

Matthew 21:1-17

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Date: 18 September 2022

[0 : 00] and going into the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew chapter 21, Matthew chapter 21. We are at that second hinge in the Gospel of Matthew, where now we are changing course once again, but this is one that is celebrated every year on what we call Palm Sunday.

It is marked on our calendars. It is an event which we set aside, even if we as a church don't set it aside in a celebratory way. It is set apart in our calendars as the week which precedes Easter.

And it is there because, not like many of our holidays, it is not a tradition that was established by some many, many years afterwards. It is not something that took the place of a worldly festival, as many other, even Christian festivals did.

Rather, it is one that we find in Scripture that has very clear dates and times with it. We are at the triumphal entry of Christ. We are no longer validating who Christ is.

We are no longer having our faith set towards Jerusalem. Today, we have the blessing of seeing the King come into Jerusalem. So we are going to be in Matthew chapter 21, verses 1 through 17, as our text this morning.

[1 : 21] If you are physically able, I would ask if you would join with me as we stand together and we read the Word of God from Matthew chapter 21, starting in verse 1.

And we will read down to the 17th verse. When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage at 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 there with a coat with her.

Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, The Lord has need of them, and immediately he will send them. This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet, Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you, gentle and mounted on a donkey, even a coat the foal of a beast of burden.

The disciples went and did, just as Jesus had instructed them. And they brought the donkey and the coat and laid their coats on them, and he sat on the coats. Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road.

And the crowds going ahead of him and those who followed were shouting, Hosanna to the son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

[2 : 34] When he had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, Who is this? And the crowds were saying, This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee. And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves.

And he said to them, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a robber's den. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, Hosanna to the son of David, they became indignant and said to him, Do you hear what these children are saying?

And Jesus said to them, Yes, if you never read, Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies, you have prepared praise for yourself. And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany and spent the night there.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this opportunity. We thank you for the chance that we have together, together as your people, to read your word and to hear your word. But Lord, more than that, we thank you for the opportunity to come together in your presence.

[3 : 45] Lord, would you speak to us now? Would you open up your word to our hearts and minds? Will we have a greater understanding of it, so that we can stand in a greater relationship with you? May it be that which transforms our life for your glory and honor, and yours alone.

And we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. I want you to see from the text this morning, the entrance of the king. The entrance of the king.

Ever since Matthew chapter 16, that great turning door in the gospel in which Peter makes his confession, not just his confession, but the confessions of the disciples there, that you are the Christ, the son of the living God.

Ever since the confession of Peter, Jesus has set his face towards Jerusalem. Beginning with that confession, he began to describe to Peter and the other apostles what would take place in Jerusalem.

We know from reading the biblical account that over the course of days, three times he told them clearly what awaited him when he got there. It was not that there was progressive revelation to Jesus because Jesus fully knew.

[4 : 50] He understood. The author of the book of Hebrews tells us that who for the joy set before him endured the cross. He not only knew that the cross was waiting, he knew the joy on the other side of the cross, right?

He knew the joy not only of the empty tomb, but the joy of reconciling man to a holy God. He knew the joy of gaining a throne which others could come to and cast their crowns before.

He knew the joy of welcoming sinners into the presence of a holy God because of the price that he would pay. He did not begin to understand the further along he went.

He began to reveal to his disciples the further they followed him. The revelation was not to Christ. The revelation was to the disciples. And we know that the longer they followed him on the way, he began to tell them more clearly exactly what would take place until we get to the point in Matthew 20 when he tells them very clearly that he's going to go, he's going to be betrayed, he's going to be mocked, he's going to be beaten, he's going to be handed over to the Gentiles, they're going to crucify him on the cross.

After they crucify him, he's going to be raised on the third day and he will come back. He clearly tells them these things. And yet we know as we progress further and we get to the passion account that these things seem to be hidden from them because one reality that we understand is though the very word of God is clear on all things, the people of God at times have a hard time accepting or even understanding it until we're put in that position of desperation.

[6 : 15] But yet we see that that day of anticipation is fully come. And the king is finally coming into the king's city. This is the city of David, right?

This is Jerusalem. This is Zion. This is the place where David said, I'm going to set up my kingdom there. It was in Jerusalem that God made a promise to David that a descendant of his, the seed of David, would set up on the throne eternal.

And by the way, that promise is not to Solomon. That promise is not to any other one. That promise is to Jesus. He did not tell David that his seeds with an S would set up on his throne. He did not tell David that there would be this eternal lineage from him that would continue on for generations and generations and generations to come.

And that this eternal lineage of David would always possess the throne of his people. He did not say that. He said the seed, singular, that there would be one who would set up on the throne eternal.

You remember, when we opened up the gospel of Matthew, we opened it up in a peculiar place. We opened it up in the book of Isaiah. And the reason we opened it up in the book of Isaiah is because Matthew is writing to a Jewish audience.

[7 : 21] This is good stuff, right? Stay with me. He's writing to a Jewish audience and the Jewish people had an expectation. And that expectation was very clearly defined by the prophet Isaiah.

And Isaiah prophesied of a coming king. And that's why when Matthew began his gospel, the good news, he said, we're not waiting on a coming king. We're celebrating the king that has come, right?

He is no longer talking about one who will be, but one who already is. And he does no longer point to someone who's going to be the king according to the lineage of David. He is showing them who is already the king according to the lineage of David.

And that is why Matthew begins his gospel with a genealogy. And the genealogy takes us all the way back to David. And it takes us all the way through this seed of David. And in Matthew's genealogy, you remember, right?

Because it's important. The reason we have two genealogies of Christ. You have one in Matthew and you have one in Luke. Those are important because in Matthew's genealogy, Jesus has a legal right to the throne.

[8 : 20] Remember that? Because Jesus has a legal right. Every one of the ones in Matthew's genealogy are those that have followed David and set up on his throne. And therefore, he possesses a legal right to the throne.

And that legal right comes through his earthly father, Joseph, his adoptive father. By the way, adoption is all throughout scripture, right? His adopted father, Joseph. And that legal right, which in the Jewish mindset, would have went through the man, all of a sudden because God had called Joseph to be betrothed to a virgin named Mary.

And then all of a sudden, Joseph's virgin fiancée becomes pregnant. And God does not make mistakes, by the way, because Joseph had a legal right to the throne. Legal right. But when we go and reconcile that legal right found in Matthew, we find out there's a problem.

We go, uh-oh, because we start opening up the books of the Old Testament. And when we open up the books of the Old Testament, we find out that one of those in the genealogy of Christ, according to his adopted father, Joseph doesn't have a spiritual right to the throne.

He is the one that is there when they are deported from the Babylonian captivity because he is so awful in the sight of God that God makes a declaration that no descendant of his will ever set up on the throne.

[9 : 37] And we're met with one of those scriptural uh-ohs. Because though, according to Jewish mindset, he has a legal right, according to the word of God, he has no spiritual right. But the good news is, is that Jesus is not of that bloodline because Joseph is an adopted father.

But he is of Mary's bloodline, which takes us all the way back to the proto-evangelium in Genesis 3.15 for the seed, again, singular. This all matters when he comes in, by the way.

Stay with me. You say, I thought we were talking about the triumphal intro. Well, you need to know who's coming, right? If somebody's showing up, you need to know who's coming. If I told you I was coming to your house today, that'd be one thing because you knew who was coming.

What if I just said someone was coming to your house today? You know, I could have sent one of my kids or it could have been the president or it could have been, well, someone's coming to you. It all matters about who's coming, right? So it matters when we understand who comes.

Because according to Matthew, he has a legal right to come into Jerusalem and say, this is my throne. But according to the rest of scripture, through Joseph, he has no spiritual right. Well, then we open up our Bibles and we go to the book of Luke.

[10 : 42] And in the third chapter of the book of Luke, we have another genealogy of Christ which seems to vary a little bit. As a matter of fact, it varies after David. It varies in which legal descent.

See, in Matthew, it follows Solomon's line. In Luke, it doesn't follow Solomon's line. It follows Nathan's line, which we look at that and we go, well, that makes no sense because Nathan never sat up on the throne.

All we know about Nathan is he was a son of David. Just because there's one obscure passage in the Old Testament that mentions that David had all these wives and we're not here to talk about that, okay? That's just, that's not God's intention, but that's man's plan.

But that David had these wives and these are the sons that David had. And in that list of the sons, there's this man named Nathan. Now, what's Nathan got to do with anything? Nathan's got a lot to do with the fact that when we get to Luke, we find out that Mary was of the descendants of Nathan.

Now, wait a minute. Did God make that promise to David or did God make that promise to Solomon? God made that promise to David. The seed of David. He did not say it had to flow through Solomon and all those others, the Jeconiahs who had no spiritual right.

[11 : 46] So now all of a sudden, we see this dual lineage of Christ and not only according to the Jewish mindset would he have a legal right to the throne, now according to the bloodline, because he is the seed of a woman, Mary, in the gospel of Luke, Jesus also has a spiritual right to the throne.

Friend, I want to tell you that when he rode the coat of a donkey into Jerusalem, he's the only man that had the right to be on the throne. And by the way, in all of history, he's the only one that can still prove his genealogy, because when Rome set Jerusalem on fire in A.D. 70, the very thing they burned was the temple, and the reason they burned the temple is because the walls were overlaid with gold.

Remember that? Herod the Great was a good builder, and they wanted the gold out of the rocks of the temple, so they set the temple on fire, because if you burn it hot enough, the gold melts, and you can catch it as it comes out. So they set the temple on fire, and in setting the temple on fire, they burned up the ancestry records of every person in Jerusalem, not only of Jerusalem, but of all the Jewish people.

There are no ancestry.coms for the Jewish people because they were burned up. They can follow him from that point on in history, but they cannot go further back. Nobody but Jesus can prove he is a descendant of David.

Nobody, because everybody else's was burned up in A.D. 70. Do you think God made a mistake? No, I think God put a period. He said, boom, I told you. When he comes back, many men have set the Bible on fire, but yet the word of God endures, because, friend, listen to me.

[13 : 11] In Matthew 21, the king comes home. It's the entrance of the king, and we would expect what we see in the book of Revelation, the king coming on a white horse.

That's a horse of battle. The psalmist tells us that the horse is prepared for battle, that he's raging. That's what we expect.

That's not what we see. That's not what we see. When he walks in or rides in, by the way, this is the only time in Scripture other than Revelations.

This is the only time in Scripture where we see Jesus traveling any other way but walking or riding in a boat. And even when he was on the sea, he didn't have to ride in a boat. Sometimes he could walk while he was there, too.

This is the only other time we see him traveling across land in Scripture that he's riding something, which tells me this is an intentional decision to show us a reality.

[14 : 13] The king is coming into Jerusalem. We see, first and foremost, the prophetic fulfillment. It says, When they had approached Jerusalem and they had come to Bethphage.

We're not exactly sure where Bethphage is. We think that it's somewhere between Bethany and Jerusalem, which is a little bit over. Bethany is about a little bit over a mile, mile and a half outside of Jerusalem.

So somewhere between the two. We do know it's around the Mount of Olives. We also know that it is his habit to stop at the Mount of Olives every night and pray. It is also his habit to be there and gather together with his disciples.

On the night of his betrayal, they'll eat the Last Supper. They'll be there around the Last Supper. They'll break bread. They'll drink of the cup of the vine. Judas Iscariot will be dismissed. What you do, do quickly, right?

After Judas Iscariot is dismissed, they'll sing a hymn together. They'll sing what is called the Hallel. They'll sing a hymn together. They'll have a praise service with one another. Can you imagine singing a hymn with Jesus?

[15 : 10] Because that hymn was all about him. The Hallel was all about the coming Messiah, the coming Savior. We have a bit of it in our scripture this morning. Could you imagine singing that with him? And then they'll cross the Kidron Valley.

They'll go down and go back up and they'll go up on the Mount of Olives. And as they go up on the Mount of Olives, as was his custom, Judas Iscariot will lead with him some officials. Jesus says, this is where I've been.

Are you coming? It's also his place of betrayal. But before he's betrayed, he's got to make a picture of who he really is. Because as they're drawing near, no longer is his face set towards Jerusalem.

He is there. Luke tells us that as he's riding this coat of a donkey, that he weeps over Jerusalem. Because from that elevation, you're coming in, you can see Jerusalem at a distance.

You've still got to cross the Kidron Valley. You've got to go up and down and something. It's about that place where he's proceeding nearer and nearer to the city. He begins to weep and to mourn. And he makes that declaration, if Jerusalem only knew who it was that was coming.

[16 : 13] By the way, he's giving them every opportunity to know. Because he tells them when they get to Bethphage, he says, go into the city opposite you and you will find there a donkey and a colt. Bring them both.

Now, some, by the way, you just need to understand this. Some Bible scholars find contradiction with this because Mark and Luke tell us that they only bring the colt, right? They don't bring both of them.

Let's not be surprised by the reality that they bring both of them. Because this colt is someone that no one has ever ridden upon because that is the prophecy. This is an unbroken colt.

Matthew just opens it up for us a little bit more. I would be more surprised if he just went and got the colt and brought it to Jesus as opposed to if he brought both of them. Listen, growing up, I had horses. I love horses.

Some of you do too. And I had my old mare. I loved her. I'd ride her. But when Carrie and I were dating, I would let her ride my other horse. Now, my other horse's name was Shadow. Shadow was the colt of my mare.

[17:08] He was a little bit smaller, so he was perfect for Carrie. Now, Shadow was a pretty good rider, but he only did good when he followed his mama. Right? He was broke to ride by following his mama.

So I would go before and she would come after her. We always got in trouble if he ever got in front. The poor thing just didn't know where he was going. I think the last time we did that, Carrie said, I'll never ride him again. And that was probably the last time she ever rode him.

But we do not be surprised here when they bring the mother and the colt because they're going to lead the donkey before and the colt will follow and Christ is going to be on the colt.

So they go and they get him and they say the master has need or the Lord has need. Now, we know from all the gospel accounts that those who were there saw him untying him and as many of you would because this is the equivalent to a tractor, right?

You're going out and you're going to get my tractor. I'm going to say, what are you doing? Get my tractor. And they go out and they untie him. I said, what are you doing with those? And they said, well, the Lord has need them. They say, okay, you can go. Now, we need to understand, did Jesus make this or were these people who follow?

[18:06] We don't know. We know the text says that they allowed them to use them with this declaration and more than likely, we could think on their way back to Bethany, they returned them, right? It's not like Jesus just rode them into Jerusalem and let them go. They're going to take care of them because nobody can take care of your possessions like the Lord can take care of your possessions.

So it's okay. It's good to let him take them, right? He wants to use it. Let him use it because he will return it better than he's ever used it. He returned an unbroken coat that had been broken to ride. Isn't that good?

Someone had a useless coat out here, couldn't do anything with it and Jesus rode that thing. And we see here his mastery over creation. We should not be surprised when the creator can set up on his creation and all his calm, again, walking of the waters of the sea.

So they go and they get the two and they bring them to them and it says that they put their coats upon them. By the way, that's not like they're trying to put a saddle on them. They don't have to put a saddle on them. This is imagery of a king coming.

We're going to cloak the animal that the king is going to ride on. This is an intentional imagery. They take their outer garments off. They would have still had their undergarments on and they cast it across and then they put it on the road, which by the way, this was always in Jewish history and in ancient history, a picture of the king coming into his city.

[19:22] The road was always overlaid before him. The picture I want you to see is what they call the messianic secret, which I think is, I don't know a better way to say it, just hogwash, okay?

I know that's not a very intelligent way to say it, but there are some people who say that there was this messianic secret that Jesus didn't want anybody to know, that he was always telling people to be quiet, don't say this, don't go tell anyone, just go home, go to the temple and show yourself clean, but don't tell anyone, there's no messianic secret, but if there was, those days are over because Jesus is making a very, very public demonstration of an eternal reality.

For any onlooker, there would be no denying what was going on. The city of Jerusalem probably was inhabited between 200,000 to 300,000 people, they think, at this time.

That was probably its normal habitation. People were crammed together, even at that. But during the Passover feast, many historians and biblical scholars looking back think that during the Passover feast, because the Jewish people would have made this commute, would have went there, this journey, during the Passover feast, the city of Jerusalem would be crammed with some 2 million plus individuals.

People sleeping on the streets, people sleeping in houses. This is why Christ saying out in Bethany makes perfect sense because in all the cities, if you can take a 200,000 or 300,000 city and put 2 million people in it, you can know how they overflow.

[20 : 58] People would have been everywhere. And if Christ was trying to keep it a secret, he picked a real bad time to go public. But there is no secret here. He is clearly demonstrating an eternal reality.

And Matthew tells us this was to fulfill the prophecy spoken by Zechariah in Zechariah chapter 9. And the prophecies declared to us there, say to the daughter of Zion, right, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Zion is Jerusalem, say to the daughter of Zion, behold, your king is coming to you, gentle and mounted on a donkey.

That word there is the foal, the coat of a donkey, even on a coat, the foal of a beast of burden. Very clear. If you were to go to Zechariah and you were to continue reading that, you would say that he brings his salvation with him.

He's coming to reign. He's coming to rule. Jesus here enters Jerusalem with prophetic fulfillment.

One of the most wondrous things in the life of Christ is the reality that every single prophecy concerning his first coming finds their fulfillment in but one person in history, and that is Jesus.

[22 : 09] But one person. And we see this prophetic fulfillment as he comes. The second thing we see in this entrance of the king is the praise accepted.

The praise accepted. The very act of casting their coats upon the donkeys, the very act of putting their coats on the road and cutting the leaves of the branches and putting them on the road for them to walk on and those carrying behind and in front, which would have been where we get Palm Sunday from, right?

The very act itself was a visible demonstration of praise. To lay your coat on the ground or to go and do the, to take the effort and the energy of gathering leaves and branches and putting them on the road was to give a visible demonstration that the one you're casting it before is worthy of your admiration and your praise and your reverence.

It was a visible demonstration that this one who is coming is worthy. I mean, think about this. It is not giving someone your coat to wear. That is giving someone your coat to walk on.

It is taking your outer garment, the thing that everybody sees, and putting it on the ground for a donkey to walk across. It is publicly displaying that the one that is on that donkey is worthy of my praise.

[23 : 29] And Christ nowhere tells them not to do it. Nowhere. We know one thing throughout Scripture. The Word of God is very clear.

When we praise something we are not supposed to praise, we are admonished and rebuked for doing so. When God's people turn to idols, God rebukes them. There's always a prophet that rises up.

When man falls down before an angel and begins to praise that angel, the angel rebukes them and says, don't do that. I'm just an angel. When man accepts praise as they should not, as in the book of Acts, when Herod Antipas accepts praise, and they say, it's the voice of a God, not the voice of a man.

It says that worms came in and ate his stomach and he died. It's pretty gruesome. We find in Scripture that there is nothing that accepts praise and gets away with it or nothing of heavenly creation that will receive praise without rebuking us.

But yet here, we see praise being accepted because he is the king. He is the king of kings and Lord of lords. He allows them to cast their coats. He allows them to put the branches on the ground.

[24 : 39] And then he goes one step further because as they are entering in, they begin declaring this praise, this hymn that they would sing. This is a portion of a hymn that they would sing each and every year as a reminder of their anticipation.

They would sing this at the Feast of Booths as they reminded themselves that there is a Savior coming. This is the hope and the longing of man. And they would say, Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Now, Hosanna means save us. Save us now. That's what it means. It's transliteration is save us now.

This is a direct quote from a psalm that would be sung about the inhabitants of the Jerusalem people and the Jewish nation as a declaration to save us. Oh God, save us now.

And then they ascribe this very clear messianic title, the Son of David. Go back to our introduction. The seed of David was set upon the throne. Their expectation would be that God would raise up a son of David that would save them now.

[25 : 48] Save us now. Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. He accepts this praise. As a matter of fact, it tells us in the other Gospels that when the Pharisees come in and they rebuke him for accepting this praise and tell him to tell his disciples to be quiet, Jesus says, if they were quiet, the rocks would begin to cry out.

Which shows us this other reality that kind of humbles us a little bit. We don't have to praise God. God doesn't need us to praise him because if we don't praise him, the rocks will praise him. We get to praise him.

Big difference, right? He will be praised. He will be praised. Jesus said, if they were silent, the rocks would have said it.

Let's be thankful the rocks didn't have to speak because his people wouldn't be quiet. And then it says later on that when he's in the temple and the children are running around screaming and the children are crying out, Hosanna to the son of David.

Jesus makes this declaration. They said, tell the kids to be quiet. How many times have we heard that, right? Tell the kids to be quiet. It's okay. Jesus makes this statement to the Pharisees there at the end of our text where it says, have you never read out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies?

[27 : 15] Look at this. You have prepared praise for yourself. There's this other great admonition to us when it comes to praise.

Not only if we are silent with a rock's cry out. Here's the other side of it. When we praise, it's only because God has prepared us to praise him for himself.

He will be praised. His goodness, his mercy, his grace, his loving kindness, that chesed word that is poured out upon us, that has prepared us to praise him.

He has prepared us and risen up praise for himself. Now, it is my ambition and my desire to never do anything in my life that would cause people to want to praise me.

I don't want to be praised. I don't even need to be recognized. I don't want to be noticed. As a matter of fact, there are some times where I'd rather be unseen. And it's nothing to draw attention, but the beauty of the gospel is that God prepares us himself to praise him.

[28 : 19] He raises up praise for himself because he wants the world to hear his people praising him so that the world will take notice.

And we see here that Christ not only allows it, he encourages it. And he's empowering them to praise him. He's giving them an opportunity to no longer be silent, but to boldly declare in front of the loudest crowd that they are the biggest crowd that they probably had ever been around to boldly declare in a very public place, the temple, the praise that he deserves.

Do you understand that? Sometimes Christ provides us with the opportunity to praise him. But quite often, the reality is that sometimes when an opportunity is presented, we are silent.

And we cannot say we're silent like stones because the stones will praise him. Probably one of my favorites authors, one of those security questions you get asked, you know, when you have all your secure information.

If anybody ever listens to my preaching, they know every one of my security questions, so that's okay. One of those security questions, who's your favorite author? If you're ever trying to log into my information, you want all my secret information, which there ain't any secret information when you're a pastor, so that's okay, go ahead.

[29 : 40] I mean, you know, it's really not. You're wanting my secret information. Who's your favorite author? A.W. Tozer. A.W. Tozer. You know why I like Tozer so much? Because he hurts my feelings. He's no longer alive, but A.W. Tozer used to say the same people that screamed like Comanche Indians at the ball game on Saturday sit like wooden Indians at the church pew on Sunday.

Woo! Wild, isn't it? See, Jesus encourages praise.

He provides an opportunity to praise, and he accepted it because he knew he was worthy of it. This is before the cross, by the way, how much more so after the cross.

The third and final thing that we see with the entrance of the king is the problem addressed. There's the prophetic fulfillment, there's the praise accepted, and there's the problem addressed.

Now, when a king comes into his city, the king usually has a direct place he's going. The king comes in, he goes to his palace, right? He goes to his house, his house of residence, which, by the way, Herod's palace was not too far away from the temple in Jerusalem.

[31 : 03] Very close, by the way. Proximity-wise, the area of pavement there where Jesus is going to be betrayed is really close to where the temple is, that place of judgment seat.

But yet, when this king rides in with all this visible demonstration, with all this audible praise, with all this recognition, he doesn't go to a palace, and that shouldn't surprise us because he wasn't born in a palace, he was born in a stable.

It says, and Jesus went to the temple. Now, we all of a sudden, in Scripture timeline, have entered into Passion Week. This is Sunday.

We're moving towards Friday. And as S.M. Locker says, Sunday's coming, though, right? We're in Passion Week because this starts the string of events which will lead to his crucifixion.

He had to be here on Sunday. He had to go public on Sunday. He had to be visible on Sunday. He had to be noticed on Sunday. He had to be in the temple on Sunday.

[32 : 16] Why? Because he was the lamb to be slain at the Passover. He is the lamb that will be slain on the little day of Passover. He is that lamb.

And the reason he had to go public on Sunday is because before you could slay a lamb for the Passover, you had to observe it for a number of days. You had to make sure that that lamb was spotless.

You remember? You had to bring the lamb into your house. You were getting ready to celebrate the Passover as a family. You would pick a lamb. You say, well, I think that one looks good. And God said, well, I don't want you to go with a think so.

I want you to go with a no so, right? You may think it looks good, but it could have a hidden problem. Anybody who's ever dealt with animals know that some things can look good today and be dead tomorrow. Man, nothing make you more aggravated than that. That thing was looking good.

I don't know how many times I've said that while dragging something out of the field. I know that's not a real good picture y'all wanted to have. That thing looked great yesterday. Well, God says, we're going to solve that problem, right? I'm going to say, pick that lamb out on Sunday and have it live with you for a number of days.

[33 : 19] Bring it in the house. And God told them in the Old Testament to watch it, to look at it, to make sure it didn't limp, to make sure that it was perfect, spotless, blameless, because what you offer at the Passover needs to be perfect.

Perfect. The reason Jesus had to go public on Sunday is so that everybody had time to look at him. That's why in that Passover week we have so much questioning, doubting, all this going back and forth.

We have everybody coming to him. We have all this what we call cross-examination and over and over and over again. Pay attention. We're going to look at it, my friend, as we go through. We've got to look at it, my friend, until we get to the crucifixion.

We're going to look at it because what you're going to see, the longer you look at this lamb, you see he's perfect. He's perfect. And he didn't go into the palace.

He went into the temple. It says it. He straightway went to the temple. He went into the temple and he walked into the outer courts.

[34 : 23] You need to know the temple layouts. I know this is a lot of information, but this is good. There's the court of the Gentiles, then you have the court of women and then you have the court of the Jewish men. So he went into the outer court, the court of the Gentiles.

This makes a difference. This is where everybody's accepted. Men, women from all over the world accepted out here. And the whole reason there's a court of the Gentiles is that all the world has the opportunity to get as close as they can to the people of God.

God provided a place for the world to get close enough to him to understand him. In the court of the Gentiles, God provided a place that everybody was welcome so that everybody could see what it looked like to praise God.

But when Jesus walked into the court of the Gentiles, he saw a marketplace, not a testimony place. Historians of that day tell us that the markets were more than likely ran by the Pharisees.

And it was a pretty good money laundering deal because before you could offer money in the Jewish temple, you had to have Jewish money. But before you could travel into Roman colonies, you had to have Roman money. Well, that's not a problem because when you get here, we can exchange your Roman money for some Jewish money, right?

[35 : 37] But there's going to be a little bit of an uptick. It's going to take a little bit more. We need more Roman money for our little bit of Jewish money so that you can put it on our offering plates. And if you're traveling so far like Jesus and his disciples did, you probably wouldn't be carrying your animals with you.

As a matter of fact, the Old Testament said that's okay. You don't have to carry your animals. When you get there, you can purchase new ones. You sell it before you leave home, and when you get there, you buy a new one. That is a God-mandated principle, by the way.

That way you don't have to carry that animal so far. And then you can offer it. Well, the opportunist said this is a good opportunity. I can charge a lot of money for a dove because they've come a long way.

It says that Jesus goes into the temple and he overturns the tables and he runs out of everybody that's buying and selling because you don't have to do that in the court of the Gentiles. You've got all of Jerusalem to do that.

This is the second time that he does it. Some see contradiction in Scripture because John puts it at the first of his gospel. But we do not need to be surprised. Scripture does not contradict itself.

[36 : 45] If we do not be surprised over a span of about three years it starts again because you give man just a little bit of days and he'll do it again. But what we see is Christ addressing the problem.

Because what was supposed to be a declaration to all the world of what worship looked like, it became a demonstration to all the world of what man could do. What was to be a public invitation for everyone in the world to come and see what reverence for a holy God looks like, had become nothing but a money laundering demonstration of what the greediness of man could accomplish.

And Jesus overturns the temple and he runs them out. And he pairs two quotations. One from the book of Isaiah and one from the book of Jeremiah. He says, it is written, my house shall be called a house of prayer in the book of Isaiah.

Read the text. It says in Isaiah that my house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations. That text in particular, by the way, anytime you find a New Testament text, a New Testament quotation of an Old Testament text, a partial text is always to be combined with the entire body of the text.

He says, this is to be a place where all the nations come to know me, but it is not. And then he quotes Jeremiah 7. Jeremiah 7, by the way, is Jeremiah's great address standing at the gate of the temple.

[38 : 23] Where he stands at the gate of the temple and he tells the people, don't go in there and offer a sacrifice. Take your sacrifices back home. I mean, he makes this declaration, but you have made it a robber's den.

You've made it all about yourself. See, the temple had become about man, not about God. Rather than being a place of showing the world holy God, it had become a place of lifting up man and filling their pockets.

Here is the problem addressed. See, when they cried out Hosanna to the son of David, they thought their praise was a declaration to a king who would come set them free from economic and political problems.

But the king's major concern is not the economic and political issues. The king's major concern is the spiritual problems of man's worship. So many people come to this same king today.

They come to King Jesus, and I'm closing. And they say, oh, what a friend I have in Jesus. And it's a true statement. And in coming to the king and in wanting that king to enter into their heart, they think that this king is going to come and set all their problems right.

[39 : 38] This king will come in and he'll fix my issues, he'll fix my concerns, and he'll take care of all this. But the reality is, his friend, quite often the very first problem the king wants to address is a spiritual issue, not a physical one.

Because it doesn't matter how good our politics or our banks look if our spirit is wrong. The problem he addressed was a spiritual issue.

And the thing that is addressed by this same king today is still a spiritual issue. He deals in matters of the hearts, not so much in matters of the wallet and the mind.

He wants to penetrate the hearts as he enters into the city of our lives. Let's pray, and then we'll stand together and sing this hymn of invitation. Lord, we thank you so much for this day.

God, we thank you for your faithfulness and your goodness. Lord Jesus, as we read of your entrance into the city of Jerusalem, we pray you would come into our own lives with the same might, the same power, and the same authority.

[40 : 45] May we lift you up and declare your worthiness to all who are here. And we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Thank you.