



## “When the Cheering Stops...”

Matthew 21:1-17

by Pastor Tim Dodson

at JF Believers Church

in Menomonie, Wisc

on February 25, 2018

Matthew 21:1-17 *Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 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. "And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "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.'" So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 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!" And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee." Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise'?" Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.*

It had been a long 3 years! 3 years of public ministry... 3 years of hot dusty roads, scarcity of food and funds, persecution and attempts to ‘fly under the radar.’ Oh, there had been some great moments! People healed of sickness, some coming back alive after they were dead, even those freed from demonic control. There was the feeding of 5000 plus with just a couple of loaves of bread and some fish. There was the whole ‘walking on water’ thing and the time He calmed the storm with his words while everyone thought they were going to die. Hmmm... some crazy days indeed. Once He made a blind man see. Once he even healed a man from miles away without even meeting him! What a ride it’s been. And now here we are. This is it.

### ***The king had come...***

In the late 1800’s, a man by the name of Sir Robert Anderson...a Scotland yard detective in the age of Jack the Ripper, dug deep into scripture, Jewish calendar, and historical math to satisfy his own curiosity as well as to establish prophetic fact from fiction. From his research he penned a book entitled, "The Coming Prince." In his book Anderson details the record of Daniel chapter 9 which we now know may hold the most amazing prophetic passage in all the Bible. Who would ever dream of predicting an event 500 years into the future and naming a specific day on which it would occur? But according to scripture, one man did just that. His name was Daniel, and his prediction was the exact day Jesus would ride into Jerusalem...what we today call “Palm Sunday.” Sir Robert Anderson, by a careful analysis of the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27, calculated that Jesus, to the very day, fulfilled Daniel’s prophecy concerning the appearance of the Messiah.

Dr. Alva McClain has written, “April 6, 32 A.D., therefore, is fixed definitely as the end of the era of the first 69 Weeks; and according to Daniel’s prophecy, it should mark the very day of Messiah’s manifestation as the Prince of Israel.’ Without attempting to enter into the clear but intricate chronological calculations set forth by Anderson in his book, ‘The Coming Prince’ (Pages 95-105), we can state positively his conclusion that April 6, 32 A.D., was the tenth of Nisan, that momentous day on which our Lord, in fulfilment of Messianic prophecy, rode up to Jerusalem on the ‘foal of an ass’ and offered Himself as the Prince and King of Israel.” (Alva J. McClain, in his book *Daniel’s Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), p. 20. (For further detail, see [www.aboutbibleprophecy.com/weeks.htm](http://www.aboutbibleprophecy.com/weeks.htm).)

Jesus was not just tripping into His destiny. From the dawn of time He had a plan. He was on a *mission*. It was for this that He had come. Though Christ was all deity, he was also all man. 1John 3:2 reminds us that we will one day be like Him. “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” Ephesians 5:1-2 tells us that such reflection may *end* in the eternal realm, but certainly not *begin* there! “Therefore be **imitators of God**, as beloved children...” John 14:12 says “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will **do the same works I have done, and even greater works**, because I am going to be with the Father. If Christ was on a life mission, what does that say concerning us and our priorities?

Everything He had done and taught was leading up to this moment. All His roads led to here. Behind Him was three years of the miraculous, the trials, the testing’s, and the blessings. In other words, *life*. And now, the cross was before Him. His destiny was waiting. The redemption of mankind was driving Him forward...

That prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27 was given predicting the exact date that the long-awaited Messiah would arrive in Jerusalem. And when that day came, He alone road into Jerusalem... and thus offered mankind the only choice as both personal redeemer and Savior of the world. Jesus saw to it that He arrived right on que that day. He closed the door on all the would-be messiahs that would follow throughout the ages. If Jesus was not the Messiah, then there never would be, for all of time. Hundreds of years prior to this event, Zechariah makes a bold prediction: “Rejoice, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey — riding on a donkey’s colt.”

“Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem!” Indeed they did! The people rejoiced at the coming of their king! “**Hosanna, Hosanna! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!**” The text tells us that “a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David!”

What a humble entrance! Instead of coming on a horse as a conquering general, He came on a colt as was customary for royalty. And we can’t miss the fact that His humility extended to even the fact that His transportation was borrowed! The masses cried out “Hosanna” which essentially means "save now!" These who ushered Jesus into this part of His journey, recognized and heralded the arrival of the Son of David; which is an open acknowledgement of His deity and position.

Verse 10 tells us that the city was *moved*. “*Moved*” in the Greek is the word “seismos.” This is where we get our word which refers to earthquakes. A fitting description of the effect that Jesus had and *has* on the world around us!

Then there was those who stood just outside of this triumphant display. They once again, as has occurred numerous times over the previous three years, asked the most basic question of our real and observable faith: “*who is this?*” It was asked in Luke 5:21, Luke 7:49, Luke 9:9, John 1:19, John 12:34, here in Matthew 21, and more. It is the greatest question of your life, for the answer has profound and sweeping ramifications on your present living and your eternal being!

Was He a prophet? A wise man? A great teacher? Maybe He is your doctor or your “shrink.” Maybe He is your genie or your Santa Claus? Maybe you see Him as your “club president” or your “town mayor.” Perhaps you will go so far as to see Him as your “sin payment benefactor.” But the critical question...the *crucial question* to your true standing before God is, “*is He your Lord and Master?*”

The people rejoiced at His arrival that day, but just who was it...*in their minds and hearts*, that had come? Was it the “food king?” John 6:26 says “Jesus replied, “*I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs.*” Was it the great healer and magician? Luke 11:29 warns “*And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, ‘This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.’*”

Just who is it that you are here to worship today?

It’s an important question because those who ushered Jesus into Jerusalem...the very people who were chanting “Hosanna, Hosanna to the Son of David” were the very people who, just a few short days later, would cry out with equal conviction: “*Crucify Him! Crucify Him!*” Why? How could such a thing as this have occurred? No doubt because Jesus would not be the person they wanted Him to be. If we watch what occurs in the historical account over the few days between this point and the cross, perhaps it will shed some light as to what happens in the minds and hearts of those who will cheer Him one moment and will wash their hands of Him the next.

Immediately upon His arrival, and for the second time in His earthly ministry, Jesus went into the temple grounds to “clean house.” We must see that Jesus was *ending* His earthly ministry in the same position as He *began* it. He hadn’t changed His mind on these things, nor had He softened as the years went by! Just as He hasn’t changed His mind about the things He taught and instructed in our day either. There are plenty of folks and churches (I use the term loosely) that say He has. Entire religious systems have been built around a different Jesus...one of their liking...one that fits their lives and desires better than the one in scripture.

However, we see what Jesus thinks about all of this, as He once again turns over the tables of the money changers and those in the business of bastardizing the church. He drives them out of the temple...out of the “House of Prayer.” That was His “first mistake” as far as religion goes. Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. But those who had their own version of religion saw the wonderful things that He did, and the people shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” and scripture records that they were “indignant.” *Strike two.*

Jesus understood what the Father wanted for us: He wants relationship, a pure heart, a committed life and a holy church. Jesus knew that what God wanted ultimately was for us to bring our lives to the cross with Him. We had to die also. But just like then, there will always be those who will try to change His message, and change His purpose to fit modern thinking and fleshly desires. They will tell you that a moderate involvement in ‘all things religious’ is enough to satisfy our Creator, but such is the lie of Satan. The same Satan who told Eve, “*did God really say?*” The same who tells us that God’s grace is a covering for knowing sin and holiness is so “yesterday.” The one who tells us that radical commitment and servanthood is not necessary. But Jesus said in Luke 14:26 “*If anyone comes to Me and does not (‘express a love and commitment to me that would be so extreme that it would be in comparison like a hatred’) for his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.*”

If we buy the line of Satan...and allow compromise to find its way into the finished work and the “closed system” of faith living, then we stand together with those who cried out “*Hosanna, Hosanna*” one minute and “*Crucify Him! Crucify Him!*” the next. A life in Christ is one of emphatic adjectives! It is a life of radical manifest. Sometimes a guy has to “turn over some tables...”

But again, don’t expect the world or even the average church folks to pat you on the back for doing so. In fact, they will likely hate you for it, possibly persecute you for it. And just maybe, they’ll cry out “*crucify Him...crucify Him!*” when it comes to you also!

Jesus herein made the blind to see and the lame to walk. He reached out to these who were never welcome in the church of that day, the outcasts, the nobodies, the sick, and the hurting. What they needed more than anything, is the same thing that we need more than anything. They were *healed*, and so are we. Spiritually and/or physically! But there were those there who were “indignant.” Oh yes, how they are indignant still! To presume that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah, God in flesh, our Redeemer; our *only* Redeemer; the narrow gate, our Savior, our Lord, our *God*. This simple carpenter from Nazareth? Where is the royal procession? Where is the armed forces? Where is the crown? Where is my stuff? Where is my easy life? Where is my paved road? They were indignant at the praise, and they were indignant at the wonderful things He did. *THIS* was not their Messiah!

Today, we see the same indignation on the lips of so many throughout the world.

- The intellectual asks for the Lord’s credentials.
- The “peacenik” wants to see his “peace, not war” picket sign.
- The rebel wants Him to march on Washington and deny His tax contributions.
- The anti-abortionists want to find him marching and chanting in front of abortion clinics.
- The liberal wants a cool Messiah who understands today’s standards.
- The conservative wants a republican Messiah.

We all in truth, want to invent our own personal Messiah.

They asked, “*Don’t you hear what these people are saying? They’re saying you are the Messiah, that you are the ONE, the “Way, the Truth, and the Light.”*” What do you have to say about that? Luke’s account of this story added one caveat: “*...He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”*” When all the cheering stops, where will you be? **What will you be?**