

JESUS' ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

Mark 11:1-19

Key Verse: 11:9b

"Hosanna! 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

The key verse of the last chapter was Mark 10:45. It says, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Today's passage tells us that Jesus enters into Jerusalem to fulfill God's will for world salvation through his death on the cross. It also tells us that Jesus clears the temple. The story about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is simple. But its meaning is deep. So we want to study the meaning of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. We will also see about why Jesus cleared the temple in such a drastic way. May God enter your heart, destroy the fortress of Satan and give you triumphal life every day.

I. Jesus' triumphal entry (1-10)

First, the two disciples' obedience (1-6). Look at verse 1a. "As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives..." The geography of Mark's Gospel tells us that Bethphage and Bethany were satellite towns of Jerusalem, where there were lodging places for pilgrims who came to the Passover. We remember the beautiful friendship at Bethany between Jesus and the sisters, Mary and Martha. Jesus frequently visited their house and taught them the word. Also, he and his disciples received their warm hospitality and food when they were hungry. Frequently the disciples' hunger was allayed in this way. We also remember Jesus' prayer on the Mount of Olives before taking the cup of suffering and death (Lk 22:39-44).

At this point, Jesus was getting ready to make the entry into Jerusalem. What did Jesus say to the two disciples? Look at verses 1b,2. "Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.'" What a difficult instruction to obey! What a dangerous instruction to carry out! To bring someone else's colt--without even asking the owner's permission--was an uncouth thing to do as his disciples, and, legally speaking, it was an act of stealing.

How did the disciples respond to Jesus' order? Look at verses 4,5.

"They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, some people standing there asked, 'What are you doing, untying that colt?'" What did they say? They said, "The Lord needs it," as Jesus had told them to. What happened to them next? The people let them go without saying a word. To Mark's eyes, this small event was a striking event. Mark saw the two disciples' obedience. To the disciples, it was very hard to obey Jesus' words to untie and bring someone else's colt without the owner's permission, for it seemed to be contradictory to his teachings. But they did not argue about this matter in their hearts. Seemingly, the order was very ridiculous even to think about. But the disciples did not reason about this matter in an attempt to disobey his order. They were not psychological; they understood Jesus' order down in their hearts. They were ready to obey his order, like a well-disciplined soldier who is always ready to obey his commander. The two disciples were not perplexed about what to say to the owner of the colt; they did not worry about being arrested for larceny. There was a possibility that they would end their careers with the record, "donkey thieves." Nevertheless, without question, they obeyed and carried out his order. It was an act of obedience. Obedience comes from faith. Faith comes from love. It was not easy for them to do so because man wants to understand before doing something. People want to think about whether or not it is beneficial

before doing something. During the time of struggling between the reactor system and the effector system, people lose their chance to obey the voice of truth. Despite their spiritual immaturity, the two disciples did not lose the chance to obey Jesus' order. We learn that we can obey Jesus' words when we have absolute faith.

Second, the owner's consent (4-6). The colt was tied at a doorway. Maybe the owner of the colt was deeply attached to his colt. Maybe his daily joy was to stroke the colt's head and rub its chin several times. It may be that, to its owner, the colt was as precious as his grandson. So it was not easy at all for him to say, "Okay, you can take it." But to our surprise, he said, "Okay." It is unbelievable that he said so. But he could say, "Okay," anyway because he was greatly moved by the disciples' absolute obedience toward Jesus' command. Probably the owner of the colt wanted to give them not only the colt but also his daughters when he saw their absolute obedience toward Jesus' command. When the disciples had faith in Jesus' words, they could have spiritual authority over the owner of the colt. In the past, the two disciples had no spiritual authority at all. But when they obeyed Jesus' words they could experience spiritual authority over the owner of the colt. Here we learn that we can have spiritual authority when we obey the word of Jesus absolutely.

Third, the Lordship of Christ (1-3). "The Lord needs it." This short sentence tells us the Lordship of Christ excellently. The Lordship of Christ means that God is the Creator and we are his creation. The Lordship of Christ means that God is the Owner and we are his possessions. The Lordship of Christ means that God is our Father and we are his children. The Lordship of Christ means that God is our Sovereign King and we are his royal subjects. Verses 1-3 illustrate best the Lordship of Christ. Look at verses 1-3. "As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, "Why are you doing this?" tell him, "The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'"" Jesus was now going up to Jerusalem to become a ransom sacrifice for the sins of the world. Jesus had no donkey on which to ride to enter Jerusalem. But we must know that Jesus is the Sovereign God.

From the owner of the colt, we also learn the Lordship of Christ. Of course the owner thought that the colt was his own possession--and indeed, he was the owner of the colt. When the Lord asked him to give him his colt for

his entry into Jerusalem, he gave it to the Lord without reservation. He is an exemplary person who put the Lordship of Christ into practice. However, it is not easy for us to put this basic faith into practice, living in an ungodly society. But we must know that life is God's gift to each person, bestowed for a certain period of time, during which one can live for the glory of God and enjoy himself. But these days, many think they were born because of their parents' mistakes, and no more.

Fourth, "Hosanna!" (7-10). When the disciples brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields (8). Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted. Look at verses 9b,10. "'Hosanna!' 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' 'Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!' 'Hosanna in the highest!'" In the ancient time, worldly kings marched into capital cities as a part of inauguration ceremonies. Kings usually rode on a white charger with a large entourage accompanying them and with the national guard marching behind them. This scene reminds us of King Solomon's inaugural procession (1Ki 1:28-40). When Solomon rode before the people on David's mule to succeed King David, all the people went with him playing flutes and rejoicing greatly, so that the

ground shook with the sound. When the trumpet blew, the people shouted, "Long live the king!" This time of the king's inauguration was indeed triumphant and majestic.

Even though Jesus was the King of kings who was marching into Zion, he did not have even a donkey, much less a horse or a mule, for he was not a political king but the spiritual King and he was the humble King. When he entered Jerusalem, he had to borrow someone else's donkey. In God's right time, God's promised Messiah came; the King was proceeding toward his eternal throne of dominion. Therefore, his entry was the time of great joy for all the people of the world, because the humble King on a colt was marching into Zion to take his throne. Luke 1:32b,33 says, "The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end." But Jesus did not march into Jerusalem as the worldly kings did. Jesus rode on a colt of a donkey. His way of entering Jerusalem conveys several things of Biblical significance.

The word "Hosanna" summarizes the whole meaning of his entry. Look at verses 9b,10. "'Hosanna!' 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' 'Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!' 'Hosanna in the

highest!" "Hosanna" means in Hebrew, "save now!" When the people shouted "Hosanna," it was a cry to God to break in and act to save his people from the hand of Satan (Zec 9:9).

Jerusalem was once the holy city of God. God wanted to make this city the Bible center of the whole world, into which all people of all nations stream to study the Bible. Isaiah 2:3 says, "Many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.' The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Ultimately God wanted his people to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Exodus 19:6a says, "you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." But when his people disobeyed God, it became the stronghold of Satan. All the children of God had been cast into the dark dungeon of Satan's kingdom. There, the characters of God's children had become crooked, distorted and perverse on account of their long suffering under Satan's rule. Jesus enters into Jerusalem to save them (Mt 4:15,16). The people of Israel liked King David and longed for his coming back again to save them. Now the Son of David, Jesus, enters into Jerusalem to save his people from their sins (9,10).

His entry into Jerusalem is called the "Triumphal Entry." God had promised to send the Savior of the world. Our Lord Jesus, even though he was the Son of God, came to this world and was entering Jerusalem on a colt of a donkey to die on the cross in obedience to God's will. Up until now, the world--both man and nature--was under Satan's rule. Satan was like a slave driver, and man was like a slave under the constant whipping of a taskmaster. But Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was to conquer and destroy man's enemy, Satan, through his death on the cross. This is the reason his entry into Jerusalem is called the "Triumphal Entry."

II. Jesus clears the temple (11-19)

First, Jesus curses a fruitless fig tree (11-14). What did Jesus do first when he entered Jerusalem? He went to the temple, the house of God, and looked around at everything, and, since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve (11). The next day, as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find if it had any fruit. When he reached out, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." Jesus cursed the fig tree, and the disciples heard him say it

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(12-14).

Why did Jesus curse the fig tree when it was not the season for figs? As verse 11 indicates, at that time the temple was on Jesus' mind. Jesus must have associated the temple with the fruitless fig tree. It was beautiful in its outward appearance. But in reality, it had no fruit. When we study the Bible, we learn that God curses those who are worthless or fruitless (Ro 3:12; Isa 5:2). God wants us to be indispensable and abundantly fruitful (Jn 15:15).

Second, Jesus clears the temple (15,16). "On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts." In part one, we studied about the humble King Jesus. He does not break broken reeds or put out lights flickering before the wind. He binds the wounds of all kinds of men inflicted by Satan's assaults. How can it be that Jesus was so indignant that he overturned the tables and drove out all the merchants? We must know that Jesus is merciful, and at the same time he is righteous. Jesus was furious when his chosen people, especially their leaders, who should be Bible teachers for all nations, made the

holy Jerusalem the fortress of Satan, and the temple of God a marketplace. The leaders of Israel were very corrupt. They loved money more than God. When the leaders disobeyed God, the people under them all disobeyed God. When the leaders were corrupted, naturally the people under them were all corrupted. His people deserved God's righteous anger.

Third, the temple is a house of prayer. Look at verse 17. "And as he taught them, he said, 'Is it not written: "My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations"? But you have made it "a den of robbers."'" Jesus teaches us here the true meaning of the temple. The temple was supposed to be the place where men could listen to God's word in prayer. Jesus suggested that the temple is a house of prayer. When we carefully meditate on this verse we learn that Jesus wants his people to pray for all nations, not to mention his own nation. Jesus said this because God's will for world salvation was on his mind. When we don't pray for all nations, God's will for world salvation might be impossible. But when we analyze modern people's prayer, their prayer does not reach the standard of Jesus' saying, "My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." Most modern people eloquently expound their welfare benefits. And churches are used for social gatherings. We must repent and pray that the church must function as a Bible house or prayer house

or monasteries in the early centuries. This is a Biblical constant. But when Jesus went into the temple, it was not a house of prayer for all nations; it was a den of robbers. So Jesus could not but reveal his righteous anger.

In this passage we learn the Lordship of Christ. At this moment, we must recognize our Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord and ourselves as his loyal subjects. Most importantly, we learn that Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is the triumphal entry. May Jesus enter into our hearts and destroy the fortress of Satan and give us peace.