

Episode: One-Hit Wonders No. 1

Narrator: Owner

Primary Scriptures: Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19

Story Summary: Jesus needs a donkey to ride on Palm Sunday

Location: Mount of Olives

Time: Circa 30 AD

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Mark 11:3

Any careful reader of the Four Gospels notices they often give different details about the same events. This should be expected because Matthew and John were usually eyewitnesses, while Mark and Luke were usually repeating things they had heard from reliable sources.

In Matthew 21:1-11, Matthew opens the story by setting it near Bethpage, a small village on the east side of the Mount of Olives. Jesus sends two disciples ahead to get a donkey and her colt. He tells them to untie the animals and that if anyone questions this action, they should say Jesus needs them and they will be sent back right away. Jesus tells his followers this is to fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9. Matthew indicates that Jesus rode both the colt and its mother.

In Mark 11:1-11, Mark adds Jesus and his followers were approaching Bethpage and Bethany, the colt had not been ridden, Jesus said he would send the colt back, and that people did question the disciples when they untied the colt. Mark does not mention the colt's mother.

In Luke 19:28-44, Luke's narrative is similar to Mark's. However, Luke adds the detail that the owners of the colt questioned the two disciples when they untied the colt.

In John 12:1-19, John just says Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it.

Perhaps, however, rather than concentrating on the details of that part of the story, it might be more useful to get a bigger picture. The Gospel writers seem to be tying many things together in their Palm Sunday story. Here are some of them:

- The raising of Lazarus from the dead presented the Jewish authorities with many problems such as: Lazarus was alive and could testify, and if Jesus could raise the dead then he was certainly of God. The crowd following Jesus was intent on spreading the news of Lazarus.
- The people knew the prophecy of Zechariah, and certainly were thrilled to praise Jesus as a prophet, if not the Messiah.
- Jesus accepted the crowd's praise, but immediately lamented over the fact that Jerusalem and its leaders would not accept him as their savior.
- Jesus knew that his death was imminent and was already preparing his followers for that event.