

## Matthew 21:1-11

### The True King

**Introduction:** Today Christians all around the world are gathered and celebrating palm Sunday or the triumphal entry. This is the occasion where Jesus rode into Jerusalem and was hailed as the long awaited king and savior of Israel.

#### 1. The True King

1. Jerusalem was, “the city of the great king”, the center of Israel’s religious life and messianic expectations. The people throw their coats on the road, like a royal red carpet, and wave palm branches and shout “Save Now Son of David” “blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” The waving of palm branches was symbolic of victory over one’s enemies. The people recognize Jesus as THE TRUE KING - the son of David. The longed for king of Israel, who all the scripture pointed to and anticipated, who would set God’s people free from tyranny and would put everything in the world right and usher in the kingdom reign of peace. The people are recognizing Jesus’ fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9
2. **"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." -Zechariah 9:9**
3. And in response they quote from Psalm 118:25-26: **"Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord." -Psalm 118:25-26**
4. One interesting fact about this event, besides all four Gospel writer’s recording it is, that this is the one time when Jesus does not discourage public recognition (many times Jesus tells those that he has healed to tell no one). In this situation Jesus receives all the praise and recognition from the crowds. Luke records that when the religious leaders heard and saw this they told Jesus to tell the people otherwise or to silence them. Jesus responded, **“I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.”**

5. **What is that about?** The prophets and specifically here Isaiah foretold that when the True King finally came the creation would erupt with praise and recognition of his kingship and in praise of his rule - **“For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the Lord, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.” -Isaiah 55:12-13**
6. This is a picture of the rightful king finally come to set everything right.
7. Jesus is clearly recognized, and embraces this identity, as the long awaited messianic king, the true king.
8. You can't know Jesus, he can't change your life, unless you know him as King.

## 2. The Longing for a King

1. The longing for a king is actually not just a Jewish hope but a human hope.
2. American idealism says, - no sovereign, we rule over ourselves, we praise democracy! Yet we make kings and queens out of movie stars, athletes and other famous people (American Idol (35 million viewers, MTV Cribs, The Bachelor and Bachelorette). Think of Prince William and Kate. We love fantasy fiction Kings, heroes and Saviors like King Arthur, Aragorn from Lord of the Rings, Aslan from the Chronicles of Narnia. We don't have a king and queen but we are obsessed with the idea of a king or queen, we make kings and queens of our own...
  1. “Where men are forbidden to honor a king they honor millionaires, athletes, or film-stars instead: even famous prostitutes or gangsters. For spiritual nature, like bodily nature, will be served; deny it food and it will gobble poison.” - C. S. Lewis
  2. What Lewis is saying is that human nature has a longing to serve worship or crown something, and if we don't have an actual, physical, king or queen, we will find something else to worship even if we know it to be toxic and disastrous.
  3. See you can tell yourself you don't need a king -but you do. You have to live for something, something, or someone gives you purpose or meaning, or worth...whatever your living for does not

serve you, you serve it; you're not in control. Whatever you live for to give yourself meaning in your life, you have to crown it. You have to give it everything... be it career, children, spouse, love, power, political cause... whatever your living for does not serve you, you serve it, you've crowned it..

4. "In the day-to day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship. And the compelling reason for maybe choosing some sort of god or spiritual-type thing to worship—be it JC or Allah, be it YHWH or the Wiccan Mother Goddess, or the Four Noble Truths, or some inviolable set of ethical principles—is that pretty much anything else you worship will eat you alive. If you worship money and things, if they are where you tap real meaning in life, then you will never have enough, never feel you have enough. It's the truth. Worship your body and beauty and sexual allure and you will always feel ugly. And when time and age start showing, you will die a million deaths before they finally grieve you. On one level, we all know this stuff already. It's been codified as myths, proverbs, clichés, epigrams, parables; the skeleton of every great story. The whole trick is keeping the truth up front in daily consciousness." - David Foster Wallace
5. What is the reason we do this, that we give ourselves in service and worship to things, causes and people?? Could it be that our hearts long for the True King? The Bible tells us that we had the true king in the beginning but we lost him because we decided to center the world on ourselves... The Bible describes all of humanity now as lost sheep, who have wandered away from their shepherd... those who are wandering in the dark, blind, groping for the right way, for truth, for light, looking for God, looking to fill this gaping hole we feel inside of us.
  1. If like secularism says, this life is all there is, there is no such thing as a True King that's fantasy and wishful thinking...why do we long for something beyond this life? Why are we so unhappy and unsatisfied?

### **3. Jesus is the lowly king -**

1. **“Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt,[a] the foal of a beast of burden.’”**
2. Look Jesus is clearly hailed as the king coming into Jerusalem, but he’s not on a war horse, he’s on a baby donkey. He’s not the triumphant king bringing judgment but the weak king. The whole scene is a picture of his lowliness and humility.
  1. “I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between Him and every person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded His empire upon love; and at this hour millions of men would die for him.” -Napoleon Bonaparte
3. You must serve Jesus as King because he’s the only king that won’t oppress you, that won’t crush you. Because he alone is the humble king, the servant king, the shepherd king.
  1. **Jesus says again and again in the gospels that he came “not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.” In John 10, Jesus calls himself the good shepherd - He says, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”**
  2. You see all of our problems in life stem from this one problem - we worship things, we worship the creation rather than the creator, and they are a weight to us, they oppress us. You see, your career, your great lover, your family..if you live for these things and fail they cannot ultimately forgive you or die for your sins. Jesus is the only one who will forgive you if you fail him.
  3. In fact he became weak for you, vulnerable, killable, all so that you might be brought back to God who is the fountain of living water; who is the source of life that you were meant to feed and drink on.
  4. We might think, ‘I don’t want to give my life to Jesus, I don’t want to lose control’, but you’ve already lost control because you’re already serving something, you’ve already crowned something... You need the true king.. the one you were created to love and

serve, he's also the only king that won't oppress you, he's the redeemer - he died for you, for your sins, to set you free.. He did not come in wrath and judgment with the sword of God's justice, instead he came lowly and weak to bear our judgement. He's the king who comes to relieve our burdens not add to them.

1. "If Jesus is the center of your life, and you fail Him, He will forgive you. Anything else you base your life on you will have to live up to. But there is NO OTHER center for your life which died for you! Everybody has to live for something. Whatever that something is becomes "Lord of your life," You crown it, whether you think of it that way or not. Jesus is the only Lord who, if you receive him, will fulfill you completely, and, if you fail him, will forgive you eternally." -Tim Keller

#### **4. How can he be your king?**

1. **You must worship him.** Your life must center on someone or something. To truly make Jesus your king, your life must center on him, he must become everything. But you worship him, not out of obligation, but because you have seen and experienced how lovely and wonderful he is. Because you have experienced his love and saving grace, you have seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. You have come to see that he is the true king you were made to serve and worship. The only one deserving of all glory and praise..
2. **You must obey him** - if you only obey God because you understand you haven't actually obey, you've entered into an agreement and he's simply your consultant. That is not obedience. You must obey Jesus not because you understand all that he asks of you but because you believe that he is true, he loves you, and that he is good.
  1. But you also must obey him because you understand that this is what you were created for, and who you were created to be. As Lewis says, "God made us: invented us as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on petrol, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other."

2. When you submit to Jesus when you obey him, you begin to find your true identity, a new and lasting peace, a whole new hope filled way to live.
3. Listen to the offer of the humble King - **“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” - Matthew 11:25-30**