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~ **The Humble King** ~

You can learn much more about this story by doing these three things:

1. Read Mark 11:1-19.
2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.
3. Answer the reflective questions.

1. Read the text of the story.

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Mark 11:1-19 NASB	Mark 11:1-19 NLT
<p>As they *approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He *sent two of His disciples, ² and *said to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find a colt tied <i>there</i>, on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it <i>here</i>.³ If anyone says to you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ you say, ‘The Lord has need of it’; and immediately he will send it back here.” ⁴ They went away and found a colt tied at the door, outside in the street; and they *untied it. ⁵ Some of the bystanders were saying to them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?” ⁶ They spoke to them just as Jesus had told <i>them</i>, and they gave them permission. ⁷ They *brought the colt to Jesus and put their coats on it; and He sat on it. ⁸ And many spread their coats in the road, and others <i>spread</i> leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. ⁹ Those who went in front and those who followed were shouting:</p> <p>“Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; ¹⁰ Blessed <i>is</i> the coming kingdom of our father David; Hosanna in the highest!”</p> <p>¹¹ Jesus entered Jerusalem <i>and came</i> into the temple; and after looking around at everything, He left for Bethany with the twelve, since it was already late.</p> <p>¹² On the next day, when they had left Bethany, He became hungry. ¹³ Seeing at a distance a fig tree in</p>	<p>As Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem, they came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany on the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of them on ahead. ² “Go into that village over there,” he told them. “As soon as you enter it, you will see a young donkey tied there that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks, ‘What are you doing?’ just say, ‘The Lord needs it and will return it soon.’”</p> <p>⁴ The two disciples left and found the colt standing in the street, tied outside the front door. ⁵ As they were untying it, some bystanders demanded, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶ They said what Jesus had told them to say, and they were permitted to take it. ⁷ Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their garments over it, and he sat on it.</p> <p>⁸ Many in the crowd spread their garments on the road ahead of him, and others spread leafy branches they had cut in the fields. ⁹ Jesus was in the center of the procession, and the people all around him were shouting,</p> <p>“Praise God! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the LORD! ¹⁰ Blessings on the coming Kingdom of our ancestor David! Praise God in highest heaven!”</p>

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<p>leaf, He went <i>to see</i> if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again!" And His disciples were listening.</p> <p>¹⁵ Then they *came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves; ¹⁶ and He would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple. ¹⁷ And He <i>began</i> to teach and say to them, "Is it not written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL THE NATIONS'? But you have made it a ROBBERS' DEN." ¹⁸ The chief priests and the scribes heard <i>this</i>, and <i>began</i> seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching.</p> <p>¹⁹ When evening came, they would go out of the city.</p>	<p>¹¹ So Jesus came to Jerusalem and went into the Temple. After looking around carefully at everything, he left because it was late in the afternoon. Then he returned to Bethany with the twelve disciples.</p> <p>¹² The next morning as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. ¹³ He noticed a fig tree in full leaf a little way off, so he went over to see if he could find any figs. But there were only leaves because it was too early in the season for fruit. ¹⁴ Then Jesus said to the tree, "May no one ever eat your fruit again!" And the disciples heard him say it.</p> <p>¹⁵ When they arrived back in Jerusalem, Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the people buying and selling animals for sacrifices. He knocked over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves, ¹⁶ and he stopped everyone from using the Temple as a marketplace. ¹⁷ He said to them, "The Scriptures declare, 'My Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations,' but you have turned it into a den of thieves."</p> <p>¹⁸ When the leading priests and teachers of religious law heard what Jesus had done, they began planning how to kill him. But they were afraid of him because the people were so amazed at his teaching.</p> <p>¹⁹ That evening Jesus and the disciples left the city.</p>
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2. Discover key cultural and historical insights

- **Bethphage** (Aramaic nu fo esuoH" .til , ריפ פגית-ripe figs") is a Christian religious site in the West Bank.

Eusebius of Caesarea (Onom 58:13) located it on the Mount of Olives. It was likely on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho and the limit of a Sabbath-day's journey from Jerusalem, that is, 2,000 cubits.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bethphage>

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- The Evangelists locate Bethany, just as they do Bethphage (which rabbinic sources place on the outer fringe of Jerusalem) in the vicinity of the Mount of Olives. It was before Bethany as one leaves Jericho on the way from Jerusalem. – Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospel, 41
- Mount of Olives – because of Zechariah 14:4-5, there were many end-time Jewish speculations about it. A Jewish false prophet wished to launch a war from there (Josephus, Wars, 2.13.5, 261-63). Jesus often visited there (Luke 21:37; John 8:1). It was within the jurisdiction of Jerusalem. The descent down into the city would be rapid. – Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, 41.
- The population of Jerusalem during Passover could swell to one million.

From Malina, A Social Science Commentary of the New Testament

- Matt 21:1-11

The horse was the usual war animal. The donkey used for common people or goods. For a king to ride a donkey was a symbol of humility.

The coats on the ground so the donkey won't touch the soil or the stones. This treatment marks the rider on the donkey as someone above ordinary human life.

The city dwellers would be stirred by the peasants from Galilee calling him the Son of David and giving such treatment to someone from Nazareth.

City dwellers could see the road from the Mount of Olives and could see the commotion as they looked over the eastern wall.

- Matt 21:12-13

A den of robbers is their gathering place and where they store their treasure. Those with wealth would be considered extortioners and profiting from taking advantage of others. (106)

- Matt 26:16

The blind and lame would be prohibited from entering the Temple Lev 21:14-16

- Mark 11:12-14, 20-26

In antiquity, speaking to plants and trees was considered normal and effective. Ancient agricultural handbooks. 196-97

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Answer these reflective questions.

The prophecy of riding on the donkey into Jerusalem is found in Zechariah 9:9-10. Read these verses and describe what you learn from them.

Rejoice, O people of Zion!

Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem!

Look, your king is coming to you.

He is righteous and victorious,
yet he is humble, riding on a donkey—
riding on a donkey's colt.

¹⁰ I will remove the battle chariots from Israel
and the warhorses from Jerusalem.

I will destroy all the weapons used in battle,
and your king will bring peace to the nations.

His realm will stretch from sea to sea
and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.

The people began saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” What do you think they were hoping Jesus would do? Were they right or wrong?

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The fig tree was a symbol for Israel and when Jesus cursed the fig tree that symbolized judgment on Jerusalem for its lack of fruit. What kind of fruit do you think Jesus was looking for from the city? What kind of fruit is he looking for in your life?

Three kinds of people greeted Jesus, some were praising, some were questioning, some were angry. In what group would you place yourself?
