

Mark 11:1-11

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[0 : 0 0] As you now turn back in your Bible to Mark chapter 11 that we read a moment ago, I wonder if we can gear our minds toward the idea of faith, which is central in the Christian life.

I think often in the Christian life, faith is thought of simply as believing in what we know to be true. Believing that something is true. And that's obviously an essential aspect.

We have to believe that something is true. But I think we stop short if that's the only way that we think of and live out our faith. That we know something's true and that's okay and that's it.

Because I think another part of Christian faith is trusting. Trusting God and specifically trusting the Lord Jesus. But let's take it even a step further.

It's trusting in Jesus the way that Jesus wants to be trusted. It's easy for us to trust someone if we're allowed to make up the rules of how we trust them.

[1 : 1 0] But how do we trust God the way He wants to be trusted? This morning, right now and this evening, we're going to be looking at some different aspects of this type of faith.

From very different angles. Tonight we're going to ask the question, What were things like before the world even existed? And what does that have to do with our life of suffering and pain?

And it's going to challenge us to trust in God the way that He wants to be trusted. And this morning, we're going to look at Jesus entering into Jerusalem and ask the same question about this text and about our lives.

This passage that we just read, the triumphal entry, as people call it, where Jesus enters into Jerusalem with shouts and praises, is it reminds me of an award ceremony.

Think about an award ceremony. Someone has received a great award, especially a real big ceremony. So there might be a stadium of people and there's a stage at the front and they're going to announce somebody's name and he's going to walk down, he or she is going to walk down the aisle and receive this award.

[2 : 2 2] In an award ceremony, there are three distinct phases, three settings. First, there's actually the part where the person receiving the award is getting ready to receive the award.

I don't know, maybe in the dressing room, maybe at home. But they're preparing themselves to look the way that they want to be seen when they enter in to receive this great award. They're presenting themselves in a certain way.

So that's one setting. The next setting is when they actually step into that aisle and begin to walk down and the crowds are clapping and cheering, kind of ushering that person toward that stage.

And then there's the third part, the stage, where they actually step up and they receive the award. And this passage is sort of like that. In the first few verses, Jesus begins to prepare for an entry, to enter into Jerusalem.

And he sets up the way that he wants to be seen when he enters Jerusalem. So that's one setting. The next is when he actually steps into the road and the crowds start cheering and ushering him in, bringing him right into the city.

[3 : 29] And the third, kind of the award, the actual stage of the award is in the temple where he enters. So with those three distinctions in mind and with that general idea and the background, let's contemplate who Jesus presents himself to be, who the people see him to be, and then we're going to ask the question, do they actually understand?

Do they actually see who he is? So look at the first few verses with me. It starts in verse 1 through 6, where Jesus tells the two disciples to go into the town and get the donkey and bring it to him.

And I guess the first question is, why a donkey? Jesus has been heading toward Jerusalem for a while with the specific intent of going to that city and being crucified and then raising from the dead.

This is his goal of getting to Jerusalem. Well, now he's right on the cusp of Jerusalem. He's in two little towns that are just a few miles away from Jerusalem. And so he starts preparing the way for that entrance.

And the first thing that he does is ask for a donkey, specifically the colt, the foal of a donkey. Why would he ask for that? Who is he trying to claim that he is by riding a donkey?

[4 : 47] Let me read you two passages from the Old Testament that I think will help to get a grasp on what Jesus is doing. The first is in 1 Kings, chapter 1, where King David is incredibly old.

He's about to die. And one of his sons has declared himself to be king and is already having a party with all of his friends. But God had told David to anoint Solomon as king, not this other one.

And so here we get King David announcing that Solomon, not the other son, is the actual king. And this is what it says.

There's a big stir in the crowd and a servant runs to this other son who's declaring himself king. And this is what the servant says. Our Lord King David has made Solomon king and they had him ride on the king's mule.

And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon. And they have gone up from there rejoicing so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you've heard. So the way that King David was going to declare that Solomon was his son and the king and not the other son was set him on his mule, on his donkey, and ride him through the streets with people shouting and cheering.

[6 : 05] The next verse we see is Zechariah chapter 9 where the people of Israel don't have a king anymore. They've been exiled and they're being ruled by the Babylonians.

They're not ruling themselves. The promised son of David is not on their throne. And this is what the promise of God is to them. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming! Righteous and having salvation is he! Humble and mounted on a donkey! On a colt, the foal of a donkey!

So what does Jesus do when he begins to enter the capital city? He says, bring me a donkey. More specifically, the colt. The foal of a donkey.

I'm going to ride in to Jerusalem as the king. That's exactly what Jesus is claiming for himself. He says, I am the king. I'm the son of David who was promised.

[6 : 59] I'm the one who has salvation. I'm the king. So bring me what I need and I'll enter as king. So that's who Jesus shows himself to be by sitting himself on a donkey to ride in to Jerusalem.

Now we have to ask the question, who do the people see him to be? Who do they recognize? So as the award winner now has prepared themselves to be seen in the way they want to be seen, now steps out into that long runway down to the stage to be awarded.

And the people start responding when they see this person. That's what happens here. So we see in verse 7, when they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it.

Many people spread their cloaks on the road while other people spread branches that they had cut in the fields. Let's stop right there. Why would they spread cloaks on the ground?

It might be similar to what we do rolling the red carpet out. You know, somebody special, a king or a queen, is not supposed to just walk on an ordinary ground. So we roll out the red carpet.

[8 : 06] Let me also read a verse from 2 Kings back in the days of the kings of David. It says, Jehu was appointed as king.

And Jehu said to his men, thus and so said the prophet, saying, this is what the Lord says, I anoint you king over Israel. Then in haste, every man of them took off his garment and put it under him on the bare steps.

And they blew the trumpet and proclaimed, Jehu is king. So the crowds, they're getting the picture. They see Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey and they say, oh, this is it.

This is the king we've been waiting for. So they take off their cloaks and they start spreading their cloaks over the ground, just like they did for Jehu in their history. And the branches.

We see a number of times in the Old Testament, God commanding the people to worship the Lord with trees. Let the trees sing praises to me. And also, He commanded them on certain festivals to cut off branches of palm trees and to wave them around and lay them down.

[9 : 11] So we see that the people are responding to Jesus as king the way that He wants to be responded to. They're celebrating the way they're supposed to celebrate. In fact, they're shouting.

Listen to what they're shouting. Those who went ahead and those who followed behind shouted, 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. Now, what does Hosanna mean? Why are they shouting this? Hosanna means save us, basically.

It means cause salvation, please. And they're actually quoting a psalm. So when Jesus comes, they start shouting a psalm. And that psalm is Psalm 118. And let me read you a few verses of this psalm.

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

[10 : 12] This is the Lord's doing. It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we pray. Hosanna. Save us, we pray.

O Lord. O Lord, we pray, give us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord. So these people are quoting this psalm.

The day of salvation is here. This man is the Savior. He's the King. This is incredible. Save us, we pray. Blessed are you. So these people are responding in an incredibly accurate way to who Jesus is claiming to be.

Now, so we see that Jesus is claiming to be King and we see that the people got it absolutely right. But then we have to ask the question as we progress in this account, did they actually get it right?

Did they actually understand what they were doing? Look at verse 11. Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the temple. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

[11 : 22] Does that seem a little bit anti-clinactic to you? After what's just been going on, Jesus declaring Himself to be King, people shouting and they're praising the Lord and they're praising Jesus for being King and it's so exciting and He walks into the temple and there's no one there.

It was late, so He leaves. What kind of way is that to end such an exciting story? Now, it's interesting, Matthew, this is Mark that we're reading, Matthew, when he records Jesus coming in to Jerusalem in this way.

He says, He went to the temple and He began to drive out all the people who were changing money and selling things in the temple. And that's actually exactly what Mark says as well, if you were to read on.

It's actually the next morning that Jesus goes back to the temple and drives out all the money lenders. So, Matthew left out this particular scene and that's fine, you know, when you tell stories, you don't have to tell every detail of the story and it doesn't say anything about its truth.

You pick what you want to tell and you tell it. Well, that does leave the question, why did Mark tell this situation? If it was, you know, if Matthew could leave it out when he was telling what happened, but Mark specifically said, this is how it ended.

[12 : 38] Jesus came in celebrating and nothing. And if you recall the scenario of the award ceremony, I think that sheds some light on what's going on.

Jesus has entered with shouts of praise like the award winner. You know, all the people are clapping and saying how wonderful and how much this person deserves this award and they usher them right to the stage.

Can you imagine if you're that award winner and you step onto the stage with all these shouts and cries of joy and there's no one on the stage? It's just empty. No one to give you an award.

Now, why do I why do I interpret in this silence that way? I'm going to mention just a few verses to you from the Old Testament again. In ancient Israel, and we see this in 2 Kings chapter 11, we see that it was a custom, is what it calls it, a custom for the newly appointed king to be stationed in the temple beside one of the pillars.

And they would have celebrations there at the temple. So that's the custom for the king of Israel to be ushered in and stand in the temple with celebration.

[13 : 57] Did you also catch that last verse, that last line of the psalm that we read? Psalm 118. The psalm that they were singing and shouting. Listen to what it says. The psalm says, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

We bless you from the house of the Lord. So the very psalm that they're singing and chanting and shouting says, We bless you from the house of the Lord.

The custom for a king was to be ushered into the temple and there declared to be king and celebrated. So what does Jesus do? When he's declaring himself to be king, he goes in to the psalm and he enters the temple and there's no one there to celebrate his kingship.

It's just silent. So Jesus leaves. And the next morning it's even worse than silent. It deserves for Jesus to kick them all out. So, I think we're left with a question.

The people are shouting right. They're declaring him to be king. They recognize what he's saying about himself. But do they actually understand? And that leaves us with a question for ourselves.

[15 : 10] Do we understand what it means that Jesus is king? Excuse me while I get my thoughts in line.

I talked to myself right in the circle. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, He, I'm sorry, I've totally confused myself.

Let me pause for one moment. So the people are shouting the correct things but they're not in the temple to praise Him. Something's wrong. They understand Him to be the promised one, sort of.

But they're missing something because in less than a week they will have changed from shouting, blessed is Jesus who is our king to crucify Him who claims to be our king.

What can cause such a shift in their faith, in their celebration? And I think there's something in this for us that false expectations about what it means for Jesus to be king leads to disillusionment, disappointments.

[16 : 25] For some people even apostasy, turning away from Jesus. He's not who I thought He was supposed to be. So He must not really be king. So as Jesus is then hanging on the cross and these same people who had cheered Him as king, what must they have been thinking?

Well, He's not who I thought He was as king. He must not be king. You know, the last time that the Israelites waved palm branches and celebrated in such a way had been 150 years before or so.

There was a guy named Simon Maccabee who led a revolt against the pagan king. And who took back Jerusalem for a time so that the Jews actually had Jerusalem. And it says in one of the history books of that time, one called 1 Maccabees, it says the yoke of the nations was taken away from Israel.

When Simon had put the pagans out of the tower stronghold, he cleansed the tower from pollutions and he entered into it with thanksgiving and branches of palm trees and with harps and cymbals and vials and hymns and songs because there was a great enemy destroyed out of Israel that day.

So, the coming king is supposed to save us from our situation, right? All these oppressors who have been over us. The coming king is supposed to deliver us, right?

[17 : 45] From all of these difficult situations. And here's Jesus. We thought He was king and He's hanging on the cross. He didn't defeat Rome. He didn't win any victory.

In fact, He's beat. He's hanging on a cross. He's obviously not king. But if we think about it from Jesus' point of view, Jesus, knowing that He was about to enter Jerusalem with a specific intent on dying on the cross and then raising, that's His goal.

And yet, He still declared Himself to be king. Jesus must mean something different for His own kingship than what we thought He meant.

So that's when we get to the point of asking ourselves, what did Jesus mean by His kingship? We often think, I can speak for myself and I can probably speak for most of you, that this thought has entered into your minds at some point.

Well, the Lord did not spare me from this painful experience. He didn't keep this bad thing from happening. Or when it happened, He didn't take it away. Is He really in control?

[19 : 03] Well, Israel had gone through 600 years of oppression and being ruled by foreign powers. And Jesus came to them and He did not save them from that.

600 years of oppression. And that's not what Jesus saved them from. So here's a question for us. What is worse than 600 years of oppression by foreign powers?

our sin. Because that's what Jesus came, chose to come, that's what Jesus chose to come and save us from.

Our sin. So out of all the physical oppressions in our lives, out of all of the difficult situations that come up, some of them very, very painful, Jesus came to deliver from sin first and foremost.

He will take care of all of that. In the end, He will right all wrongs. And that is His promise. So it's not that He's going to leave us and not care about our situation.

[20 : 11] In the end, He will right all wrongs. But, He did not save Israel from their oppressors. He chose to do something else.

So I'll ask us a number of questions as we wrap this time up about our understanding of what it means for Jesus to be King of the world and also King of our lives.

How is your allegiance to King Jesus? Especially when we don't get our way. When Jesus does not save us in the way that we think that He should, do we question whether He's really in control or do we still celebrate Him being King?

Jesus' pattern of kingship is very different from what we expect. He said, I'm King and then He went to the cross. So, to remind ourselves of the award ceremony, as Jesus was hanging on the cross, do you think that you could have, with all of your dashed hopes in Him, do you think you still could have given that award to Him?

Said, you are King, even hanging on the cross. Or how about if we take it into our specific lives, specific experience? When God doesn't take away the pain in our lives, when God doesn't heal our ailments, and when God is not doing what we think that He should if He were really in control, would you still, at that moment, give the Lord Jesus the award?

[21 : 58] Acknowledge that He really is King, and He really does know exactly what He's doing. So, will you trust Jesus as He wants to be trusted, in the way that He wants to be relied upon?

So, when Jesus is King of your life, what does that mean? Jesus is certainly the King of all kings, and we know that with our heads. We believe that to be true.

But Christian faith asks us to trust Jesus the way that He wants to be trusted on the day-to-day experience. And that's my hope for all of us in here.

And that will be our prayer right now as we close. So please pray with me. Lord Jesus, we ask for your help to trust you as you want to be trusted.

We know that you do not leave us alone in our struggles, in our pain. But we also know that you don't always take us out of those.

[23 : 14] we absolutely are desperate for you to help us trust you and help us sing praises to you for whatever you are choosing to do, not what we think you should do.

We ask for your grace to enable us in this way. And we ask for your wisdom to teach us what it does mean to submit to you as king.

So Lord, as we continue to sing your praise now and as we leave this room, please challenge us in our lives in those points where we are not submitting to you.

Where we are questioning your wisdom and your rule. And please make our hearts leap for joy like those Israelite hearts were, but in a true way, in a deep way that is dependent on you truly.

And we ask you these things. We ask you, Father, for these things in the name of our King Jesus. Amen. If you will turn now to praise this Lord of ours in Psalm 118, the psalm that we looked at.

[24 : 40] Psalm 118 in the traditional version, page 399. Psalm 118 person 918, Psalm 118 – the ■ of the alive world in the world this Tiger kaufen the object