

# GROWTH + GROUPS

## NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide  
SB 03.24.2024

WHO IS THIS KING? - MATTHEW 21:1-11

### PART 1: Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

By the very nature of Jesus' triumphal entry—choosing to arrive on a humble donkey, rather than a powerful war horse—Jesus fulfilled prophecies, but even more importantly, He revealed the nature of His mission. He had come to save—not by usurping power and bringing with Him a military coup, but by surrendering power and embracing His own death. Jesus' unmatched power triumphed through weakness, and ours will do the same when we take up our cross and follow Him. As we humble ourselves, repent and admit our need for a Savior, we embrace the humility needed to identify with Christ, share in His sufferings and follow Him with our very lives. Let's get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from Pastor Daniel's sermon?
2. How does Jesus compare in power, fame, and prestige to any celebrity or hero we could think of today? By worldly standards and expectations, how should His grand entrance into Jerusalem have compared as a result?

### PART 2: Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 21:1-3

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1. What was the significance of the city of Jerusalem in Israel's spiritual and political life?

Jerusalem is the city of a great king, and it was the center of Israel's spiritual and national life. King David ruled in Jerusalem and made plans to establish the temple there. All of the Gospels make a point to emphasize Jesus' journey to Jerusalem in some way. In Matthew's Gospel it is the ascent to the climax. When Jesus entered the city, He was not coming as a visitor to celebrate Passover, but as a King who was coming to claim His rightful authority as the true and better center of Israel's life.

1. What directions did Jesus give His disciples in verses 2-3? What authority and power does Jesus reveal in these words?
2. What does the term "Lord" teach us about how Jesus saw Himself and how His disciples received His directions?

Jesus clearly envisioned that the disciples and the owners of these animals would take His directions and obey them. Jesus took charge and asserted His authority. He knew where these animals were and knew that the owner would give them to the disciples. He intentionally chose these animals; it was not for lack of options. Jesus wanted His entry into Jerusalem to take place exactly according to His plan. The use of the term “Lord” is one of authority. Jesus believed that He was one in the same with God and was coming to rescue His people. Such a self-reference reveals what Jesus understood His purpose to be as He entered the gates of Jerusalem.

**HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 21:4-5**

1. Matthew cited from Zechariah 9:9 to support what occurred in verses 1-3. What does Jesus’ fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy reveal about Him?
2. Read 2 Corinthians 1:20. What light does Paul shed on Jesus’ prophetic fulfillment?

Zechariah’s prophecy says, “Look, your king is coming to you.” Only the king Israel had been waiting for could fulfill this prophecy. That makes the attention Jesus gave to preparation all the more important. He wanted to communicate to everyone in Jerusalem, “I am the king you have been waiting for.” This is one of many prophecies Jesus fulfilled during His earthly ministry. As Paul noted, all of the Old Testament reaches its conclusion and fulfillment in Jesus.

3. What statement did Jesus make by riding into Jerusalem on a young donkey? What did it reveal about His nature and purpose on earth? How did that separate Him from other rulers?

Pastor Daniel tells us “A greater contrast could not exist than the one between Pilate and Jesus. While Pilate rode on the back of a mighty stallion, Jesus sat on a humble donkey. While Pilate was preceded by a cavalry and imperial soldiers, Jesus was surrounded by peasants. While Pilate’s entrance projected an image of Roman power and might, Jesus’ projected a posture of humility. Ultimately, we know that the crowds who cheered Jesus on this day ended up turning on Him by the end of the week. Why did they do that? Because they were looking for someone more like Pilate. They wanted a political king who would crush their enemies and exert His will. When it became clear that Jesus had a different agenda, they turned on Him.”

**HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 21:6-11.**

1. How did the crowd receive King Jesus?
2. Read Psalm 118:25-26. What was the purpose of this psalm? Why is it fitting to use on this occasion?
3. The cry “Hosanna” means, “save us.” Yet at the end of the week, the crowd would be yelling something entirely different. What does this teach us about the fickle nature of our own hearts?

Both the actions of the crowd and their announcement was indicative of Jesus’ status as the Jewish Savior. Psalm 118 was a psalm of ascent, which would be sung on ascent to the highest point in Jerusalem, the temple mount where Jesus was headed. Here we see further affirmation and clarification of Jesus’ identity. Though at this point, Jerusalem seemed poised to welcome and receive her king, they would quickly turn on Jesus. Many of the same people crying “Hosanna!” would soon be shouting, “Crucify Him!” The tide began to turn in the next few verses.

4. What was behind the people’s question in verse 10? How do you know? How can we see the change in the temperature of the city already happening?

In the same way the whole city was shaken when Jesus was born thanks to Herod’s rage (Matt. 2:3), the city of Jerusalem was shaken here. The question in verse 10 is more of a, “Who does He think He is?” question, rather than a harmless curiosity. The religious leaders looked at Jesus and saw Him as someone who needed to be eliminated, and their plans were about to come together. But no person could stop the plan of God.

PART 3: Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

*The Disciples exclaimed: "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him!"* At the end of the day, we all must answer that question for ourselves. Who is Jesus to you? I can't answer that question for you, but to me, He is the humble King and Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world. In His first coming, his arrival produced a variety of responses and sent localized shockwaves throughout the community, but when He returns, He will leave no doubt regarding His identity and the whole earth will shake! In John's description of the Second Coming, he says, 'Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake.'

1. All the details we see in today's verses, along with the rest of Scripture, are meant to show us who Jesus is. Do you receive and respond to the Jesus who is, or a Jesus of your own making? Explain.
2. What are the implications of Jesus being King of this small group? How will we respond corporately to His kingship?
3. All people are actively making a choice: accept Jesus as King or reject Him. What does the response of the crowd teach us about the people we encounter every day? How can we live in a way that shows we believe Jesus is the true King?

**PRAYER:** Give thanks to King Jesus. Proclaim His ability to save and confess your allegiance to Him as Lord of your life. Trust Him even when it doesn't make sense. He has a good plan for your life!

*'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. The LORD has done it this very day: let us rejoice today and be glad.'*  
(Psalm 118:22-22)

HAPPY AND BLESSED PALM SUNDAY!

