

The Big Entrance – Part I

Matt 21:1-11

Scripture Ref: Zech 9:9-10; Luke 19:41-44; Matt 24:1-2; Ps 118:25-26

As we move into chapter 21 of Matthew's gospel, our journey following Jesus in His ministry takes a dramatic turn. Jesus comes into the holy city of Jerusalem, the week of Passover, and is welcomed as a king. Then He goes into the temple and drives out the money changers and merchants. Next he curses a fig tree, which then withers and dies. We can examine this sequence of events on the surface: The background, the scriptures that were fulfilled, and Jesus response to each situation. And we will. But, is there a bigger picture? Is there something for our lives today that we can take away from these two days of events?

- 1. The dramatic turn – it's a key component of any good drama , large parts of any script or book will be dedicated to setting the stage:**
 - a. Introducing the characters, giving background**
 - b. Laying out several sub-plots which at first seem disconnected**
 - c. . Each set of characters involved in each sub-plot have an angle, some important mission or objective that they are trying to reach...**
 - d. But eventually things begin to converge into one point in time, one interconnected event**
 - e. As you read along you begin to see the connection points – how things might fit together**
 - f. But the characters are often blind to the bigger picture**
- 2. Then comes the dramatic turn – all of the characters and plots intersect and thus begins the final push towards the climactic end.**
 - a. And that is where we are in the account of Jesus ministry...**
 - b. He has been traveling around for three years,**
 - i. declaring the principles of the Kingdom,**
 - ii. performing signs and miracles to confirm His Kingship,**
 - iii. being confronted and opposed at every turn.**
 - c. Now He is approaching his destiny – the cross on calvary.**
 - d. And the opening scene is His dramatic entrance into the Holy City, Jerusalem.**
 - e. But first – He encountered two blind men...**

The Setup – Spiritual Blindness

Matt 20:29 Now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. 30 And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!" 31 Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all

the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!" 32 So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" 33 They said to Him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened." 34 So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.

- 3. At first this seems like just another day in the miracle working life of Jesus – “Oh look, some blind guys, here, your healed”**
 - a. But remember nothing is in God’s word without purpose...
 - b. And I believe that there is a message here –
- 4. These men are blind. In that day there were no “programs” for people with disabilities. There wasn’t a special school to learn Braille; there was no effort to help them function in society.**
 - a. People considered it – **WRONGLY** – a curse from God, and all they could do was get a friend or family member to help them get to a place each day where they could beg for alms. They had no hope for a life.
- 5. Why is that important? Because that is exactly the state of nation of Israel.**
 - a. Sure some had seen and believed – but most of Israel was in a state of spiritual blindness.
 - b. Yet here are these men – physically blind – and they make an interesting declaration: *“Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David”*
 - c. Lord? Son of David? These were Messianic labels...
 - d. In other words these guys might have been physically blind, but they were not without hope, because they recognized Jesus Christ for who He was –
 - e. The Son of God – the one true Messiah, from the line of David, who had come to bring salvation to mankind!
- 6. But this problem of spiritual blindness is not limited to 1st century Israel.**
 - a. See we live in a fallen world, and as a result millions of people are born with both physical and mental disabilities as a result of the degenerative state of man...
 - b. Living with a physical disability can be extremely challenging, but for the Christian there is the grace of God to sustain you, and the promise of the regeneration of our bodies –
- 7. But worse than being physically blind is to be spiritually blind to the person of Jesus Christ.**
 - a. To exist in this world, looking for hope, peace, fulfillment, healing ...
 - b. Looking to the government – to other people – to some dream of money or power...

- c. **And yet all the while be blinded to the true source, the one power, the majesty of the one who is the answer to all that we seek....
The Lord Jesus Christ.**
- 8. **What's my point? Jesus is coming into Jerusalem and these two men that He encountered give us a living picture of the condition of man...**
 - a. **Two men who are physically blind - yet they spiritually see Christ as the Lord – and they receive their sight!**
 - b. **The city of Jerusalem – full of people ready to celebrate Passover – who are physically fine – yet they are spiritually blind to their coming King.**

The Triumphal Entry

21:1 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethpage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. 3 And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."

4 All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

5 *"Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'"*

Zech 9:9-10

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey. 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be 'from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.'

6 So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. 8 And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

- 9. **from this description we get the feeling that the people were really excited about Jesus arrival, and yet Luke gives us some insight Jesus mind...**

Luke 19:41-44

Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

10. It's like these two blind men on the road could see better than the entire city of Jerusalem...

- a. There were probably 2 million people in the city, preparing for Passover.
- b. If you have ever been to one of our Passover Seders, you know that Passover is ALL ABOUT the coming Messiah Jesus Christ.
- c. These people were there for the "ritual" – but were they there for the Savior?
- d. And it broke Jesus heart to see the state of blindness of the people... they could have received Him as Messiah and the Kingdom of God would have been raised up – right then!

11. Instead the same people that cheered Him would later reject Him,

- a. As He was being tried they would say *"We have no king but Caesar"*
- b. And Jesus spoke prophetically of what would come as a result.

43 For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Matt 24:1-2

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

12. Jesus is speaking of the Roman siege of 70 AD, the General Titus ravaged the city.

- a. After months of siege and attempts to breach the walls, the Romans finally made a breach at the Antonia Fortress. After days of street fighting, the Jewish fighters were holed up in the temple.
- b. Titus was going to spare the temple, but one of the soldiers tossed a burning stick into the temple and it caught on fire (yes it was made of stone but there it was filled and trimmed out with wood and fabric).
- c. The temple burned, and all of the gold implements melted, and the gold ran down into the cracks between the blocks, so the soldiers literally tore the temple down stone-by-stone to get at the gold.

9 Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

"Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! 'Hosanna in the highest!" 10 And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" 11 So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."

13. So Jesus sees all these people, and instead of thinking “Alright! They’re happy to see me!” He weeps, because in His heart He understands that they are in fact blinded to the reality of who He is and why He came.

- a. In other words, yes the people were lining the road and cheering, but for the wrong reason

14. The phrase the people were using came from Ps 118:

Ps 118:25-26

25 Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

- a. Note the phrase in the Psalm – “Save Now... send prosperity...” – the people were looking to Jesus to come in and overthrow the Romans and restore the Jewish nation.
- b. They were looking for salvation... from the Romans, from oppression, from the hardship of life... “do something for me Jesus!”

15. You know, it sounds a lot like what we see today... People are looking for something, hope, change, something better - But it centers on the here and now.

- a. Perhaps we’ve had some difficulties in life, some hard knocks, we feel oppressed, held down,
- b. And we think “I’ll give God a try. Maybe He can help”
- c. So we’ll try church for a while, maybe join a bible study, pray a little.... “save me now Jesus!”
- d. You know what that is? My wife calls it “drive through Christianity” – pull up to the talking box – give our order, then drive up to the window, get our blessing, and move on.
- e. McGod!

16. So think about this – we are sitting here in God’s house, and all of us have something to ask of the Lord...

- a. But WHO are we looking for?
- b. Are we looking for McGod who will serve up my immediate need, but if I don’t get what I want, then I move on?
- c. Or do I have my spiritual eyes open to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of all, the rightful King of Kings

- d. Am I willing to surrender all to Him – to give my life to Him?**
- e. To worship Him as God?**

Pray for churches

- Life community
- Church on the cape
- Myrtle Grove
- Port City
- Northside Baptist
- Southside Baptist
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