JESUS’ TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

Mark 11:1-11 (Key Verse 9)

Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

We are now continuing with our Mark’s study after the new year special lecture series. The message before today’s message was about a blind man who came to Jesus and asked, Rabbi I want to see. In today’s passage is about Triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Through today’s passage we are reminded of the Lordship of Jesus. As we begin the year, last week at the start of the teaching semester campus was filled with vibrancy and life. Especially from new students. They are so fresh and filled with energy and much hopes for the future. The university has become that place to provide a key to a successful future. They want their time and life to mean something. Even after graduation, as workers or as those who own a business. We accumulate resources and things, we begin to earn something because of how we used our time. Some further their studies in order to improve their earnings and opportunities. Over time we earn some skills and abilities. However, who really owns what you have? That skill? That ability? that vehicle? that house? That bank account? Your time? Ultimately our life? What does it mean that Jesus is lord and king? What does it mean that Jesus rains triumphal practically? We shall learn through this passage that Jesus is indeed king and may we surrender all our possession to Jesus most especially the priceless possession, our lives in submission to Jesus. Amen!

Look at verse 1a, “As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives,…” The geography of Mark's Gospel tells us that Bethphage and Beth­any were satellite towns of Jerusalem, where there were lodging places for pil­grims who came to the Passover. We also remember Jesus' prayer on the Mount of Olives before taking the cup of suffering and death (Lk 22:39-44). Verse 1b -2a says, “…Jesus sent two of his disciples, 2saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here.” This instruction was perhaps strange to the disciples, it was as though Jesus was requesting them to go steal. The colt did not belong to Jesus and yet, here is Jesus instructing them to bring a colt to him. However, while they were still debating within their hearts, Jesus right away explained, Look at verse 3, “If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’ ”

Though Jesus does provide a practical reality of what might happen once they are about to take the colt. It still does not justify taking a colt that has its owner. Would things even happen the way Jesus is saying they would? What if the owner immediately decides to be violent and not even ask them anything? Given all this, how did the disciples respond? Because it is usually difficult to obey when we do not understand.

Look at verse 4, “They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it,” The disciples though they did not understand, went. They simply obeyed Jesus and went. Like the Nike logo, “Just do it”. They just went. And as Jesus had predicted, some people standing there asked, what are you doing untying that colt? And they gave Jesus’ answer, “The lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.” Upon hearing that, the people let them go [5-6].

These people who asked could have protested, what is Jesus going to do with the colt? What if he returns it dead? Or what if he returns it with a broken leg or something? They did not even question who is this Lord. This was possible because Jesus is the real owner of the colt. The man who took care of the colt is the steward. Jesus is the Creator God. John 1:3 says, “Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.” Colossians 1:16 says, “For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.” So Jesus was not stealing the donkey; he was claiming what rightfully belonged to him. Jesus is the real owner not only of this donkey, but of all things, including our houses, lands, bank accounts, cars, and so on. Furthermore, Jesus is the real owner of our children, spouse, and even our very lives.

When God created heaven and earth, he gave us the mission to take care of the earth. God is the owner; we are just stewards. What is the steward’s job? It is to take care of the master’s property, and make sure what the master owes prospers in all aspects. While we are living in this world we should seriously take care and use the things God has entrusted to us. The time will come when God calls us to return to him. At that time we will have to give an account to him. We don’t know when this will happen. So we should develop a lifestyle of using our time, energy, money and even our lives for God’s purpose and glory. Whenever the Lord needs something we should give it to him right away. The problem is that we sometimes feel a sense of loss. It is due to the illusion that we are owners. In truth, when we use things only for ourselves, they have no meaning. But whatever we give to God for His use, even our lives, becomes glorious and honorable. We should live with this attitude, that we are stewards of our Lord Jesus.

Preparing this message has reminded me once again that, I am a steward not only of our property, but also of my time, energy, talents, abilities, and so on. That Jesus is lord. Jesus Lordship is not something I leave at my home after prayer and return to when I pray. Jesus lordship transcends every area of my life. The type of food I choose to eat, how I use my time and energy, my skills and abilities. Where I choose to focus my thoughts, the way I think about things and people. How I use the monies in my bank account, who I choose to marry, who and where I choose to work for, and so on. I am reminded that Jesus is lord and am only steward, I may have abilities, skills, time, money in my bank account, and so on. But am only a steward. Jesus is the real owner. I have actually forgotten this truth. That am simply Jesus steward, Jesus is the real owner to this ministry, my family, and all my abilities. Whatever we face as a family, good or bad, we should always ask the owner through prayer. At the moment one of our hot prayer topic is to have a kids ministry and sacrificial shepherds. Because day in day out I find myself burdened by my work demands (teaching, admin, research), same time failing to be good shepherd of God’s flock. If the fellowship I belong to did not have a number of matured believers, they would have fallen astray. Sometimes feeling helpless when I think about the challenges our members and leaders have, financial issues, some been praying for better jobs and nothing seems to appear after many years, getting married, marriage life and so on. However, in spite my weaknesses and shortcomings, somehow the lord has still entrusted our family with this ministry and wonderful leaders who love God’s people. Am reminded that Jesus is the real owner, I should pray all the more for His leading. My research work has also been on a down slope, not much publications over the years, not so great research projects and somehow loosing the research passion. Even starting to wonder if research is a path worth continuing on with. At home just sometimes anxieties on whether Godi is alright at school and that Gomo taken good care of by our helper while myself and Becca work. At night sometimes worried of some intruders, so ma always attentive to sounds. Through this message am reminded that Jesus is lord and we all belong to him, he alone is our Lord. This ministry, my family and my research work belongs to him. Any issues I have, I should ask the real owner. Any vision I need, I should ask the owner. Its all His, non belongs to me. Because He is creator God, he is the real owner. May I give what belongs to Jesus so he may use it all for his glory. I pray that I may be a good steward of all the lord has entrusted to me, money, family, ministry, time and my life. Amen!

The disciples could experience Jesus’ omniscience and the power of his words when they obeyed him. We too can experience this when we trust and obey Jesus. Jesus is the real owner of our lives and all Africa Higher Education Institutions. As we proclaim his name and as we obey Jesus, Jesus will work to plant the gospel in our homes, among family members, works places and advance his kingdom through us.

Once the colt was brought to Jesus, how was the reaction? Look at verses 7-8, “When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. 8Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields.” This was like red carpet entry vibes. More than even the red carpet honor, the people actually used their our clothes to form the red carpet. It did not matter to them how expensive that cloth was or how new it was. Upon seeing Jesus nothing else mattered he deserved all the honor and glory as king.

The people went ahead of Jesus and some followed and shouted, what did they shout? verse 9b-10 says, “…Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” 10“Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest heaven!” Jesus entered Jerusalem this way and went into the temple courts [11]. This was in fulfilment of God’s prophesy. Some 500 years before this, Zechariah prophesied: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! 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” (Zech 9:9, ESV). Jesus is humble, gentle, righteous king who gives us salvation.

“Hosanna!” means “Save us now!” Why did people welcome Jesus with this expression? They desperately longed for a king like David to rule over them. David was a shepherd king who took care of his people with God’s heart, but his kingdom did not last. It was a shadow of the messianic kingdom which God promised would come. Now Jesus came as the Messiah, fulfilling God’s promise (Lk 1:32-33). When the people shouted “Hosanna!” they may have been hoping for freedom from Roman oppression. But the deeper cry of their hearts was for freedom from the power of sin and death, which Satan uses to torment people night and day (Heb 2:14-15). This is the real heart cry of many in our times. We look fine outwardly, however inwardly we experience meaninglessness and have no direction. We may be suffering from fear, anxiety, sorrow and depression. Who can save us? Education? Money? Politicians? Psychologists? The people in Jesus day shouted, “Hosanna! Save us now!” Only Jesus can save us from sin and Satan. This is why Jesus entered Jerusalem. In Jerusalem he would die for our sins and rise from the dead to rescue us from sin and Satan. He humbly rules over us with love and peace. Jesus is the king of peace, love and justice. We really need this king, Jesus. Let’s accept Jesus as our lord and king! Amen!

**In conclusion**, the fundamental human problem is not money, time, resources, talent or skills and so on. Our fundamental problem is sin, from beginning of creation. However, our Lord Jesus sits supreme, he is lord and king, he is the creator God. How then does Jesus lordship impact our lives. **Firstly, because of Jesus lordship, because Jesus is creator God, Jesus saves from the power of sin and death**. And so we too can shout loud, “Hosanna!” “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”. **Secondly, because Jesus is Lord, we are all God’s possessions**, and if we all His possessions then all we own belongs to God. Colossians 1:16 says, “For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.” We just celebrated valentines day, and I must say the precious gift is not that woman or that man, of even that child. One of the most precious gifts from God, is the breath of life he bestowed upon us. And it does not matter whether we are believers or not. It is all by God’s grace. The book of Genesis teaches us that, It was from that time on, when God breathed his spirit in us, that man became a living being. Without God’s breadth we are all dead bodies. One day the lord will take back his breath of life from our nostrils. **Thirdly, because Jesus is Lord, we have been made into God’s stewards of God’s creation**. How are we spending our time, our monies, skills and abilities? We are God’s stewards and I believe this the highest calling of our lives. It is what gives our lives meaning and sense of mission or purpose. May we honor and live for Jesus because he is Lord and King. A king who was victorious in conquering the power of sin and death, and has come to save us from sin and Satan. Amen!