

Lesson #2 – The coming king

Let's begin in prayer, saying together:

God, we thank you that you are living and active, that you are present here with us, and that you reveal yourself by your Word and Spirit. Lord, give us eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts that understand what you want to teach us about yourself, and about our lives in you. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Next, read or listen to the story. As you do this, keep the following questions in mind:

- Is anything unclear in the story? What questions arose in your mind as you read or listened?
- What do you learn about Jesus in this story? Is that what you expected to see, or did it come as a surprise?
- How did the people around Jesus respond to him in this story? How might you have responded if you had been there?

Mark 11:1-11

Jesus Enters Jerusalem Like a King

¹ Jesus and his followers were coming closer to Jerusalem. They came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives. There Jesus sent two of his followers to do something. ² He said to them, "Go to the town you can see there. When you enter it, you will find a young donkey that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here to me. ³ If anyone asks you why you are taking the donkey, tell them, 'The Master needs it. He will send it back soon.'"

⁴ The followers went into the town. They found a young donkey tied in the street near the door of a house, and they untied it. ⁵ Some people were standing there and saw this. They asked, "What are you doing? Why are you untying that donkey?" ⁶ The followers answered the way Jesus told them, and the people let them take the donkey.

⁷ The followers brought the donkey to Jesus. They put their coats on it, and Jesus sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their coats on the road for Jesus. Others cut branches in the fields and spread the branches on the road. ⁹ Some of them were walking ahead of Jesus. Others were walking behind him. Everyone shouted,

"Praise Him!"

'Welcome! God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord!'

¹⁰“God bless the kingdom of our father David.

That kingdom is coming!

Praise to God in heaven!”

¹¹Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the Temple. He looked at everything in the Temple area, but it was already late. So, he went to Bethany with the twelve apostles.

Responding:

Spend some time responding to the general questions below, using the space provided to record your thoughts.

- Is anything unclear in the story? What questions arose in your mind as you read or listened?

- What do you learn about Jesus in this story? Is that what you expected to see, or did it come as a surprise?

- How did the people around Jesus respond to him in this story? How might you have responded if you had been there?

Now, spend some time drilling deeper into the story, and the meaning it might hold for your life, by responding to the following additional questions:

- Does anything strike you as odd or funny in the way that Jesus enters Jerusalem “like a king”? If so, what? How might you have *expected* a king to triumphantly enter the place of his reign?

- How do you imagine the authorities – Roman, Jewish, religious – might have viewed this event? Do you think they might have felt threatened or intimidated by what they saw happening, or would it have hardly registered a ‘blip’ on their radar?
- Assuming he did this intentionally (a fair assumption, I think:) why do you think Jesus chose to enter the city in this way? What message might he have been trying to deliver by it?
- Does the end of this story feel a little anti-climactic?
“Jesus came in, looked around, and then left (back to “the house of suffering”, by the way).”
 Use your imagination to place yourself in the shoes of one of Jesus’ disciples. What might you have been thinking or feeling in these moments? How would you have *expected* this story to end?
- If Jesus were here right now, what questions might you want to ask him (related to what you have seen in this story)? What might he want to ask you?

Conclude this lesson with a time of prayer, speaking with God as a friend (remember... ***The Lord is here; His Spirit is with us!***) about anything that you have noted above, or anything else that is on your heart and mind.