

**Mark**  
**Chapter 11:1-11**  
**“The End of the Beginning”**

**\*All scripture references are from the NASU unless otherwise noted\***

Calvary Chapel Fellowship of Enid  
Matthew W. Thoms, Pastor/Teacher  
January 2010

**Announcement:**

---

**Teaching:** As we approach **chapter 11**, I want you to consider something with me ... the **first 10 chapters of the gospel of Mark** cover 3 and ½ years of Jesus’ earthly ministry ... whereas the **last 6 chapters** cover a mere 8 days. The last 8 days of Jesus’ life.

**Q. Now ... why does that matter?** – It matters because it tells us about priorities. It tells us that of all the great things that Jesus did; the miracles, the teachings, the healings ... nothing even comes close to the importance of the cross.

The cross is central. The cross was the goal of it all, because without it we are lost.

- 1.** Had Jesus only been a great teacher ... we could call Him confusions.
- 2.** Had he only been an inspiring teacher, we could call Him Mohamed.
- 3.** Or ... had He only been a worker of miracles, we could call Him the greatest magician who ever lived.

But Jesus is the Messiah ... He’s God almighty. He’s the One we can pin our eternal hopes on because He went to the cross.

And that’s why for someone to respect or even accept Jesus’ wise teaching is not enough. To be saved, **Romans chapter 10 (verse 9)** tells us that we must accept His death and resurrection. We must accept the cross and see it’s centrality in the Lord’s ministry.

Now, I also want you to remember the setting: It’s the time of Passover and Jerusalem is packed ... an estimated 2 million visitors are there for the celebration and therefore more than 250,000 lambs are about to be sacrificed.

And so what an appropriate time for Jesus ... the ultimate sacrificial, Passover Lamb to enter the city.

**Q. Almost sounds divinely planned out doesn’t it?**

Passover is the annual Hebrew festival that takes place on the 14th day of the month of

Nisan in Israel. It's an imitation of the last meal that the Hebrews ate in Egypt during their captivity. The symbolism, though, extends beyond just the meal that they ate. Remember, that was also the evening that God "passed over" the houses of the Hebrews, but slayed the firstborn in each of the Egyptian homes. And the Jews were "passed over" because they sacrificed a Passover Lamb and painted their door posts with its blood in the shape of a Roman cross ... interesting. **Exodus chapter 12** covers that account.

Passover was the largest of the annual feasts and on multiple levels it plays a significant role in the prophetic plan that we begin studying this morning. For instance ...

1. Remember that Israel was under the control of the Roman government at this time.

2. And remember also that Jerusalem had been a problem area in the past for Rome, because those Hebrews didn't submit to their authority very willingly.

So put yourself in the shoes of Rome. One of the hot spots that has given you trouble in the past over religious issues is having their biggest religious festival of the year and Jews from all over the region have gathered for it. Two million of them.

So you can bet that the Romans were out to force. You might call it a peacekeeping force. Deterrence through power.

And Roman soldiers were impressive in their appearance. Rome had plenty of money and so supplied their army well. More than half of the Roman army at this time was cavalry. Mounted on their Roman steeds and clad in their brass and iron gear they were an impressive sight.

So this is the scene of what's known as "Passion Week" ... the days leading up to the Lord's crucifixion.

Most historians and Bible scholars alike, believe that the, so called, "triumphal entry" that we'll see in these **first verses** occurred on an American Sunday.

On the next morning - Monday, which starts in **verse 12**, we see the cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the Temple.

Tuesday is recorded more thoroughly in **Matthew 26 (verses 14-16)**, but includes the debates with the religious leaders, the famous Olivet Discourse and Judas' acceptance of the thirty pieces of silver for his betrayal of the Lord.

Wednesday, interestingly is completely skipped in the scriptures.

Thursday includes the Last Supper and what we know as the Upper Room Discourse, The events in the Garden of Gethsemane. Although in actuality , these events carry over into Friday morning.

Friday is, of course, the culmination of “Passion Week” with the Lord’s arrest, mock trials and His crucifixion.

So that’s the bigger picture, but now let’s get started with some of the details ...

---

**Verses 1-8:** It is uncertain where Bethphage stood in the New Testament era, but some archeological evidence has placed it in between Jerusalem and Bethany.

Now I want to show you a couple of maps because there are several places that are going to come up over and over in the coming verses so we might as well familiarize ourselves with them now.

Now ... note this with me ...

**Mark 11:2 ... "... as you enter ..., you will find a colt tied there, on which no one yet has ever sat ....**

Wait a minute ... “**on which no one yet has ever sat**”.

**Q. Now what would you expect an unbroken young donkey to do when someone climbs on his back for the very first time?**

When I was growing up ... we had an opportunity to own a few colts. We would always buy them from the auction just to save them from the glue factories, but then we’d have the dilemma of what to do with them.

But ... using your imagination, see if you can hazard a guess what happened when me and my brother and a few of our friends would be hanging around these colts with nothing to do ...

Ya ... I’ve still got a scar on my shoulder from those experiments.

My point is that a colt that’s never had a man on its back is seen here in perfect peace and tranquility with his Creator ... working in perfect harmony with his Lord.

And that does two things:

- 1.** It shows me the power that our God has over His creation.
- 2.** And it shows me my own ignorance. This donkey is smarter than me and most of you too. He surrendered and was at perfect peace and as a result, he was useful to his master.

**Ps 8:6 ... You have put all things under his feet, 7 All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, 8 The birds of the heavens and the fish of the**

**sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas. 9 O LORD, our Lord,  
How majestic is Your name in all the earth!**

This donkey didn't fight because the Lord -- his Creator was the one on his back.

Now it's important and certainly worth the time for us to also look at what's going on here on a larger timeline because Bible scholars who have taken the time to do all the research and math tell us that this day that we call the "Triumphal Entry" is actually very significant, not only for the things that occurred in it, but also for the date itself.

If you go back to Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks in **Daniel chapter 9 (verses 24-27)**, you will find the prophecy that after 69 weeks (or 483 years), beginning with the issuance of the decree to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem, that the Messiah would be "cut off". And that decree was issued by King Artaxerxes on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 445 B.C ... about 100 years after Daniel's death. So if you start with that date and count forward 173,880 days (or 483 years), you come to the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 32 A.D., the date that Jesus made this entry into Jerusalem.

Just coincidence I suppose! Lucky Guess!

So here we are on day one of Holy Week -- Sunday.

Now consider some of the things that we discussed in background. Picture it as we read the scripture. Two million people in this city and all these impressive Roman soldiers mounted on their beautiful horses. Jesus, though, rides in, not on a horse, but on a donkey.

This just doesn't fit what we think a King should do. At the Homecoming football game when the princesses all get paraded out in Corvettes, you don't expect to see the Queen in a Gremlin or a Pinto.

But it had to be. Of Jesus' life and ministry and death the Old Testament offers us well over 600 very specific prophecies to confirm Jesus' Messiahship. One of those is recorded in **Zechariah chapter 9:9**) and speaks of the humility of the King of Kings, riding in His coronation parade on the colt of a donkey.

**John's gospel** records that the last miracle Jesus performed before this entry was the raising of Lazarus from the dead (**11:38-44**). So with this dramatic miracle fresh in their minds, the crowd was very excited. This lowly entry was creating quite a stir that, I'm sure, made these mighty Roman soldiers a bit jumpy.

The people have lined the streets to celebrate, what they thought would be their new King's entry. It was like "rolling out the red carpet".

We read here that these branches that the people were spreading out were leafy, Palm branches (which is, of course, where we get the name "Palm Sunday"). The day of the

Lord's triumphal entry.

---

**Verses 9-11:** This was a king's entrance, which we might, on one hand applaud, but as we read the remainder of the story we realize that they were way off base.

They weren't looking to make Jesus the king of their hearts or to save them from their sin, they were looking to Jesus to save them Rome.

**"Hosanna"**, it doesn't mean save us from our sin or change our hearts ... it means "Save us now" and it was intended to speak of the temporal ... Make our lives better now.

I've never been a very good financial investor. Partly that's because I just don't have the savvy for it. I've not taken the time to figure out a lot of the ins and outs of it. But the other part is that when I have cash in my hand and have to decide ... invest it in the future or buy this thing that will improve my life now ... or at least bring me some temporal pleasure ... and OH THAT'S SO HARD FOR ME!

Well that's the same dilemma that the people were facing here ... only on a scale and to a magnitude substantially larger than an earthly retirement fund.

Jesus was trying to get the people to see eternity, but the best they could do was next week.

And the people are shouting "**Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!**"

"Hosanna" is, of course, an ancient Hebrew exclamation that means "save now" and "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord" is a quote from **Psalm 118** ... a Psalm written to honor military victors.

And you'll want to note here that Jesus, for the very first time, doesn't try to stop the people from praising Him as King. On all other occasions when the people had tried to elevate Jesus politically He had responded "**My hour has not yet come.**", but He doesn't stop them here because His hour was finally upon them.

Now we all know that as these people were shouting "Hosanna!", save now, what they really wanted was liberation from Roman rule, not salvation. The people were fed up. They wanted to elect Jesus as their king, but most of them weren't interested in accepting Him as the King of Kings.

They weren't willing to let Him into their hearts ... only into their government. They weren't willing to be restored permanently ... only ruled temporarily.

But Jesus wasn't willing to do that. That's not why He came and it was because of these expectations that the people had and that Jesus didn't meet, that they ultimately crucified Him.

But this begs the same question of us.

**Q. Do you have expectations of what you think Jesus has to do? Are you trying to make Him a temporary ruler instead of your Lord? Does He owe you something?** --

We all know the answers to these, but we often don't allow that knowledge to sink down into our hearts.

**Q. If Jesus never did another thing for you?** ...

**1. Q. If He never gave you another blessing?**

**2. Q. If He never gave you another day of protection?**

**3. Q. Or another moment of comfort and peace as long as you live on this earth?** ...

**Q. Would your love for Him change?**

Satan had a discussion with God along these same lines. Speaking of Job, Satan said to God; "He only loves You because You give him stuff." God said "No, that's not true and I'll prove it to you." So God took away all of Job's stuff.

**Q. And what did Job say?** He said ...

**Job 19:25 "As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, ..."**

And with his face to the ground in prostrated worship he said ...

**Job 1:21 ... "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD." ...**

See Job understood that God would forgive his sins and that's what really mattered. Not the property or the big family. Not the promotion or even our health, because all these things are temporal. They're there and then gone, but the gift of salvation that's already given us is enough reason to praise Him forever.

Job put no conditions on it. He didn't demand that God bless Him more before he offered praise -- he just praised.

He was sitting in a heap of ashes scratching his boils with a broken piece of pottery when He praised God. His wealth, his home and even his children were gone. His wife was telling him to "curse God and die." And Job praised God.

The Jews were offering the Lord their conditional love, but Job's love was not based on

what he could get from God, but on what he'd already been given by Him.

Now the obvious question then is ...

**Q. Are you more like these Jews that lined the streets shouting “Blessed is He Who Comes In the Name of the Lord!” conditionally?**

**Q. Or are you more like Job who sat in ashes and shouted “I know that my Redeemer lives ... Blessed be the name of the LORD.”?**

Remember the crowd of people that yelled “Hosanna” at the Lord’s triumphal entry? “Save us now” they were exclaiming. Many of those same people were yelling “crucify Him” just a few days later.

They wanted to be associated with Him as long as things looked promising, but as soon as the events looked like they weren’t going the way they wanted to see, their commitment to Him died.

**Q. What about you? Are you committed win, lose or draw?**

John Wesley once said ...

*“If I had 300 men who feared nothing but God, hated nothing but sin, and were determined to know nothing among men except Him crucified, I would set the world on fire.”*

We saw how the writer of **Psalm 8**, wrote that the Lord has dominion over all the beasts and the fish. We saw how the unbroken colt offered no resistance to what the Lord wanted to do with Him.

**Q. What about you and me? Does the Lord have dominion over us? How much resistance do we put up?**

Jesus has proclaimed Himself as God privately and now publicly. He’s proven His claim with His works and time and time again we’ve read that because of that claim He had caused a division. He’s divided friends and families. He’s divided the general populace and the Jewish leadership.

But as the time of His glorification on the cross approaches, all of those things begin to seem pale in comparison to the polarity of His actions and words during Passion Week. He’s now just days from the cross.

We are now just four days from Passover -- the day that the priests would inspect all of the 250,000 lambs that the historian, Josephus tells us were brought into the city for this Passover. Each one had to be inspected for spots and blemishes that would disqualify it as a Sacrificial Passover Lamb.

And it's on that exact day that Jesus rides into Jerusalem to Himself, be inspected as the Passover Lamb of God. And to remind you -- after He had been thoroughly inspected, Pontius Pilate declared "**I find no guilt in Him**" (**John 18:38**), making Him a duly inspected and qualified Passover Lamb ... and He was right on time.

---

**\* Signal Usher to get P & W Leader \***

**Conclusion:** Jesus comes in "**Gentile and mounted on a donkey**", (**Matt 21:5**) tells us. **Acts 8:32** tells us that Jesus came to this earth 2,000 years ago "**as a lamb led to the slaughter**", but ...

**Rev 19:11** And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. **12** His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. **13** He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. **14** And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

Jesus came to this earth the first time "**as a sacrificial lamb**", "**lowly and riding on a donkey**", but He's coming back and when He does it will be in the glory of His power riding on a white horse of war instead of a lowly donkey of peace.

And all of this is true ... because of the cross!