

Small Group Discussion Guide

Matthew 21:1-11

“March 29, 33”

Based on Sunday's
Sermon 3/29/2026

Background

This account is misnamed the “triumphal” entry. Jesus does appear to be at the zenith of his popularity, even acknowledged as the Messiah, but the crowd shows no appreciation for the suffering and death to which he must soon submit himself. Only five days later, some of these people will clamor for his crucifixion, even if the crowd then is not entirely composed of the same individuals as here. ¹ Most people today have little first-hand knowledge of a genuine monarchy. Those who hold the title of king or queen in modern societies are often rulers in name only, having little if any governmental power or responsibility. An elaborate coronation is often the only notice they will ever have of any consequence. But until modern times the coronation of a monarch involved the display of great splendor and pageantry. This event in the life of Christ portrays the most significant coronation the world has yet seen, but it was a coronation in marked contrast to the kind just described. It was a true coronation of a true King. He was affirmed as King and was, in a sense, inaugurated into His kingship. But there was no pomp, no splendor, and a nondescript sort of pageantry.² This was Jesus’ last major public appearance before His crucifixion and was an extremely important event yet seldom studied carefully. What was the significance of this day? One-third of the gospels focus on the week from the Triumphal Entry to the Resurrection. This event is the beginning of that final week in the earthly life of Jesus.

Discussion Questions

Getting Started

1. What do you like best about parades? What do you like least about them?

Observation

2. Read Matthew 21:1-11. To where was Jesus traveling? With whom? Find a map of the Jerusalem area and look up the locations mentioned. (21:1)

¹ Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 311.

² John F. MacArthur Jr., *Matthew*, vol. 3, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985–1989), 256.

3. How were the disciples instructed to answer anyone who might object to their actions? (21:2)
4. What did the gathered crowd place on the road? (21:8)
5. What did the crowds shout as Jesus entered Jerusalem? “Google” the meaning of what they were shouting. (21:9)

Interpretation

6. What does the act of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey signify in the context of the culture and expectations of the people at that time?
7. How can we understand the contrast between the expectations of the crowds and the reality of Jesus’ mission as depicted in this passage?
8. Read Zechariah 9:9-10. Matthew quotes from Zechariah 9:9, but why doesn’t he also quote 9:10?

Application

9. What does the Lord “need” from you (See Matthew 21:3) today to accomplish His plan in your life? (Some cross references – Isaiah 6:8, Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 4:10)
10. How can you honor Jesus as King this week? (Colossians 3:15)

Prayer List: