



Growth Group Questions
March 16, 2025
“Hype or Hope”

CONTEXT

In Mark 11 we begin the “passion” narrative of Jesus’ last week of his earthly life before the crucifixion. The word passion comes from the Latin “*passio*” which means suffering. Much of Mark’s narrative of that final week is centered around the temple. More than likely Mark is trying to help his readers see that Jesus is going to supersede the temple. Jesus is taking up residence amongst his people and they will find the forgiveness they need through him, not what happens at the temple.

As Jesus enters Jerusalem there is celebrating and rejoicing, but soon that will turn to opposition and condemnation like we see in Mark 11:18. In chapters 11-12 we will see Jesus in several controversies with the religious authorities. Galilee had been where Jesus had been revealing himself as the Son of Man and the Son of God, but Jerusalem would not be able to comprehend his mission.

The disciples and Jesus approach Jerusalem from the east. They depart from the Mount of Olives which is some 2600 feet above sea level (300 feet higher than Jerusalem). It had been a place of worship since before the time of David (2 Samuel 15:32). Ezekiel 11:23 speaks of a vision about the glory of the Lord departing from Jerusalem and settling at the Mount of Olives.

The welcoming of a king with the spreading of cloaks and branches had happened before with King Jehu in 2 Kings 9:13. Hosanna literally means, “save, I pray.” The reference to the “coming kingdom of our father David” is not well known. It is possible this is another way of Mark letting his audience know that the crowd that greeted Jesus was still not certain who he was.

Riding a colt into Jerusalem recalls Zechariah 9:9-10, but no one probably realized the significance of this moment. Once Jesus enters the city, he surveys the temple operation and then leaves for the evening. It was about an 18-mile trek from Jericho to Jerusalem, so it was probably late in the day and the disciples were more than likely tired. The crowd disperses and does not reappear until the next morning when Jesus returns.

SCRIPTURE

Mark 10:46-52

⁴⁶ Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaheus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁸ Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” ⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.” ⁵⁰ Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. ⁵¹ “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” ⁵² “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

Mark 11:1-11

¹ As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ² saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’” ⁴ They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, ⁵ some people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶ They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them go. ⁷ When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, “Hosanna!^[a]”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”^[b]

¹⁰ “Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!”

“Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

¹¹ Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple courts. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

Zechariah 9:9

⁹ Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!

Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!

See, your king comes to you,

righteous and victorious,

lowly and riding on a donkey,

on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Psalms 118:25-26

²⁵ LORD, save us!

LORD, grant us success!

²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD.

From the house of the LORD we bless you.^[a]

Mark 11:18

¹⁸ The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.

QUESTIONS

1. Mark 11:1-11 is a familiar passage often read on Palm Sunday. As you read the passage and heard the sermon this week, were there any new things that struck you?
2. What does Mark 11:1-6 reveal to you about Jesus?
3. What does the way Jesus chose to enter Jerusalem tell us about Him and His Kingdom?
4. What does the crowd's response to Jesus in Mark 11:8-10 reveal about their understanding of Jesus? What is significant about what they said and did?
5. Pastor Paul spoke of the importance of praising God. What does it mean to you to praise God?
6. Why is it important that we not only pray during our struggles, but that we also praise God through our struggles?
7. Pastor Paul said that in his account of Jesus' first entry into the temple in Mark 11:11, Mark is trying to tell us not to let the hype get in the way of the hope. What do you think he meant by that?
8. In Mark 11:17, Jesus quotes Isaiah 56:7 when He says: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." What is the significance of that statement?
9. This week's sermon focused on Mark 11:1-11. As you read through the entire chapter during the week, was there anything else in Chapter 11 that particularly spoke to you?

SERMON QUESTIONS:

1. How can you be more intentional about "praising" your way through struggles?
2. What would you like Jesus "to do for you" today?