***The King Who Cries***

**Lent: Journey to the Cross #6, Luke 19:28-48 April 10, 2022**

***As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it  
and said, “If you, even you, had only known would bring you peace –   
but now it is hidden from your eyes.”*Luke 19:41-42**

**Next step on the journey: Entering Jerusalem**

*28 After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 30 “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 31 If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it.’ ”*

*32 Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?”*

*34 They replied, “The Lord needs it.”*

*35 They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. 36 As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.*

*37 When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:*

*38 “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 Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”*

*40 “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”*

*41 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it 42 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. 43 The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. 44 They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”*

*45 Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling. 46 “It is written,” he said to them, “ ‘My house will be a house of prayer’; but you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’”*

*47 Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. 48 Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.*

Luke 19

1. Listen for expressions of Jesus’ humanity and his Deity

2. Watch for the motives of the Pharisees. Are they more interested in truth or decorum?

3. Doug’s question: Was Jesus’ emotion more human or divine?

**What Jesus had said**

51 *As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.*

Luke 9:51

*11 While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once . . . .*

Luke 19:11

1. Jesus is intentional – only Jesus truly knows his role in God’s redemption drama

2. Luke 19 is gateway into Jesus’ passion

**Messiah’s arrival – a different kind of King**

*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.*

Zechariah 9 (quoted in Matthew’s and John’s Triumphal Entry narratives)

1. Jesus is the Messiah King that Zechariah was expecting -- but not the king most people wanted

2. Jesus is still revealing his sovereignty – he receives praise due God

3. Jesus reveals the heart of God for the people and the city

**The prepares the temple for Passover**

*“Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar;*

*for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”*

Isaiah 56:7 (but be sure to catch the whole context of eunuchs and foreigners in God’s “house”)

1. Jesus’ first words of judgement are not against Roman but against religious powers

2. There always needs to be room in God’s house for the “foreigner” and the “eunuch”

**Crying with Jesus**

1) Jesus cries for those who will reject him

*9 He went on to tell the people this parable: “A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. 10 At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed.  
11 He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. 12 He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out.*

*13 “Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.’*

*14 “But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. ‘This is the heir,’ they said. ‘Let’s kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ 15 So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.*

*“What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others.”*

*When the people heard this, they said, “May this never be!”*

*17 Jesus looked directly at them and asked, “Then what is the meaning of that which is written:*

*“ ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone’?*

*18 Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed.”*

*19 The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.*

Luke 20 (while Jesus is still at the temple)

2) Jesus cries for the city

4 *This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce.   
6 Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. 7 Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”*

Jeremiah 29

2) Jesus cries for us

*13 “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. 14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. 19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.*

John 17

**Resources for our Lenten journey 2022**

*Bible.org* has some wonderful resources at [*https://bible.org/book/Luke*](https://bible.org/book/Luke)

I. Howard Marshall’s Greek commentary is my go to help (Eerdmans, 1978)

J. C. Ryle has an interesting commentary (and a different way to organize this passage) at [*https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/Luke.htm*](https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/Luke.htm)

Bob Deffinbaugh has a very interesting sermon on the end of Luke 19 at [*https://bible.org/series/luke-gospel-gentiles*](https://bible.org/series/luke-gospel-gentiles)*.*

Tim Keller has wonderful summary of the gospel at [*https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-story-of-the-bible-how-the-good-news-about-jesus-is-essential-tim-kelle/*](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-story-of-the-bible-how-the-good-news-about-jesus-is-essential-tim-kelle/)

Diagram, schematic

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**Luke’s chronology**

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**Jeremiah 7, God’s judgment on Jerusalem and “the Lord’s house"**

**Evil in the Land**

**7**The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: **2**“Stand in the gate of the Lord’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all you men of Judah who enter these gates to worship the Lord. **3**Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. **4**Do not trust in these deceptive words: ‘This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.’

**5**“For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly execute justice one with another, **6**if you do not oppress the sojourner, the fatherless, or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own harm, **7**then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever.

**8**“Behold, you trust in deceptive words to no avail. **9**Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, **10**and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, ‘We are delivered!’—only to go on doing all these abominations? **11**Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the Lord. **12**Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it because of the evil of my people Israel. **13**And now, because you have done all these things, declares the Lord, and when I spoke to you persistently you did not listen, and when I called you, you did not answer, **14**therefore I will do to the house that is called by my name, and in which you trust, and to the place that I gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. **15**And I will cast you out of my sight, as I cast out all your kinsmen, all the offspring of Ephraim.

**16**“As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them, and do not intercede with me, for I will not hear you. **17**Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? **18**The children gather wood, the fathers kindle fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven. And they pour out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke me to anger. **19**Is it I whom they provoke? declares the Lord. Is it not themselves, to their own shame? **20**Therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, my anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched.” [[1]](#footnote-1)

J. C. Ryle’s commentary on Luke 8  
at [*https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/l19.htm*](https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/l19.htm)

**Section 113. The Triumphal Entry, Luke 19:28-40**

*And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when he was come near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, Saying, Go you into the village over against you; in the which at your entering you shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither. And if any man ask you, Why do you loose him? thus shall you say unto him, Because the Lord has need of him. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose you the colt? And they said, The Lord has need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come near, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord: peace in Heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke your disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.*

**Let us mark, for one thing, in these verses — the perfect knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.** We see Him sending two of His disciples to the entrance of a village, and telling them that they would find "a colt tied, which no one has ever ridden." We see Him describing what they would see and hear, with as much confidence as if the whole transaction had been previously arranged. In short, He speaks like one to whom nothing in all creation is hidden from His sight — everything is uncovered and laid bare before His eyes. He speaks like one whose eyes were in every place — like one who knew things unseen, as well as things seen.

An attentive reader will observe the same thing in other parts of the Gospel. We are told in one place that "He knew the thoughts" of His enemies. We are told in another chapter, that "He knew what was in man." We are told in another place, that "Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe, and who would betray him." (Luke 6:8; John 2:25; John 6:64.)

Knowledge like this is a particular attribute of God. Passages like these are meant to remind us, that "the man Christ Jesus" is not only man. He is also "God blessed forever." (Romans 9:5.)

*The thought of Christ's perfect knowledge should alarm sinners and awaken them to repentance.* The great and righteous *Judge* knows them, and all their doings. The *Judge of all* sees them continually, and marks down all their ways. There is "no darkness where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves." (Job 34:22.) If they go into the secret chamber — the eyes of Christ are there. If they privately scheme villainy and plot wickedness — Christ knows it and observes it. If they speak secretly against the righteous — Christ hears. They may deceive men all their life long — but they cannot deceive Christ. A day is coming when God "will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel." (Romans 2:16.)

*The thought of Christ's perfect knowledge should comfort all true-hearted Christians, and quicken them to increased diligence in good works*. The Master's eye is always upon them. He knows where they dwell, and what are their daily trials, and who are their companions. There is not a word in their mouths, or a thought in their hearts — but Jesus knows it altogether. Let them take courage when they are slandered, misunderstood, and misrepresented by the world. It matters nothing, so long as they can say, "You, Lord, who know all things! You know that I love you." (John 21:17.)

Let them walk on steadily in the narrow way, and not turn aside to the right hand or the left. When sinners entice them, and weak brethren say, "Spare yourself," let them reply, "My Master is looking at me. I desire to live and move as in the sight of Christ."

**Let us mark, for another thing, in this passage — the public visibility of our Lord's last entry into Jerusalem.** We are told of His riding in on an donkey, like a *king* visiting his capital, or a *conqueror* returning in triumph to his native land. We read of a "multitude of disciples" surrounding Him as He rode into the city, "rejoicing and praising God with a loud voice."

The whole history is strikingly unlike the general tenor of our Lord's life. On other occasions — we see Him withdrawing from public observation, retiring into the wilderness, charging those whom He healed to tell no one what was done.

On the present occasion, all is changed. Reserve is completely thrown aside. He seems to court public notice. He appears desirous that all should see Him, and should mark, note, and observe what He did.

The reasons of our Lord's conduct at this crisis of His ministry, at first sight, may appear hard to discover. But on calm reflection, they are clear and plain. He knew that the time had come when He was to die for sinners on the cross. His work as the great Prophet, so far as His *earthly* ministry was concerned — was almost finished and completed.

His work as the sacrifice for sin and substitute for sinners — remained to be accomplished. Before giving Himself up as a sacrifice, He desired to draw the attention of the whole Jewish nation to Himself. The Lamb of God was about to be slain! The great sin-offering was about to be killed! It was fit that the eyes of all Israel should be fixed upon Him. This great work of redemption was not to be done in a corner.

Forever let us bless God that the death of our Lord Jesus Christ was so widely known and so public an event. Had He been suddenly stoned in some common tumult, or privately beheaded like John the Baptist in prison — there never would have been lacking unbelievers who would have denied that the Son of God had died at all.

The wisdom of God so ordered events, that such a denial was rendered impossible. Whatever men may think of the doctrine of Christ's atoning death — they can never deny the fact that Christ died. Publicly He rode into Jerusalem a few days before His death. Publicly He was seen and heard in the city until the day that He was betrayed. Publicly He was brought before the High Priests and Pilate, and condemned. Publicly He was led forth to Calvary, and nailed to the cross.

The corner-stone and crowning-event in our Lord's ministry — was His death for sinners. Of all the events of His ministry — that death was the one most public, and the one witnessed by the greatest number of Jews. And that death, was the "life of the world." (John 6:51.)

Let us leave the whole passage with the cheering reflection, that the joy of Christ's disciples at His entry into Jerusalem, when He came to be crucified — will be as nothing compared to the joy of His people when He comes again to reign!

That first joy was soon broken off — and exchanged for sorrow and bitter tears. The second joy shall be a joy for evermore! That first joy was often interrupted by the bitter sneers of enemies, who were plotting mischief. The second joy shall be liable to no such crude interruptions. Not a word shall be said against the King, when He comes to Jerusalem the second time. Before Him every knee shall bow — and every tongue confess that He is Lord of all!

**Section 114. Jesus Weeping over Jerusalem, Luke 19:41-48**

*And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If you had known, even you, at least in this your day, the things which belong unto your peace! but now they are hid from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you, that your enemies shall cast a trench about you, and compass you round, and keep you in on every side, And shall lay you even with the ground, and your children within you; and they shall not leave in you one stone upon another; because you knew not the time of your visitation. And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but you have made it a den of thieves. And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.*

**We learn, firstly, from these verses — how great is the *tenderness* and *compassion* of Christ towards sinners.** We are told that when He came near Jerusalem for the last time, "He beheld the city, and wept over it." He well knew the character of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Their cruelty, their self-righteousness, their stubbornness, their obstinate prejudice against the truth, their pride of heart — were not hidden from Him. He well knew what they were going to do to Him within a very few days — His unjust judgment, His delivery to the Romans, His sufferings, His crucifixion — were all spread out distinctly before His mind's eye! And yet knowing all this, our Lord pitied Jerusalem! "He beheld the city, and wept over it."

We err greatly if we suppose that Christ cares for none but His own believing people. He cares for all. His heart is wide enough to take an interest in all mankind. His compassion extends to every man, woman, and child on earth. He has a love of 'general pity' for the man who is going on still in wickedness — as well as a love of 'special affection' for the *sheep* who hear His voice and follow Him. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Hardened sinners are fond of making excuses for their conduct. But they will never be able to say that Christ was not merciful, and was not ready to save.

We know but little of true Christianity, if we do not feel a deep concern about the souls of unconverted people. A *lazy indifference* about the spiritual state of others — may doubtless save us much trouble. To have no concern whether our neighbors are going to Heaven or Hell — is no doubt the way of the world. But a man of this spirit is very unlike David, who said, "Rivers of waters run down my eyes — because men do not obey your law." He is very unlike Paul, who said, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart for my brethren." (Psalm 119:136; Romans 9:2.) Above all, he is very unlike the Lord Jesus Christ. If Christ felt tenderly about wicked people — then the disciples of Christ ought to feel likewise.

**We learn, secondly, from these verses — that there is a willful ignorance which is sinful and blameworthy.** We read that our Lord denounced judgments on Jerusalem, because they did not know the time of their visitation. She might have known that the times of Messiah had fully come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. But she would not know. Her rulers were willfully ignorant. They would not calmly examine evidences, and impartially consider great plain facts. Her people would not see "the signs of the times." Therefore judgment was soon to come upon Jerusalem to the uttermost! Her *willful ignorance* left her without excuse.

The principle laid down by our Lord in this place is deeply important. It contradicts an opinion which is very common in the world. This principle teaches distinctly, that all ignorance is not excusable, and that when men might know truth, but refuse to know it — their guilt is very great in the sight of God. There is a degree of knowledge for which all are responsible, and if from indolence or prejudice, they do not attain that knowledge — the lack of it will ruin their souls.

Let us impress this great principle deeply on our own hearts. Let us urge it diligently on others, when we speak to them about saving religion. Let us not flatter ourselves that ignorance will excuse everyone who dies in ignorance, and that he will be pardoned because he knew no better! Did he live up to the light he had? Did he use every means for attaining knowledge? Did he honestly employ every help within his reach, and search industriously after wisdom?

These are grave questions. If a man cannot answer them, he will certainly be condemned in the judgment day. A *willful ignorance* will never be allowed as a plea in a man's favor. On the contrary, it will rather add to his guilt!

**We learn, thirdly, from these verses — that God is sometimes pleased to give men special opportunities and invitations.** We are told by our Lord, that Jerusalem "did not know the day of her visitation." Jerusalem had a special season of mercy and privilege. The Son of God Himself visited her. The mightiest miracles that man had ever seen, were wrought in her midst. The most wonderful preaching that ever was heard, was preached within her walls. The days of our Lord's ministry were days of the clearest calls to repentance and faith, that any city has ever received. They were calls so marked, peculiar, and unlike any previous calls Jerusalem had received — that it seemed impossible that they should be disregarded. But they were disregarded! And our Lord declares that this disregard was one of Jerusalem's principal sins!

The subject before us is a deep and mysterious one. It requires careful stating and delicate handling — lest we should make one scripture contradict another. There seems no doubt that churches, nations, and even individuals are sometimes visited with special manifestations of God's presence — and that their neglect of such manifestations is the turning point in their spiritual ruin. Why this should take place in some cases, but not in others — we cannot tell. Facts, plain facts in history and biography — appear to prove that it is so.

The last day will probably show the world, that there were seasons in the lives of many who died in sin, when God drew very near to them, when conscience was peculiarly alive, when there seemed but a step between them and salvation. Those seasons will probably prove to have been what our Lord calls their "day of visitation." The neglect of such seasons will probably be at last — one of the heaviest charges against their souls.

As deep as the subject is, it should teach men one practical lesson. That lesson is the immense importance of not stifling convictions, and not quenching the workings of conscience. He who resists the voice of conscience may be throwing away his last opportunity of salvation. That warning voice may be God's "day of visitation." The neglect of it may fill up the measure of a man's iniquity — and provoke God to let him alone forever!

**We learn, lastly, from these verses — how much Christ disapproves of the profanation of holy things.** We read that He cast the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and told them that they had made God's house into "a den of thieves." He knew how formal and ignorant the ministers of the temple were. He knew how soon the temple and its services were to be destroyed, the veil to be rent, and the priesthood to be ended. But He would have us to know, that a reverence is due to every place where God is worshiped. The reverence He claimed for the temple — was not for the temple as the house of sacrifice, but as "the house of prayer."

Let us remember this conduct and language of our Lord, whenever we go to a place of public worship. Christian churches no doubt are not like the Jewish temples. They have neither altars, priesthood, sacrifices, nor symbolical furniture. But they are places where God's Word is read, where Christ is present, and where the Holy Spirit works on souls. These facts ought to make us grave, reverent, and solemn — whenever we enter them. The man who behaves as carelessly in a church as he would in an inn, or a private dwelling — has yet much to learn. He has not the "mind of Christ."

# The Untriumphal Entry (Luke 19:28-44) Deffinbaugh at [*https://bible.org/seriespage/60-untriumphal-entry-luke-1928-44*](https://bible.org/seriespage/60-untriumphal-entry-luke-1928-44)

[Matthew 21:1-17](javascript:%7b%7d) As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.” This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: “Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’” The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them.

They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. 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!” When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. “It is written,” he said to them, “ ‘My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it a ‘den of robbers.’” The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they were indignant. “Do you hear what these children are saying?” they asked him. “Yes,” replied Jesus, “have you never read, “‘From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise’?” And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

[Mark 11:1-18](javascript:%7b%7d) 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.’ “ 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?” They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go.

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 others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed 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!” 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.

The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, 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.” And his disciples heard him SAY it.

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. 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.’” The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

[Luke 19:28-48](javascript:%7b%7d) After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and 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 untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it.’ “ Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They replied, “The Lord needs it.”

They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!” “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

As he 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 build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”

Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling. “It is written,” he said to them, “ ‘My house will be a house of prayer’; but you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’” Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.

[John 12:9-19](javascript:%7b%7d) Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.

The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Blessed is the King of Israel!” Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, “Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”

At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him. So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

### Introduction

It was nearly 20 years ago that I heard this text used in a most unusual way. A friend had just lost a little girl, who died as an infant of an incurable disease. At the funeral, one of the elders of the church, Howard Prier, read the paragraph (I do not recall from which of the gospel accounts) which we have recorded before us in verses 28-34. How could a text pertaining the acquisition of a donkey possibly bring comfort to those who had just lost a child in death? Mr. Prier focused our attention on the phrase, “the Lord needs it.” All it took was this statement from the disciples, and the owners of these two animals were willing to let them be led away. And all it required for the Christian to release the little child to God’s care and keeping was the knowledge that, in His good purposes, God had need of the child. What a beautiful truth. What a marvelous application.

In the context of the passage before us, I am nevertheless faced with a couple of tensions. The first is this: Why is an entire paragraph devoted to the procuring of a donkey and its foal, when it seems like such an insignificant event? The second tension is occasioned by the great contrast between the joyful praise of the crowds and Jesus’ weeping: Why does the entrance of our Lord seem so triumphal, when our Lord’s assessment of it implies the opposite? Why does the people rejoice while the Savior weeps?

### The Background of our Passage

The events of the entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem can only be understood in the light of a number of very important elements, all of which converged in this place at this point in time. First, Jerusalem was the destination of our Lord, toward which He had been heading for some time. From Luke’s gospel, and from the accounts of Matthew and Mark, we know that Jesus has been bound for Jerusalem for some time. Ever since the transfiguration of Jesus, He had been speaking to His disciples of going to Jerusalem, where He would be put to death (cf. [Luke 9:31, 51](javascript:%7b%7d)). Even publicly, to some degree, it was made known that He would not be stopped from going to Jerusalem, to His death ([Luke 13:31-35](javascript:%7b%7d)).

Second, all Israel knew that it would be in Jerusalem where Messiah would be enthroned as their King. In our previous lesson, I outlined a few of the Old Testament texts which looked for Messiah to appear in Jerusalem.[58](https://bible.org/seriespage/60-untriumphal-entry-luke-1928-44#P6665_2179896) In the “triumphal entry,” Jesus’ presentation of Himself to Israel as their Messiah is seen as the fulfillment of the prophecy in [Zechariah 9:9](javascript:%7b%7d) (cf. [Matthew 21:4-5](javascript:%7b%7d)). All eyes were on Jerusalem, and Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem.

Third, the Passover feast was at hand, which brought many spiritual pilgrims to Jerusalem and fueled the fires of spiritual and messianic expectations. Spiritual Israelites from all over Israel would make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, just as Jesus’ family did, as recorded in Luke chapter 2 (verses 41 ff.). Edersheim writes,

“Everyone in Israel was thinking about the Feast. for the previous month it had been the subject of discussion in the Academies, and, for the last two Sabbaths at least, that of discourse in the Synagogues. Everyone was going to Jerusalem, or had those near and dear to them there, or at least watched the festive processions to the Metropolis of Judaism. It was a gathering of universal Israel, that of the memorial of the birth-night of the nation, and of its Exodus, when friends from afar would meet, and new friends be made; when offerings long due would be brought, and purification long needed be obtained—and all worship in that grand and glorious Temple, with its gorgeous ritual. National and religious feelings were alike stirred in what reached far back to the first, and pointed far forward to the final Deliverance.[59](https://bible.org/seriespage/60-untriumphal-entry-luke-1928-44#P6668_2182409)

John specifically tells us that many came to Jerusalem from the country, to celebrate the Passover:

Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover, to purify themselves ([John 11:55](javascript:%7b%7d)).

Fourth, Jesus had performed a number of spectacular miracles, which attracted the crowds and further fueled their messianic enthusiasm. Blind Bartimaeus (Mark named him, [Mark 10:46](javascript:%7b%7d)), accompanied by another unnamed blind man ([Matthew 20:30](javascript:%7b%7d)), were given their sight in Jericho ([Luke 18:35-43](javascript:%7b%7d)). The most spectacular miracle, however, was the raising of Lazarus, which happened very near to Jerusalem, in Bethany ([John 11:1](javascript:%7b%7d)). The result of this miracle was even greater popularity for our Lord, with some believing in Him, and others not:

“Many therefore of the Jews, who had come to Mary and beheld what He had done, believed in Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done” ([John 11:45-46](javascript:%7b%7d)).

This popularity alarmed the Pharisees, who met together to discuss the crisis, and who, from that day on, were intent on killing Jesus, based upon this counsel, spoken by Caiaphas:

“You know nothing at all, nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish” ([John 11:49](javascript:%7b%7d)b-50).

Jesus therefore retreated, avoiding public exposure, until the proper time for His death came. He went to the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, staying there with His disciples ([John 11:54](javascript:%7b%7d)). Many were seeking Jesus. He was the topic of conversation of those waiting at the Temple ([John 11:56](javascript:%7b%7d)). Not only was Jesus sought, but also Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead:

Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him ([John 12:9-11](javascript:%7b%7d)).

One can hardly grasp the mood of many at that moment in history. They were looking for Messiah, and Jesus was a likely candidate. The moment was right. They looked for Him, watching carefully for any indication of His identity. In contrast, the Pharisees and religious leaders were determined that He was not the Messiah, and that He would have no opportunity to attempt to be acclaimed such by the masses who would have wished He were their King. They were intent on putting Him to death, and were only looking for the right opportunity. These opponents of our Lord feared the crowds, and sought to do away with Jesus out of their sight.

### Putting the Props in Place: Arranging for Messiah’s Entrance (19:28-34)

After Jesus had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and 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 untying it?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it.’” Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They replied, “The Lord needs it.”

The Mount of Olives is a hill outside of Jerusalem, which Luke tells us elsewhere is a “Sabbath day’s journey” from Jerusalem ([Acts 1:12](javascript:%7b%7d)). It is a place of great significance. It was on the Mount of Olives that king David wept, along with his faithful followers, as he fled from Jerusalem and from his son, Absolom ([2 Samuel 15:30](javascript:%7b%7d)). According to Zachariah 14:4, the Messiah was to appear on the Mount of Olives, which would be split in half, forming a great valley. It is here that the “triumphal entry” was staged. During His last week, Jesus spent His nights on the Mount of Olives ([Luke 21;37](javascript:%7b%7d)). It seems also to be from the Mount of Olives that Jesus ascended (cf. [Acts 1:12](javascript:%7b%7d)).

Jesus must have paused here on the Mount of Olives, before entering Jerusalem. He sent two of His disciples on ahead to procure a mount. It was not that Jesus needed a ride, for it was not a long walk into Jerusalem. To my knowledge, this is the first time Jesus is said to have ridden an animal. The purpose for riding into Jerusalem on a never-ridden foal of an ass was to fulfill prophecy, and thereby to proclaim His identity as Messiah. The prophecy is that of [Zechariah 9:9](javascript:%7b%7d):

Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Look! Your king is coming to you: he is legitimate and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey—on a young donkey, the foal of a female donkey.([Zechariah 9:9](javascript:%7b%7d)).

There is a whole paragraph devoted to a description of the details surrounding the procuring of this donkey and its foal in all three of the synoptics (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). John alone cuts these details from his account. Why the detail in Luke and the other two gospels? Several responses can be given:

First, this was an important fulfillment of prophecy, which our Lord was intent on fulfilling precisely. While Luke does not stress the element of fulfilled prophecy as much as Matthew, this is nevertheless a factor. Jesus was, by His deed, declaring His identity as Messiah.

Second, the miraculous power of the Lord Jesus is portrayed. Some might think it a miracle that the animals were released to these two disciples. But Jesus’ exact knowledge of the whereabouts of the animals, and of the response of the owners, indicates our Lord is completely aware of and in control of His environment. The fact that the animal on which Jesus rode had never been ridden may be a hidden clue to His deity. In [Numbers 19:2](javascript:%7b%7d) and [Deuteronomy 21:3](javascript:%7b%7d), the animals which were to be sacrificed to God were not to have borne a yoke. Is the fact that this animal had never been ridden a clue to the fact that it was, as it were, an offering to God, something to be used in His service? I believe that our Lord’s choosing to ride on a never-ridden animal is a miraculous event. I can almost see the owners snickering to themselves, saying, in effect, “Just wait until he tries to ride this animal. Is he in for a jolt!”

Third, the fact that the disciples did not first ask to use the two animals, but only gave an explanation for their right to take them, is an indication of the Lord’s right to make use of anything man owns. Think of the various ways in which a previously unridden animal could have been acquired. Jesus Himself could have gone and asked to use it. He could have identified Himself as Messiah, and explained that He had certain prophecies to fulfill, and the use of that person’s animal would be an important contribution to His kingdom. Or, Jesus could have sent His disciples on a similar task. Once they explained who Jesus was, and then asked for the use of the animal, they surely would have gotten it. They could, of course, have promised to bring the animals right back, or could even have offered to rent or buy them.

Yet none of these things were done. Instead, these two disciples went into the village, and without previously asking permission, started to take the animals. All this was done in the sight of the animals’ owners. We would say that this act was “gutsy.” And remember that the two disciples are doing precisely what Jesus instructed them to do. They were told to locate the animals, to take them, and to give an explanation only if they were challenged, which they were. In effect, the owners were probably saying something like this, when they saw their animals being taken, “Hey, what do you think you’re doing?”

The amazing thing to me is that once told, “The Lord has need of it,” the owners cease to protest, allowing the two disciples to lead the two animals away, with no statement being made about their return. I wonder if they ever expected to see these animals again. Our understanding of the response of these owners must begin with an understanding the value of these two animals to their owners.[60](https://bible.org/seriespage/60-untriumphal-entry-luke-1928-44#P6690_2190646) Wealth in that part of the world, was often measured in terms of cattle. Put into today’s culture, the ass and its colt would have been something like a red Porsche convertible. Can you imagine allowing two strangers to get into it and drive off, with only the words, “The Lord has need of it”? What was it about these words which satisfied the owners of these animals?

The key is to be found in the word, “Lord,” which, in every account is the same term. What did the word “Lord” convey to the people of Jerusalem, and to these people in particular? I believe that this term “Lord” was understood by the animals’ owners to refer to Jesus of Nazareth. I further assume that the term “Lord,” based upon its Old Testament roots, implied the deity of our Lord, and thus His sovereignty over all creation. The term “Lord” conveyed to these animal owners that Jesus was not only Messiah, but God, and thus He had every right to possess these animals, whether He ever returned them or not. His same authority is that which enabled and empowered Him to be in perfect control over this animal, which had never been “broken,” and which would normally have refused to bear Jesus as a burden, or to go where He wanted it to go.

Not only the act of riding this animal into Jerusalem, but also the way in which the animal was obtained was a statement by our Lord of His authority. And take note of the fact that His authority, at least in the obtaining of the animals, was not exercised by our Lord directly, but through His disciples, who were sent by Jesus, in His authority. The later implications of this will be spelled out by Luke in his second volume, the book of Acts.

The is a very obvious application here, as I see our text. Jesus, as the Messiah, has every right to possess what is ultimately His. If Jesus were the Messiah, if He was the divine Son of God, why did He lack anything? Why did He need to borrow these animals? Why did He not miraculously create two beasts? What we see here is consistent with our Lord’s first coming. His parents had no place to bear the child, other than a borrowed stable. Jesus had no home of His own (cf. [Luke 9:58](javascript:%7b%7d)), and no means of support ([Luke 8:1-3](javascript:%7b%7d)). He stayed, I assume, sometimes under the stars ([Luke 21:37](javascript:%7b%7d)), and at other times it may well have been in borrowed quarters. Jesus was even buried in a borrowed tomb ([Luke 23:50-53](javascript:%7b%7d)).

Why did the Creator of the Earth ([Colossians 1:16](javascript:%7b%7d)) put Himself in need, so that He had to borrow what belonged to others? In the first place, everything does belong to Him. In the ultimate sense, the foal and its mother did not belong to men, but to God. They were only stewards of things. Thus, for the Son of God to “borrow” what belongs to others is really for Him to possess what is His. Second, as the Creator of the Earth, and as the Creator of man, our Lord also possesses man. Man is not free. God is free, free to do with what He created as He chooses (cf. [Romans 9:19-24](javascript:%7b%7d)). Thus, for the Son of God to lay claim to these two animals was consistent with Him right to lay claim to all of His creation, including man. We are His possession, to dispose of as He chooses.

While their theology may not have been very well developed, and while the owners of the animals may not have been eager for them to be used (on they other hand, they may have delighted to have Jesus use them), they did not, indeed, they could not resist His will, even when conveyed through two of His disciples.

But back to my point of application. Do we really believe that Jesus Christ possesses all things, and that He has the right to lay claim to them, to dictate how they are used, at any time? I think that we are far less inclined to let go of things than those who owned these two animals. It is one thing to acknowledge our Savior as “Lord,” and as the possessor of all things; it is quite another to live this way. He has chosen to continue, even to this day, to lay claim on the possessions of men. He has chosen not to carry out His earthly work, not by supernaturally creating the means, but by laying claim on those means which He has placed in the hands of men. Our willingness to release possessions into His hands is a testimony to His lordship.

We know that when the Kingdom of God comes, the King will come, and He will possess His kingdom, and all that is in it. None are exempt. Those who have renounced and resisted His ownership will resist Him no longer. His enemies will be defeated and destroyed.

### The Untriumphal Entry (19:35-40)

They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!” “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

We would best begin to understand this event by recognizing several important details:

**(1) We know that this incident was the fulfillment of Zechariah’s prophecy (9:9), even though Luke did not make a point of saying so, as Matthew and John did.**

**(2) Not everyone in Jerusalem participated in the triumphal entry, but mainly those who could be called His disciples.** From all of the accounts, it is evident that while there was a great crowd involved in welcoming Jesus to Jerusalem (cf. [John 12:12](javascript:%7b%7d)), many of the people of Jerusalem were not involved. The whole city, Matthew tells us was stirred (21:10), but not all were involved. It would seem that the majority of those involved in this celebration were those not from Jerusalem, but those pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem, either to celebrate the Passover ([John 12:12](javascript:%7b%7d)), or to follow Jesus there ([Luke 19:37](javascript:%7b%7d)), or both.

**(3) No one really understood the meaning and significance of what they were doing as they welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem.** John informs us that even the (12) disciples did not understand what they (or Jesus) were doing:

At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him ([John 12:16](javascript:%7b%7d)).

When asked by the Jerusalemites what was going on, and who this “Jesus” was, the crowd responded that He was a prophet, not that He was the Messiah:

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee” ([Matthew 21:10-11](javascript:%7b%7d)).

Luke informs us that Jesus was praised for His miracles ([Luke 19:37](javascript:%7b%7d)).

When we look at our Lord’s response to the “triumphal entry,” He regarded it as a rejection, and not as a reception of Him as Messiah (cf. [Luke 19:41-44](javascript:%7b%7d)). Just as Jesus could say that those who crucified Him “knew not what they were doing” ([Luke 23:34](javascript:%7b%7d)), so we see that the crowds did not know what they were doing here either.

Some of the disciples did regard Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem as the entrance of the Messiah, of Israel’s King, but they did not understand when His kingdom would be instituted, or how. Others seem to have regarded Jesus as someone less than this. Many, simply did not know who He was, or what was happening. One wonders how many got caught up in the excitement and the activity, without knowing what was happening at all.

I think that some did not regard Jesus as the Messiah, but thought that they could appoint Him as such. I wonder if those, who according to Matthew’s account (21:11), thought of Jesus as “the prophet,” also thought that they could almost forcibly make Him their King, as the people wanted to do in [John 6:15](javascript:%7b%7d). Jesus would therefore have not been regarded highly enough, but only as One who had the potential for being King, if the people appointed Him as such.

**(4) We are not told that Jesus commanded this of His disciples, only that He refused to prohibit them from doing so.** I cannot prove it, but I have the impression that Jesus did not tell the disciples what to do, once the two returned with the donkeys. The texts of all four gospels reads nearly the same (John’s version is, predictably, somewhat unique, but in agreement in the details). Jesus told the two disciples to go to the nearby village and to get the two donkeys they would find. There is no report that He told anyone what to do when they returned with the donkeys. An explanation for this is not difficult. The disciples knew the prophecies about Messiah. They knew Zechariah’s prophecy well, and thus, when Jesus sent two of them to get two donkeys, the connection between this command and Zechariah’s prophecy was self-evident to them. They did not need to be told what to do, they simply responded to the prophecy they knew was being fulfilled. And so Jesus did not need to tell the disciples what to do once the donkeys arrived. They spontaneously did what they knew should be done in the circumstances. Jesus refused to prohibit His disciples from this welcome, but it does not seem that He commanded them to do so.

A question should haunt us, at this point. If the “triumphal entry” was, in reality, a failure, a kind of fiasco, something which only our Lord really understood, then why did Jesus allow it to happen? Indeed, why did Jesus cause it to happen? Why would Jesus precipitate such an event, which did nothing more than to excite the crowds, but produced no kingdom?

I believe that there are several answers to this question. The first response is that it was absolutely necessary for Jesus to publicly identify Himself as the King of Israel, even though (and we might even say, in order that) He might be rejected and put to death. Many were wondering who Jesus was. Many wondered if He were the Messiah. His act of riding into Jerusalem on a donkey was His way of dramatically and emphatically saying, “I am the King of Israel.”

The second reason why I believe Jesus precipitated the triumphal entry was in order to affirm not only His identity as Messiah, but also His deity, and thus His right to be worshipped by all men. Just as the owner’s protest at the disciples’ taking of the donkeys was the backdrop to Jesus’ authority to possess them, so the protests of the Pharisees over the praise of Jesus is the backdrop to His right, as Messiah, to be praised. The Pharisees, of course, not only rejected Jesus’ deity (cf. [Luke 5:21](javascript:%7b%7d)), but also His identity as Messiah. How, then, could they allow Him to be praised? They insisted that Jesus stop the people from praising Him. Jesus refused. He said that if the people were silenced, the stone would cry out. Jesus was the Son of God. He not only deserved praise and worship, it could not be silenced.

That is what you and I are to do now, my friend. If you acknowledge Jesus to be the Son of God, to be your Savior, then He must be praised. How is it that a rainy day can keep us from joining others in praising Him? How is it that a beautiful day can do the same, by giving us a “day out on the lake,” rather than with the saints, praising Him? It is one thing for those who deny Jesus as Lord to fail to praise Him. It is another for those who name Him as Lord and King to refuse to worship Him. Heaven is an eternity of praise. When He comes as King, every knee will bow to Him, and every tongue will utter His praise ([Philippians 2:9-11](javascript:%7b%7d)). Let us not be guilty of keeping silent when we should be praising Him. And is not our bearing witness to Him a form of praise as well? Do we not refuse to praise Him when we fail to tell others of Him and of His love? Let us surpass the stones!

**(5) The “triumphal entry” of Jesus provided a forceful impetus to the Jewish religious leaders to get rid of Jesus.** The triumphal entry convinced the Pharisees that they must act both quickly and decisively to get rid of Jesus. He was winning the masses over. He must be stopped, and stopped quickly ([John 12:19](javascript:%7b%7d)).

### Jesus’ Response to His Reception (19:41-44)

As he 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 build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”

What an amazing contrast there is here between the joyful reception of Jesus by the crowds with our Lord’s tears. They thought they had received Him in a way that was appropriate and fitting; Jesus viewed the event as a disaster, and as leading to disaster, for Jerusalem.

Jesus wept as He approached the city of Jerusalem (v. 41). The reason for His tears is given to us in verses 42-44. First and foremost, Jerusalem failed to grasp “the things which make for peace.” Just what are “the things which make for peace”? In our day, this is a matter of great disagreement and heated debate. The “hawks” think that peace is obtained by might, by having sufficient arms to serve as a threat to any who would think of attacking us. The “doves” think that the absence of armament is the answer. In Israel, the believe was that Messiah would bring peace to the nation when He appeared. Thus, at the birth of the Lord Jesus the angels sang of “peace on earth” ([Luke 2:14](javascript:%7b%7d)).

But how was this peace to be accomplished? By and large, it would seem that the majority of people thought that this peace would be accomplished by a sword, and by force. They therefore supposed that when Messiah came, He would utilize military might, and that He would throw off the shackles of Rome. When Jesus wept because Jerusalem did not know what would bring about peace, He wept because He knew what lay ahead for this wayward, wrong-thinking nation. Instead of Messiah’s coming bringing about the demise of Rome, the rejection of Jesus as Messiah meant the destruction of Jerusalem, at the hand of Roman soldiers. Jesus therefore spoke of the coming destruction of Jerusalem, which took place in 70 A.D.

It was not by Messiah’s use of force and power, nor by the death of Messiah’s enemies that the kingdom was to be brought about, but by Messiah’s death, at the hand of His enemies. It was not triumph which would bring in the kingdom, but the tragedy (from a merely human viewpoint) of the cross. God’s ways are never man’s ways. Man would have brought about the kingdom in many ways, but man would never have conceived of doing so by a cross, by apparent defeat, by the suffering of Messiah Himself, for the sins of His people.

Here, then, is a third implication of our Lord’s deity. If Jesus was Lord (that is, God), then not only does He possess the right to possess man’s possessions (vss. 28-34), and the right to possess man’s praise and worship (vss. 35-40), he also has the right to institute His kingdom in the way He sovereignly chooses, rather than by those means which men might prefer. Messiah will come to possess what is His, to receive man’s praise, and to bring about the kingdom in His own way. Men seemed to suppose that the kingdom would be founded on acts of power and might and by more miracles (cf. v. 37), but Jesus was intent on fulfilling the will of the Father, and thus to bring about the kingdom by personal pain, rejection, and suffering. Such is the way of His cross.

Why is it, my friend, that we still cling to the idea that where God is, there will be miracles, wonders, and prosperity, when the way of our Lord was one of need (as for the donkeys), of rejection, suffering, and pain? If we are to be followers of our Lord, need we not expect to take up a cross, even as Jesus said? And need we not anticipate rejection and suffering, even as was His experience? Just as men resisted God’s way of inaugurating His kingdom, so we continue to resist God’s way of doing things.

### Jesus’ Attack: Not on Rome, but on Religion (19:45-48)

Then he entered the temple area and began driving out those who were selling. “It is written,” he said to them, “ ‘My house will be a house of prayer’; but you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’” Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.

Did the Israelites expect Jesus to immediately wage an attack on Rome, and on its rule? Jesus did not do so. What Jesus did was to attack the Jewish religious system itself, and to renounce its evils. Jesus marched on the temple, for a second time (cf. [John 2:13-16](javascript:%7b%7d)) and cast out the money-changers. This was the holiday season, and “business” there in the temple area must have been booming. But instead of using the temple for a place of prayer and worship, the religious leaders made it a place for personal gain. Jesus went back to the temple each day, and taught the people. For a short time, at least, the temple would serve its original purpose. Soon, that temple, as indicated earlier (vv. 43l-44), would be destroyed. God was going to see to it not only that the old temple was torn down, but that a new temple was created, a temple not made with hands, a temple where there was no distinction between Jews and Gentiles, for all who are one in Christ (cf. [Ephesians 2:11-22](javascript:%7b%7d)).

Jesus’ attack on the religious system of His day was strongly reacted to by those with a vested interest—the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the leaders of the people. They were not yet able to kill Jesus, due to the crowds, but they were intent on putting Him to death at the earliest possible moment. The battle lines were drawn, but it was not between the Messiah and Rome, but rather between Messiah and religion, the Jewish religion.

### Conclusion

The triumphal entry, then, was not only Jesus’ claim to be Israel’s Messiah, but also a clear declaration of His deity. He was also Israel’s Lord. His rights as Lord are therefore affirmed and demonstrated in these verses. He as Creator, has the right to possess men’s possessions. As a perfect and holy God, He has the right to possess men’s praise and worship. As the Lord, He has the right to attack the false religion of that day, and to replace it. All of these rights are the rights of the One who was not only Israel’s Messiah, but also Her God. They are the prerogatives of deity.

This declaration of our Lord’s deity, and of His rights as Israel’s Lord are very important, in the context of Luke. Jesus is about to be rejected by His own people, handed over to the Gentiles, persecuted, abused, and crucified. To some, it might have seemed that Jesus had “high hopes” which were unrealistic, and which failed. To some, the cross may have seemed both a disaster and a defeat. But just prior to His death, Jesus declared His deity, demonstrated His right to possess, to receive man’s praise, and to determine how the kingdom would be established. All of these things happened under protest, but could not be stopped. Jesus’ death on the cross was not an evidence of Jesus being overrun or overpowered by His opponents, but of His laying down His life voluntarily, for the sins of His people, as God’s means of establishing the kingdom. What a vital truth we see demonstrated here, just prior to our Lord’s death.

We are not like Israel, for if we have received Jesus as our Savior, we have received Him as Lord, as God, and as our Savior. We have come to acknowledge Him as the King of the Earth, whose kingdom will soon be established on the earth. Why, then, are we failing to practice those things which declare His prerogatives as the King? We say that He is Lord, and yet we resist letting loose of our possessions, so that His kingdom may be furthered. We say that He is Lord, and yet we are reluctant to praise Him as we ought. When we come to church, and even when we come to a worship service, so often our religion is as self-serving as was that of Israel. We think of ourselves, talk of ourselves, and ignore Him who is our God, our Creator, and our Redeemer. We think of His kingdom today in much the same terms as did the disciples of Jesus’ day. We think in terms of the power and prestige we will have, rather than in terms of the praise He should have. We look for miracles and wonders and we want to see Jesus overcome our enemies, and we do not want to think of a cross, of suffering or shame, or rejection by men. We want our religion to be one that is self-serving, rather than one which calls for self-sacrifice. But if Jesus is both Lord and Christ, then He must have His prerogatives, He will have His prerogatives. He should possess our possessions, our praise, and our submission to His ways of bring about His purposes.

58 Edersheim writes of what going to Jerusalem meant to Jesus, in the context of its meaning to every Israelite: “To him it would be true in the deepest sense, that, so to speak, each Israelite was born in Zion, as, assuredly, all the well-springs of his life were there. It was, therefore, not merely the natural eagerness to see the City of their God and of their fathers, glorious Jerusalem; nor yet the lawful enthusiasm, national or religious, which would kindle at the thought of ‘our feet’ standing within those gates, through which priests, prophets, and kings had passed; but far deeper feelings which would make glad, when it was said: ‘Let us go into the house of Jehovah.’ They were not ruins to which precious memories clung, nor did the great hope seem to lie afar off, behind the evening-mist. But ‘glorious things were spoken of Zion, the City of God’—in the past, and in the near future ‘the thrones of David’ were to be set within her walls, and amidst her palaces.” Alfred Edersheim*, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., [photolithoprinted, 1965), I, p. 235.

59 Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, II, pp. 479-480.

60 I refer to owners (plural) because Luke uses the plural. It may well be that these people were so poor that it took several of them to be able to purchase this one (then pregnant, perhaps) animal. I can well remember the four families who lived in seminary housing, jointly purchasing a clothes drier, which cost a total of $20.

**William Hendricksen’s summary of Luke’s Holy week in his *New Testament Commentary* (Baker, 1978)**

The account of The Perean Ministry has ended, and so has the entire second division of Luke’s story concerning the work the Father gave the Mediator to do. The evangelist has told us all he, guided by the Holy Spirit, wanted to relate concerning the Progress or Continuation of Christ’s work. At this point, therefore, the narrative of The Week of the Passion begins. It covers Luke 19:28–23:56, and is followed by the story of The Resurrection and Ascension, chapter 24.

Luke 18:35–19:27 described what Jesus did when he was in the Jericho region. From Jericho the little party continued on its way toward Jerusalem (19:28). On reasonable grounds it may be assumed that Bethany, about two miles from Jerusalem (John 11:18), was reached before sunset on Friday, that on the sabbath (Friday sunset to Saturday sunset) Jesus enjoyed the sabbath rest with his friends, that on Saturday evening a supper was given in his honor at the home of “Simon the leper” (Mark 14:3–9), and that the next day, being Sunday, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem occurred. From this point on the day by day events recorded in Luke’s Gospel are found in the following passages:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Sunday | 19:28–44 |
| Monday | 19:45–48 |
| Tuesday |  |
| & } | 20:1–22:6 |
| Wednesday |  |
| Thursday | (including the night from Thursday to very early Friday) 22:7–71 |
| Friday | Chapter 23 |
| Saturday | No events reported in Luke, but see Matt. 27:62–66 |
| Sunday | 24:1–49 |
| “forty days later” | 24:50–53 (cf. Acts 1:1–5) |

In the preceding section (19:11–27) there has been constant reference to “the kingdom” and “the king” (verses 11, 12, 14, 15, and 27). And now “the king”—not, however, the kind of king the people wanted, but the very opposite (see Matt. 21:5)—comes riding into Jerusalem.

**28. After Jesus had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.**

The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem was an event of outstanding significance. Note the following:

1. By means of it Jesus deliberately evokes a demonstration. He fully realizes that, as a result, the enthusiasm of the masses will enrage the hostile leaders at Jerusalem, so that they will desire more than ever to carry out their plot against him.

2. Jesus forces the members of the Sanhedrin to change their timetable, so that it will harmonize with his (and the Father’s) timetable. The enthusiasm of the crowds with respect to Jesus will hasten the crisis.

3. By means of this triumphal entry Jesus fulfils the Messianic prophecy of Zech. 9:9. See Matt. 21:4, 5. When the people hail him as the Son of David, i.e., the Messiah, he does not try to restrain them.

4. However, he also shows the crowds what kind of Messiah he is, namely, not the earthly Messiah of Israel’s dreams, the One who wages war against an earthly oppressor, but the One who came to promote and establish “the things that make for peace” (Luke 19:42), lasting peace: reconciliation between God and man, and between a man and his fellow man. Accordingly, Jesus enters Jerusalem mounted on a colt, the foal of an ass, an animal associated not with the rigors of war but with the pursuits of peace, for he is the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6). But the people in general, their minds filled with earthly ideas concerning the Coming One, do not understand or appreciate this. In hailing him as the Messiah, the people are right; the Pharisees, chief priests, and scribes (Matt. 21:15, 16; Luke 19:39, 40) are wrong. But in expecting this Messiah to reveal himself as a political, earthly Messiah the Hosanna shouters are as wrong as are their leaders. Those who in every way reject Jesus are committing a crime, but those who outwardly “accept” and cheer him are also doing him a gross injustice, for they do not accept him for what he really is. Their tragic mistake is committed with dire results for themselves. It is not surprising therefore that Luke pictures a weeping King in the midst of a shouting multitude (19:39–44), nor is it strange that, a little later, when the crowds begin to understand that Jesus is not the kind of Messiah they had expected, they, at the urging of their leaders, are shouting, “Crucify (him)!”[[2]](#footnote-2)

#### Maclaren on Luke 19 at Third Mill: <https://thirdmill.org/magazine/article.asp/link/ale_maclaren%5Eale_maclaren.ES.9pt2.html/at/Expositions%20of%20Holy%20Scripture>

#### A NEW KIND OF KING

*And when He was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; 38. Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. 38. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto Him, Master, rebuke Thy disciples. 40. And He answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. 41. And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it, 42. Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. 43. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, 44. And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. 45. And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; 46. Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. 47. And He taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy Him, 48. And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.'--LUKE xix. 37-48.*

He went on before.' What concentrated determination, and almost eagerness, impelled His firm and swift steps up the steep, weary road! Mark tells that the disciples followed, amazed'--as they well might be--at the unusual haste, and strange preoccupation on the face, set as a flint.

Luke takes no notice of the stay at Bethany and the sweet seclusion which soothed Jesus there. He dwells only on the assertion of royalty, which stamped an altogether unique character on the remaining hours of Christ's life.

I. The narrative brings into prominence Christ's part in originating the triumphal entry (vs. 30-34). He sent for the colt with the obvious intention of stimulating the people to just such a demonstration as followed.

As to the particulars, we need only note that the most obvious explanation of His knowledge of the circumstances that the messengers would encounter, is that it was supernatural. Only one other explanation is possible; namely, that the owners of the animal were secret disciples, with whom our Lord had arranged to send for it, and had settled a sign and countersign, by which they would know His messengers. But that is a less natural explanation.

Note the remarkable blending of dignity and poverty in The Lord hath need of him.' It asserts sovereign authority and absolute rights, and it confesses need and penury. He is a King, but He has to borrow even a colt to make His triumphal entry on. Though He was rich, for our sakes He became poor.

Jesus then deliberately brought about His public entry. He thereby acts in a way perfectly unlike His whole previous course. And He stirs up popular feelings at a time when they were specially excitable by reason of the approaching Passover and its crowds. Formerly He had avoided the danger which He now seems to court, and had gone up to the feast as it were in secret.' But it was fitting that once, for the last time, He should assert before the gathered Israel that He was their King, and should make a last appeal. Formerly He had sought to avoid attracting the attention of the rulers; now He knows that the end is near, and deliberately makes Himself conspicuous, though--or we might say because--He knew that thereby He precipitated His death.

The nature of His dominion is as plainly taught by the humble pomp as is its reality. A pauper King, who makes His public entrance into His city mounted on a borrowed ass, with His followers' clothes for a saddle, attended by a shouting crowd of poor peasants, for weapons or banners had but the branches plucked from other people's trees, was a new kind of king.

We do not need Matthew's quotation of the prophet's vision of the meek King coming to Zion on an ass, to understand the contrast of this kingdom with such a dominion as that of Rome, or of such princes as the Herods. Gentleness and peace, a sway that rests not on force nor wealth, are shadowed in that rustic procession and the pathetic poverty of its leader, throned on a borrowed colt, and attended, not by warriors or dignitaries, but by poor men unarmed, and saluted, not with the blare of trumpets, but with the shouts of joyful, though, alas! fickle hearts.

II. We have the humble procession with the shouting disciples and the background of hostile spies. The disciples eagerly caught at the meaning of bringing the colt, and threw themselves with alacrity into what seemed to them preparation for the public assertion of royalty, for which they had long been impatient. Luke tells us that they lifted Jesus on to the seat which they hurriedly prepared, while some spread their garments in the way--the usual homage to a king:

Ride on triumphantly; behold, we lay Our lusts and proud wills in Thy way.'

How different the vision of the future in their minds and His! They dreamed of a throne; He knew it was a Cross. Round the southern shoulder of Olivet they came, and, as the long line of the Temple walls, glittering in the sunshine across the valley, burst on the view, and their approach could be seen from the city, they broke into loud acclamations, summoning, as it were, Jerusalem to welcome its King.

Luke's version of their chant omits the Jewish colouring which it has in the other Gospels, as was natural, in view of his Gentile readers. Christ's royalty and divine commission are proclaimed from a thousand throats, and then up swells the shout of praise, which echoes the angels' song at Bethlehem, and ascribes to His coming, power to make peace in heaven with an else alienated world, and thus to make the divine glory blaze with new splendour even in the highest heavens.

Their song was wiser than they knew, and touched the deepest, sweetest mysteries of the unity of the Son with the Father, of reconciliation by the blood of His Cross, and of the new lustre accruing to God's name thereby, even in the sight of principalities and powers in heavenly places. They meant none of these things, but they were unconscious prophets. Their shouts died away, and their faith was almost as short-lived. With many of them, it withered before the branches which they waved.

High-wrought emotion is a poor substitute for steady conviction. But cool, unemotional recognition of Christ as King is as unnatural. If our hearts do not glow with loyal love, nor leap up to welcome Him; if the contemplation of His work and its issues on earth and in heaven does not make our dumb tongues sing--we have need to ask ourselves if we believe at all that He is the King and Saviour of all and of us. There were cool observers there, and they make the foil to the glad enthusiasm. Note that these Pharisees, mingling in the crowd, have no title for Jesus but Teacher.' He is no king to them. To those who regard Jesus but as a human teacher, the acclamations of those to whom He is King and Lord always sound exaggerated.

People with no depth of religious life hate religious emotion, and are always seeking to repress it. A very tepid worship is warm enough for them. Formalists detest genuine feeling. Propriety is their ideal. No doubt, too, these croakers feared that this tumult might come to formidable size, and bring down Pilate's heavy hand on them.

Christ's answer is probably a quoted proverb. It implies His entire acceptance of the character which the crowd ascribed to Him, His pleasure in their praises, and, in a wider aspect, His vindication of outbursts of devout feeling, which shock ecclesiastical martinets and formalists.

III. We see the sorrowing King plunged in bitter grief in the very hour of His triumph. Who can venture to speak of that infinitely pathetic scene? The fair city, smiling across the glen, brings before His vision the awful contrast of its lying compassed by armies and in ruins. He hears not the acclamation of the crowd. He wept,' or, rather, wailed,'--for the word does not imply tears so much as cries. That sorrow is a sign of His real manhood, but it is also a part of His revelation of the very heart of God. The form is human, the substance divine. The man weeps because God pities. Christ's sorrow does not hinder His judgments. The woes which wring His heart will nevertheless be inflicted by Him. Judgment is His strange work,' alien from His desires; but it is His work. The eyes which are as a flame of fire are filled with tears, but their glance burns up the evil.

Note the yearning in the unfinished sentence, If thou hadst known.' Note the decisive closing of the time of repentance. Note the minute prophetic details of the siege, which, if ever they were spoken, are a distinct proof of His all-seeing eye. And from all let us fix in our hearts the conviction of the pity of the judge, and of the judgment by the pitying Christ.

IV. We have Christ's exercise of sovereign authority in His Father's house. Luke gives but a summary in verses 45-48, dwelling mainly on two points. First he tells of casting out the traders. Two things are brought out in the compressed narrative--the fact, and the Lord's vindication of it. As to the former, it was fitting that at the end of His career, as at the beginning, He should cleanse the Temple. The two events are significant as His first and last acts. The second one, as we gather from the other Evangelists, had a greater severity about it than the first.

The need for a second purifying indicated how sadly transient had been the effect of the first, and was thus evidence of the depth of corruption and formalism to which the religion of priests and people had sunk. Christ had come to cleanse the Temple of the world's religion, to banish from it mercenaries and self-interested attendants at the altar, and, in a higher application of the incident, to clear away all the degradations and uncleannesses which are associated with worship everywhere but in His Church, and which are ever seeking, like poisonous air, to find their way in thither also, through any unguarded chink.

The vindication of the act is in right royal style. The first cleansing was defended by Him by pointing to the sanctity of My Father's house'; the second, by claiming it as My house.' The rebuke of the hucksters is sterner the second time. The profanation, once driven out and returning, is deeper; for whereas, in the first instance, it had made the Temple a house of merchandise,' in the second it turned it into a den of robbers.' Thus evil assumes a darker tint, like old oak, by lapse of time, and swiftly becomes worse, if rebuked and chastised in vain.

The second part of this summary puts in sharp contrast three things--Christ's calm courage in continuous teaching in the Temple, the growing bitter hatred of the authorities, who drew in their train the men of influence holding no office, and the eager hanging of the people on His words, which baffled the murderous designs of the rulers. The same intentional publicity as in the entrance is obvious. Jesus knew that His hour was come, and willingly presents Himself a sacrifice. Meekly and boldly He goes on the appointed way. He sees all the hate working round Him, and lets it work. The day's task of winning some from impending ruin shall still be done. So should His servants live, in patient discharge of daily duty, in the face of death, if need be.

The enemies, who heard His words and found in them only food for deeper hatred, may warn us of the possibilities of antagonism to Him that lie in the heart, and of the terrible judgment which they drag down on their own heads, who hear, unmoved, His daily teaching, and see, unrepentant, His dying love. The crowd that listened, and, in less than a week yelled Crucify Him,' may teach us to take heed how we hear, and to beware of evanescent regard for His teaching, which, if it do not consolidate into resolved and thoroughgoing acceptance of His work and submission to His rule, will certainly cool into disregard, and may harden into hate.

1. [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](https://ref.ly/logosres/esv?ref=BibleESV.Je7.1). (2016). (Je 7:1–20). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Hendriksen, W., & Kistemaker, S. J. (1953–2001). [*Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*](https://ref.ly/logosres/bkrc-lk?ref=Bible.Lk19.28-44&off=1991&ctx=)+visited+you.%E2%80%9D%EF%BB%BF512%0a~The+account+of+The+P) (Vol. 11, pp. 870–873). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)