Introduction

A good secret is hard to keep.

Can you imagine how hard it must have been for the disciples to witness some of the miracles of Jesus and then be told, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen.”?

But on this day, Palm Sunday, all of that began to change. There would be no more secrets. The time had come for Jesus to openly declare to the world that he is the Messiah.

The key question in this text is who is Jesus?

Matthew shows us how Jesus fulfills the three roles of the Messiah of prophet, priest and king.

Jesus and his disciples came toward Jerusalem from Jericho.

They came to Bethpage which means “house of figs”.

Jesus sent two of his disciples to find a donkey and her colt.

There are two things to note:
- Everything is under Jesus control.
- Everything is intentional.

I. JESUS IS THE GREATEST OF KINGS.
MATTHEW 21:1-11

Jesus and his disciples came toward Jerusalem from Jericho.

They came to Bethpage which means “house of figs”.

Jesus sent two of his disciples to find a donkey and her colt.

There are two things to note:
- Everything is under Jesus control.
- Everything is intentional.
“Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” Zechariah 9:9

When the crowd saw Jesus riding on a colt, they exploded with excitement.

“Hosanna to the Son of David!”
The sight of Jesus coming down the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem must have been amazing.

The whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”
The Magi asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?” Matthew 2:2
The Priests asked, “Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God?” Matthew 26:63
Pilate asked, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Matthew 27:11
Jesus replied, “Yes, it is as you say!”

What sort of king is he? He is the “King of Kings and Lord of Lords”. Revelation 19:16
II. JESUS IS THE GREATEST OF PRIESTS. MATTHEW 21:12-17

Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling. There were two kinds of transactions taking place on the Temple Mount.

- Paying the Temple Tax.
- Buying a lamb or dove for sacrifice.

Josephus tells us that at one Passover 256,500 lambs were brought into the city.

Jesus came to the temple as a priest to purify it and call them back to God’s intent. The temple is a place for prayer, healing and worship.

What is God’s purpose for the church?

The primary duty of the priest was to represent God’s people and to make atonement for their sin. Jesus would do that like no other when he offered himself for our sins.

“Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.” Hebrews 7:27

III. JESUS IS THE GREATEST OF PROPHETS. MATTHEW 21:18-22

The cursing of the fig tree is a parable. The fig tree was Israel.

They had a profession of faith, but no fruit. And just like the prophets of old, Jesus pronounced God’s judgment on Israel.
“My people come to you, as they usually do, and sit before you to listen to your words, but they do not put them into practice. With their mouths they express devotion, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain. Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice.” Ezekiel 33:31-33

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.” James 1:22-25

Conclusion

Matthew shows us how these three offices of prophet, priest and king come together in one person – Jesus.

“It is his glory, given him by the Father, to be in this way the all-sufficient Savior. We who believe are called to understand this and to show ourselves his people by obeying him as our king, trusting him as our priest, and learning from him as our prophet and teacher. To center on Jesus Christ in this way is the hallmark of authentic Christianity.” J.I. Packer

Jesus is
The Greatest of Kings
The Greatest of Priests
The Greatest of Prophets