercede for him, or to love him through quiet acts of mercy, friendly visits, or to extend some small courtesy. There will always be something for you to do.

In the meantime, you and I must stand and wait, preparing ourselves through prayer, Bible reading, and quiet listening—ready for the moment that our Lord has need of us.

Will you be ready when He needs you?

God has work for all His children, regardless of age or ability.

By David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

F B Meyer - They said, The Lord hath need of him.

Oh, could I hear Thee say as much of me, my blessed Lord! Here, where two ways meet, I have been standing long, waiting for a purpose worthy to fill my soul, and task the powers that are, as yet, only in the first burst of young life.

Thou needest much and many in thy great redemptive work. The boat to cross the lake; the line to catch the fish; the bread and fish to feed the crowds; the baskets to gather up the fragments; the chalice to hold the wine; the dish to hold the sop; the little child to be the text for thy sermon; the clay for the blind man's eyes; the tender women to minister of their substance; the apostles to preach thy Gospel. Canst Thou not find a niche for me also?

Thou requirest undivided loyalty. — Born of the Virgin's womb, laid in death where man's dust had never come, Thou must have a colt on which none had ever sat. I cannot give Thee a heart which has never known another; but I profess to Thee that there is no rival now. Thou mayest have all. Thine is the Kingdom.

Thou requirest patience and humility. — But these, also, Thou hast taught. I have waited patiently till this glad hour, and am quieted and humbled like a weaned child. No longer do I seek great things for myself. It is enough for me to be and do anything, if only Thou shalt be glorified.

Thou requirest, perhaps, but one brief service. — To serve Thee always with increasing fervour would be my choice; but if Thou

needest only one brief, glad hour of ministry, like that the good Ananias did to thy Church when he ministered to Saul, then be it so. To prepare for it, and revert to it, would be my satisfaction in having lived.

Let It Go

Say, "The Lord has need of it," and immediately he will send it here. — Mark 11:3

Today's Scripture: Mark 11:1-11

Many years ago, when a young friend asked if he could borrow our car, my wife and I were hesitant at first. It was our car. We owned it, and we depended on it. But we soon felt convicted to share it with him because we knew that God wanted us to care for others. So we handed the keys over to him, and he traveled to a church 30 miles away to conduct a youth rally. The meeting was used by the Lord to bring teens to Christ.

Jesus instructed His disciples to take another man's donkey. The Son of God told His men to "loose it and bring it" to Him [Mark 11:2](#)). If someone objected, they were to say, "The Lord has need of it," and they would then be permitted to lead it away. That donkey carried Christ into Jerusalem on what we call Palm Sunday.

There's a lesson here for us to consider. We all have things that we hold dear. We may have thought, I could never part with that. It may be a new truck, a coat, some other possession, or our precious few free hours during the week. Will we be open to give when someone obviously needs something we have?

If you sense that the Spirit is speaking to you, let your time or possession go, as the owner released his animal to Jesus. He will then be glorified as He deserves! By: David C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Make me a channel of blessing today,
Make me a channel of blessing, I pray;
My life possessing, my service blessing,
Make me a channel of blessing today.
—Smyth

God gives us all we need, so we can give to others in their need.

God Needs You!

If anyone says to you, "Why are you doing this?" say, "The Lord has need of it." —Mark 11:3

Today's Scripture: Mark 11:1-7

For His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus chose a donkey to serve as His royal transportation. His disciples were instructed to say, "The Lord has need of it" (Mark 11:3). Isn't it astounding that the Son of God should use such lowly means to accomplish His purposes? Alexander MacLaren commented on this: "Christ comes to us in like fashion, and brushes aside all our convenient excuses. He says, 'I want you, and that is enough.' "

Think of it! The Creator of the universe needs us and desires to fit us into His eternal design! Though all-powerful and not dependent on any creature, He has chosen to carry out His plans through lowly human instruments. If this were not so, He would have taken us to heaven as soon as He saved us by His grace.

Someone once asked Francis of Assisi how he was able to accomplish so much. He replied, "This may be why: The Lord looked down from heaven and said, 'Where can I find the weakest, littlest man on earth?' Then He saw me and said, 'I've found him. I will work through him, and he won't be proud of it. He'll see that I am only using him because of his insignificance.' "

You may be small in your own eyes, but God has need of you! By: Paul Van Gorder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Yours is a mission you alone can fill,
Whether it be to build or teach or till;
Your goal may still be hidden from your view,
But somewhere God has urgent need of you.
—Thayer

God is looking for ordinary people for extraordinary work.

Matthew 21:4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

- **this:** Mt 1:22 26:56 Joh 19:36,37
- **spoken through the prophet:** Zec 9:9 Joh 12:15

This took place to fulfill ([pleroo](#)) what was spoken through the prophet - The prophet Zechariah is quoted in the next verse.

In this section it is fascinating in that we see a mixture of the attributes of Jesus coming into play as the drama of redemption crescendos - His dominion, power and authority (riding an unbroken colt, cleansing temple), His omniscience (details of colt), His humility (to ride in on a donkey)

Henry Morris - the prophet. Here, for the first time publicly, Christ presented Himself to the Jews as their promised Messiah and King (Zechariah 9:9).

Matthew 21:5 "SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, 'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.'"

- **the daughter** (KJV): Ps 9:14 Isa 12:6 40:9 62:11 Zep 3:14,15 Mk 11:4-11
- **King:** Mt 2:2,6 Ge 49:10 Nu 24:19 Ps 2:6-12 45:1-17 72:1-20 Ps 110:1-4 Isa 9:6,7 Jer 23:5,6 Eze 34:24 37:24 Da 2:44,45 Da 7:13,14 Mic 5:2 Zec 6:12-13 Joh 1:49 19:15-22
- **gentle** (KJV): Mt 11:29 12:19,20 2Co 10:1 Php 2:3-5
- **mounted:** De 17:16 Jud 5:10 12:14 2Sa 16:2 1Ki 1:33 10:26 Ho 1:7 Mic 5:10,11 Zec 9:9-10

Related Passages:

Zechariah 9:9-10 (See also [discussion below](#).) Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! **Behold**, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.

SAY TO THE [DAUGHTER OF ZION](#), 'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, GENTLE ([praus](#)), AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY, EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN - Notice the words all in all caps which in the NAS version signify a direct Old Testament quote (this tool not used in any other Bible version). See also [discussion below](#).

NET NOTE - Grk "Tell the daughter of Zion" (the phrase "[daughter of Zion](#)" is an idiom for the inhabitants of Jerusalem: "people of Zion"). The idiom "daughter of Zion" has been translated as "people of Zion" because the original idiom, while firmly embedded in the Christian tradition, is not understandable to most modern English readers. Grk "**the foal of an animal under the yoke**," i.e., a hard-working animal. This is a quotation from Zech 9:9.

Gentle ([4239](#)) [praus](#) - some sources state it originates from **paos** = easy, mild or soft) ([Click](#) for in depth study of the related noun "**gentleness**" = [prautes](#) which is a fruit of the Holy Spirit - Gal 5:23^{[note](#)}) describes those who are of a quiet, gentle spirit, in opposition to the proud and supercilious Scribes and Pharisees and their disciples. We have a compound word **gentleman**, which once fully expressed the meaning of the word meek, but in our modern society has almost wholly lost its original meaning. **Paus** describes a person who is not overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance, but instead one who is gentle, humble, lowly, defers, and is considerate or mild. Ultimately person who manifests **praus** is the one who imitates Jesus (cf His gentleness in Mt 11:29-^{[note](#)}) enabled of course by the power of His indwelling Spirit.

Praus - 4v - Matt. 5:5; Matt. 11:29; Matt. 21:5; 1 Pet. 3:4

QUESTION - [What does the Bible mean when it refers to a "Daughter of Zion"?](#)

ANSWER- The "daughter of Zion" is mentioned several times in the Old Testament, usually in prophecy and once in poetry. "Zion" meant Jerusalem and, later, Israel as the people of God. "Daughter of Zion," then, does not refer to a specific person. It's a metaphor for Israel and the loving, caring, patient relationship God has with His chosen people.

As a representation of the people of Israel, the daughter of Zion is described in several different situations:

2 Kings 19:21: A people confident in the deliverance of their God. When Assyria threatened Jerusalem, King Hezekiah went to the Lord. In response, God sent Isaiah to reassure Hezekiah that Jerusalem would not fall to Assyria, and God considered the threatening insult to “the virgin daughter of Zion” as a personal affront to Himself.

Isaiah 1:8: A hut, abandoned after judgment came to an evil family. Here, Isaiah compares the rebellion of Judah to a sick body in a devastated land. The daughter of Zion is left as a lone remnant—a shelter hidden in the vineyard or a hut in a cucumber field that barely escaped destruction.

Jeremiah 4:31: A woman in labor, helpless before attackers. The steadfastness of Hezekiah was rare in Judah—most kings encouraged rebellion against God instead of loyalty to God. Jeremiah warns that if the nation does not turn away from evil, God will punish them severely. And the people will be helpless against it—as helpless as a woman in labor.

Isaiah 62:11: A people awaiting salvation. After the punishment of exile, God promises restoration to Israel. He will rejoice over His chosen people again. And in verse 11, He promises the daughter of Zion, “Lo, your salvation comes; behold His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him.”

Micah 4:13: A bull that threshes his enemies. In verse 10, God warns that the daughter of Zion will suffer as much as a woman in labor. But in verse 13, He promises vengeance. The weak, powerless woman will become a bull with horns of iron and hoofs of bronze that will crush its enemies.

Zechariah 9:9: A land awaiting its king. This prophecy promises Israel’s enemies will be destroyed, but also speaks about a more permanent solution to the problem of sin. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Should in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; he is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” Despite the consistent rebellion of the daughter of Zion against her Father, He promises to restore her and present her with a Deliverer-King in the form of Jesus.

Daughter implies that God is a loving father. He cherishes and loves His people, even while they reject Him. By using the metaphor “daughter of Zion,” God showed how He felt for the rebellious Israelites: frustrated, angry, but always with an eye to the future when the relationship would be restored, and He could once again return to them and welcome them into His arms (Zechariah 2:10).

Related Resource:

- [What is Zion? What is Mount Zion?](#)

[A King on a Donkey](#)

See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey. Matthew 21:5

Today’s Scripture & Insight: Matthew 21:1–11

It was Sunday—the day we now call Palm Sunday. Without a doubt, this wasn’t Jesus’ first visit to Jerusalem. As a devout Jew, He would’ve gone to the city every year for the three great feasts (Luke 2:41–42; John 2:13; 5:1). In the past three years, Christ had also ministered and taught in Jerusalem. But this Sunday His coming into the city was radically different.

By riding a young donkey into Jerusalem at a time when thousands of worshipers were coming into the city, Jesus was the center of attention (Matthew 21:9–11). Why would He take the place of prominence before thousands of people when for the past three years He’d deliberately kept a low profile? Why would He accept the people’s proclamation that He was King just five days before His death?

Matthew says that this took place to fulfill a five-hundred-year-old prophecy (Matthew 21:4–5) that God’s chosen king would come into Jerusalem “righteous and victorious, [yet] lowly and riding on a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9; see also Genesis 49:10–11).

This was a truly unusual way for a triumphant king to enter a city. Conquering kings normally rode on mighty stallions. But Jesus didn’t come riding a warhorse. This reveals what kind of King Jesus is. He came in meekness and lowliness. Jesus came not for war, but for peace, establishing peace between God and us (Acts 10:36; Colossians 1:20). By: K. T. Sim

What kind of king is Jesus to you today? How can you honor Him as your King?

Jesus, thank You for coming into Jerusalem to reveal Your mighty and humble ways. Fill my heart with Your peace.

Learn more about Jesus' life in the area of Judea with this [online course](#).

[The Promise Of A King](#)

Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey. — Matthew 21:5

Today's Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

For all his education, Austrian-born psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud couldn't predict how history was going to unfold. When Communist revolutionaries were laying the foundations of Soviet tyranny on the corpses of their own countrymen, Freud wrote, "At a time when great nations are declaring that they expect to find their salvation solely from a steadfast adherence to Christian piety, the upheaval in Russia . . . seems to promise a better future." How mistaken that godless man was!

Freud's failure to predict the future stands in stark contrast to the hundreds of fulfilled prophecies of the Bible. People may make educated guesses, but only God knows the future.

None of the Bible's prophecies are more wonderful than those about the Messiah. The Old Testament foretold many details of Christ's life and death, such as His virgin birth (Isa. 7:10-14), sacrificial death (Isa. 53), and even His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (Zech. 9:9; Mt. 21:5).

How wonderful that the all-knowing God promises that the King who came on a donkey nearly 2,000 years ago will one day return in glory and power (2 Th. 1:7-10). Until then, the same Divine Promise Keeper will care for those who have asked Christ to reign in their hearts. By: Vernon Grounds (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

God kept His promise of the Savior's birth
That wondrous night when Jesus came to earth;
And still today the prophets' message rings:
He'll come again to reign as King of kings.
—Hess

Christ's second coming is as certain as His first.

[The Lord's Donkey](#)

Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey. — Matthew 21:5

Today's Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

People often speak of donkeys in belittling terms. You may have heard the expression, "I'm just someone who has to do all the donkey work." Or "So-and-so is as stubborn as a mule" (a mule is part donkey).

These sayings overlook the contributions of a truly valuable animal. Donkeys have served the human race for thousands of years. They were once prized as symbols of humility, gentleness, and peace.

In Bible days, donkeys that had never been ridden were regarded as especially suitable for religious purposes. So it was most fitting that Jesus sent for a colt to perform the royal task of carrying Him into Jerusalem. How enviable was that donkey's mission! How like our mission as Jesus' followers!

A missionary in China calls herself "the Lord's donkey." She's a humble believer, "carrying" her Lord faithfully into town after town and training others to do likewise. The Lord has need of many such "donkeys" in today's world—humble people who will carry Him into their Jerusalem and make Him known.

The donkey had to be untied before Jesus could use it. We too must be released from worldly attachments if we are to serve Christ. Are we willing to be the Lord's donkey? By: Joanie Yoder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Teach me to do the humble task
The very best I can,
And not to look for greater calls
Which may oppose Thy plan.

Humble work becomes holy work when it's done for God.

DONKEY MENTALITY

Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey. —Matthew 21:5

A minister referred to Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and asked, "What if the donkey on which Jesus was riding had thought all the cheering was for him? What if that small animal had believed that the hosannas and the branches were in his honour?"

The minister then pointed to himself and said, "I'm a donkey. The longer I'm here the more you'll come to realise that. I am only a Christ bearer and not the object of praise."

In recording Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, Matthew referred to the prophecy of Zechariah: "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'" (Matt. 21:5; see Zech. 9:9).

On Palm Sunday the donkey was merely the bearer of Christ, bringing the Son of God into the city where He would give His life for the sins of the world.

If we could develop a healthy 'donkey mentality', what an asset that would be as we travel the road of life. Instead of wondering what people think of us, our concern would be, "Can they see Christ Jesus, the King?" Rather than seeking credit for service rendered, we would be content to lift up the Lord. David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

A CHRISTIAN'S LIFE IS A WINDOW THROUGH WHICH OTHERS CAN SEE JESUS.

Matthew 21:6 The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them,

- and did: Ge 6:22 12:4 Ex 39:43 40:16 1Sa 15:11 Joh 15:14

The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them

Matthew 21:7 and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats.

- **brought:** Mk 11:4-8 Lu 19:32-35
- **laid their coats on them:** 2Ki 9:13

and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats -Only Matthew gives this detail that it was the colt and his mother. Christ's ability to ride an unbroken colt through wildly cheering and demonstrating crowds is yet another evidence of His deity and His total mastery over all the world of nature. We all know how wildly an unbroken colt will react to being saddled! Not this one! It instantly owned Jesus as its Lord.

NET NOTE - Grk "garments"; but this refers in context to their outer cloaks. The action is like 2 Kgs 9:13.

Brian Bell adds "The disciples are instructed to bring both of them, perhaps so the mom could settle the youngster down. These animals were quite expensive, and we see in Lk 19:33 ('owners') that there were at least two owners who had gone in together to buy these donkeys. In our culture today, it would be like someone coming up to a bright red convertible Porsche, opening the door, starting the car and driving away. When the owner comes running outside you would just say, "The Lord needs it." When the disciples were sent to get a colt, Jesus was putting into place yet one more very specific prophecy about who He was. In Zechariah 9:9, which was written some five hundred years earlier.

What the Bible Teaches - The triumphal entry into Jerusalem is not only the culmination of the journey that began at Luke 9:51+, and the fulfillment of the prophecy by Zechariah 9:9, it is one of the most important events in the life and ministry of the Lord. **It is recorded in all four Gospels which is not true of His birth, temptation, transfiguration nor the Gethsemane experience.** If He had not ridden on the colt in fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy, they the nation would have had some excuse for not knowing Him. At the time of this entry He proclaimed His kingship publicly and officially ([What the Bible Teaches – Luke](#))

Matthew 21:8 Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road.

- others: Lev 23:40 Joh 12:13

JESUS ENTERS THE HOLY CITY

Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, This was an honor bestowed on a king and expressed their submission to Jesus as their King. The idea is that they were "in effect" placing themselves under His feet. So instead of doing it physically people would throw their coats beneath His path.

In 2 Kings 9:13 we see a similar act of casting cloaks in the path of one acclaimed as king....

"Then they hurried and each man took his garment and placed it under him on the bare steps, and blew the trumpet, saying, "Jehu is king!" Then they hurried and each man took his garment and placed it under him on the bare steps, and blew the trumpet, saying, "Jehu is king!"

Wuest - Matthew and Luke say that they spread the garments in the road, Mark, into the road. They threw them into the road and spread them there. Matthew, Mark, and John each use a different word for "branches." **Matthew** speaks of a young slip or shoot, a twig; **Mark**, of a mass of straw, rushes, or leaves beaten together or strewed loose, so as to form a bed or carpeted way; and **John**, of palm-branches, the feathery fronds forming the tufted crown of the tree. Each group contributed its own road-decorations. Robertson says that the deliberate conduct of Jesus here could have but one meaning, namely, that this was His formal presentation of Himself as the Messiah. The crowds realized this and entered into the spirit of the occasion. The people, however, expected the Lord to set up His rule in opposition to that of Rome, and deliver the Jews from the yoke of their oppressors.

and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road - Only John tells us they were palm trees. And so the crowd is throwing the palm branches on Jesus' path. John seems to suggest that the crowd was also waving the palm branches (although waving is not definitely stated) as they were shouting "[Hosanna!](#)" (which means "Save Now" or "Save, we pray.") Take a moment of respite to play and worship the coming King as you sing [Hosanna](#).

Paul Apple - **The Triumphal Entry** – (maybe the Triumphal Procession would be better) - **Palm Sunday** – occurred on the first day of Passion week – either **Sunday or Monday** ([MacArthur favors Monday and calls it "Palm Monday"](#)) (The palms were) Not some symbol of peace and pleasantness as in our Sunday School classes with young children but symbol of Maccabean revolt by political revolutionaries -- The Palm branches signify the expectation of a military victory of their king over the occupying Romans. Look at [Rev. 7:9+](#) the martyrs coming out of the Great Tribulation ("palm branches were in their hands;"). - What should we call it? **The Reception That Wasn't** ([John MacArthur calls it "The False Coronation of the True King"](#)) – looking not so much at the procession but what took place upon His arrival. **Where does all this excitement and anticipation lead?** Excitement Over Jesus That Stops Short Of Worshiping Him As King Over All Quickly Fades Away.

Hendriksen - At this point it is important to take note of the fact that the crowd that accompanied Jesus as he started out from Bethany does not remain the only one that participates in the activities pertaining to the triumphal entry. A caravan of pilgrims had arrived at Jerusalem previously. Having heard that Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead and was now on his way toward the city, these people came pouring out of the eastern gate to meet him. With fronds cut from palm trees they go forth to welcome Jesus (John 12:1, 12, 13a, 18). Having done so they turn around and, as it were, lead Jesus down the western slope of the mount of Olives and so into the city. The crowd from Bethany continues to follow. (Borrow [Exposition of the Gospel of Luke](#))

Brian Bill on cloaks - Can you imagine what all this commotion would have done to the colt? Remember, it had never been ridden before and now Jesus was on its back, the crowd was shouting, and cloaks and branches were being laid in front of it as it walked down the hill toward Jerusalem. The laying of cloaks on the road would be like rolling out the red carpet for someone today. In 2 Kings 9:13, people spread cloaks under King Jehu as he walked on the bare stairs. The people recognized Jesus as royalty and gave Him the honor afforded a King.

Brian Bill on branches (which John 12:13+ calls "palm branches") - This was a common way to welcome a victorious King when he would return from battle. These palm branches were also a symbol of joy and victory and were placed on graves as a sign of eternal

life. Since they often grew out in the desert near water, palm trees were a sign that life-giving activity was near. By laying palm branches on the road, the people were signifying that Jesus was the victorious King who gives eternal life to those out wandering in the desert of life. The gifts of the colt, the cloaks, and the branches all point to who Jesus is. What started out as a Jewish feast is now turning into a Messiah celebration. The colt was expensive, the cloaks were essential, and the branches were an expression of joy. Here's the principle: The Lord has the right to make use of anything I own. Is He asking you to give something that is expensive? Is He longing for you to give something that you consider essential? Or, have you been holding out on an expression of joy?

F F Bruce - From the time of the Maccabees palms or palm-branches had been used as a national symbol. Palm-branches figured in the procession which celebrated the rededication of the temple in 164 bc (2 Maccabees 10:7) and again when the winning of full political independence was celebrated under Simon in 141 bc (1 Maccabees 13:51). Later, palms appeared as national symbols on the coins struck by the Judean insurgents during the first and second revolts against Rome (ad 66-70 and 132-135)."

QUESTION - [What is the significance of the triumphal entry?](#) [WATCH VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - The triumphal entry is that of Jesus coming into Jerusalem on what we know as [Palm Sunday](#), the Sunday before the crucifixion (John 12:1, 12). The story of the triumphal entry is one of the few incidents in the life of Jesus which appears in all four Gospel accounts (Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-40; John 12:12-19). Putting the four accounts together, it becomes clear that the triumphal entry was a significant event, not only to the people of Jesus' day, but to Christians throughout history. We celebrate Palm Sunday to remember that momentous occasion.

On that day, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a borrowed donkey's colt, one that had never been ridden before. The disciples spread their cloaks on the donkey for Jesus to sit on, and the multitudes came out to welcome Him, laying before Him their cloaks and the branches of palm trees. The people hailed and praised Him as the "King who comes in the name of the Lord" as He rode to the temple, where He taught the people, healed them, and drove out the money-changers and merchants who had made His Father's house a "den of robbers" (Mark 11:17).

Jesus' purpose in riding into Jerusalem was to make public His claim to be their Messiah and King of Israel in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Matthew says that the King coming on the foal of a donkey was an exact fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." Jesus rides into His capital city as a conquering King and is hailed by the people as such, in the manner of the day. The streets of Jerusalem, the royal city, are open to Him, and like a king He ascends to His palace, not a temporal palace but the spiritual palace that is the temple, because His is a spiritual kingdom. He receives the worship and praise of the people because only He deserves it. No longer does He tell His disciples to be quiet about Him (Matthew 12:16, 16:20) but to shout His praises and worship Him openly. The spreading of cloaks was an act of homage for royalty (see 2 Kings 9:13). Jesus was openly declaring to the people that He was their King and the Messiah they had been waiting for.

Unfortunately, the praise the people lavished on Jesus was not because they recognized Him as their Savior from sin. They welcomed Him out of their desire for a messianic deliverer, someone who would lead them in a revolt against Rome. There were many who, though they did not believe in Christ as Savior, nevertheless hoped that perhaps He would be to them a great temporal deliverer. These are the ones who hailed Him as King with their many hosannas, recognizing Him as the Son of David who came in the name of the Lord. But when He failed in their expectations, when He refused to lead them in a massive revolt against the Roman occupiers, the crowds quickly turned on Him. Within just a few days, their hosannas would change to cries of "Crucify Him!" (Luke 23:20-21). Those who hailed Him as a hero would soon reject and abandon Him.

The story of the triumphal entry is one of contrasts, and those contrasts contain applications to believers. It is the story of the King who came as a lowly servant on a donkey, not a prancing steed, not in royal robes, but on the clothes of the poor and humble. Jesus Christ comes not to conquer by force as earthly kings but by love, grace, mercy, and His own sacrifice for His people. His is not a kingdom of armies and splendor but of lowliness and servanthood. He conquers not nations but hearts and minds. His message is one of peace with God, not of temporal peace. If Jesus has made a triumphal entry into our hearts, He reigns there in peace and love. As His followers, we exhibit those same qualities, and the world sees the true King living and reigning in triumph in us.

The First Palm Sunday - Henry Morris

"And [Jesus] saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him" (Mark 11:2).

On that first Palm Sunday, over 1,960 years ago, the Lord Jesus fulfilled the ancient prophecy of Zechariah 9:9: "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 an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Always before, so far as all records indicate, Jesus walked wherever He went.

Now He must ride! So He borrowed, from some unknown friend in the village, an ass's colt, upon which He could enter the city of the great King.

Although Jesus' circumstances seemed far too lowly for Him to claim a throne, He did indeed come, having salvation for the few who would receive Him. Most of the people, of course, and almost all their leaders, crowned Him only with thorns, and then made a cross His throne.

There was one who recognized Him, however. The colt He requested was a colt "whereon never man sat," and one can be sure that such a colt could not be ridden by any ordinary man without vehement protest and rejection.

Once long ago, the Lord had opened the mouth of an ass and "the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet" (2 Pet. 2:16). The animals were originally created to be under man's dominion (Gen. 1:26-28), and it was only the entrance of sin into the world that caused the dread of man to come on them (Gen. 9:2). When the true Son of Man and true King of creation calls, then the creatures of the animal kingdom respond, even though His human creatures, whom He loves most of all, still refuse to submit to His rule.

QUESTION - [Why would a king ride a donkey instead of a warhorse \(Zechariah 9:9-10\)?](#)

ANSWER - Many have wondered why the king mentioned in Zechariah 9:9-10 would ride a donkey into Jerusalem rather than a warhorse. It seems an odd choice for royalty. Kings ride chargers, don't they?

In the ancient Middle Eastern world, leaders rode horses if they rode to war, but donkeys if they came in peace. 1 Kings 1:33 mentions Solomon riding a donkey on the day he was recognized as the new king of Israel. Other instances of leaders riding donkeys are Judges 5:10; 10:4; 12:14; and 2 Samuel 16:2.

The mention of a donkey in Zechariah 9:9-10 fits the description of a king who would be "righteous and having salvation, gentle." Rather than riding to conquer, this king would enter in peace.

Zechariah 9:10 highlights this peace:

"I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth."

Note the many details symbolic of peace:

- "Take away the chariots": an end to the main vehicle of war.
- "Take away . . . the war-horses": no need for horses used in war.
- "The battle bow will be broken": no need for bows or arrows for fighting.
- "He will proclaim peace to the nations": His message will be one of reconciliation.
- "His rule shall be from sea to sea": the King will control extended territory with no enemies of concern.

Jesus fulfills this prophecy of Zechariah. The worldwide peace proclaimed by this humble King will be a fulfillment of the angels' song in Luke 2:14: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (NKJV). Significantly, Jacob's blessing on his son Judah includes a reference to a donkey and a donkey's foal (Genesis 49:11). Jesus is from the [tribe of Judah](#).

Zechariah 9:9 was fulfilled by the [triumphal entry](#) as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday (Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19). Verses 10 and following refer to a future time when the Messiah will reign after defeating His enemies at the [second coming](#).

Matthew 21:9 The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!"

- **Hosanna:** Mt 21:15 Ps 118:24-26 Mk 11:9,10
- **Blessed:** Mt 23:39 Lu 19:37,38 Joh 12:13-15
- **in the highest:** Lu 2:14

Related Passages:

Revelation 22:16+ "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

JESUS' "TRIUMPHAL ENTRY"

Notice "**Triumphal Entry**" is in quotation marks. Why did I do that? On one hand His entry was signal the temporary triumph of evil (very temporary). And it would not be the triumphal entry the Jews were expecting, for they thought He was coming as the King of Israel to defeat Rome. On the other hand, it did mark the soon coming greatest triumph in the history of the world, for His death would signal the death of death, the defeat of Satan and the "defanging" of Sin and provide the way for dead men to live forever with Him. So it was indeed a Triumphal Entry for any and all who would ever place their faith in Him!

In John 1:29 John the Baptist saw Jesus walking toward him and proclaimed "Behold, the **Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world!" ([Take a moment to worship the Lamb and May the Spirit move your deepest being to profoundly praise the Lamb](#)) Then a short while later in John 1:49 Nathanael made the incredibly insightful declaration to Jesus -- "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." Now some three years later, it was the time of the Passover Feast in Israel and the time had come for Him to acknowledge before the nation of Israel that Nathanael had been correct in his designation and to fulfill John's prophecy as the Passover Lamb! ([This video and song will break your heart dear follower of Christ!](#)) Whereas heretofore, Jesus had stopped any attempts to at a public declaration of His identity as Messiah (Mt 16:20, Jn 6:14-15), but "in the fullness of time," the time had come to open announce and acknowledge that He was the King of Israel, the promised Messiah. As discussed elsewhere, many if not most of the Jewish crowd were hoping His arrival would bring the defeat of the Romans, but such was not to be the case in His first "**Triumphal Entry.**"

Warren Wiersbe has an interesting note asking "What did this demonstration mean to the Romans? Nothing is recorded about the Roman viewpoint, but it is certain that they kept a close watch that day. During the annual Passover feast, it was not uncommon for some of the Jewish nationalists to try to arouse the people; and perhaps they thought this parade was that kind of an event. I imagine that some of the Roman soldiers must have smiled at the "Triumphal Entry," because it was nothing like their own "**Roman triumph**" celebrations in the city of Rome. Whenever a Roman general was victorious on foreign soil, killing at least 5,000 of the enemy, and gaining new territory, he was given a "**Roman triumph**" when he returned to the city. It was the Roman equivalent of the American "[ticker-tape parade.](#)" only with much more splendor. The victor would be permitted to display the trophies he had won and the enemy leaders he had captured. The parade ended at the arena where some of the captives entertained the people by fighting wild beasts. Compared to a "**Roman triumph**," our Lord's entry into Jerusalem was nothing." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Related Video - [Four versions on one video depicting His entry on youtube.](#)

The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed ([akoloutheo](#)), **were shouting, "Hosanna (Hosanna) to the Son of David - Followed** ([akoloutheo](#)) is the verb that often describes Jesus' disciples (following His teaching, His example; e.g., Mk 1:18+, Mk 2:14+, Mt 9:9+), but in this context simply refers to the crowd literally following Him. **Shouting** ([krazo](#)) in the imperfect tense pictures the crowd over and over loudly shouting, almost screaming (used of demons shrieking - Mk 5:5+). **Hosanna (Hosanna)** means "save now," and Jn 12:13 adds they called Him "the King of Israel" which helps us understand that they desired **political** salvation not **spiritual** salvation. **Son of David** was clearly recognized as a title of the Messiah. [Gotquestions](#) says "the title "**Son of David**" is more than a statement of physical genealogy. **It is a Messianic title.** When people referred to Jesus as the Son of David, they meant that He was the long-awaited Deliverer, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies."

Son of David in the NT (most in Matthew which is not surprising as Matthew is the most "Jewish" of the 4 Gospels!) - Matt. 1:1; Matt. 1:20; Matt. 9:27; Matt. 12:23; Matt. 15:22; Matt. 20:30; Matt. 20:31; Matt. 21:9; Matt. 21:15; Matt. 22:42; Mk. 10:47; Mk. 10:48; Mk. 12:35; Lk. 3:31; Lk. 18:38; Lk. 18:39

Whitacre on Hosanna - The cry of Hosanna! is a Hebrew word (hôsî'ah-na) that had become a greeting or shout of praise but that actually meant "Save!" or "Help!" (an intensive form of imperative). Not surprisingly, forms of this word were used to address the king with a need (cf. 2 Sam 14:4; 2 Kings 6:26). Furthermore, the palm branches the people carry are symbolic of a victorious ruler (cf. 1 Macc 13:51; 2 Macc 10:7; 14:4). Indeed, in an apocalyptic text from the Maccabean era, palms are mentioned in association with the coming of the messianic salvation on the Mount of Olives (Testament of Naphtali 5). The cry of Hosanna! and the palm branches are in themselves somewhat ambiguous, but their import is made clear as the crowd adds a further line, Blessed is the King of Israel! (v. John 12:13). Clearly they see in Jesus the answer to their nationalistic, messianic hopes. ([Jesus Enters Jerusalem as King of Israel](#))

BLESSED ([eulogeo](#)) **IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna (Hosanna) in the highest** - In Luke 19:38+ the

crowd was shouting "**BLESSED IS THE KING**". The crowd slightly altered the Ps 118:26 which reads "Blessed is the **ONE** who comes in the name of the LORD," and substituted "King." Passover celebrated the Hebrew people's liberation and deliverance out of Egypt and Psalm 118 was one of the Egyptian Hallel's (Ps 113-119). And so the nation of Israel mistakenly anticipates another deliverance like God had brought about from Egypt. They saw Jesus as the Messianic Liberator Who would deliver them from Roman oppression, but they misinterpreted Psalm 118 because they had missed the crucial context that the Messiah would be a Suffering Servant before He would be a conquering King. Note also that this blessing was voiced by the people when Christ entered Jerusalem (Mt 21:9). And when the leaders rebuked the people's praises (Lu 19:37-39+), Jesus then said to the Jews as a nation .

"Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! "For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'" (Mt 23:38-39+)

A T Robertson on "**BLESSED...**" - Quotation from Psalm 118:25-26, written, some think, for the dedication of the second temple, or, as others think, for the feast of tabernacles after the return (Ezra 3:1-2). It was sung in the processional recitation then as a welcome to the worshippers. Here the words are addressed to the Messiah as is made plain by the addition of the words, "**even the king of Israel**" as Nathanael called him (John 1:49+). Jesus is here hailed by the multitudes as the long-looked for Messiah of Jewish hope and He allows them so to greet Him (Luke 19:38-40+), a thing that He prevented a year before in Galilee (John 6:14-15). It is probable that "in the name of the Lord" should be taken with "blessed" as in Deut. 21:5; 2 Samuel 6:18; 1 Kings 22:16; 2 Kings 2:24. The Messiah was recognized by Martha as the Coming One (John 11:27) and is so described by the Baptist (Matthew 11:3). Mark (Mark 11:10) adds "the coming kingdom" while Luke (Luke 19:38+) has "the king Who comes." "It was this public acclamation of Jesus as King of Israel or King of the Jews which was the foundation of the charge made against him before Pilate (John 18:33)" (Bernard).

Henry Morris - These multitudes were unwittingly fulfilling Psalm 118:25,26 ("Hosanna" means "save now"). However, they only perceived Jesus as "the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee" (Matthew 21:11) and were evidently expecting Him somehow to defeat the Romans and restore the kingdom to Israel. People had frequently called Him "son of David," evidently knowing about the genealogy of His (foster) father, and realizing He was the legal heir to David's throne (see note on Matthew 1:16). However, just five days later, these same multitudes--apparently disappointed by His meek submission to arrest and torture by the Jewish and Roman rulers--were calling for His crucifixion, preferring to release Barabbas who had led a rebellion against the Romans (Matthew 27:21,22).

NET NOTE - The expression *ἠὸςά* (**hōsanna**, literally in Hebrew, "O Lord, save") in the quotation from Ps 118:25–26 was probably by this time a familiar liturgical expression of praise, on the order of "**Hail to the king**," although both the underlying Aramaic and Hebrew expressions meant "O Lord, save us." In words familiar to every Jew, the author is indicating that at this point every messianic expectation is now at the point of realization. It is clear from the words of the psalm shouted by the crowd that Jesus is being proclaimed as messianic king. See E. Lohse, TDNT 9:682–84. **Hosanna** is an Aramaic expression that literally means, "help, I pray," or "save, I pray." By Jesus' time it had become a strictly liturgical formula of praise, however, and was used as an exclamation of praise to God. A quotation from Ps 118:25–26.

Hosanna (5164) **Hosanna** is a word that we hear frequently in worship services, for it is found in many great old hymns and modern spiritual songs. Indeed, it is a word we should hear often, singing loud "Hosanna's", even "Hosanna's in the highest" to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and yet do we all understand what we are singing? The word **hosanna** in English is a transliteration (not a translation) of a Hebrew phrase composed of two Hebrew words (**hoshiya + na'** - spelling varies depending on resource consulted) used only once in [Ps 118:25 See below](#)>). The meaning of the original Hebrew phrase is something like "*Please save!*," "*Help, I pray*," "*Save now*," or "*Save now, I pray!*" (the exact wording depends on source consulted). As **John Piper** explains more fully [below](#), in Jesus' day the word **Hosanna** while originally signifying a cry for help, over time was not only a prayer for help (salvation), but also an invocation of blessing, an exclamation of praise, and/or a shout of celebration. As discussed below, in the context of Jesus' "Triumphal Entry" into Jerusalem, the shouts of **Hosanna** from the crowd seem to have had all three nuances.>**Hosanna** would have been a term familiar to everyone in Israel which accounts for the crowds shouting "Hosanna" at the time of the Triumphal Entry of the Messiah into Jerusalem.

[What is the meaning of hosanna?](#)

[What is the meaning of hosanna in the highest?](#)

The modern Webster's Dictionary defines **Hosanna** as "a cry of acclamation and adoration." The 1828 Webster's Dictionary adds that **Hosanna** is "an exclamation of praise to God or an invocation of blessings. In the Hebrew ceremonies, it was a prayer rehearsed on the several days of the Feast of Tabernacles, in which this word was often repeated."

Hosanna is similar to [Hallelujah](#), [Sabbath](#), [Sabaoth](#), [Amen](#) in that all these words represent transliteration of Hebrew words or phrases. **Hosanna** is composed of two transliterated Hebrew words (aN" = **na** - [see below](#) + h[yviAh = **yasha** - [see below](#)). **TWOT** adds that "The Greek **hosanna** is a transliteration of the Hebrew phrase "O save us," even including the phonetic

doubling of the *n* of the particle *nā* ([below](#))."

J A Motyer explains that **hosanna** represents a

transliteration from Aramaic **hōša' nā'** (Heb., **hoshiya + na'**), meaning "O, save". The precise OT equivalent to the NT cultic shout "Hosanna" is to be found in the **hoshiya + na'** of Ps. 118:25. Here [Septuagint \(Lxx\)](#) does not view it as a cultic cry of the "hallelujah" type, and produces the translation *sōson*. There is general agreement that we should find in [Ps. 118](#) a liturgy for the Feast of Tabernacles, but beyond that interpretations vary as to who the "coming one" of v. 26 is. The view that it is the Jerusalem pilgrim who is so "blessed" by the welcoming priests (see, e.g. IDB II, S.V. Hosanna) is singularly unimpressive. The whole movement of the Psalm, and certainly its exalted tone of spiritual elation, is better suited if we imagine the Davidic king, in his role as the → Melchizedek priest, leading his people in procession to Yahweh's house (cf. NBCR). In this context the cry "O, Save" would indicate an imploring cry to Yahweh to bring to reality that which the liturgy has depicted. Judaism later followed out this thought by making the great cry focus on the expectation of the messianic king.

NT By NT times Hosanna had become a full "cultic cry", exactly as is reflected in [Lxx](#) use of → [allelouia](#). The Greek of Mt. 21:9; Mk. 11:9; Jn. 12:13 **transliterates but does not translate**. The sight of Jesus fulfilling the kingly prophecy of Zech. 9:9, coupled with the strewing and waving of branches reminiscent of the ceremonial fronds which had come to characterize the [Feast of Tabernacles](#), prompted the shout appropriate to that occasion and, all unwittingly, they greeted the true → David with the Davidic welcome. All the NT "hosanna" verses above centre their thought on the "**son of David**", the "**kingdom of David**" and the "**King of Israel**". (SEE [New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology page 100 - online](#))

Blessed (perfect tense) ([2127](#))([eulogeo](#) from **eu** = good + **lógos** = word) means speak good or well. "Blessing God" extends (shares) ourselves with the Lord, giving our word to be completely His— i.e. conferring ourselves to Him which fulfills the common OT imperative, "Bless the Lord!" Luke 1:64 "And at once (Lk 1:63) his (Zacharias) mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he was speaking, blessing (eulogéō) God."

[The Discovery Bible](#) says "Scripture calls us to *"bless God!"* See: Lk 1:64,68, 2:28; Ro 1:25, 9:5; 2 Cor 1:3, 11:31; Eph 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3. The distinction between *"blessing God"* and *"praising God"* is carefully preserved in the original Hebrew/Greek text of Scripture and therefore *both* should be practiced in true worship! *"Praising God"* acknowledges (exalts) His work and character. In contrast, *"blessing God"* means *surrendering oneself* to Him. The scriptural imperative to "bless God!" is frequent in the (*Hebrew*) text of the OT. See Ps 103:1,2, 104:1, etc. Unfortunately, it was "eliminated" by the *NIV* (and other translations), rendering it the same as "praise God." God also "gives Himself away" to us as He blesses us. A. W. Tozer, *"God gives....but He doesn't give away!" Reflection: "Blessing God" means giving ourselves away to Him. It is so important to bless God because this impacts Him forever. Why? The Lord never becomes more nor less than He has always been, is, or will be (cf. Rev 4:8). Therefore what impacts God now....does so forever! Meditate on this in light of Mal 3:6 and Heb 13:8."*

In the comparison below note that all four Gospels quote from Psalm 118:26 part of the Hallel sung during the Passover. Luke changes "He" to "King" which would emphasize the royal character of the One coming. Note that "He who comes" is more literally "**the coming One**," which is a concept that had definite Messianic overtones among the Jews (see Mt. 11:3; Lk 7:19; Jn 3:31; 6:14; 11:27; Heb. 10:37). Hiebert explains that "While not naming the Messiah, the designation gave expression to the ardent yearning among the Jews for the assured coming of the promised one upon whom all their expectations for the future centered. This coming one they now welcomed in the name of the Lord, the name of Jehovah. He came in the authority denoted by that supreme name."

COMPARISON OF THE ACCLAIM OF THE CROWDS AT JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Matthew 21:9, 15+	Mark 11:9, 10+	Luke 19:38+	John 12:13+
Multitudes (were) going before Him, and those who followed after (Matthew 21:9+)	Those who went before, and those who followed after (Mk 11:9+)		

Hosanna
(Mt 21:9, 15+)

Hosanna
(Mk
11:9,10+)

Hosanna

Son of David
(Mt 21:9,15+)

Branches
of the palm trees

Blessed is **He** Who comes in
the Name of the Lord (Mt
21:9+)

Blessed is **He** Who comes in
the Name of the Lord (Mk
11:9+)

Blessed is **the King** Who
comes in the Name of the
Lord

Blessed is **He** Who comes in
the Name of the Lord

the
King

the
King of Israel

Blessed is the coming kingdom
of our father David (Mk 11:9+)

Peace in heaven

Hosanna
in the highest (Mt 21:9+)

Hosanna
in the highest (Mk 11:10+)

Glory
in the highest!

Children were crying out in
the temple (Mt 21:15+)

QUESTION - [What does it mean that Jesus is the son of David?](#) | [GotQuestions.org](#) **WATCH THE VIDEO**

ANSWER - Seventeen verses in the New Testament describe Jesus as the “son of David.” But the question arises, how could Jesus be the son of David if David lived approximately 1,000 years before Jesus? The answer is that Christ (the Messiah) was the fulfillment of the prophecy of the seed of David (2 Samuel 7:12–16). Jesus is the promised Messiah, which means He had to be of the lineage of David. Matthew 1 gives the genealogical proof that Jesus, in His humanity, was a direct descendant of Abraham and David through Joseph, Jesus’ legal father. The genealogy in Luke 3 traces Jesus’ lineage through His mother, Mary. Jesus is a descendant of David by adoption through Joseph and by blood through Mary. “As to his earthly life [Christ Jesus] was a descendant of David” (Romans 1:3).

Primarily, the title “**Son of David**” is more than a statement of physical genealogy. **It is a Messianic title.** When people referred to Jesus as the Son of David, they meant that He was the long-awaited Deliverer, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.

Jesus was addressed as “Lord, thou son of David” several times by people who, by faith, were seeking mercy or healing. The woman whose daughter was being tormented by a demon (Matthew 15:22) and the two blind men by the wayside (Matthew 20:30) all cried out to the Son of David for help. The titles of honor they gave Him declared their faith in Him. Calling Him “Lord” expressed their sense of His deity, dominion, and power, and calling Him “Son of David,” expressed their faith that He was the Messiah.

The Pharisees understood exactly what the people meant when they called Jesus “Son of David.” But, unlike those who cried out in faith, the Pharisees were so blinded by their own pride that they couldn’t see what the blind beggars could see—that here was the Messiah they had supposedly been waiting for all their lives. They hated Jesus because He wouldn’t give them the honor they thought they deserved, so when they heard the people hailing Jesus as the Savior, they became enraged (Matthew 21:15) and plotted to destroy Him (Luke 19:47).

Jesus further confounded the scribes and Pharisees by asking them to explain the meaning of this very title: how could it be that the Messiah is the son of David when David himself refers to Him as “my Lord” (Mark 12:35–37; cf. Psalm 110:1)? The teachers of the Law couldn’t answer the question. Jesus thereby exposed the Jewish leaders’ ineptitude as teachers and their ignorance of what the Old Testament taught as to the true nature of the Messiah, further alienating them from Him.

Jesus’ point in asking the question of Mark 12:35 was that the Messiah is *more* than the physical son of David. If He is David’s Lord, He must be greater than David. As Jesus says in Revelation 22:16, “I am the Root and the Offspring of David.” That is, He is both

the Creator of David and the Descendant of David. Only the Son of God made flesh could say that.

Related Resources:

- [What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of God?](#)
- [What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of Man?](#)

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of hosanna in the highest? | GotQuestions.org](#)

ANSWER - The phrase *hosanna in the highest* appears only twice in the Bible, once in Matthew and again in Mark, during the [triumphal entry](#) of Jesus into Jerusalem. The people were crowded around the gate watching Jesus enter the city, and they were celebrating and calling out, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (Matthew 21:9, ESV). Mark 11:10 records the crowd saying, "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!" (ESV). The NIV translates their shout as "Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

The word *hosanna* comes from a Hebrew word meaning "save now" or "save us, we pray." The first word of Psalm 118:25 is *howosiah-na*, translated "Save us!" and the crowd's use of this word at the triumphal entry was significant—especially as they waved palm branches (Psalm 118 was associated with the [Feast of Tabernacles](#)). By saying "hosanna" as Jesus passed through the gates of Jerusalem and referring to David and David's kingdom, the Jews were acknowledging Jesus as their Messiah. The Jews had been waiting a long time for the fulfillment of the [Davidic Covenant](#) (2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17:11–14; 2 Chronicles 6:16), and their shouts of "hosanna in the highest" indicated the hope that their Messiah had finally come to set up God's kingdom then and there (see Luke 19:11).

By saying "in the highest," the crowd was invoking heaven's blessing on them and the salvation that the Messiah was bringing. The phrase also echoes the song of the angels in Luke 2:14: "Glory to God in the highest" (ESV). To paraphrase the shouts of the crowd: "Save us, our Messiah, who comes to fulfill God's mission! Save us, we beseech you, as you take your rightful throne and extend heaven's salvation to us!"

Sadly, the salvation that the people of Jerusalem wanted that day was political, not spiritual. They were only interested in a temporary, worldly fulfillment of the messianic prophecies. They chose not to see the prophecies that said the Messiah would be "a man of sorrows" who would bear the griefs of His people and be crushed for their sins. His oppression and death were clearly predicted in Isaiah 53. Yes, Jesus was the Messiah they had been waiting for, and He accepted their shouts of "hosanna in the highest." He was truly Immanuel, God with us (Isaiah 7:14). But the political conquest and final fulfillment of the David Covenant must await the second coming (Acts 1:11; Zechariah 14:4; Matthew 24:30; Titus 2:13). Before Jesus could take care of the political problems of His people, He had to take care of the sin problem.

As the people shouted "hosanna in the highest," little did they know what that would actually mean. Jesus had come to save (Luke 19:10), but not in the manner they desired. "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22). Their cries for salvation and their demand that it come "now" were answered with the cross. God provided a spiritual salvation from the bondage of sin, bought at great cost to the Lord Jesus. But the blessed results of that salvation extend into eternity and far outweigh any temporary benefits we could experience in this world.

QUESTION - [What is the significance of the triumphal/triumphant entry? WATCH VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - The triumphal entry is that of Jesus coming into Jerusalem on what we know as Palm Sunday, the Sunday before the crucifixion (John 12:1, 12). The story of the triumphal entry is one of the few incidents in the life of Jesus which appears in all four Gospel accounts (Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-40; John 12:12-19). Putting the four accounts together, it becomes clear that the triumphal entry was a significant event, not only to the people of Jesus' day, but to Christians throughout history. We celebrate Palm Sunday to remember that momentous occasion.

On that day, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a borrowed donkey's colt, one that had never been ridden before. The disciples spread their cloaks on the donkey for Jesus to sit on, and the multitudes came out to welcome Him, laying before Him their cloaks and the branches of palm trees. The people hailed and praised Him as the "King who comes in the name of the Lord" as He rode to the temple, where He taught the people, healed them, and drove out the money-changers and merchants who had made His Father's house a "den of robbers" (Mark 11:17).

Jesus' purpose in riding into Jerusalem was to make public His claim to be their Messiah and King of Israel in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Matthew says that the King coming on the foal of a donkey was an exact fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." Jesus rides into His capital city as a conquering King and is hailed by the people

as such, in the manner of the day. The streets of Jerusalem, the royal city, are open to Him, and like a king He ascends to His palace, not a temporal palace but the spiritual palace that is the temple, because His is a spiritual kingdom. He receives the worship and praise of the people because only He deserves it. No longer does He tell His disciples to be quiet about Him (Matthew 12:16, 16:20) but to shout His praises and worship Him openly. The spreading of cloaks was an act of homage for royalty (see 2 Kings 9:13). Jesus was openly declaring to the people that He was their King and the Messiah they had been waiting for.

Unfortunately, the praise the people lavished on Jesus was not because they recognized Him as their Savior from sin. They welcomed Him out of their desire for a messianic deliverer, someone who would lead them in a revolt against Rome. There were many who, though they did not believe in Christ as Savior, nevertheless hoped that perhaps He would be to them a great temporal deliverer. These are the ones who hailed Him as King with their many hosannas, recognizing Him as the Son of David who came in the name of the Lord. But when He failed in their expectations, when He refused to lead them in a massive revolt against the Roman occupiers, the crowds quickly turned on Him. Within just a few days, their [hosannas](#) would change to cries of “Crucify Him!” (Luke 23:20-21). Those who hailed Him as a hero would soon reject and abandon Him.

The story of the triumphal entry is one of contrasts, and those contrasts contain applications to believers. It is the story of the King who came as a lowly servant on a donkey, not a prancing steed, not in royal robes, but on the clothes of the poor and humble. Jesus Christ comes not to conquer by force as earthly kings but by love, grace, mercy, and His own sacrifice for His people. His is not a kingdom of armies and splendor but of lowliness and servanthood. He conquers not nations but hearts and minds. His message is one of peace with God, not of temporal peace. If Jesus has made a triumphal entry into our hearts, He reigns there in peace and love. As His followers, we exhibit those same qualities, and the world sees the true King living and reigning in triumph in us.

QUESTION - [What is Palm Sunday? WATCH VIDEO](#)

ANSWER - Palm Sunday is the day we celebrate the [triumphal entry](#) of Jesus into Jerusalem, one week before His resurrection (Matthew 21:1–11). As Jesus entered the holy city, He neared the culmination of a long journey toward Golgotha. He had come to save the lost (Luke 19:10), and now was the time—this was the place—to secure that salvation. Palm Sunday marked the start of what is often called “[Passion Week](#),” the final seven days of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Palm Sunday was the “beginning of the end” of Jesus’ work on earth.

Palm Sunday began with Jesus and His disciples traveling over the [Mount of Olives](#). The Lord sent two disciples ahead into the village of Bethphage to find an animal to ride. They found the unbroken colt of a donkey, just as Jesus had said they would (Luke 19:29–30). When they untied the colt, the owners began to question them. The disciples responded with the answer Jesus had provided: “The Lord needs it” (Luke 19:31–34). Amazingly, the owners were satisfied with that answer and let the disciples go. “They brought [the donkey] to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it” (Luke 19:35).

As Jesus ascended toward Jerusalem, a large multitude gathered around Him. This crowd understood that Jesus was the Messiah; what they did not understand was that it wasn’t time to set up the kingdom yet—although Jesus had tried to tell them so (Luke 19:11–12). The crowd’s actions along the road give rise to the name “Palm Sunday”: “A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road” (Matthew 21:8). In strewing their cloaks on the road, the people were giving Jesus the royal treatment—King Jehu was given similar honor at his coronation (2 Kings 9:13). John records the detail that the branches they cut were from palm trees (John 12:13).

On that first Palm Sunday, the people also honored Jesus verbally: “The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ / ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’ / ‘Hosanna in the highest heaven!’” (Matthew 21:9). In their praise of Jesus, the Jewish crowds were quoting Psalm 118:25–26, an acknowledged prophecy of the Christ. The allusion to a Messianic psalm drew resentment from the religious leaders present: “Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, ‘Teacher, rebuke your disciples!’” (Luke 19:39). However, Jesus saw no need to rebuke those who told the truth. He replied, “I tell you . . . if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out” (Luke 19:40).

Some 450 to 500 years prior to Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem, the prophet Zechariah had prophesied the event we now call Palm Sunday: “Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! / Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! / See, your king comes to you, / righteous and victorious, / lowly and riding on a donkey, / on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9). The prophecy was fulfilled in every particular, and it was indeed a time of rejoicing, as Jerusalem welcomed their King. Unfortunately, the celebration was not to last. The crowds looked for a Messiah who would rescue them *politically* and free them *nationally*, but Jesus had come to save them *spiritually*. First things first, and mankind’s primary need is spiritual, not political, cultural, or national salvation.

Even as the coatless multitudes waved the palm branches and shouted for joy, they missed the true reason for Jesus’ presence. They could neither see nor understand the cross. That’s why, “as [Jesus] approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it

and said, 'If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies . . . will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you" (Luke 19:41–47). It is a tragic thing to see the Savior but not recognize Him for who He is. The crowds who were crying out "[Hosanna!](#)" on Palm Sunday were crying out "Crucify Him!" later that week (Matthew 27:22–23).

There is coming a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10–11). The worship will be real then. Also, John records a scene in heaven that features the eternal celebration of the risen Lord: "There before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were *holding palm branches in their hands*" (Revelation 7:9, emphasis added). These palm-bearing saints will shout, "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb" (verse 10), and who can measure sum of their joy?

Palm Sunday Calendar:

2024 — March 24

2025 — April 13

Who Is This?

Read: Luke 19:28–40 | Bible in a Year: Joshua 19–21; Luke 2:25–52

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Luke 19:38

Imagine standing shoulder to shoulder with onlookers by a dirt road. The woman behind you is on her tiptoes, trying to see who is coming. In the distance, you glimpse a man riding a donkey. As He approaches, people toss their coats onto the road. Suddenly, you hear a tree crack behind you. A man is cutting down palm branches, and people are spreading them out ahead of the donkey.

Jesus's followers zealously honored Him as He entered Jerusalem a few days before His crucifixion. The multitude rejoiced and praised God for "all the miracles they had seen" (Luke 19:37). Jesus's devotees surrounded Him, calling out, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" (v. 38). Their enthusiastic honor affected the people of Jerusalem. When Jesus finally arrived, "the whole city was stirred and asked, 'Who is this?'" (Matthew 21:10).

Lord, I want others to see You in me and to know You too.

Today, people are still curious about Jesus. Although we can't pave His way with palm branches or shout praises to Him in person, we can still honor Him. We can discuss His remarkable works, assist people in need, patiently bear insults, and love each other deeply. Then we must be ready to answer the onlookers who ask, "Who is Jesus?"

Lord, may my life and my words express what I know about who You are. I want others to see You in me and to know You too.

We honor God's name when we live like His children.

By Jennifer Benson Schuldt

INSIGHT Do you sometimes struggle with finding the right words and right time to speak about Jesus? Your concern and hesitancy may be from God. There is a time to speak and a time to be quiet (Ecclesiastes 3:7). The Spirit knows the difference. Sometimes He is in the quiet moments and thoughtful actions that prepare the way for words later. Sometimes He enables us to fill a silence so ripe for words that if we don't gently express our confidence in Jesus, it might feel as if even "the stones will cry out" (Luke 19:40). ([Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

HOSANNA (Read Jn 12:12-19, Mt 21:9) - It's Sunday morning, time for the electronic church in America. Thousands lounge in their living rooms watching television. Almost every channel carries a religious program. Some preachers proclaim a clear-cut gospel message. Others, however, pace before an enraptured audience, telling them that Jesus will heal all their diseases and make them rich. "He wants you well! Poverty is of the devil!" shouts the preacher. And the swelling of applause picks up where he leaves off. People love the "gospel" of prosperity and deliverance from sickness.

Now turn back the calendar to a Sunday morning around 33 A.D. The city is Jerusalem. There's no TV, but there is a preacher who stirs the hopes of an excited crowd. For three years He's been going about Judea and Galilee, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and even raising the dead. Now He rides into Jerusalem on a colt, gladly receiving the acclaim of the crowd. But those who shout "Hosanna!" are accepting Him for what they think He will give them, not for who He is and what He came to do. They want an earthly Messiah who will provide for their material welfare, not a suffering Messiah whose death on the cross will expose their sin, provide forgiveness, and call for a life commitment.

Jesus didn't promise release from all the suffering in the world. But He did offer forgiveness, peace, eternal life, and a cross. Anything less than taking up that cross in serving Him is shallow allegiance.—D. J. De Haan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

The word easy appears only once in the New Testament, and then in connection with yoke.

The Problem Within

Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven! Matthew 21:9

Today's Scripture & Insight: Matthew 21:1–9

A few years ago, a woodpecker began tapping on the siding of our home. We thought the problem was only external. Then one day, my son and I climbed up a ladder into the attic only to have a bird fly past our startled faces. The problem was worse than we'd suspected: it was inside our house.

When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, the crowd was hoping He would be the one to fix their external problem—their oppression by the Romans. They went wild, shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” (Matthew 21:9). This was the moment they'd been waiting for; God's appointed King had come. If God's chosen Deliverer was going to begin reforming things, wouldn't He start with all the wrong out there? But in most gospel accounts, the “triumphal entry” is followed by Jesus driving out exploitative moneychangers . . . from the temple (vv. 12–13). He was cleaning house, and from the inside out.

That's what happens when we welcome Jesus as King; He comes to set things right—and He starts with us. He makes us confront the evil inside. Jesus on the donkey is like the warriors in the Trojan horse. The horse was welcomed as a symbol of peace, but its ultimate aim was unconditional surrender. Jesus our King requires the same from us. By: Glenn Packiam (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

What does it mean for Jesus to be your King? Why is it vital for you to surrender your all to Him?

Dear Jesus, You're the true King. Forgive me for wanting You to only fix the problems in the world around me and not to confront the sin in my heart. Show me where I'm prone to wander and expose the ways I want to run my own life.

The King Has Come

Read: Luke 19:28-44

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!—Luke 19:38

An American philosopher once asked, “If Jesus and Plato should return to earth and were to lecture on the same campus at the same time, which would I go to hear?” He concluded, “Who would choose to go and hear even so great a one as Plato talk about truth, when he might listen to the One who is the Truth?”

The cheering crowd that surged around Jesus on that first Palm Sunday responded much like that philosopher. They recognized that He had no equal, yet there was something unsettling about Him. Jesus rode calmly into Jerusalem on a donkey, although a stately war horse might have better suited the occasion. He visited the temple and then returned to Bethany (Mk. 11:11). The crowd had expected much more. They sought deliverance from Roman rule, but He came to deliver from Satan's rule. They recognized that Jesus had come from God, but they completely misunderstood His spiritual mission.

Do we pay tribute to Jesus because of who He is or just for what He can do for us? To honor Him means to obey Him and to die to our self-centered nature. The philosopher recognized Him as the Truth and the crowd saw Him as their deliverer, but we are called to submit to Him as King, the One who has come to rule in our hearts.

To be a Christian is to be a loyal subject of the King of kings.

By Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Way To Praise Him

Read: Luke 19:28-38

Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! —Luke 19:38

The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem a few days before His death focused attention on Him as Lord. When Jesus sent His disciples to get the colt He was to ride, He instructed them to tell its owners, "The Lord has need of it" (Luke 19:31). And when the crowds shouted their praise, they quoted Psalm 118:26, saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Luke 19:38).

Jesus is Lord. His name is "above every name" (Philippians 2:9). As part of His title, the word Lord refers to His sovereignty. He is the King, and every believer in Him is a member of His kingdom.

We acknowledge Jesus as Lord of our lives by bowing to His authority as King. This means that we live in obedience to Him. We can't be like the man who claimed to be a Christian and yet chose to use illegal drugs and live in an immoral relationship. When his minister confronted him, he glibly replied, "Don't worry, pastor. It's okay. I'm just a bad Christian."

It's not okay. Not at all! Not for a person who claims to be a follower of Christ (Luke 6:43-49).

Today, make sure you are honoring Him with your deeds as well as with your words. Then you can join with others in proclaiming, "Jesus is Lord!"

Take me as I am, Lord,
And make me all Your own;
Make my heart Your palace
And Your royal throne.
—Pope

If you adore Christ as Savior, you can't ignore Christ as Lord.

By David C. Egnor ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

[The King's Offer](#)

The multitudes . . . cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" —Matthew 21:9

Today's Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

I have often wondered how many of those people who enthusiastically cried, "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" a few days later. Some may have been keenly disappointed, even angry, that Christ didn't use His miraculous power to establish an earthly kingdom. Hadn't He created a golden opportunity to rally popular support by parading into Jerusalem and offering Himself as King?

Many Jews failed to recognize that before Jesus would openly assert His sovereignty He had to rule in their hearts. Their greatest need was not to be freed from Caesar's rule but to be released from the chains of pride, self-righteousness, and rebellion against God. They wanted the visible kingdom prophesied in the Old Testament with all its material benefits. But the Messiah first had to die for the sins of mankind and rise again to establish the basis for a spiritual rule.

The issue is the same today. Christ does not offer immunity from life's hardships, a cure for every disease, or the promise of financial success. What the King offered then is what He offers today—Himself as the sacrifice for our sins, and a challenge to serve Him. If we accept His offer, we will not be disappointed. By: Dennis J. DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

There's no disappointment in Jesus,
He's all that He promised to be;
His love and His care comfort me everywhere;
He is no disappointment to me.
—Hallett

Putting Christ first brings satisfaction that lasts.

ISAIAH 9:6 - When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, the crowds cried out, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" (Mt 21:9). Later

that same week, however, a mob called for His crucifixion (Mt 27:22). Few people recognized Him as the one Isaiah described as Wonderful (Isa 9:6).

If there is anyone who deserves that name, it is Jesus. He is wonderful in His deity and in His selfless love that led Him from the shining glories of heaven into the darkness of this sin-cursed world. He is wonderful in His virgin birth, wonderful in His overcoming, sinless life of service, wonderful in His teachings, wonderful in His vicarious death, wonderful in His astounding resurrection, and wonderful in His ascended glory.

Someone has observed, "In Christ we have a love that can never be fathomed, a peace that can never be understood, a rest that can never be disturbed, a joy that can never be diminished, a hope that can never be disappointed, and a spiritual resource that can never be exhausted." —H. G. Bosch (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

THE VICTIM OF CALVARY
BECAME THE VICTOR OF EASTER.

[Man Of Contrasts](#)

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! — Matthew 21:9

Today's Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

On that first Palm Sunday, one might have expected Jesus the King to enter Jerusalem on a mighty steed. But He chose instead a lowly donkey. Before He could come as a King to reign, He had to come as a Savior to die. Throughout His life on earth, Jesus was a man of striking contrasts—reflecting both His genuine humanity and His full deity.

Someone once wrote this about Jesus: "He who is the Bread of Life began His ministry hungering. He who is the Water of Life ended His ministry thirsting. Christ hungered as a man, yet fed the hungry as God. He was weary, yet He is our rest. He paid tribute, yet He is the King. He was called a devil, but He cast out demons. He prayed, yet He hears prayer. He wept, and He dries our tears. He was sold for 30 pieces of silver, yet He redeems sinners. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, yet He is the Good Shepherd. He gave His life, and by dying He destroyed death."

We would expect to find such contrasts in the life of One who was fully God and fully man. Jesus, who is the sovereign Lord of the universe, became a man to provide for our redemption. But one day He will return as King of kings.

Jesus, the God-man, deserves all our praise. — Richard DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

From Hosanna to Crucify - (John 12:12-13). Sometimes I wonder how many of those who enthusiastically cried, "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday were shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" a few days later. People must have been disappointed, even resentful, that Christ didn't overthrow the Romans and set up an earthly kingdom. He had had a golden opportunity to rally support as He rode into Jerusalem. In contrast to His earlier actions, He didn't try to dampen this jubilant demonstration. Yet neither did he capitalize on the fervor of the crowd and issue a call to arms. Those who longed only for release from foreign domination were disillusioned. The Messiah had not fulfilled their expectations.

Jesus' contemporaries failed to recognize that before He could assert His outward sovereignty, He had to rule the inner citadel of their hearts. The Jews' greatest need was not freedom from Caesar's legions but release from the chains of their own sin. Jesus would rule in power and glory one day, but first He had to pay sin's penalty on the cross. The key to His kingdom was not revolution but repentance.

Through the centuries the issue has not changed. If we follow Christ only because we think He'll shield us from life's hardships, heal all our sicknesses, and guarantee prosperity, we're headed for disillusionment. But if we renounce sin, take up our cross, and live for Him because He is our God, our Creator, and our Redeemer, we will never be disappointed in Him. —D. J. De Haan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Putting Christ first brings satisfaction that lasts.

Who Is This?

Read: Luke 19:28-40

Blessed is [He] who comes in the name of the Lord! —Luke 19:38

Imagine standing shoulder to shoulder with onlookers by a dirt road. The woman behind you is on her tiptoes, trying to see who is coming. In the distance, you glimpse a man riding a donkey. As He approaches, people toss their coats onto the road. Suddenly, you hear a tree crack behind you. A man is cutting down palm branches, and people are spreading them out ahead of the donkey.

Jesus' followers zealously honored Him as He entered Jerusalem a few days before His crucifixion. The multitude rejoiced and praised God for "all the mighty works they had seen" (Luke 19:37). Jesus' devotees surrounded Him, calling out, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" (v.38). Their enthusiastic honor affected the people of Jerusalem. When Jesus finally arrived, "all the city was moved, saying, 'Who is this?'" (Matt. 21:10).

Today, people are still curious about Jesus. Although we can't pave His way with palm branches or shout praises to Him in person, we can still honor Him. We can discuss His remarkable works, assist people in need (Gal. 6:2), patiently bear insults (1 Peter 4:14-16), and love each other deeply (v.8). Then we must be ready to answer the onlookers who ask, "Who is Jesus?"

So let our lips and lives express The holy gospel we profess; So let our works and virtues shine, To prove the doctrine all divine. — Watts

We honor God's name when we call Him our Father and live like His Son.

By Jennifer Benson Schuldt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Matthew 21:10 When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?"

- all: Mt 2:3 Ru 1:19 1Sa 16:4 Joh 12:16-19
- Who: Song 3:6 Isa 63:1 Lu 5:21 7:49 9:9 20:2 Joh 2:18 Ac 9:5

When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this

Matthew 21:11 And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."

- This: Mt 16:13,14 De 18:15-19 Lu 7:16 Joh 7:40 9:17 Ac 3:22,23 7:37
- of Nazareth: Mt 2:23 Joh 1:45,46 6:14

And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee- Notice the shift from the acclamation on His entry as "King" now to "Prophet."

Matthew 21:12 And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves.

- went: Mal 3:1,2 Mk 11:11
- and cast: Mk 11:15 Lu 19:45,46 Joh 2:14-17
- moneychangers: De 14:24-26
- doves: Lev 1:14 5:7,11 12:6,8 14:22,30 15:14,29 Lu 2:24

And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves

NET NOTE - The merchants (those who were selling) would have been located in the Court of the Gentiles. Matthew (here, Mt 21:12–27), Mark (Mk 11:15–19) and Luke (Lk 19:45–46) record this incident of the temple cleansing at the end of Jesus' ministry. John (Jn 2:13–16) records a cleansing of the temple at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. See the note on the word temple courts in John 2:14 for a discussion of the relationship of these accounts to one another.

Matthew Henry Concise - Mt 21:12-17. Christ found some of the courts of the temple turned into a market for cattle and things used in the sacrifices, and partly occupied by the money-changers. Our Lord drove them from the place, as he had done at his entering upon his ministry, John 2:13-17. His works testified of him more than the hosannas; and his healing in the temple was the fulfilling the promise, that the glory of the latter house should be greater than the glory of the former. If Christ came now into many parts of his visible church, how many secret evils he would discover and cleanse! And how many things daily practised under the cloak of religion, would he show to be more suitable to a den of thieves than to a house of prayer!

QUESTION - [What does it mean that the house of prayer had been turned into a den of thieves?](#)

ANSWER - About a week before His arrest and crucifixion, Jesus went into the [temple and cleared it](#) out of “all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves” (Matthew 21:12). Jesus then spoke to the startled crowds: “It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves” (verse 22, KJV). The same incident is recorded in Mark 11 and Luke 19. John 2 records similar actions of Jesus at the beginning of His ministry.

In speaking of a “house of prayer” and a “den of thieves” (the NIV has “den of robbers”), Jesus cited two passages from the [Tanakh](#). In Isaiah 56:7 God says, “These [faithful foreigners] I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.” Twice in this verse, God’s temple is called “a house of prayer.” God’s design was for His house in Jerusalem to be a gathering place for worshipers from all nations, a place where prayers would rise like incense from the hearts of the faithful to the presence of the living God.

The phrase *den of thieves* comes from Jeremiah 7:11, where God says, “Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.” The prophet Jeremiah was rebuking the temple leaders for their abuses. Even as they continued going through the motions of their religion, they were oppressing the needy and violently taking what was not theirs. God saw through their pretense, however, and promised to deal with the thieves in His sanctified house.

Jesus takes these two verses from the Old Testament and applies them to His day. One verse was full of purity and promise: God’s temple would be an inviting house of prayer. The other verse was full of conviction and warning: people had perverted God’s right purposes for their own gain. In the courts of the temple, people were being taken financial advantage of, being cheated through exorbitant exchange rates and being compelled to buy “temple-approved” animals for sacrifice, on the pretext that their own animals were unworthy. Jesus denounced such greedy goings-on and physically put a stop to the corruption. In His righteous indignation, He quoted Isaiah and Jeremiah to show that He had biblical warrant for His actions. What should have been a sanctuary for the righteous had become a refuge for the wicked, and the Son of God was not going to put up with it. God’s design for the temple was that it be a house of prayer, a place to meet with God and worship Him. But when Jesus stepped into its courts, He found not prayer but avarice, extortion, and oppression.

It’s always good to remember the Lord’s purpose for what He makes. Whether it’s the temple, the church, marriage, the family, or life itself, we should follow God’s design and seek to honor Him. Any twisting or perverting of God’s design for selfish purposes will draw the Lord’s righteous anger.

Related Resources:

- [Why does God call His house a house of prayer \(Isaiah 56:7\)?](#)
- [What does it mean that Jesus overturns tables \(John 2:15\)?](#)
- [How many times did Jesus cleanse the temple? Why did He cleanse the temple?](#)
- [Was Jesus ever angry?](#)
- [Who were the money changers in the Bible?](#)
- [What does it mean that “zeal for your house will consume me” in John 2:17?](#)

Matthew 21:13 And He *said to them, “It is written, ‘MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER’; but you are making it a ROBBERS’ DEN.”

- It is: Mt 2:5 Joh 15:25
- My: Ps 93:5 Isa 56:7
- ye: Jer 7:11 Mk 11:17 Lu 19:46

And He *said to them, “It is written, ‘MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER’ (from Isa 56:7); **but you are making it a ROBBERS’ DEN**

NET NOTE - A quotation from Jer 7:11. The meaning of Jesus’ statement about making the temple courts a den of robbers probably operates here at two levels. Not only were the religious leaders robbing the people financially, but because of this they had also robbed them spiritually by stealing from them the opportunity to come to know God genuinely. It is possible that these merchants had recently been moved to this location for convenience.

Matthew 21:14 And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.

- Mt 9:35 11:4,5 Isa 35:5 Ac 3:1-9 10:38

And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them

Matthew 21:15 But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they became indignant

- when: Mt 21:23 26:3,59 27:1,20 Isa 26:11 Mk 11:18 Lu 19:39,40 20:1 22:2,66 Joh 11:47-49,57 12:19
- Hosanna: Mt 21:9 22:42 Joh 7:42
- they were: Joh 4:1

But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they became indignant

Matthew 21:16 and said to Him, “Do You hear what these children are saying?” And Jesus *said to them, “Yes; have you never read, ‘OUT OF THE MOUTH OF INFANTS AND NURSING BABIES YOU HAVE PREPARED PRAISE FOR YOURSELF’?”

- Hearest: Lu 19:39,40 Joh 11:47,48 Ac 4:16-18
- have: Mt 12:3 19:4 22:31 Mk 2:25
- Out: Mt 11:25 Ps 8:2

and said to Him, “Do You hear what these children are saying?” And Jesus *said to them, “Yes; have you never read, ‘OUT OF THE MOUTH OF INFANTS AND NURSING BABIES YOU HAVE PREPARED PRAISE FOR YOURSELF’ (Ps 8:2)

QUESTION - [What does it mean that “out of the mouth of babes You have perfected praise” \(Matthew 21:16\)?](#)

ANSWER - In Matthew 21, Jesus has just arrived in Jerusalem for the final days leading up to His death on the cross. While He was in the temple, [healing the blind and the lame](#), the leading priests and scribes saw Jesus performing miracles and even heard children shouting, “Hosanna! Praise God for the Son of David.” The religious teachers grew irate, questioning Jesus, “Do you hear what these children are saying?” “Yes,” Jesus responded to His critics, asking, “Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants you have perfected praise’?” (Matthew 21:16, NKJV).

Jesus was quoting Psalm 8:2:
“Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants
You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.”

Following the Greek Septuagint, Matthew 21:16 uses “praise” instead of “strength.” The idea is that God silences His enemies and puts them to shame by the words coming out of the mouths of babies and infants who tell of the Lord’s strength.

Earlier this day, six days before the Passover, Jesus had [ridden on a donkey into the city](#). The crowds celebrated Him as the Messiah and guided Him into town like a conquering warrior or exalted king: “A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed

shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' 'Hosanna in the highest heaven!'" (Matthew 21:8–9).

The Jewish leaders could not miss the implications as they observed everything taking place. They witnessed Christ's victorious entry into Jerusalem, the ecstatic crowd of worshippers, His commanding cleansing of the temple, His miracles of healing, and even children proclaiming His praises. The people hailed Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, and it was more than these religious hypocrites could handle. They became outraged.

By pointing out what they saw as a dreadful error—children worshipping Him as Messiah—they thought Jesus would be horrified that He had misled these innocent ones, even causing them to commit blasphemy. Surely Jesus would put a quick stop to it. But instead, Jesus saw nothing wrong with receiving their praise. He accepted it enthusiastically, supporting their actions by referring to an Old Testament Scripture that the religious leaders would recognize. The children had understood what the leaders had not—that Jesus was their promised Savior. The Jewish leaders were the same as God's Old Testament enemies who would be silenced and put to shame by children's praise.

The word *babes* refers to "infants" and "young children." Earlier, in Matthew 11:25–27, Jesus had affirmed the ability of children to perceive the secrets of God's kingdom when others could not: "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way!" (NLT).

The children crying out praises to God in the temple proved to be wiser than the wise (see 1 Corinthians 1:18–25). Even though the priests and scribes failed to praise God, these little children would not. Luke's gospel records the Pharisees trying to silence the crowds during Jesus' triumphal entry. But Jesus declares, "If they kept quiet, the stones along the road would burst into cheers!" (Luke 19:40, NLT).

About Matthew 21:16 and Psalm 8:2, one Bible commentator writes, "The 'scarcely articulate' cry of an infant proves, like the heaven and the stars, the power and providence of God. On all these God builds a stronghold against His adversaries, i. e. convinces them of His might. So also the children in the temple attest the truth of God" ([Carr, A. *The Gospel According to St Matthew, with Maps, Notes, and Introduction*, Cambridge University Press, 1893, p. 162](#)).

Out of the mouth of babes You have perfected praise means the praise of little children is perfect praise. It is perfect because children can comprehend the realities of God's kingdom that even the most learned fail to grasp (Matthew 19:14; Mark 10:13–15; Luke 18:16–17). Children are not blinded by pride and hypocrisy and are better able to perceive spiritual truth (Matthew 18:3–4.) Jesus accepts their worship because it is untainted and reserved for God alone.

Matthew 21:16

READ: Matthew 21:1-17

THE religious leaders were wrong about Jesus. They knew a lot about theology, but they knew nothing about Christ.

The children, however, were right. They were the ones in the temple who shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" They believed that the person riding that unbroken colt was the promised Son of David. They fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 8:2 by giving praise to the Lamb who was about to die for the sins of the world. It was the children who responded with wholehearted joy, even though they couldn't fully understand Jesus' mission of human redemption. Children can teach us a vital lesson about faith. Their innocence makes it easy for them to believe and trust in the one who is truth, goodness, and love all in one.

Adults think they know so much. We try to be so mature, so correct, so religious. But I wonder if we would even recognize the Savior if He walked among us. Or would we, like those people long ago, be deceived because He doesn't fit our preconceived ideas of how He should behave and what His agenda should be?—D C Egnor (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, grant me the faith of children, who are able to believe so easily in Your goodness because they have seen so little of this world's evil. May I not be deceived by Satan's empty promises when he offers me something that looks good, but rather trust You, the author and possessor of all true goodness.

Matthew 21:17 And He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

- he left: Mt 16:4 Jer 6:8 Ho 9:12 Mk 3:7 Lu 8:37,38

- Bethany: Bethany was a village to the east of the mount of Olives, on the road to Jericho; fifteen stadia, (Joh. 11:18) or nearly two miles, as Jerome states, from Jerusalem. This village is now small and poor, and the cultivation of the soil around it is much neglected; but it is a pleasant, romantic spot, shaded by the mount of Olives, and abounding in vines and long grass. It consists of from thirty to forty dwellings inhabited by about 600 Mohammedans, for whose use there is a neat little mosque standing on an eminence. Here they shew the ruins of a sort of castle as the house of Lazarus, and a grotto as his tomb; and the house of Simon the leper, of Mary Magdalene and of Martha, and the identical tree which our Lord cursed, are among the monkish curiosities of the place. Mk 11:11,19 Lu 10:38 Joh 11:1,18 12:1-3

And He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

Matthew 21:18 Now in the morning, when He was returning to the city, He became hungry.

- in: Mk 11:12,13
- he hungered: Mt 4:2 12:1 Lu 4:2 Heb 4:15

Now in the morning, when He was returning to the city, He became hungry

Matthew Henry Concise - Mt 21:18-22 This cursing of the barren fig-tree represents the state of hypocrites in general, and so teaches us that Christ looks for the power of religion in those who profess it, and the savour of it from those that have the show of it. His just expectations from flourishing professors are often disappointed; he comes to many, seeking fruit, and finds leaves only. A false profession commonly withers in this world, and it is the effect of Christ's curse. The fig-tree that had no fruit, soon lost its leaves. This represents the state of the nation and people of the Jews in particular. Our Lord Jesus found among them nothing but leaves. And after they rejected Christ, blindness and hardness grew upon them, till they were undone, and their place and nation rooted up. The Lord was righteous in it. Let us greatly fear the doom denounced on the barren fig-tree.

QUESTION - [Why did Jesus curse the fig tree?](#)

ANSWER - The account of Jesus cursing the barren fig tree is found in two different gospel accounts. First, it is seen in Matthew 21:18-22, and then also in Mark 11:12-14. While there are slight differences between the two accounts, they are easily reconciled by studying the passages. Like all Scripture, the key to understanding this passage comes from understanding the context in which it happened. In order to properly understand this passage, we must first look at the chronological and geographical setting. For example, when did this occur, what was the setting, and where did it happen? Also, in order to fully understand this passage, we need to have an understanding of the importance of the fig tree as it relates to the nation of Israel and understand how the fig tree is often used in the Scriptures to symbolically represent Israel. Finally, we must have a basic understanding of the fig tree itself, its growing seasons, etc.

First, in looking at the general chronological setting of the passage, we see that it happened during the week before His crucifixion. Jesus had entered Jerusalem a day earlier amid the praise and worship of the Jewish people who were looking to Him as the King/Messiah who was going to deliver them from Roman occupation (Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11). Now, the next day, Jesus is again on His way to Jerusalem from where He was staying in Bethany. On His way, both Matthew and Mark record that He was hungry and saw a fig tree in the distance that had leaves on it (Mark 11:13). Upon coming to the tree expecting to find something to eat, Jesus instead discovered that the fig tree had no fruit on it and cursed the tree saying, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" (Matthew 21:19; Mark 11:14). Matthew records the cursing and the withering of the fig tree all in one account and includes it after the account of Jesus cleansing the Temple of the moneychangers. Mark explains that it actually took place over two days, with Jesus cursing the fig tree the first day on the way to cleanse the Temple, and the disciples seeing the tree withered on the second day when they were again going to Jerusalem from Bethany (Mark 11:12-14 and Mark 11:19-20). Of course, upon seeing the tree "withered from the roots up," the disciples were amazed, as that would have normally taken several weeks.

Having reviewed the general chronological setting of the story, we can begin to answer some of many questions that are often asked of it. First of all is the question, Why did Jesus curse the fig tree if it was not the right season for figs? The answer to this question can be determined by studying the characteristics of fig trees. The fruit of the fig tree generally appears before the leaves, and, because the fruit is green it blends in with the leaves right up until it is almost ripe. Therefore, when Jesus and His disciples saw from a distance that the tree had leaves, they would have expected it to also have fruit on it even though it was earlier in the season than what would be normal for a fig tree to be bearing fruit. Also, each tree would often produce two to three crops of figs each season. There would be an early crop in the spring followed by one or two later crops. In some parts of Israel, depending on climate and conditions, it was also possible that a tree might produce fruit ten out of twelve months. This also explains why Jesus and His

disciples would be looking for fruit on the fig tree even if it was not in the main growing season. The fact that the tree already had leaves on it even though it was at a higher elevation around Jerusalem, and therefore would have been outside the normal season for figs, would have seemed to be a good indication that there would also be fruit on it.

As to the significance of this passage and what it means, the answer to that is again found in the chronological setting and in understanding how a fig tree is often used symbolically to represent Israel in the Scriptures. First of all, chronologically, Jesus had just arrived at Jerusalem amid great fanfare and great expectations, but then proceeds to cleanse the Temple and curse the barren fig tree. Both had significance as to the spiritual condition of Israel. With His cleansing of the Temple and His criticism of the worship that was going on there (Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17), Jesus was effectively denouncing Israel's worship of God. With the cursing of the fig tree, He was symbolically denouncing Israel as a nation and, in a sense, even denouncing unfruitful "Christians" (that is, people who profess to be Christian but have no evidence of a relationship with Christ).

The presence of a fruitful fig tree was considered to be a symbol of blessing and prosperity for the nation of Israel. Likewise, the absence or death of a fig tree would symbolize judgment and rejection. Symbolically, the fig tree represented the spiritual deadness of Israel, who while very religious outwardly with all the sacrifices and ceremonies, were spiritually barren because of their sins. By cleansing the Temple and cursing the fig tree, causing it to wither and die, Jesus was pronouncing His coming judgment of Israel and demonstrating His power to carry it out. It also teaches the principle that religious profession and observance are not enough to guarantee salvation, unless there is the fruit of genuine salvation evidenced in the life of the person. James would later echo this truth when he wrote that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). The lesson of the fig tree is that we should bear spiritual fruit (Galatians 5:22-23), not just give an appearance of religiosity. God judges fruitlessness, and expects that those who have a relationship with Him will "bear much fruit" (John 15:5-8).

Related Resources:

- [What is the fig tree prophecy?](#)
- [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Fig Tree?](#)

Matthew 21:19 Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only; and He *said to it, "No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you." And at once the fig tree withered.

- fig tree: Gr. one fig-tree
- and found: Isa 5:4,5 Lu 3:9 13:6-9 Joh 15:2,6 2Ti 3:5 Tit 1:16
- Let: Mk 11:14 Lu 19:42-44 Heb 6:7,8 2Pe 2:20-22 Rev 22:11
- the fig tree: Jude 1:12

Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only; and He *said to it, "No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you." And at once the fig tree withered

NET NOTE - The fig tree is a variation on the picture of a vine as representing the nation; see Isa 5:1-7.

Matthew 21:20 Seeing this, the disciples were amazed and asked, "How did the fig tree wither all at once?"

- How: Isa 40:6-8 Mk 11:20,21 Jas 1:10,11

Seeing this, the disciples were amazed and asked, "How did the fig tree wither all at once

Matthew 21:21 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will happen.

- If ye have: Mt 17:20 Mk 11:22,23 Lu 17:6,7 Ro 4:19,20 1Co 13:2 Jas 1:6
- Be thou removed: Mt 8:12

And Jesus answered and said to them, “Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ it will happen

Matthew 21:22 “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”

- Mt 7:7,11 18:19 Mk 11:24 Lu 11:8-10 Joh 14:13 15:7 16:24 Jas 5:16 1Jn 3:22 5:14,15

And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive

NET NOTE - Grk “believing”; the participle here is conditional.

Matthew 21:23 When He entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching, and said, “By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?”

- when: Mk 11:27,28 Lu 19:47,48 20:1,2
- the chief priests: 1Ch 24:1-19
- By what: Ex 2:14 Ac 4:7 7:27

When He entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching, and said, “By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority

Matthew Henry Concise - Mt 21:23-27 As our Lord now openly appeared as the Messiah, the chief priests and scribes were much offended, especially because he exposed and removed the abuses they encouraged. Our Lord asked what they thought of John's ministry and baptism. Many are more afraid of the shame of lying than of the sin, and therefore scruple not to speak what they know to be false, as to their own thoughts, affections, and intentions, or their remembering and forgetting. Our Lord refused to answer their inquiry. It is best to shun needless disputes with wicked opposers.

Matthew 21:24 Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

- I also: Mt 10:16 Pr 26:4,5 Lu 6:9 Col 4:6

Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

Matthew 21:25 “The baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men?” And they began reasoning among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say to us, ‘Then why did you not believe him?’

- baptism: Mt 3:1-12 11:7-15 17:12,13 Mk 1:1-11 11:27-33 Lu 1:11-17,67-80 Lu 3:2-20 7:28-35 Joh 1:6,15,25-34 3:26-36
- Why: Lu 20:5 Joh 3:18 5:33-36,44-47 10:25,26 12:37-43 1Jn 3:20

The baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men?” And they began reasoning among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say to us, ‘Then why did you not believe him

NET NOTE - The question is whether John's ministry was of divine or human origin.

Matthew 21:26 “But if we say, ‘From men,’ we fear the people; for they all regard John as a prophet.”

- we fear: Mt 21:46 14:5 Isa 57:11 Mk 11:32 12:12 Lu 20:6,19 22:2 Joh 9:22 Ac 5:26
- for: Mk 6:20 Joh 5:35 10:41,42

But if we say, ‘From men,’ we fear the people; for they all regard John as a prophet

Matthew 21:27 And answering Jesus, they said, “We do not know.” He also said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

- We cannot tell: Mt 15:14 16:3 23:16-28 Isa 6:10 28:9 29:10-12 42:19,20 56:10,11 Jer 8:7-9 Mal 2:6-9 Lu 20:7,8 Joh 9:30,40,41 Ro 1:18-22,28 2Co 4:3 2Th 2:9,10

And answering Jesus, they said, “We do not know.” He also said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things

NET NOTE - Very few questions could have so completely revealed the wicked intentions of the religious leaders. Jesus’ question revealed the motivation of the religious leaders and exposed them for what they really were—hypocrites. They indicted themselves when they cited only two options and chose neither of them (“We do not know”). The point of Matt 21:23–27 is that no matter what Jesus said in response to their question, they were not going to believe it and would in the end use it against him. **Neither will I tell you.** Though Jesus gave no answer, the analogy he used to their own question makes his view clear. His authority came from heaven.

Matthew 21:28 “But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in the vineyard.’

- what: Mt 17:25 22:17 Lu 13:4 1Co 10:15
- A certain: Lu 15:11-32
- sons: Mt 20:5-7 Mk 13:34 1Co 15:58

But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go work today in the vineyard

Matthew Henry Concise - Mt 21:28-32 Parables which give reproof, speak plainly to the offenders, and judge them out of their own mouths. The parable of the two sons sent to work in the vineyard, is to show that those who knew not John's baptism to be of God, were shamed by those who knew it, and owned it. The whole human race are like children whom the Lord has brought up, but they have rebelled against him, only some are more plausible in their disobedience than others. And it often happens, that the daring rebel is brought to repentance and becomes the Lord's servant, while the formalist grows hardened in pride and enmity.

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Two Sons?](#)

ANSWER - The Parable of the Two Sons can be found in Matthew 21:28-32. The basic story is of a man with two sons who told them to go work in the vineyard. The first son refused, but later obeyed and went. The second son initially expressed obedience, but actually disobeyed and refused to work in the vineyard. The son who ultimately did the will of his father was the first son because he eventually obeyed. Jesus then likens the first son to tax collectors and prostitutes—the outcasts of Jewish society—because they believed John the Baptist and accepted “the way of righteousness” (v. 32), in spite of their initial disobedience to the Law.

The key interpretive point in understanding the Parable of the Two Sons comes in defining to whom Jesus is speaking. For that we need to look at the overall context of this passage. Matthew chapter 21 begins with Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The whole point of Matthew’s gospel is to show Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah. The crowd responds by shouting Hosannas and praises to the King. The King’s first act upon entering Jerusalem is to cleanse the temple (21:12-17). Afterwards, we see Jesus cursing a fig tree (21:18-22). This account may seem an isolated story, but Jesus was making a strong symbolic point. The fig tree is often symbolic of Israel (cf. Hosea 9:10; Joel 1:7). The fact that the fig tree had leaves but no fruit is symbolic of Israel’s religious activity—i.e., all the trappings of spirituality, but no substance. Israel may have had the leaves of activity, but not the fruit of repentance and obedience to God, which is why Jesus tells them the prostitutes and tax collectors will enter the kingdom ahead of them (v. 31).

In Matthew 21:23-27, the religious authorities—the chief priests and elders—question Jesus’ authority. Who is this Jesus who comes into Jerusalem receiving the praises of the masses and drives the moneychangers out of the temple? The stage is set for the

showdown. It is in this context that Jesus tells three parables—the Two Sons, the Tenants, and the Wedding Feast. Each of these parables is told to the Jewish religious leaders, each illustrates their rejection of Jesus, and each pronounces judgment on Israel for their rejection of their Messiah. In the Parable of the Two Sons, the leaders of Israel are the second son who claimed obedience, but did not do the will of the father.

Matthew 21:29 “And he answered, ‘I will not’; but afterward he regretted it and went.

- I will not: Mt 21:31 Jer 44:16 Eph 4:17-19
- he repented: Mt 3:2-8 2Ch 33:10-19 Isa 1:16-19 55:6,7 Eze 18:28-32 Da 4:34-37 Jon 3:2,8-10 Lu 15:17,18 Ac 26:20 1Co 6:11 Eph 2:1-13

And he answered, ‘I will not’; but afterward he regretted it and went

NET NOTE - The Greek text reads here μεταμέλομαι (metamelomai): “to change one’s mind about something, with the probable implication of regret” (L&N 31.59); cf. also BDAG 639 s.v. The idea in this context involves more than just a change of mind, for the son regrets his initial response. The same verb is used in v. 32.

Matthew 21:30 “The man came to the second and said the same thing; and he answered, ‘I will, sir’; but he did not go.

- I go: Mt 23:3 Eze 33:31 Ro 2:17-25 Tit 1:16

The man came to the second and said the same thing; and he answered, ‘I will, sir’; but he did not go

Matthew 21:31 “Which of the two did the will of his father?” They *said, “The first.” Jesus *said to them, “Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you.

- did: Mt 7:21 12:50 Eze 33:11 Lu 15:10 Ac 17:30 2Pe 3:9
- The first: 2Sa 12:5-7 Job 15:6 Lu 7:40-42 19:22 Ro 3:19
- Verily: Mt 5:18 6:5 18:3
- the publicans: Mt 9:9 20:16 Lu 7:29,37-50 15:1,2 19:9,10 Ro 5:20 9:30-33 1Ti 1:13-16

Which of the two did the will of his father?” They *said, “The first.” Jesus *said to them, “Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you

NET NOTE - The tax collectors would bid to collect taxes for the Roman government and then add a surcharge, which they kept. Since tax collectors worked for Rome, they were viewed as traitors to their own people and were not well liked.

NET NOTE - TECHNICAL NOTE - Verses 29–31 involve a rather complex and difficult textual problem. The variants cluster into three different groups: (1) The first son says “no” and later has a change of heart, and the second son says “yes” but does not go. The second son is called the one who does his father’s will. This reading is found in the Western MSS (D it). But the reading is so hard as to be nearly impossible. One can only suspect some tampering with the text, extreme carelessness on the part of the scribe, or possibly a recognition of the importance of not shaming one’s parent in public. (Any of these reasons is not improbable with this texttype, and with codex D in particular.) The other two major variants are more difficult to assess. Essentially, the responses make sense (the son who does his father’s will is the one who changes his mind after saying “no”): (2) The first son says “no” and later has a change of heart, and the second son says “yes” but does not go. But here, the first son is called the one who does his father’s will (unlike the Western reading). This is the reading found in (x) C L W (Z) 0102 0281 f1 33 and several versional witnesses. (3) The first son says “yes” but does not go, and the second son says “no” but later has a change of heart. This is the reading found in B Θ f13 700 and several versional witnesses. Both of these latter two readings make good sense and have significantly better textual support than the first reading. The real question, then, is this: Is the first son or the second the obedient one? If one were to argue simply from the parabolic logic, the second son would be seen as the obedient one (hence, the third reading). The first son would represent the Pharisees (or Jews) who claim to obey God, but do not (cf. Matt 23:3). This accords well with the parable of the prodigal son (in which the oldest son represents the unbelieving Jews). Further, the chronological sequence of the second son being obedient fits well with the real scene: Gentiles and tax collectors and prostitutes were not, collectively, God’s chosen people, but they

did repent and come to God, while the Jewish leaders claimed to be obedient to God but did nothing. At the same time, the external evidence is weaker for this reading (though stronger than the first reading), not as widespread, and certainly suspect because of how neatly it fits. One suspects scribal manipulation at this point. Thus the second reading looks to be superior to the other two on both external and transcriptional grounds. But what about intrinsic evidence? One can surmise that Jesus didn't always give predictable responses. In this instance, he may well have painted a picture in which the Pharisees saw themselves as the first son, only to stun them with his application (v. 32).

QUESTION - [Why does the Bible speak so negatively about tax collectors?](#)

ANSWER - Probably in every culture, in every part of history, from the tax collectors of ancient Israel to the IRS agents of today, the tax man has received more than his share of scorn and contumely. The New Testament indicates that the occupation of "tax collector" (or "[publican](#)") was looked down upon by the general populace.

The [Pharisees](#) communicated their disdain for tax collectors in one of their early confrontations with Jesus. The Lord was eating a meal with "many tax collectors and sinners . . . , for there were many who followed him." When the Pharisees noticed this, "they asked his disciples: 'Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?'" (Mark 2:15–16). A "sinner," to a Pharisee, was a Jew who did not follow the Law (plus the Pharisees' own rules). And a "tax collector" was—well, a *tax collector*.

Jesus used the commonly held opinion of tax collectors as an illustration of the final stage of church discipline: when a person is excommunicated, Jesus said to "treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector" (Matthew 18:17). In other words, the excommunicant is to be considered an outsider and a candidate for evangelism.

There are a few reasons for the low view of tax collectors in the New Testament era. First, no one likes to pay money to the government, especially when the government is an oppressive regime like the Roman Empire of the 1st century. Those who collected the taxes for such a government bore the brunt of much public displeasure.

Second, the tax collectors in the Bible were *Jews* who were working for the hated Romans. These individuals were seen as turncoats, traitors to their own countrymen. Rather than fighting the Roman oppressors, the publicans were helping them—and enriching themselves at the expense of their fellow Jews.

Third, it was common knowledge that the tax collectors cheated the people they collected from. By hook or by crook, they would collect more than required and keep the extra for themselves. Everyone just understood that was how it worked. The tax collector [Zacchaeus](#), in his confession to the Lord, mentioned his past dishonesty (Luke 19:8).

Fourth, because of their skimming off the top, the tax collectors were well-to-do. This further separated them from the lower classes, who resented the injustice of their having to support the publicans' lavish lifestyle. The tax collectors, ostracized as they were from society, formed their own [clique](#), further separating themselves from the rest of society.

Jesus taught that we should love our enemies. To emphasize the point, He said, "If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?" (Matthew 5:46). The word *even* is significant. Jesus was telling the crowd they needed to rise above the level of publican behavior. If our love is only reciprocal, then we're no better than a tax collector! Such a comparison must have left its mark on Jesus' hearers.

Given the low esteem people had for tax collectors, it is noteworthy that Jesus spent so much time with them. The reason He was [eating that meal](#) in Mark 2 with "many tax collectors" is that He had just called Matthew, a tax collector, to be one of His twelve disciples. Matthew was throwing a feast because he wanted his circle of friends to meet the Lord. Many believed in Jesus (verse 15). Jesus responded to the Pharisees' indignation by stating His ministry purpose: "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17).

The Pharisees saw tax collectors as enemies to be shunned. Jesus saw them as the spiritually sick to be healed. The Pharisees could offer nothing to the tax collectors except a list of rules. Jesus offered forgiveness of sins and the hope of a new life. No wonder the publicans liked to spend time with Jesus (Luke 15:1). And tax collectors like Matthew and Zacchaeus were transformed by the gospel and followed the Lord.

[John the Baptist's](#) message was that *all* need to repent, not just tax collectors and other obvious sinners. The Pharisees couldn't see their need and refused to be categorized with publicans. To the self-righteous, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him" (Matthew 21:31–32).

Matthew 21:32 “For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.

- came: Mt 3:1-8 Isa 35:8 Jer 6:16 Lu 3:8-13 2Pe 2:21
- and ye believed: Mt 21:25 11:18 Lu 7:29,30 Joh 5:33-36 Ac 13:25-29
- the publicans: Lu 7:37-50
- repented: Ps 81:11,12 Zec 7:11,12 Joh 5:37-40 2Ti 2:25 Heb 3:12 6:6-8 Rev 2:21

For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him

Matthew 21:33 “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey.

- Hear: In this parable, in its primary sense, the householder denotes the Supreme Being; the family, the Jewish nation; the vineyard, Jerusalem; the fence, the Divine protection; the wine-press, the law and sacrificial rites; the tower, the temple; and the husbandmen, the priests and doctors of the law. Mt 13:18 1Ki 22:19 Isa 1:10 Jer 19:3 Ho 4:1
- There: Ps 80:8-16 Song 8:11,12 Isa 5:1-4 Jer 2:21 Mk 12:1 Lu 20:9-18 Joh 15:1
- husbandmen: Mt 23:2 De 1:15-17 16:18 17:9-12 33:8-10 Mal 2:4-9
- went: Mt 25:14,15 Mk 13:34 Lu 19:12

Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who PLANTED A VINEYARD AND PUT A WALL AROUND IT AND DUG A WINE PRESS IN IT, AND BUILT A TOWER, and rented it out to vine-growers and went on a journey

NET NOTE - The vineyard is a figure for Israel in the OT (Isa 5:1–7). The nation and its leaders are the tenants, so the vineyard here may well refer to the promise that resides within the nation. The imagery is like that in Rom 11:11–24. The leasing of land to tenant farmers was common in this period.

Matthew Henry Concise - Mt 21:33-46. This parable plainly sets forth the sin and ruin of the Jewish nation; and what is spoken to convict them, is spoken to caution all that enjoy the privileges of the outward church. As men treat God's people, they would treat Christ himself, if he were with them. How can we, if faithful to his cause, expect a favourable reception from a wicked world, or from ungodly professors of Christianity! And let us ask ourselves, whether we who have the vineyard and all its advantages, render fruits in due season, as a people, as a family, or as separate persons. Our Saviour, in his question, declares that the Lord of the vineyard will come, and when he comes he will surely destroy the wicked. The chief priests and the elders were the builders, and they would not admit his doctrine or laws; they threw him aside as a despised stone. But he who was rejected by the Jews, was embraced by the Gentiles. Christ knows who will bring forth gospel fruits in the use of gospel means. The unbelief of sinners will be their ruin. But God has many ways of restraining the remainders of wrath, as he has of making that which breaks out redound to his praise. May Christ become more and more precious to our souls, as the firm Foundation and Cornerstone of his church. May we be willing to follow him, though despised and hated for his sake.

QUESTION - [What is the meaning of the Parable of the Vineyard?](#)

ANSWER - The Parable of the Vineyard appears in three of the gospels ([Matthew 21:33-46](#); [Mark 12:1-12](#); [Luke 20:9-19](#)), with Matthew's account being the most complete. However, there are additions in the others; hence, it is wise to study all three accounts so as to achieve the greatest understanding. To get the context of what is happening, we need to look at [Matthew 21:18](#). Early in the morning, Jesus goes to the temple courts to teach (Mt 21:23). While He is teaching, the chief priest and elders confront Him, wanting to know by what authority He is teaching. Not allowing them to control the conversation, Jesus answers the question by first asking a question (Mt 21:24-26). They do not like His question nor His response to their answer; essentially, He has told them that they can't save face from their obvious attempt to cajole Him and, therefore, He is not obligated to answer their question (Mt 21:27). What Jesus told them is that John the Baptist and He received their authority from the same source. This exchange causes the leaders to become angry and puts them in opposition to Jesus. Jesus then further frustrates the priests by telling two parables: the first one is the Parable of the Two Sons, and the second is the Parable of the Vineyard, sometimes called the Parable of the Wicked Tenants.

The first parable Jesus teaches tells the priests that they have claimed to accept the message from God but they have failed to live up to it by being obedient. Outwardly, they are pious and appear to be people of God, but God knows the heart, and there they have failed miserably. The next parable (the Parable of the Vineyard) is like pouring salt on a wound. Just in case they didn't fully

understand (which they did), Jesus gives a much clearer picture of what He means. Obviously, this further infuriates the priests, but it also gives the others who were present an opportunity to hear Jesus fully explain the implications of the disobedience of the Jewish people throughout the ages.

Background: There are 6 main characters in this parable:

- 1) the landowner—God,
- 2) the vineyard—Israel,
- 3) the tenants/farmers—the Jewish religious leadership,
- 4) the landowner's servants—the prophets who remained obedient and preached God's word to the people of Israel,
- 5) the son—Jesus, and
- 6) the other tenants—the Gentiles.

The imagery used is similar to Isaiah's parable of the vineyard (it would be prudent to study this also) found in Isaiah chapter 5. The watchtower and the wall mentioned in verse 33 are means of protecting the vineyard and the ripened grapes. The winepress is obviously for stamping out the juice of the grapes to make the wine. The farmer was apparently away at the time of harvest and had rented the vineyard to the tenants. This was customary of the times, and he could expect as much as half of the grapes as payment by the tenants for use of his land.

Explanation: Verses 34-36 tell us the landowner sent his servants to collect his portion of the harvest and how they were cruelly rejected by the tenants; some were beaten, stoned, and even killed. Then he sent even more the second time and they received the same treatment. The servants sent represent the prophets that God had sent to His people/Israel and then were rejected and killed by the very people who were claiming to be of God and obedient to Him. Jeremiah was beaten (Jeremiah 26:7-11; 38:1-28), John the Baptist was killed (Matthew 14:1-12), and others were stoned (2 Chronicles 24:21). In this parable Jesus is not only reminding the religious establishment what they were like, but He was putting in their minds a question: how could they claim obedience as God's people and still reject His messengers? We don't know how many servants the owner sent, but that is not what is important; the theme is God's repeated appeal through His prophets to an unrepentant people. In the next verses (37-39), the situation becomes even more critical. The landowner sends his own son, believing that they will surely respect him. But the tenants see an opportunity here; they believe that if they kill the son they will then receive his inheritance. The law at the time provided that if there were no heirs then the property would pass to those in possession (possession is nine tenths of the law). This amounts to conspiracy to commit murder by the Jewish leadership, and it is prophetic in the sense that Jesus is now telling them what they are going to do to Him (see Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 28:16). After Jesus' death, Peter would make the same charges against the religious establishment (Acts 4:8-12). The tenants probably thought that the fight for the property was over, but it wasn't; the owner would now appear on the scene.

Jesus now (Mt 21:40-41) asks the question, what will the owner do to the evil tenants? What He is doing is forcing the religious leaders/priests to declare their own miserable fate: condemnation for their blatant disobedience. This is similar to the question that Nathan put to David (2 Samuel 12:1-7). Up to this point, Jesus has been dealing with the immediate situation of Israel and its past disobedience; now Jesus leaves open the question of what Israel's leadership is going to do with the Messiah, the Son of God, whom He refers to as the "chief cornerstone" (Mt 21:42). Cornerstones and capstones are used symbolically in Scripture and picture Christ as the main piece of the foundation of the church and the head of the church, respectively. Jesus is the beginning of and is foundational to the church, and He now stands over the church in His rightful position of honor, guiding the church to fulfill its divine destiny. This verse makes clear prophetically how Jesus will be rejected by the religious establishment and ultimately be crucified (see Psalm 118:22-23).

The key to understanding this parable and what it says about the religious leaders is found in verse 43, where Jesus makes their lack of obedience personal. Jesus tells the leaders that because of their disobedience they will be left out of the kingdom of heaven (individually and as a people); that they have let their opportunity for the time being slip away to be given to the Gentiles (see verse 41, "other tenants"). This will be more than they can tolerate, as we will see in verses 45 and 46. He is saying that there will be a new people of God made up of all peoples who will temporarily replace the Jews so that Jesus can establish His church. This will change the way God deals with man, from the old dispensation of the law to a new dispensation of God's grace. It will usher in a period of time where man will no longer understand forgiveness of sins as man's work through what he does or doesn't do or by the sacrifices of animals on the altar, but by the work of Christ on the cross. It will be a time where each individual can have a personal and saving relationship with the One and only God of the universe. The exciting part of the verse is the phrase "who will produce fruit"; this gives authority to the church to share the gospel of Christ to the lost of the world. Up to this time, the Jews felt that they had automatic membership in God's kingdom because of their relationship to Abraham; this is why they put so much emphasis on genealogies. But

the new people of God would truly have what God wanted for Israel all along: a personal and holy relationship that would be honored through the spreading of God's word to all peoples (see Exodus 19:5-6).

Jesus continues the stone metaphor in verse 44 to show how a stone can be used to build something beautiful, such as His church, or it can be used to crush and destroy, depending on the situation. This could be likened to God's word: to some it is salvation, peace and comfort. To others it is foolish and disconcerting because of its ability to convict man of his sins (2 Timothy 3:16).

Verses 45 and 46 give us three insights into the psyche of the chief priest of the religious establishment. 1) They are jealous and envious of Jesus' popularity with the common people. This encroaches on their authority and power to govern. 2) They have come to the realization that Jesus is talking about them. This hurts their pride and embarrasses them in front of the people. 3) They understood the analogy of the son and that Jesus was referring to Himself. This would be blasphemous to them, and they would now seek to kill Jesus. From here the leaders would meet in secrecy to plot how they would get rid of Jesus. Why all the secrecy? The people thought of Jesus as a prophet from God; arresting Him could cause an uprising. An uprising would jeopardize the leaders' relationship with the Roman authorities, something that the Jews did not want at any cost.

Application: We apply this parable to our lives by asking two questions:

First, have you come to know Christ as your Lord and Savior, or have you rejected Him like the Jewish leadership did? The process is simple, as long as you are sincere in seeking a relationship with Christ. You need to recognize your sins, and then accept Christ as the only One who can save you from the penalty of your sins.

Second, if you are a believer, what have you done with Jesus? Are you like the bad tenants, rejecting His Word and living a life of disobedience? If you are, you need to study God's Word and pray for guidance (ED: AND [ESPECIALLY LEARNING TO DEPEND ON THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT](#) TO ENABLE YOUR OBEDIENT CHOICES!), seeking His will for your life and living out that will as best as you can, moment by moment, day by day.

Matthew 21:34 "When the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce.

- he sent: 2Ki 17:13,14-23 2Ch 36:15,16 Ne 9:29,30 Jer 25:3-7 35:15 Zec 1:3-6 7:9-13 Mk 12:2-5 Lu 20:10-19
- that: Song 8:11,12 Isa 5:4

When the harvest time approached, he sent ([apostello](#)) his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce (Lit "to collect his fruits")

NET NOTE - These slaves represent the prophets God sent to the nation, who were mistreated and rejected.

Matthew 21:35 "The vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third.

- Mt 5:12 23:31-37 1Ki 18:4,13 19:2,10 22:24 2Ch 16:10 24:21,22 2Ch 36:15,16 Ne 9:26 Jer 2:30 25:3-7 26:21-24 Lu 13:33,34 Ac 7:52 1Th 2:15,16 Heb 11:36,37 Rev 6:9

The vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third

NET NOTE - The image of the tenants mistreating the owner's slaves pictures the nation's rejection of the prophets and their message.

Matthew 21:36 "Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them.

Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them

Matthew 21:37 "But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

- last: Mt 3:17 Mk 12:6 Lu 20:13 Joh 1:18,34 3:16,35,36 Heb 1:1,2
- They: Isa 5:4 Jer 36:3 Zep 3:7

But afterward he sent ([apostello](#)) his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son

[NET NOTE](#) - The owner’s decision to send his son represents God sending Jesus.

Matthew 21:38 “But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’

- This: Mt 2:13-16 26:3,4 27:1,2 Ge 37:18-20 Ps 2:2-8 Mk 12:7,8 Lu 20:14 Joh 11:47-53 Ac 4:27,28 5:24-28

But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance

Matthew 21:39 “They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

- caught: Mt 26:50,57 Mk 14:46-53 Lu 22:52-54 Joh 18:12,24 Ac 2:23 4:25-27
- cast: Heb 13:11-13
- slew: Ac 2:23 3:14,15 4:10 5:30 7:52 Jas 5:6

They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him

[NET NOTE](#) - Throwing the heir out of the vineyard pictures Jesus’ death outside of Jerusalem.

Matthew 21:40 “Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?”

- what: Mk 12:9 Lu 20:15,16 Heb 10:29

Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers

Matthew 21:41 They *said to Him, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.”

- they say: Our Lord here causes them to pass that sentence of destruction upon themselves which was literally executed about forty years afterwards by the Roman armies.
- He will: Mt 3:12 22:6,7 23:35-38 24:21,22 Lev 26:14-46 De 28:59-68 Ps 2:4,5,9 Isa 5:5-7 Da 9:26 Zec 11:8-10 12:12 13:8 14:2,3 Mal 4:1-6 Lu 17:32-37 19:41-44 21:22-24 1Th 2:16 Heb 2:3 12:25
- and will let out: Mt 21:43 8:11 Isa 49:5-7 65:15 66:19-21 Lu 13:28,29 14:23,24 21:24 Ac 13:46-48 15:7 18:6 28:8 Ro 9:1-11:36 15:9-18

They *said to Him, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons

Matthew 21:42 Jesus *said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures, ‘THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES’?

- Did: Mt 21:16
- The stone: Ps 118:22,23 Isa 28:16 Zec 3:8,9 Mk 12:10,11 Lu 20:17,18 Ac 4:11 Ro 9:33 Eph 2:20 1Pe 2:4-8
- and it is: Hab 1:5 Ac 13:40,41 Eph 3:3-9

Jesus *said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures, ‘THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES (Ps 118:22–23)

NET NOTE - Or “capstone,” “keystone.” Although these meanings are lexically possible, the imagery in Eph 2:20–22 and 1 Cor 3:11 indicates that the term κεφαλῆ γωνίας (kephalē gōnias) refers to a cornerstone, not a capstone. The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The use of Ps 118:22–23 and the “stone imagery” as a reference to Christ and his suffering and exaltation is common in the NT (see also Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet 2:6–8; cf. also Eph 2:20). The irony in the use of Ps 118:22–23 here is that in the OT, Israel was the one rejected (or perhaps her king) by the Gentiles, but in the NT it is Jesus who is rejected by Israel.

Matthew 21:43 “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.

- The kingdom: Mt 21:41 8:11,12 12:28 Isa 28:2 Lu 17:20,21 Joh 3:3,5
- a nation: Ex 19:6 Isa 26:2 1Co 13:2 1Pe 2:9

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it

Matthew 21:44 “And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust.”

- whosoever: Ps 2:12 Isa 8:14,15 60:12 Zec 12:3 Lu 20:18 Ro 9:33 2Co 4:3,4 1Pe 2:8
- but: Mt 26:24 27:25 Ps 2:9 21:8,9 110:5,6 Da 2:34,35,44,45 Joh 19:11 1Th 2:16 Heb 2:2,3

And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust

NET NOTE - This proverb basically means that the stone crushes, without regard to whether it falls on someone or someone falls on it. On the stone as a messianic image, see Isa 28:16 and Dan 2:44–45.

QUESTION - [Why is Jesus called the stumbling stone in Matthew 21:43-44?](#)

ANSWER - In Matthew 21:44, Jesus says, "He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed." The key to understanding this statement lies in the context of the verse and the larger conversation Jesus was having.

Jesus was teaching in the temple courts when the chief priests and elders approached Him and demanded to know the source of His authority. In response, Jesus asked them about John the Baptist—was he a prophet of God or not? The religious leaders, fearing the people’s response, refused to reveal their true opinion on the matter. In turn, Jesus refused to reveal the source of His authority (Matthew 21:23-27). In doing so, Jesus made it clear that the Jewish leaders themselves had no authority to judge Him.

Jesus then related two parables concerning vineyards. In the first, Jesus told of [two sons](#) who were told by their father to go work in the vineyard. The first son initially refused but later changed his mind and went to work. The second son promised to work, but he never went to the vineyard. Jesus applied this to the religious leaders of Israel, who were like the second son—they expressed agreement with the Father but, in the final analysis, were disobedient. The sinners who responded to John the Baptist’s message were like the first son—they seemed unlikely candidates for heaven, but they repented and thus will enter the kingdom (verses 28-32).

In the [second parable](#), Jesus tells of a landowner who, at harvest time, sent some servants to his vineyard to collect the fruit. However, the farmers who were tending the vineyard were a wicked lot, and when the servants arrived, the farmers beat some of them and killed others. Finally, the landowner sent his own son to collect the fruit, expecting that the farmers would show him respect. But the farmers treated the son worst of all, throwing him out of the vineyard and killing him (Matthew 21:33-39).

Jesus then asks a question: "When the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" (Matthew 21:40). The chief priests and elders respond, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end" (Matthew 21:41). Jesus then presses His point home with a quotation from Psalm 118: "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes" (Matthew 21:42). After a warning that the religious leaders will not inherit the kingdom (Matthew 21:43), we come to the statement in question, which is the culmination of a series of dire pronouncements aimed at the chief priests and elders.

Jesus begins with a question about John the Baptist in Matthew 21:25, but by the end of the conversation, Jesus is plainly speaking of Himself, referring to a "father" sending his "son" who was killed (Matthew 21:37). He then immediately quotes a Messianic prophecy (Matthew 21:42), in effect claiming to be the long-awaited Messiah. The progression is logical: a rejection of John leads one naturally to a rejection of Christ, to whom John pointed (John 1:29, 3:30).

The stone which "the builders rejected" in Mt 21:42 is Jesus. Although rejected, He nevertheless becomes the "chief cornerstone" (NKJV). See also Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20; and 1 Peter 2:6-8. The builders' rejection of the stone is a reference to Christ's crucifixion. The Lord's choice of the stone to be the cornerstone is a reference to Christ's resurrection. God chose His Son, despised and rejected by the world, to be the foundation of His church (1 Corinthians 3:11). "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation" (Isaiah 28:16).

Now, there are consequences for coming into contact with a stone. If you trip over the edge of a rock and fall on it, you may break some bones. If a large enough rock falls on top of you, you may be killed. Jesus uses these truths to deliver a warning to the Jewish leaders.

The stone in Mt 21:44 is also Jesus. In saying that those who fall on this stone "will be broken to pieces," Jesus is warning against opposing Him. Defying Jesus is like beating one's head against a solid rock—a foolish action. In saying that those upon whom the stone falls "will be crushed," Jesus is warning against ignoring Him or trivializing Him. Apathy towards Jesus is like standing in the way of a falling rock—another foolish action. "I am here to do God's work," Jesus essentially says. "The foundation for the church will be laid. It is unwise to oppose Me because God's work is not inconsequential."

Rejection of the Savior is fatal. Unfortunately, many do reject Him. "He will be a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall" (Isaiah 8:14). To persistently reject the Savior is to court judgment so severe that the only thing left will be dust. The prophet Daniel gives a similar picture of the Messiah, likening Him to a rock "cut out, but not by human hands," which smashes into the nations of the world and completely obliterates them (Daniel 2:31-45).

Matthew 21:44 is a call to faith, an appeal to open one's eyes and see that Jesus is indeed the Son of God sent into the world. The verse is also a strict warning against rejecting Jesus Christ. He is the sure Rock of salvation for those who believe, but an immovable stumbling stone for those who do not.

Related Resources:

- [What is the significance of a capstone in the Bible?](#)

QUESTION - [What does it mean that Jesus Christ is the cornerstone?](#)

ANSWER - Since ancient times, builders have used cornerstones in their construction projects. A cornerstone was the principal stone, usually placed at the corner of an edifice, to guide the workers in their course. The cornerstone was usually one of the largest, the most solid, and the most carefully constructed of any in the edifice. The Bible describes Jesus as the cornerstone that His church would be built upon. He is foundational. Once the cornerstone was set, it became the basis for determining every measurement in the remaining construction; everything was aligned to it. As the cornerstone of the building of the church, Jesus is our standard of measure and alignment.

The book of Isaiah has many references to the Messiah to come. In several places the Messiah is referred to as "the cornerstone," such as in this prophecy: "So this is what the sovereign Lord says: 'See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed. I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the plumb line'" (Isaiah 28:16–17). In context, God speaks to the scoffers and boasters of Judah, and He promises to send the cornerstone—His precious Son—who will provide the firm foundation for their lives, if they would but trust in Him.

In the New Testament, the cornerstone metaphor is continued. The apostle Paul desires for the Ephesian Christians to know Christ better: "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:19–21). Furthermore, in 1 Peter 2:6, what Isaiah said centuries before is affirmed in exactly the same words.

Peter says that Jesus, as our cornerstone, is "chosen by God and precious to him" (1 Peter 2:4). The Cornerstone is also reliable, and "the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame" (verse 6).

Unfortunately, not everyone aligns with the cornerstone. Some accept Christ; some reject Him. Jesus is the "stone the builders rejected" (Mark 12:10; cf. Psalm 118:22). When news of the Messiah's arrival came to the [magi in the East](#), they determined to bring

Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But when that same news came to [King Herod](#) in Jerusalem, his response was to attempt to kill Him. From the very beginning, Jesus was “a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall” (1 Peter 2:8).

How can people reject God’s chosen, precious cornerstone? Simply put, they want to build something different from what God is building. Just as the people building the [tower of Babel](#) rebelled against God and pursued their own project, those who reject Christ disregard God’s plan in favor of their own. Judgment is promised to all those who reject Christ: “Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed” (Matthew 21:44).

Related Resource:

- [Leon Patillo's vocal - Cornerstone](#)

Matthew 21:45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them.

- they: Mt 12:12 Lu 11:45 20:19

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them

Matthew 21:46 When they sought to seize Him, they feared the people, because they considered Him to be a prophet.

- they sought: 2Sa 12:7-13 Pr 9:7-9 15:12 Isa 29:1 Joh 7:7
- because: Mt 21:11 Lu 7:16,39 Joh 7:40,41 Ac 2:22

When they sought to seize Him, they feared the people, because they considered Him to be a prophet