**SEE, YOUR KING COMES TO YOU  
Mark 11:1–19**

**“*‘Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!’ ‘Hosanna in the highest heaven!’*” (v. 10)**

In last week’s passage, we witnessed Jesus’ resolute journey toward Jerusalem, where he would die on the cross as a ransom for many and then rise again from the dead. In today’s passage, Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem in what came to be known as his triumphal entry. The way in which he enters is rich with meaning and symbolism, revealing the nature of his kingship, as well as how we should relate to Jesus as our King. We can learn Jesus’ royal right to us and every part of our lives; the blessedness of submitting our humble King who brings salvation, joy, and peace to those he rules; and that King Jesus expects us to bear fruit. May each of us welcome Jesus to rule in our lives with joyful hosannas as we study his triumphal entry.

1. **The Lord Needs It (vs. 1–6)**

As Jesus and his disciples neared Jerusalem, Jesus gave his disciples an unusual errand. Look at verses 1–3: “***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.”’***” Jesus told two of his disciples to borrow a stranger’s donkey. From a modern perspective, this would be like asking to borrow a stranger’s car or bicycle. In Jesus’ day, donkeys were valuable property due to their usefulness for transporting passengers and goods, and they were sometimes stolen.

Overcoming their feelings of shyness or awkwardness, Jesus’ disciples went ahead and found the colt just as Jesus had predicted, and they started untying it. Sure enough, some people nearby, the donkey’s owners (Luke 19:33), challenged them, “***What are you doing, untying that colt?***” But when the disciples answered them as Jesus had instructed, saying, “The Lord needs it,” they let them go, willingly offering their donkey for the Lord’s use.

It may be easy to skip over this brief story, but this incident teaches us some important lessons about Jesus’ lordship, that is, his authority as King. Jesus has the right to use anyone’s donkey because he is the Lord, the almighty Creator of the universe. Colossians 1:15–16 declares, “*The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.*” Because he is the Creator, all creation rightfully belongs to Jesus. Indeed, all things were created not only through Jesus but also for Jesus. Since Jesus is the purpose of creation, the greatest honor is to be used for the sake of the Lord.

Just as Jesus had the right to the colt, he has the right to us, and even more so. We already belong to God because God made us, but moreover we belong to Jesus because he purchased us from death with his own blood. So Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 6, “*You are not your own; you were bought at a price*” (6:19b–20a). So when Jesus asks something from us, we must not refuse him what is rightfully his.

One man in the Old Testament who truly understood and submitted to God’s lordship is Abraham. God gave Abraham some difficult commands to obey, but the most difficult command God gave Abraham was to sacrifice his son Isaac, whom he dearly loved, as a burnt offering. However, Abraham accepted that God who gave him Isaac could ask for him back, or could even raise him from the dead. So he obeyed immediately, getting up early the next morning to travel with his son to the place God would show him. When Abraham showed his faith by not withholding his only son, God provided a ram as a substitute to die in place of Isaac and blessed Abraham, “*…through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me*” (Genesis 22:18). The blessing God gave Abraham was the gospel in advance, pointing to the coming King Jesus.

Here’s a modern example of a man who submitted to Jesus’ lordship. There was a young man who loved working as a DJ at the small radio station at his college. However, he felt God calling him to be a pastor. He felt sad at the prospect of giving up his dreams of a career in radio to follow God, but he obeyed. Now that man, Dr. David Jeremiah, has an international radio ministry, broadcasting on 2,200 stations. When God asked for something from David Jeremiah, it was so that God could give him greater blessings and use him as a blessing for many more.

We too can learn Jesus’ lordship from the example of the colt’s owners, who entrusted their colt to Jesus and received their colt back honored to have borne the King of kings. This colt became the most famous and blessed animal in God’s redemptive work. If Jesus asks for our time, our love, our money or possessions, our career or marriage, we should give to him wholeheartedly and submit to his rule without holding back. Jesus has the right to ask anything from us. And we should not be afraid to offer to Jesus what he asks, for Jesus is not an unfeeling tyrant, but a loving Shepherd King, who first gave us his best, his very life, by pouring out his blood for us unreservedly. Furthermore, in his request to use us, there is his wonderful plan to bless us. When we are asked, “The Lord needs it,” let’s say, “Here am I. Use me for your purpose!” Let’s look next at the nature of Jesus’ kingship, revealed through his entry into Jerusalem.

1. **The Lord Enters Jerusalem (vs. 7–10)**

Verse 7 says, “***When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it.***” Jesus wasn’t tired and wanting to get off his feet; rather, his riding a colt was full of meaning as the fulfillment of the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9–10: “*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. 10 I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.*” Through publically fulfilling this prophecy, Jesus revealed the nature of his kingship to his disciples and the world. What can we learn about Jesus’ kingship?

First, Jesus brings joy and peace. Zechariah’s prophecy begins, “*Rejoice greatly*”! Jesus’ coming is “*good news of great joy*” (Luke 2:10) because he came as our Savior. And joy comes not only through Jesus’ salvation, but through his rule.

In ancient times, when kings would come to do battle, they would ride on a warhorse or in a chariot drawn by horses. But a donkey could not be ridden into battle; donkeys will stop and refuse to budge the moment they sense danger ahead. So a king riding on a donkey was a symbol of peace. Zechariah prophesied that God would take away the chariots and warhorses from his people, and that Jesus would “*proclaim peace to the nations.*” Jesus came to bring peace between God and men and between men and men through reconciling us all to God. When we are ruled by Jesus, we can have true joy and peace that the troubles of this world can never take away.

Second, Jesus is righteous and victorious. Jesus’ public entrance to Jerusalem is called his triumphal entry, that is, his victorious entry. Look at verse 8: “***Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields.***” The laying of garments on the road before Jesus showed the people’s welcoming him as their king. Also, the cut branches people spread before Jesus symbolized victory. So what victory of Jesus was being celebrated? Colossians 2:15 declares that Jesus triumphed over his enemies “*by the cross*”. Jesus had not yet died on the cross, but his victory at the cross was already so certain that it deserved great celebration. By his death on the cross, Jesus defeated the power of sin, death, and Satan by paying the penalty for sin, ransoming our lives from Satan’s clutches, and imparting to us his righteousness through his blood and his Spirit.

Jesus’ victory through his sacrificial death made a way for us to be cleansed so that his Spirit could dwell within each of his people and the universal church; thus, he would expand his kingdom “*to the ends of the earth*” through his Spirit-filled church.

Third, Jesus is lowly and gentle. A donkey’s colt is by no means a majestic animal; an adult male riding a donkey would probably notice his feet dragging on the ground. Someone riding a donkey is not aloof and above everyone around him, but accessible, down with the crowd. As Jesus rode down the Mount of Olives, even little children could approach him. Even though Jesus is high and exalted above every name (Philippians 2:9), he is also accessible to us, for he is one of us. Jesus is a gentle King whose rule is not burdensome but paradoxically gives rest from burdens. Jesus invites us in Matthew 11:28-29, “*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*” When we come to Jesus as we are, we will find rest, peace, joy, and righteousness in him.

When the people of Jerusalem saw their coming King, they welcomed him with joyful shouts of praise. Let’s read verses 9–10 together: “***Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, ‘Hosanna!’ ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’ 10 ‘Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!’ ‘Hosanna in the highest heaven!’***” These acclamations for Jesus are very meaningful. “Hosanna” had become an expression of praise, used in a similar manner to “hallelujah”, which means, “praise the Lord”. But the original meaning of “hosanna” is “save us now”—an urgent cry for salvation. “Hosanna” is a particularly appropriate expression of worship for Jesus, for to shout “hosanna” acknowledges one’s own desperate need for a Savior and recognizes Jesus as the one who is able to save.

When the Jews cried out, “Hosanna!” they wanted deliverance from political subjugation by the Romans. But Jesus came to save us from a much greater danger—the penalty for our own sin. Through choosing to go our own way and be our own standard of right and wrong instead of listening to God, we rebelled against our Maker, bringing the guilt of cosmic treason upon ourselves, the penalty for which is death. Because of God’s inexorable justice, there’s no way that we could ever escape the penalty for our transgressions through our own efforts. But Jesus humbled himself to become a lowly human like us in order to pay the price our sin deserves in our place; he gave his life as a ransom for many. The way to receive the salvation that Jesus purchased for us is to acknowledge our sin and need for salvation, to trust in Jesus’ victory through his death on the cross and his resurrection, and to submit to his rule as our King.

The crowd’s shouts of, “***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!***” quoted Psalm 118:26, which was a messianic Psalm anticipating the Messiah’s coming. Acknowledging that Jesus came in the name of the Lord, that is, that he was sent by God, is important for accepting him. Jesus is the one sent by God as the only way of salvation. When they yelled, “***Blessed is the coming kingdom of our Father David!***” the people recognized that Jesus had come to establish the messianic kingdom as the eternal King over an everlasting and all-encompassing kingdom, the kingdom of God. They were looking for a kingdom of this world, but Jesus’ kingdom is not of this world; his kingdom is far greater. God’s kingdom is a spiritual kingdom advancing among those who are in Christ and ruled by Christ.

We can experience the joy, peace, and blessings of God’s kingdom through submitting to Jesus’ kingship. Enthroning Jesus in our hearts requires dethroning ourselves, for the throne only seats one. We should examine our lives to see who is on the throne, asking such questions as: Who determines how I spend my time? Is there anything in my life I would not give to God if he asked me to give it up? What do I truly value in life? Or to take another approach: Is my life characterized by anxiety and frustration, or do the peace and joy of Christ reign my heart? Jesus’ kingship is a reign of love. He became our King through the greatest act of love, and he has never stopped loving us. The other “kings” that seek to rule our lives are tyrants, always asking more without being able to supply true satisfaction, hope, or security. But Jesus proved his love for us indisputably at the cross.

To enthrone Jesus practically in our lives requires continual repentance, for our sinful flesh will continue to struggle for control while we live on earth. We should humble ourselves before God’s word to receive and obey our humble King Jesus.

1. **The Lord Looks for Fruit (vs. 11–19)**

After Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem, “***he looked around at everything***” in the temple courts (11), searching for the fruit of obedience but was disappointed. Jesus couldn’t catch a break, since the next morning on the way back to the city, he couldn’t find any fruit for breakfast either. Look at verse 13: “***Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs.***” Fig trees normally begin growing fruit as soon as the leaves begin to sprout. So the only reason a productive fig tree in leaf would not have fruit is if it had been harvested, but that possibility is ruled out since it wasn’t the season for harvesting figs. So the fig tree had no legitimate excuse for being fruitless when Jesus came looking for fruit.

How did Jesus respond? Look at verse 14: “***Then he said to the tree, ‘May no one ever eat fruit from you again.’ And his disciples heard him say it.***” Because the tree did not render fruit for its Creator, it lost the ability to bear fruit. Jesus as Lord has the right to expect fruit when he comes to look for it, and he has the authority to curse what is unfruitful. Just as the main purpose of a fruit tree is to bear fruit, the purpose for which God created humans was that we might be fruitful. God’s first command to people in the Bible is in Genesis 1:28, “*Be fruitful…*” In the Old Testament, God’s people especially are likened to fruit-bearing plants. God chose Israel to bear fruit for his glory and gave them everything necessary to bear fruit.

When Jesus came to the temple, however, he did not find fruit. So what did he do? Verses 15–16 say, “***On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, 16 and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts.***” In his holy anger and with his authority as the Lord of the temple, Jesus cleansed the temple.

The Jews had lost the original purpose for the temple, which Jesus taught them in verse 17: “***And as he taught them, he said, ‘Is it not written: “My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations”? But you have made it “a den of robbers.”’***” God intended the temple to be a house of prayer, a place for meeting with God, where people from all nations could come to worship and listen to the word of God. However, the Gentile courts, where non-Jews were allowed, had been converted into essentially an animal market, and they were likely making a killing. Around 2 million people came to the Passover festival in Jerusalem each year. That’s about as many people attended the Minnesota State Fair this year—and a big opportunity to make some quick cash. Since everyone coming to the Passover festival was religiously required to offer certain sacrifices and pay the temple tax in temple currency, the merchants and money-changers could charge exorbitant rates. God’s temple had become essentially a den of robbers. Because Jerusalem had strayed so far from God’s purpose for them, Jesus prophesied that it would be destroyed and the nation would be scattered within that generation, which it was by the Romans in 70 AD.

In the New Testament, believers are called the temple of God—both singly and collectively. Each of us is a temple of God’s Holy Spirit, who dwells within us, and we as a church are being built into God’s holy temple. God has given us all the conditions necessary to bear fruit for his glory, and one day he will come to collect. And when God asks for fruit, the unfruitful will have no excuse.

What fruit does Jesus desire from us, as believers and his church? First, as John the Baptist put it in Matthew 3:8, “*Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.*” Or as Paul said in Acts 26:20b, “…*I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.*” Our practical actions should show that we have turned from self-directed lives to Christ-directed lives.

Second, the fruit of the Spirit, that is, the image of Christ. When the Spirit of Christ is living and working within us, we will grow to be conformed to Christ’s image, resembling his character traits including “*love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*” (Galatians 5:22–23).

Third, good deeds for the glory of God. Good works aren’t necessary for salvation, but they inevitably come as a result of salvation. Jesus commands in Matthew 5:16, “*In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*”

Fourth, evangelism, saved souls, and discipleship. When we share the gospel, the gospel bears fruit. Paul testified in Colossians 1:6, “*…the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world— just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God's grace.*” Sharing the gospel so that unbelievers can truly understand and accept God’s grace is precious fruit to Jesus. Equipping believers to grow as fruitful followers of Christ is also a way to bear fruit.

Bearing fruit is important because it is our purpose as humans, leading to the greatest joy and satisfaction, as well as eternal rewards. Moreover, Jesus warns very sternly that fruitlessness will be judged like the withered fig tree in Matthew 7:19: “*Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.*”

So finally, how can we bear fruit? Through submitting to Jesus’ rule, obeying him and remaining in him. Jesus said in John 15:5, “*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*” When we continually pursue and maintain a close relationship with Jesus in prayer and Scripture, his word drives out hindrances and his power produces fruit in our characters and actions, and in the lives of those we serve with his truth, love, and self-sacrifice.

Throughout this passage, we learned about the lordship of Jesus. Jesus has the right to us and anything of ours because it all came from him, and he ransomed our lives with his own blood. He is our Savior King, who rules us with peace, righteousness, and gentleness. What Jesus wants from us is fruit, which we can bear through submitting to his loving rule. When we do submit to Jesus, even though we will face troubles, we will experience true joy, lasting peace, and eternal salvation. Hosanna, King Jesus! Hosanna in the highest heaven!