

Day 1

September 17



Pray | That you would better reflect the humility of Jesus

A HUMBLE TRIUMPH

For being known as ‘the triumphal entry,’ Jesus’ ride into Jerusalem is a bit of a disappointment. No trumpets, no horses, no fancy robes or army of soldiers – just a former carpenter on a borrowed donkey with some friends following behind on foot.

Yet, this triumphal entry is a beautiful and perfect representation of God’s upside-down kingdom. He defies all human ideas of worth, glory, and success and replaces them with humility, with a God accessible to the masses. Not riding high on a horse, looking down at his miserable creation, but instead eye level on a donkey, face-to-face with his beloved sons and daughters.



Read | Matthew 21:1-11



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following questions.

Why do you think God chose to have his Son enter Jerusalem in a picture of humility, rather than in the manner of an earthly king? What can you learn from this example?

Our culture values independence and self-reliance; it can be difficult for us to ask others for help when we’re in need. Jesus, however, readily states his need for a donkey in verse 3 and accepts cloaks in place of a saddle in verse 7. How does this story affect your view of today’s culture? Does it reveal any attitudes or behaviors you may need to change?

The crowd, in verse 8, gave what they had – the very cloaks they were wearing – to honor Jesus, by spreading them on the ground beneath him. Think about your thoughts and actions over the past week. What have you done to honor him? What more can you offer?

Day 2
September 18



Pray | Ask God for a deeper understanding of his word

WHO IS THIS JESUS?

Hands down, THE best part of every Scooby Doo episode is the Big Reveal at the end. Not the part when they pull off the mask and find out who did it, but instead the part where Velma reviews the clues that led her to solve the mystery.

Usually, Velma knew something that the audience didn't, making it hard for us to guess the ending. That's not how God does it. He left clues throughout the Old Testament that lead us to acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God, whether it be through the words of prophets, events that foreshadow Jesus' work on the cross, or details of Jesus' genealogy. The Big Reveal in the New Testament of Jesus' divinity shouldn't be a mystery to any of us.



Read | Matthew 21:1-7, Zechariah 9:9



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following questions.

What effect does reading about the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy have on your faith in the truth of the Bible? From your past studies, can you think of other ways the Old Testament points to Jesus as the Messiah?

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem takes place on the tenth day of Passover, which is when the Jewish people were to set aside the lamb that would be sacrificed. How does this add to your understanding of Matthew 21:1-11?

Why do you think Matthew places such emphasis on the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy? Why is it important to notice the connections between the Old and New Testament?

Day 3

September 19



Pray | Give praise to Jesus for his saving grace

WORTHY OF OUR PRAISE

“Jesus! It is the name which moves the harps of heaven to melody. Jesus! The life of all our joys. If there be one name more charming, more precious than another, it is this name.” These words from Charles Spurgeon reflect a heart that truly worshiped the King of Kings.

Worshiping God with our whole being means living a life that revolves around bringing glory to God, rather than living as though the world revolves around us. The good news is that when our worship is half-hearted or misplaced in other people or things, through Christ we are forgiven. Hosanna!



Read | Matthew 21:9-11, Luke 19:37-40



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following questions.

Hosanna means ‘save now.’ The meaning sounds like a prayer – a request – yet in the text the people shout it in praise to Jesus. How might this word be both prayer and praise?

Most of Jesus’ ministry on earth is accomplished without much fanfare, until his entry into Jerusalem during Passover. Why do you think Jesus was willing to receive praise at this time, without attempting to quiet the crowds?

What might a life more abandoned to praise and worship of Jesus look like for you?

Day 4
September 20



Pray | For God to guard your heart against the enemy

BLURRED LINES

It could have started innocently enough in the temple courts: a service provided to help those who had to travel far. Goods for sale, certainly convenient for weary travelers. Perhaps someone else had the wrong kind of money – who could step in to assist? More people get involved, it grows, and it moves closer in to where the products and services are needed. It's hard to tell when it crossed the line from innocent to immoral.

Maybe that's what happened in the temple at Jerusalem – a gradual slide, each step accepted by the merchants, the priests, and the worshipers - no one noticing that the sacred house of God had become a 'den of robbers.'



Read | Matthew 21:12-13, Proverbs 4:23-27



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following questions.

The merchants turned the temple into a place where some were seeking worldly gain rather than seeking God. Are there any ways in which the Church today seems to be seeking worldliness rather than Godliness?

It's easy to justify small steps in the wrong direction and believe we aren't really doing anything bad. Has there been a time in your life when you've started sliding from innocent to immoral and didn't realize it right away? How did you change direction?

Sometimes the best defense is a good offense. Spend some time meditating on the verses from Proverbs and then list a few of the ways you need to guard your heart this week to prevent sliding down the wrong path. Pray for strength to prevent that slide.

Day 5
September 21



Pray | For your eyes to ever be on the Lord

CONSPIRACY THEORIES

On November 9, 2017, 500 people assembled in North Carolina for the first annual Flat Earth International Conference, at which speakers presented their reasons for maintaining that the earth is flat and stationary. A national poll conducted in 2013 revealed that 7 percent of Americans believe that the Apollo 11 moon landing was faked, and 4 percent believe that lizard people control our government.

Clearly, we can be blind to the truth, even when the evidence is right in front of our eyes. This was just as apparent during Jesus' ministry as it is today.



Read | Matthew 21:14-17, Psalm 8:2, Psalm 19:1-4



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

The Pharisees witnessed Jesus performing miraculous healings of the blind and lame in the temple, and instead of believing in him, they were 'indignant.' Why? In what ways are they similar to or different from non-believers today?

Jesus quotes part of Psalm 8:2 in response to the Pharisees in Matthew 21:16. How does studying the second half of Psalm 8:2 affect your reading of Matthew 21:16?

The evidence for our Creator is apparent in his majestic creation. Take some time to reflect on the truths in Psalm 19:1-4. If you see the evidence and want to know more, seek out a pastor or Christian friend and ask them your questions.

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