

The King has Come

Matthew 21:1-17

Who has the right to rearrange your life and my life?

In little ways

In really big ways

Jerusalem, the Temple, and Passover

Jerusalem

The epicenter of Jewish life: social, political, economic, and religious

"The city of our God, the Great King" *Psalms 48:1-2*

The Temple

The epicenter of Jerusalem, especially religiously

Passover

One of the 3 great feasts (perhaps the greatest)

Jerusalem at Passover

Those who could travel to Jerusalem at Passover would

Perhaps normal population: 30,000

Perhaps at Passover: 180,000

The Temple is the center of the Passover

Jerusalem, the Temple, and Passover → Jesus

Traveling to Jerusalem for the Passover

Now on the last leg of the journey: Jericho to Jerusalem

With...

The 12 apostles

Many more disciples (including the prominent women)

The mother of 2 of the 12, so probably other relatives...

And a "great crowd"

Matthew 21:1-17

1-6: Jesus deliberately claimed to be the Messiah & King

Jesus deliberately fulfills the direct, predictive prophecy of Zechariah

Less about fulfilling details of prophecy

More about fulfilling the big idea of prophecy

Zechariah prophesied the return of God when Jerusalem would become the center of worship for all nations

Jesus deliberately claims to be the fulfillment of that great vision of God!

Yet in humility

Riding a borrowed young beast of burden

7-9: The crowds from Galilee enthusiastically agreed!

They treated Jesus like a victorious king

They praised Him as the Messiah, the promised king and rescuer from God

This was a very dramatic entrance to Jerusalem!

Earlier Jesus silenced anyone who knew that He was the Messiah

Now He leads the people to make the claim!

10-11: The city of Jerusalem was troubled

Crowds from Galilee knew and praised Jesus

The whole of Jerusalem was skeptical

Probably the people who called for His crucifixion

“STIRRED” is the same word as “the earth SHOOK” when Jesus died and “the guards TREMbled” when the angels rolled the stone away from Jesus’ tomb

“Who is this?” is an objection rather than seeking information
Galilean crowds were right, yet incomplete

12-13: Jesus deliberately claimed authority over the Temple

By overturning what the Temple authorities allowed, Jesus claimed highest authority among the Jews
This significantly disrupted Temple activities at one of the most important times of the year!

People expected the Messiah to overthrow Rome

Instead Jesus challenged the Jewish authorities!

Jesus claimed to speak for God in the Temple

14: Jesus miraculously healed in the Temple

The blind and lame would normally not be allowed to enter the Temple

They came to Jesus in the Temple

Were they invited? Or just expected a welcome?

Earlier miracles caused controversy on Sabbaths

Now in the Temple itself

15-16: The Jewish leaders were very troubled

By miracles in the temple

By children praising Jesus in the Temple

Their question is a demand that Jesus stop

Psalm 8: “How majestic is Your Name!”

Jesus: God is prompting kids to praise Jesus!

17: Having confronted the leaders, Jesus gave them time to decide how to respond

Their response...

Matthew 21:23

This question was not a request for information

It was a rejection of the claims Jesus’ actions made:

He is God’s Messiah, the promised King

He has authority over the Temple

He deserves praise as God in the Temple

Jesus gave the religious leaders 2 options:

Submit completely to Jesus

Reject His claims

There is no middle ground with Jesus

The Big Idea

Jesus is God the King over all including every part of our lives

Who gets to rearrange the furniture in a house?

Who gets to break down walls?

Who can tell us to move?

Who gets to rearrange our lives?

Jesus’ total claim over the lives of people...

All our possessions: Matthew 19:16-21

Family relationships and cultural values: Matthew 8:21-22

Life itself: Matthew 16:24-25

Jesus’ promise to those who bow to Him

To those who submit to Jesus, He will say: “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!” *Matthew 25:21*

When we bow to Him, we can expect...

Honor
Authority and blessings
The love and happiness of God Himself!

When Jesus 'rearranges the furniture' of our lives, it is not to take from us → it is to give us far more!

Application

Submit every part of our lives to Jesus

He is God over all

He is completely good and generous and kind and wise

He already gave His life for us when we were His enemies → there is nothing He wouldn't give us now! *Romans 8:32*

To treat Jesus as merely an advisor, a helper in time of need, our Sunday morning focus...

misses the best gifts He wants to give!

When Jesus 'rearranges the furniture' of our lives, it is not to take from us → it is to give us far more!

Matthew 16:24-27

Is there something you are holding back?

Good things: money, time, relationships, abilities, passions, identity, hopes, dreams, ...

Bad things: fears, anger, regrets, grief, hate, pride, ...

All lesser gods are terrible masters!

They never fully give what they claim to give

In the end, they always steal, kill, and destroy

Jesus gives life, freedom, and joy to those who bow to Him alone: Matthew 19:29

Rejoice that no other power, human or demonic, can resist the power of Jesus!

Nations are a drop in a bucket!

He redirects the hearts of kings

He can send or stop armies and earthquakes

He can send or stop disease and overcome death itself

"If God is for us, who can be against us?" *Romans 8:31*

Conclusion

He has come to give life and joy to all who will submit to Him as King over all

Reflection Questions

1. Is there a time when you have submitted a valued part of your life to Jesus, putting it in His hands? What happened?
2. "When Jesus 'rearranges the furniture' of our lives, it is not to take from us → it is to give us far more!" Do you know any examples of that, whether in your life or in others' lives?
3. Is there something you hesitate to submit to Jesus today? What is it? Why do you hesitate?
4. Given our world today, what difference does it make to realize that Jesus has total authority over every other authority? How does that fit with the ongoing troubles we see in the world?