

**The King Who Comes Gently**  
**Matthew 21:1–11**  
**March 29, 2026**  
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**Sermon Theme**

Jesus enters Jerusalem not as the conqueror people expect but as the humble king who walks toward suffering. The crowd's praise is real, but so is their misunderstanding. Palm Sunday opens Holy Week by asking us what kind of Savior we truly want.

**Big Idea**

Jesus is the promised King, but He comes in humility, peace, and obedience rather than force. His entry into Jerusalem reveals that God's salvation does not arrive through spectacle or domination, but through self-giving love.

**What the Passage Shows Us**

Jesus enters Jerusalem on purpose. He is not swept along by the crowd's excitement. He chooses the donkey, fulfilling prophecy and showing the kind of king He is. He does not come like a ruler bent on conquest. He comes gently.

The crowd welcomes Him with cloaks, branches, and shouts of "Hosanna." Their praise is sincere, but their expectations are mixed. They want salvation, but many still seem to want it in the usual human way, fast, visible, and powerful. Jesus comes to save, but not by grasping power. He comes by walking toward the cross.

Palm Sunday holds joy and tension together. The people say true things about Jesus, yet they do not fully understand Him. Matthew shows us that praise and misunderstanding can stand side by side.

**Why the Donkey Matters**

Jesus' entrance tells us what kind of king He is. He is not weak, but neither is He violent. He has authority, but He does not display it through intimidation. He comes in humility, peace, and obedience to the Father.

That matters because we still tend to define strength the world's way. We admire force, control, and quick victory. Jesus shows another way. True authority does not need cruelty. True power does not need spectacle. The King of heaven comes gently.

**What This Means for Us**

Palm Sunday invites us to ask what kind of Savior we really want. Do we want the Jesus who

comes in humility and suffering love, or do we want a Jesus remade in our own image, louder, harsher, and easier to control?

It is possible to praise Jesus and still misunderstand Him. It is possible to welcome Him with words while resisting Him in the heart. This passage calls us to receive Him as He truly is.

As Holy Week begins, Jesus invites us not only to celebrate Him, but to follow Him. That means trusting Him when His way is not what we expected. It means recognizing that gentleness is not weakness. It means believing that the road to redemption may pass through suffering before it reaches resurrection.

### **Key Truths**

Jesus is the promised King.

He fulfills prophecy.

He comes gently, not violently.

The crowd's praise is real, but incomplete.

Jesus rides toward suffering on purpose.

Palm Sunday leads directly into Holy Week.

The passage asks us whether we will receive Jesus on His terms or ours.

### **Questions for Reflection**

What does the crowd understand rightly about Jesus?

What do they still misunderstand?

Why is it important that Jesus enters on a donkey instead of a war horse?

Where do you see the temptation to want Jesus to act on your terms?

How does Jesus' gentleness challenge the way you think about strength?

What might it look like to follow this King more faithfully this Holy Week?

### **Takeaway**

Jesus enters Jerusalem as the true King, but He comes in humility, peace, and suffering love rather than force. Palm Sunday calls us to praise Him, trust Him, and examine whether we are willing to follow the King who comes gently.

### **Key Verse**

“Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey.’” —  
Matthew 21:5