



Empowering People to Change the World

The Triumphal Entry: Clash of Kingdoms

Steve Holt

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- We are breaking from our Romans study for the next two Sundays because of Passion Week.

The only message Jesus preached was the Kingdom of God.

Let's look at the Gospel of Matthew...

- Matthew 4:17: Jesus opened His ministry preaching the Kingdom of God.
- Matthew 5, 6, and 7: Jesus' greatest sermon was on the ethics and culture of the Kingdom of God.
- Matthew 6:10: "Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."
- Matthew 6:33: Jesus instructed us to make it our highest priority to seek the Kingdom of God.

What is this Kingdom of God?

The Kingdom of God is the reign, rule, values, and culture of God. He is the King. Jesus is preaching that His power, values, influence, and culture have come. He is the Ruler. He reigns. Jesus is proclaiming Himself as the King and His Kingdom has come.

Jesus came to empower and delegate His Kingdom to His disciples—the citizens of the Kingdom.

Matthew 9:35-38

Matthew 10:5-8

Matthew 13:11 secrets of the Kingdom

Matthew 16:18-20

Now, after three and a half years, He is ready to announce His kingdom and His kingship. The triumphal entry is Jesus publicly announcing to the nation of Israel that He is the King who brings a Kingdom.

In Matthew, which has twenty-eight chapters, the final week is covered in Chapters 21-28.

Eighty-nine chapters in the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John:

- Four chapters cover the first thirty years of Jesus' life.

- Eighty-five chapters cover the last three and a half years of his life.
- Twenty-nine of those eighty-five chapters cover the last week.
- All four Gospel writers include Palm Sunday.

Matthew 21:1-12

My Title: The Triumphal Entry - Clash of Kingdoms

Jesus is drawing attention to Himself. Before, He said keep it quiet, don't talk about it. But now He wants everything to go viral. He is intentionally confronting the crowd.

- Jesus, coming with the message and power of the Kingdom of God will clash openly with two other kingdoms in this final week.
- Before this week, there had been little skirmishes, but out of fear of the popularity of Jesus, the political zealots and the religious legalists have stayed back.
- But during the Passion Week, beginning with Palm Sunday, Jesus and His Kingdom will clash with the religious kingdom, the religious system of his day.
- THE WAR IS ABOUT TO START AND JESUS IS PICKING A FIGHT.

First, Jesus and the Kingdom of God will clash with the Political Kingdom of His day.

- There was a sense of expectancy. The perception was Jesus was about to take control from the Romans. He would be their King and Messiah. The Jews saw Jesus as a political and military savior.
- The perception was that the Kingdom of God which Jesus declared was a political kingdom.
- Imagine the hopes of the people as they had been under Roman rule for over seventy years. They were now in the Passover, and this was one of three major festivals that were mandatory for Jews.
 - Passover represented the freedom of Israel from Egyptian bondage. How perfect for a Messiah to show Himself and bring freedom from Roman rule.
- The disciples are still confused about Jesus and His mission. In Acts 1:6, even after teaching them for forty days on the Kingdom, they say, "Lord, will you restore the kingdom to Israel?"

- They failed to see that the Messiah would suffer before He would reign. If He had wanted to take over, He would level His anger toward the Romans and attacked the garrison at Antonio.
- Rather, Jesus levels His anger toward His own people—the Jews. They had gone astray.
- The problem was not the government but God’s people.
- He doesn’t go into the palace but the temple.
- He doesn’t show anger toward the political kingdom of Rome.

Jesus comes in on a donkey.

Verses 4-5

- Matthew says that Jesus coming on the back of donkey was the fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9.
- Jesus rides into HIS city as a King and is hailed as such—but a king of peace, not a conquering king.
- Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem bringing a spiritual kingdom, not a political one.
- He receives the worship and praise of the people because only He deserves it.
- 2 Kings 9:13, the spreading of cloaks was a sign of homage to a king.

Verse 9

- Jesus is openly proclaiming that He is the Messiah and the King they have been waiting for.
- The people did not see Jesus as the savior of their sins but rather has a political leader who would lead them in a revolt against Rome.
 - When the crowds would later realize that Jesus was not going to be a military and political leader, they would quickly turn on Him.
 - In just a few days, their cries of “Hosanna” would change to “Crucify him.”

The triumphal entry is a story of contrasts of the Kingdom of God to the political military savior the people expected.

Four contrasts of the Kingdom of God and the political kingdom:

1. Instead of a prancing white steed or royal robes, Jesus enters on a lowly donkey, wearing the clothes of the poor and humble.
2. Instead of military political might, Jesus comes as a humble king, conquering through love and grace.
3. Instead of conquering nations, Jesus conquers the hearts and minds of people.
4. Instead of a temporal peace built on treaties, Jesus brings an everlasting peace built on the cross and resurrection.

Jesus has made a triumphal entry into our hearts, He reigns there with peace and love.

Secondly, Jesus will clash with the kingdom of religion.

- It is at this point that we see both the sadness of Jesus and anger of Jesus.

Verses 12-17

- Jesus is picking a fight with the religious leaders in Jerusalem. This is bold courageous stuff! No one picks a fight with the Jewish religious leaders without there being repercussions.
- Jesus was provoking them.
- Jesus is not some kind of Southern California surfer.
- He is muscular—He walked everywhere, He was a carpenter, He built stuff.
- You may be asking, but what about the meek Jesus? Meekness is not weakness. Meekness is power under constraint. He is holding back.
- The temple people were running a scam and restricting people from coming in. Their sin was keeping people from God.
- The Church is a hospital for sinners. Come dirty, come as you are, and He will clean you up!
- Are you a bridge or a barrier. Are you a steppingstone or a stumbling block?

Four differences between religion and Jesus:

- 1) Religion emphasizes the outward but Jesus emphasized the inward.

- Jesus emphasized the heart! Not appearances.
- Jesus didn't emphasize what people looked like, what they've done or not done, rather He says, "The greatest commandment is love God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength."
- Jesus was about being wholehearted! He doesn't care whether you're rich or poor, white or black, speak English or Spanish.

2) Religion is about what you can't do, Jesus was about what you can do.

- "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."
- "Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

3) Religion puts up barriers and Jesus tore down barriers.

- There were courts in the temple area: gentile court, women's court; courts and walls that keep people out!
- Religion is always evaluating people according to barriers.
- Jesus came to break down barriers! He healed on the Sabbath.

Jesus says, "Come unto Me all who are weak and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

4) Religion makes you work your way to God; but Jesus said "I am the way to God."

- Religions are always about divine accomplishment—what you must do; but Jesus says, this is what I've done!

We are quick to point fingers at our political leaders, and justly so I might add. We are quick to point fingers at Hollywood and culture, and justly so. But when we see a nation, like America, gone astray, our model is Jesus on Palm Sunday. He points His finger at His own people, the Church.

"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

- If God's people would live as we should, it would impact everything around us.

- King for only a day. The purpose was to go to the cross. The incarnation was for the purpose of the atonement. The birth of Jesus was for the death of Jesus.

Jesus is Coming as a King—to set up His Kingdom—not a political kingdom, not a new religious kingdom...No, He comes to bring a Kingdom of God Revolution.

Passion Week: The Kingdom of God Revolution is about to begin. It's being announced to Pilate, Herod, the Pharisees, and the Sanhedrin in this final week.

What about you? You are a “temple of the Holy Spirit.” Your body is your temple.

- The Church is a hospital for sinners. Come dirty, come as you are, and He will clean you up!
- Are you a bridge or a barrier. Are you a steppingstone or a stumbling block?
- This is the second time Jesus cleansed the temple. But over time, the same money changers, the same tables got set up again.
- Our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit. We get cleaned up but then those little tables start to get set up again. Do you need a spring cleaning? Have some of the old tables are brought back into your temple?
 - Some of you are messy. “Why do today, what you can put off till tomorrow”, right?
 - Others of you clean as you go, keeping the house regularly clean.
 - Apply that to your spiritual life: you can let messes grow; you can let sin develop; you can let anger continue...
 - Or you can deal with these issues daily. Little things turn into big things. Little compromises over years. Porn addiction...
 - Clean house as often as necessary. You sin every day.

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:8-9).

- Maybe your life is a mess right now! You've tried to clean it up. You want a little religion, but what you need is a lot of Jesus!

- He longs for fellowship with you. Don't make Jesus King for a day, but the King for a lifetime.

Invitation: invite Christ into your life; invitation to those who have allowed old habits to come back, sins and vices have returned. You need a cleansing of your temple.