

The Basics of Christianity

I AM the Prophesied Messiah

Matthew 21:1-11

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INTRODUCTION:

This morning we are celebrating "Palm Sunday". It is called "Palm Sunday", because the Gospels tell us that the crowds in Jerusalem threw their cloaks on the ground and put palm branches on the road in front of Jesus as He entered Jerusalem to greet Him as King.

Our Savior is knowingly entering the final week of His life. In just a few short days, the crowd will turn against Him and crucify Him. But today is the day of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Turn with me as we go to the Gospel of Matthew the 21st chapter starting in verse 1. The title of the message this morning is "**I AM the Prophesied Messiah**".

We come now to a most important section of the Gospels as Jesus and His disciples are approaching Jerusalem. Jerusalem is buzzing with people who are arriving for the annual Passover celebration.

All Stand and Read Scripture

Matthew 21:1-11 (NASB95)

21 When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage (Beth Fah' Juh), at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied *there* and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." ⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

⁵ "Say to the daughter of Zion,
'Behold your King is coming to you,
Gentle, and mounted on a donkey,
Even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"

⁶ The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, ⁷ and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. ⁸ Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. ⁹ 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!"

¹⁰ When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" ¹¹ And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."

Prayer

As Jesus came riding into Jerusalem on a lowly, young donkey, we ask, "**WHY?**"

Why did Jesus arrange to enter the Holy city this way? Jesus, certainly did not need to ride, He has walked the entire way. Why **did** He ride the last two miles into Jerusalem on a colt?

The answer is...that it was the appointed time to publicly announce for the first time that He was the Messiah of the Old Testament. He is coming into Jerusalem as a King. He was not coming as a sovereign earthly king to **take the lives** of His enemies with force. Instead Jesus is coming as a servant King to give His own life that He might **offer forgiveness** to His enemies. He came this way to visually convey that He comes with **humility** offering **salvation and peace** with God.

At His second coming, Jesus **will come** as the sovereign King riding a white horse, leading His armies in a day of war. But now, Jesus comes as the servant, riding a lowly colt, leading His disciples, not to war, but to witness.

It is somewhat ironic how this event depicts Christ as a servant King by riding on a young donkey instead of a war horse, but yet at the same time it shows His true power over His enemies. He is not at all afraid of them. Despite the fact that He knows that the Jewish leaders are plotting and scheming to kill Him, He publicly rides in defiantly for everyone to see. He puts Himself in the spotlight and everyone **has** to take notice of Him. He takes the initiative in His own hands. He even forces the issue. He knows that all of these enemies with all of their power cannot do anything without God's permission. By riding into Jerusalem publicly, He defies His enemies! HE IS THE KING!

This is the triumphal entry of God's Son doing the will of the Father.

THIS, now, begins the clock ticking for the final week of the life of Jesus Christ. This week begins on Palm Sunday with His entry into Jerusalem. It will conclude on Easter Sunday with His resurrection from the dead.

This final week is **SO** important that the **Holy Spirit** chose that all four Gospels give an enormous amount of space to the last week of our Lord's life. Jesus lived 33 years and His public ministry lasted over three years, but...

- Matthew devotes 1/4 of his Gospel to this final week. (Chapters 21 to 28).
- Mark devotes 1/3 of his entire Gospel to this one week. (Chapters 11-16).
- Luke gives 1/5 of his Gospel. (Chapters 20-24)
- John gives 1/2 of his entire Gospel to only this one week in the life of the Lord Jesus. (Chapters 11-21)

When you add it all up, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John write a total of 89 chapters. Thirty of those 89 chapters (more than 1/3 of the entire Gospel accounts) focus specifically and exclusively on this last week of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is like a concentrated spotlight that is shining on the persons and events that occur during this last week. All of this underscores the extreme importance of this last week. All of this will center upon the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon Calvary's cross.

BODY:

I. The Prophesied Arrival of the Messiah.

There are over 300 Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. In order for Jesus to be the Messiah, He had to fulfill all of them. These were written so we would know when the Messiah arrived.

I am going to look at just a few of these prophecies from Daniel, Isaiah, and Zechariah to show that Jesus was the Messiah. Daniel gives us a specific day that the Lamb of God would be examined for defects before He was offered on Passover.

The prophecies from the Old Testament are so accurate that we can actually calculate the predetermined date that Jesus was going to make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

This prophecy is found in Daniel.

Daniel 9:21-26 (NASB95)

²¹ while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in *my* extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. ²² He gave *me* instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. ²³ At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell *you*, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.

²⁴ "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy *place*. ²⁵ So you are to know and discern it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. ²⁶ Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.

Daniel realizes from reading the prophecies of Jeremiah, that the time of their captivity is nearly at an end. So he begins to pray for his nation and people. While he was still praying the angel Gabriel appeared before him and revealed a very specific prophecy. He revealed the exact date that Jesus would make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem as well as the death of the Messiah and the destruction of Israel in 70 A.D.!

Daniel is told that "**from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince *there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;***"

The seven weeks of years (49 years) followed by 62 weeks of years (434 years) makes a total of 69 weeks of years or 483 years from the decree until the arrival of the Messiah into Jerusalem at His triumphal entry.

Artaxerxes Longimanus (Art tuh irks' ease Longe uh mean' us) issued a decree on March 5, 444 B.C. authorizing Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 2:1-6 (NASB95)

2 And it came about in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes (Art tuh irks' ease), that wine *was* before him, and I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I

had not been sad in his presence. ² So the king said to me, “Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart.” Then I was very much afraid. ³ I said to the king, “Let the king live forever. Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?” ⁴ Then the king said to me, “What would you request?” So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ I said to the king, “If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.” ⁶ Then the king said to me, the queen sitting beside him, “How long will your journey be, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time.

The biblical/prophetic year was based on 360 days per year. The calculation used by Christian Standard Bible is as follows: When you calculate 69 weeks of years you get 483 years. When you multiply 483 years times 360 you get 173,880 days. If this calculation is correct, then the precise day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem, on Palm Sunday, and announced publicly for the first time that He was the Messiah would be March 30, 33 A.D.

II. The King Fulfilling Prophecy.

The disciples of Jesus understood that Jesus was the Messiah. They were probably aware of the prophecy in Isaiah that stated that the Messiah would come to Jerusalem (Zion).

Isaiah 59:20 (NASB95)

²⁰ “A Redeemer will come to Zion,
And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,” declares the Lord.

They tried on different occasions to have Jesus go to Jerusalem and publicly announce that He was the Messiah. Each time Jesus would tell them that “**My time has not yet come**”.

John 7:3-8 (NASB95)

³ Therefore His brothers said to Him, “Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. ⁴ For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be *known* publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.” ⁵ For not even His brothers were believing in Him. ⁶ So Jesus *said to them, “My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune. ⁷ The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil. ⁸ Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come.”

Everything that Jesus said and did was in accordance to His Father's will and they were always was in line with the Messianic prophesies in the Old Testament. Jesus was not caught off guard with any event that He faced. He knew in advance what was going to happen. He also knew the exact day that He would publicly proclaim that He was the Messiah in Jerusalem.

When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, He arranged all of the prophecies concerning that moment and fulfilled each of them in the correct order. This was so we could see what was written about Him through the prophets would prove that He was indeed the Messiah.

On the precise day prophesied by the prophets, Jesus instructed His disciples to go to Bethphage (Beth Fah' Juh) at the Mount of Olives and find a donkey tied together with her colt. This will set into motion the fulfillment of the Messiah coming into Jerusalem (Zion), as Isaiah predicted.

What Jesus asked of the disciples was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy of the Messiah coming to Jerusalem as well as Zechariah's prophecy of the Messiah coming to Zion on the foal of a donkey.

Zechariah 9:9 (NASB95)

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout *in triumph*, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

According to the Christian Standard Bible, Isaiah lived from 740 - 698 B.C. and Zechariah lived from 520 - 514 so their prophecies were approximately 200 years apart. Despite the time lap, they both totally agreed with each other. This shows the inspiration of the scriptures.

Zechariah described the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy of the arrival of the Messiah to Jerusalem on **Palm Sunday** with greater detail.

The Messiah will be revealed in Jerusalem.

Zechariah 9:9a (NASB95)

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout *in triumph*, O daughter of Jerusalem!

He will be a king.

Zechariah 9:9b (NASB95)

Behold, your king is coming to you;

He will be just.

Zechariah 9:9c (NASB95)

He is just...

He will bring salvation to mankind.

Zechariah 9:9d (NASB95)

and endowed with salvation,

He will be humble and will ride into the city on the foal of a donkey.

Zechariah 9:9e (NASB95)

Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Philippians 2:5-11

⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

CONCLUSION:

Jesus Christ was on his way to Jerusalem, knowing full well that this trip would end in his sacrificial death for the sin of humanity. Being fully human, it had to be a very agonizing time knowing the pain and suffering that He was about to endure.

But Christ's mission was first and foremost to do God's will. What will happen in this final week is the very purpose that He has come into the world. The time to reveal Himself has now arrived! The hour has now come for the Son of Man to lay down His life for mankind. This time has been planned since before the beginning of time. It was God's plan to send His Son to die on the cross as a Savior for man.

This is what Peter said in his sermon on the day of Pentecost to those who had shouted "**crucify Him!**" just 50 days earlier.

Acts 2:22-23 (NASB95)

²² "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— ²³ this *Man*, delivered over **by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God**, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

Jesus is totally in control of this week. In fact every molecule of creation for all time has been and will be in sovereign control by the authority of God.

The Pharisees realized that the disciples were quoting Psalm 118:26 and declaring that Jesus was the Messiah during His triumphal entry. So they asked Jesus to rebuke His disciples.

Luke 19:38-40 (NASB95)

³⁸ shouting:

"Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord;
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

³⁹ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." ⁴⁰ But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"

The time had come to proclaim that He was the Messiah. Even if the disciples were to keep silent, God would make the truth known, even if it required a miracle.

Jesus did all of these things so that we would know beyond a shadow of any doubt, that every event, every person, down to the betrayal of Christ by Judas was **ALL** prescribed by the Father. It is the unfolding of the eternal purpose and plan of God for this week to rescue those who will believe in His Son from the curse of sin.

He is Lord.