

Entrances are a big deal. Whether it be a king in ancient history venturing to a far off territory or presidents and prime ministers in more recent centuries, cultures throughout the world have given much attention to the entrance of people perceived to be important. We see red carpets laid when receiving Royalty or other important people – there is protocol to be followed as to who sits where depending upon status and prestige.

Entrances are also important on a more popular level.. At awards shows and movie premieres, cameras flash as stars wear expensive clothes and enter a theatre. We are well acquainted with the attention given to the entrances of important people.

In Mark 11, we read about an entrance. But this entrance is far more important than the entrance of a King or Prime Minister, an athlete, or a movie star. It's the entrance of the King of kings and Lord of Lords as He moves toward the most important event in human history. Jesus Christ enters Jerusalem in order to die.

We commemorate this entrance on the day known as “Palm Sunday.” The streets were flooded with crowds, as many who were there that Sunday laid out their cloaks and palm branches, shouting “Hosanna!” The shouts expressed Israel’s hope for the coming Davidic king: “Save us, we pray, O LORD. O LORD, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD” (Psalm 118:25–26).

The masses were in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, the feast held in remembrance of God’s faithfulness in delivering His people from bondage by the blood of a lamb. Now Jesus, the spotless Lamb, was coming to lay down His life for the sheep. He was entering Jerusalem to seal a new covenant and purchase their salvation.

One aspect of Jesus’s entrance that stands out is the vehicle that brought Him into the city. A donkey was not fit for royalty, much less the Creator and Sustainer of all things. The disciples must have been puzzled upon hearing Christ’s command to procure a donkey. After all, while they struggled with the implications of Jesus’s identity, they had seen His power on display. They were there when He commanded the winds and sea to be still. They saw Him raise Lazarus from the dead. Surely, He was worthy of a greater entrance than this.

Jesus was fulfilling the promise of Zechariah 9:9: “Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” God’s promise through Zechariah was that the story of God’s people would not end with exile, but that a King would come to truly free them. But God did not send a messenger like the flawed prophets of old, nor did He send

money or some form of a quick-fix spiritual Band-Aid for our sinful condition. God sent the only remedy for our sins—His Son.

Jesus came to deal with sin and sinners, and He did this **humbly**. We see His humility not only in the way He entered Jerusalem but also in His teaching. Matthew 11:28–30 is one of the most memorable examples: *“Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”*

This humble King would deal with sin and sinners as the Suffering Servant spoken of in Isaiah 53. He was “numbered with the transgressors” (v. 12) so that we are “accounted as righteous” (v. 11). Jesus went to the cross in our place as sinners, absorbing the wrath of God. He bore our sins in His body on the tree so we who were in bondage to corruption could be freed from sin in Him (1 Peter 2:24). The King, who rode humbly into the city, carried His cross outside the city gate to die for His people.