



Smith Rock
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community
Group
study guide

the book of

MARK

For the week of
5th April 2020



Seize the moment

We are all going through a strange time right now, and after two weeks of not being able to do what we would like to do we are all looking forward to when life can get back to "normal" and we can resume our activities.

What a great moment that will be when we are released from the disease and laws that bind us now.

If you are a disciple of Jesus Christ, there will come a day when you are released from the body you occupy right now and will be with Jesus in glory, and what a moment that will be.

What will be able to compare with that? It would be easy just to wait for that moment to arrive rather than seeing the current opportunity of the life we have as moments to be seized.



35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." 36 And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" 37 And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." 38 Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" 39 And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized, 40 but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." 41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. 42 And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever

would be first among you must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

46 And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 48 And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent.

But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” 49 And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.”

50 And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51 And Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And the blind man said to him, “Rabbi, let me recover my sight.” 52 And Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

11 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples 2 and said to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. 3 If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.’” 4 And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. 5 And some of those standing there said to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” 6 And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it. 8 And many spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. 9 And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "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!"

11 And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

Mark 10:35–11:11 (ESV)

Commentary

In this passage Mark gives us the the final day's travel before Jesus makes His entry into Jerusalem. The day starts in Jericho, some eighteen miles from Jerusalem, but it was an arduous day's journey as Jericho lies at 850' below sea level and Jerusalem 2,540' above. The road passes through a remote rocky desert area where there is little protection from the sun, and although well used, was notorious for bandits (see Jesus' story in Luke 10:30).

However it wasn't the physical journey that weighed on Jesus' mind as He travelled to Jerusalem that day, it was what He had told His disciples prior to setting out that cast a shadow over it.

32 And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them. And they were amazed,

and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, 33 saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. 34 And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise."

Mark 10:32–34 (ESV)

Jesus had His mind set on the climax of His ministry and life, but the disciples minds seemed to be elsewhere as it soon became apparent where!

James and John ask to sit with Jesus on His right and left (positions of honour) in His glory, presumably they thought that glory was going to be achieved when Jesus reached Jerusalem and set up His kingdom. Jesus asks them if they can drink the cup He is to drink and be baptised with the baptism He is to be baptised with. Jesus is not talking about taking communion but rather the cup of the wrath of God that will be poured out on Him on the cross. Jesus will take the place of those who put their faith in Him and pay the price for their sin. In Revelation we read that cup of wrath, God's judgement will be poured out on everyone who does not belong to God.

9 And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and

sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

Revelation 14:9–10 (ESV)

The baptism that Jesus is about to be plunged into is death, as he takes the sin of His people and buries it once and for all. Through His death He ransoms His people. The term ransom was often used in conjunction with the price of freeing a slave, so in this regard Jesus pays the price for us to be freed from slavery to sin. Jesus tells James and John that indeed they will drink the cup and be baptised but to sit on His left and right hand is not His to give. It has already been decided by the Father. Jesus does tell them they will share in the cup and baptism of Him, but not on the cross as they are not able to redeem anyone with their lives but as disciples they are not about facing the same fate as their master. Indeed we can read in Acts 12:2 that James was the first Apostle recorded to die, executed by Herod. John was later exiled on the Island of Patmos.

The rest of the disciples quickly betray that they were thinking exactly along the same lines as James and John when they get wind of what the brothers are up to they are angry. Not because they were upset at what James and John were asking Jesus for, but they had pulled a fast one and beaten the rest of them!

Jesus tells them that they not to be like the rest of the world who think when they have positions of authority, power and glory, can throw their weight around but rather the most prestigious in His kingdom is the one who sees him or herself as the servant of all, and the one who is first is the one who is everyone's slave!

If we take Jesus' offer of ransom we also take on Jesus' way of life and seeing ourselves as servants to everyone.

As Jesus and His disciples leave Jericho, Bartimaeus a blind beggar is crying out to Him, calling Jesus the Son of David. Jesus is more than the Son of David He is the Lord of David as when Jesus discusses it later in the temple with the Pharisees (Matthew 22:41). The crowd surrounding Jesus want Bartimaeus to be quiet, Jesus doesn't have time to stop and chat with him, He's on a mission, but Bartimaeus cries all the louder. Jesus stops and has Bartimaeus brought to Him and He asks Bartimaeus the same question He asked James and John; "What do you want me to do for you?" Bartimaeus in faith had called out to Jesus and in faith asks for recovery in sight, and Jesus responds to his faith and restores his sight and Bartimaeus joins the throng following Jesus. Even at this time Jesus still had time and compassion to serve a poor blind beggar.

After the long journey Jesus and the disciples make to a Bethany a village about a mile and half from Jerusalem and He sends two disciples on to bring back to him a donkey which has never been ridden. It seems likely Jesus had already prearranged its use with the owner, who was possibly in the crowd. A make shift saddle of coats is laid on the donkey's back and then Jesus sits on it and they make their way towards Jerusalem, and as they approach the entrance some of the crowd lay down their garments in the road while others cut branches off nearby trees to lay down. As festival goers made their way up to the gates of Jerusalem it was customary for them to recite the psalms of ascent, (113-118) and the chorus that rings out around Jesus is taken from psalm 118:

25 *Save us, we pray, O LORD!*
O LORD, we pray, give us success!

O LORD, we pray, give us success!

26 *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!*

We bless you from the house of the LORD.

Psalm 118:25–26 (ESV)

this psalm along with the image of Jesus riding in on the donkey taken from Zechariah:

The Coming King of Zion

9 *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.*

Zechariah 9:9 (ESV)

All had great messianic implications, although the symbolism of the donkey is not of an all powerful conqueror riding victorious into his city.

By the time they get to the temple it is late, the crowd quickly disperses to find lodging and food for the night, and Jesus with His disciples has a quick look around the temple and then they also leave for the night, setting the scene for His return to the temple the next morning.

Group Study

Open the group with prayer and discuss how you have used your application from last week's study in your life, and what you have learned from it.

What are you focused on right now?

When you are focused on an important task, how easy is it for you to be interrupted?

How do you think Jesus must have felt when He saw James and John approaching Him? Do you think He knew what they were going to ask Him?

Read:

17 And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, 18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

1 Peter 1:17–19 (ESV)

Describe the ransom Jesus made for us and what that means we don't have to face.

Jesus said He came not to be served but to be served. Read John 13:1- 17.

In what way are we to follow Jesus' example?

What gets in our way of having a servant attitude?

Why would Jesus take the trouble to stop for Bartimaeus?

How well do we hear the cries of those around us pleading for mercy?

What tends to drown out their cries?

Read Isaiah 11:1-9

Bartimaeus calls out to Jesus "son of David," Isaiah describes the kingdom the "Son of David" is bringing in, how does this passage make you feel about it?

Describe the difference between Jesus' expectations as He entered Jerusalem and His disciples and the crowd with Him.

If you had been there as a bystander, watching a man riding in on a donkey what would you have thought?



Personal study time

Read psalms 113 - 118 and reflect what that must have been like to be part of the crowd on Palm Sunday.

KIDS CORNER



The Big Day

1. Can you think of something big that's happened in history?

When we think of big events in history, we think of Explorers discovering new lands, scientists creating revolutionary advancements, or leaders shaping the futures of their peoples. But do you know what was the biggest event ever to happen? Every other historical milestone pales in comparison to this single, life-changing, earth-shattering, mind-blowing accomplishment: When Jesus died on the cross and rose back to life. It's the very thing that makes salvation from sin and a relationship with God possible. Because, when Jesus died, He was punished for the evil things that we've done so that we wouldn't have to be. And then He came back to life! This

proved that He really did take all our punishment, conquer all our sin, and give us all the freedom to be close to God. Today is “Palm Sunday”, which means that today remembers Jesus’ exciting entrance into Jerusalem. It’s called Palm Sunday because the Jewish crowds laid down palm branches on the road for Jesus on this day. It was a big deal. Everyone was so excited for their King to come, and they all wanted to praise and honor Him. And, even though they didn’t know it, as they eagerly received Him into their city, they made it possible for Him to fulfill the most important event in all of history. After He was welcomed into their city, that’s when the big day came, and He died to give salvation to the world. Just like the Jewish people, you and I can also joyfully welcome Jesus. We can welcome Him into our lives, and in doing so make His salvation possible for us!

2. Have you received Jesus and His offer of salvation?

