

## Sermon Series: Transformation

### Sermon: A New King

Text: Matthew 21:1-11

#### Discussion Questions:

There have been times in history when the masses have cried out, demanding a new king.

Can you think of times in history when you know this to have happened?

- What are the causes?
- What motivates this kind of outcry?
- What are some of the things that “the masses” do in conjunction with this cry?
- What are the typical responses of those who are currently in power when these things happen?

#### Examination:

Read **1 Samuel 8:1-9**. Samuel the Judge was dying, and he had appointed his sons to take his place. There was just one problem - his sons weren't good guys. They “*turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.*”

So the elders of the people called a special session with Samuel, and demanded a change in government.

- Was this reasonable?
- Looking at this at face-value, does there seem to be anything wrong with their having done this?
- Would things have been different if they were requesting this change instead of demanding a change?
- The last sentence in **verse 5** seems very telling: “...such as all the other nations have.” What does this tell us about their mentality?
- Why do you think this demand displeased Samuel (v. 6)?
- This demand displeases God as well (vv. 7-8). What reasons does God give for his displeasure?
- God implies that this cry for a king is connected to the nations' tendency to forsake God in order to serve other gods (v. 8). This being the case, the demand for a king really had nothing to do with how bad Samuel's sons were - it was just an excuse. What they really wanted was to serve other gods. Compare this to our world - and our country. Regardless of who's in the White House, people are constantly calling for “a new king,” justifying this by the complaint that our leaders have “*turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.*” Could it be that what “the masses” really want is to serve other gods? What might those gods be? What might God's response to this ultimately be?
- How is God trying to help the people think through the consequences of their request (v. 9)?

Read **1 Samuel 8:10-18**.

- What are all the reasons God (through Samuel) gives for discouraging their request for a new king?
- Why are these the inevitable results of having a king? Why will a king “claim these as his rights”?
- Is it a fair warning that God “will not answer you in that day” (v. 18)? Why not?

Read **Matthew 21:1-11**.

- All four of the gospels record this account we now call Palm Sunday. Each writer, though, provides unique details about this event. Matthew tells us something that none of the other three do - there wasn't just one donkey involved in Palm Sunday, there were two.  
*“Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”*  
We see a female donkey - the mother - accompanied by her baby - the male colt. Mark and Luke both tell us that the colt that Jesus sits on had never been ridden. So why did Jesus want the mother as well? No one knows for sure, but it stands to reason that a young colt, never ridden before, would behave much differently (and calmer) with its mother leading the way.
- This also fulfills the details of the prophecy in **Zechariah 9:9**, that mentions both a colt (male) which is the foal (younger than 1 year old) of a donkey (female - the mother).
- The most significant phrase in the Zechariah 9:9 prophecy is: *“Behold, your King is coming to you...”*. Jesus is undeniably coming into Jerusalem as the King - the one singled out in the prophecy.
  - Are the people crying out for a new king? If so, why?
  - The word *“Hosanna”* literally means: “Lord, save us!” Two things are worth noting about this word. One, it is a political term - not spiritual. The people aren't crying out to be saved spiritually. They want saved from the heavy oppression and taxation imposed by the Roman Empire. The second thing to note is that this is not a request - it's a demand. It's the cry of a mob demanding immediate action. Might the masses be justifying this by their belief that the Roman rulers had *“turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice”*? Could it be that what “the masses” really want is to serve other gods? What might those gods be? What might God's response to this ultimately be?

**Application:**

Comparisons to our current world are striking. The root of so much political outcry is selfish - and idolatrous. We want what we want - with the end goal of worshiping whatever gods we think best. Give this thought during this Holy Week leading up to Easter. Understand that Jesus is the King of Kings - and to be a Christian means we seek His glory and kingdom - not ours.