



Turning Lost Students into Christ-Centered Laborers

JERUSALEM • Jesus Enters the City

What Do I Need to Know About the Passage?

Luke 19:28-44

For the last 12 weeks we've been following Jesus on His march to Jerusalem. Along the way we've listened to Him essentially propose marriage, calling us to a total commitment superseded only by His commitment to us. We've learned that He is our portion and He's taught us how to pray. There have been warnings of judgment and vivid pictures of His great love for sinners. He has also given us lessons about life in the Kingdom.

Today, finally, he arrives in the city.

His arrival is filled with paradoxes. He rides in on a donkey that he has miraculously "reserved." It must have been weird for the disciples to go untie that donkey, not knowing who it belonged to. I wonder if they kind of waved their fingers in an Obi-Wan Kenobiesque "These aren't the droids you're looking for" kind of way, when they told the owner that the Lord needed it.

And yet, though it's clear something supernatural is happening, He chooses a donkey as His entry vehicle. I might have chosen to fly, or take a Corvette. Even if He wanted to stay within first century Palestinian technology how about some valiant war horse, or chariot? Anything but a donkey.

The answer to that by the way is found in Zechariah 9:9. By riding in on a humble donkey He was identifying Himself as Israel's long awaited king – gentle and bringing salvation. He is the King with sovereign power but He will take His throne through sacrifice and humility.

A second major paradox exists in the contrast between the crowds present adoration and the bloodlust that is about to overtake them. They recognize who He is (for the moment anyway) and laud Him as Messiah. Their cry in v. 28 is from Psalm 118:26. They aren't just calling Him a king, but The King, the promised Davidic King.

Today they love Him, and lay down their cloaks for Him. In less than a week they will be shouting, "Crucify Him!" Our hearts are so fickle and given to contradiction.

In John 2 it says, "Jesus would not entrust Himself to [men], for He knew all men. He did not need man's testimony about man, for He knew what was in a man." It must have been odd for Him to enjoy the adoration of the crowd knowing that He would soon endure their taunts.

What's the Big Idea?

Although the crowds initially welcome Jesus to Jerusalem with praise, they ultimately reject Him as their King and call for His crucifixion.

What's the Problem?

Like the people of Jesus' day, we can resist His kingship, worshipping Him one moment and despising Him in the next. One reason for this flip-flop was the inadequacy of their view of Jesus. He didn't deliver what they were looking for in a "king." We do the same thing.



Third, is the paradox between divine sovereignty and human responsibility. As He is riding in to the songs of the crowd, the Pharisees demand that He rebuke them. Jesus declines and observes that “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.” That’s because the purpose of the entire universe is to bring praise to God. He has ordered the world in such a way that it will bring Him praise. That’s the point of everything. That funny little phrase, “The rocks will cry out,” reminds us that Jesus is sovereign over all things and will receive the praise He is due. He can turn rocks into worshippers. He did turn you and I into worshippers.

And yet, He weeps over Israel’s rebellion. He has been warning them of coming judgment, calling them to repent, but they don’t and He knows they won’t. The things He predicts in v. 43 – 44 were fulfilled in AD 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed. He could turn the hearts of Israel and override their rebellion – but He doesn’t. Though their rebellion does not happen outside of His control, He weeps over the fate they have brought upon themselves by rejecting their Messiah and He longs for their salvation.

Finally, there is the paradox that though He is about to die a wretched, excruciating death, and be cut off from His Father, the tears he sheds are for His executioners, not Himself. This one may not be fair to call a paradox since it’s so consistent with who He is. He didn’t come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. On the cross He prayed the Father would forgive His tormenters. At every step He gives away love like the sky gives rain and sun.

And now He’s in Jerusalem – The Prince of Peace is in “the city of peace” so He could purchase its peace with His life. Praise Him who resolutely set His face towards Jerusalem so He could die for you.

What’s Our Response?

In this final study, please help the people in your group consider how they alternately worship and despise Jesus.

Encourage them to reflect on all the lessons and choose one to work on believing and applying.

What Are the Questions?

Luke 19:28-44

LAUNCH

In the unkind days of junior high and high school, did you ever have a friend turn on you over night? Did you ever do that to someone else? Tell us about it.

EXPLORE

1. As we conclude this series, let's look back. What were some of the lessons we've learned while following Jesus to Jerusalem?

Read 19:28-34.

2. This event is reminiscent of Mt. 17:24-27. How are they similar? What do they teach about Jesus?
3. If He's so powerful, why do you think He chose such a lowly, unimpressive way to make His final entry into the city?

Read 19:35-38.

4. The song they sing is from Psalm 118. Read Psalm 118:19-29. What do you think it is about? Why do they apply it to Jesus?
5. Why does the crowd praise Him now and shout for His crucifixion days later?

Read 19:39-44.

6. What does Jesus mean when He says, "the rocks will cry out?" What does that tell us about Him?
7. Do you know what Jesus is describing in vv. 42-44?
8. Why is Israel going to be judged?
9. Why doesn't Jesus turn their hearts?
10. How do you resolve that tension?
11. When Jesus gets to the city He doesn't weep for Himself but for Jerusalem. What does that tell you about Him?

APPLY

12. Where have you seen your own heart flip-flop, worshipping Jesus at one moment and then cursing Him the next?
13. What does this flip-flop potentially reveal about the inadequacy of your view of Jesus?
14. Is it easy or hard for you to believe that Jesus is saddened by things that hurt you, even when it's your own fault? Why or why not?
15. From this twelve week portrait of Jesus, what makes you most want to worship Him?
16. What lesson has been the hardest for you to believe?
17. Which has been the hardest for you to apply?

What Are the Answers?

1. See “What Do I Need to Know About the Passage?”
2. Both show Jesus with an eerie knowledge and control of events. It shows He is sovereign.
3. Because He is lowly, as well as majestic. It fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 that the Messiah would be, “righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey.”
4. It’s about the Messiah, whom they recognized Jesus to be. You might point out that in Luke 20 Jesus quotes the portion of Psalm 118 about the rejected capstone.
5. Allow the group to discuss.
6. See “What Do I Need to Know About the Passage?” He is asserting His sovereign ability to ordain praise.
7. The destruction of Jerusalem coming in AD 70.
8. According to vv. 44 their judgment is the result of their refusal to recognize Jesus as Messiah.
9. Allow the group to discuss. This is the mystery of human responsibility and divine sovereignty. It’s clear from Scripture that He does turn fallen hearts to faith. 2 Tim 2:24-26 is one of many examples of this. But He also turns fallen hearts over to judgment. Romans 9:18 summarizes both of these.
10. Though the group isn’t likely to solve it, it’s healthy for them to wrestle with it.
11. That He is loving and kind and selfless, even towards His enemies.
- 12.-17. Allow the group to discuss.

Memorize

As He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace – but now it is hidden from your eyes.

Luke 19:41-42