

And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. 11.1-11

If one follows Mark geographically, Jesus has followed a trajectory from the heights of Mt Hermon (9.2), down through the Jordan Valley, via Jericho up to Jerusalem. He enters the city down the Mount of Olives on the eastern side, finally going up into the temple on Mt Zion.



If one traces the journey spiritually, Jesus goes from the heights of his glorious transfiguration, down through the valley of the shadow of death (9.30-32; 10.32-34), up to and into his royal city as Messiah-king, finally coming as the Lord to his temple (see Mal 3.1).

Whichever way one views it, it's some journey. There are wonderful highs, but more often troubling lows, and an overwhelming sense of foreboding. The moments of transfiguration and being hailed as king are just that – transitory moments. Isaiah may well have celebrated Zion as the highest of the mountains (Isa 2), and the Psalmist spoken of it as the city of our God and of the great King, the joy of the whole earth (Ps 48); but the disciples' instinct is correct - amazement and fear that Jesus should make it his destination (10.32).

Jesus alone knows the enormity of what awaits him in Jerusalem and understands *why* he must make this journey. What we know, with the benefit of hindsight, is just how ironic the treatment he would receive is: here is the Davidic Messiah coming to take up his throne in his royal city, and to fulfil his role as our true High Priest - and he is killed as a blasphemer and criminal.

But is Jesus' lordship over all the earth any more welcome today? Brown's painting of Jesus entering Chicago suggests the response would range from nought to token interest, only one lone soul actively welcoming the lonely Messiah.

? How actively do we look forward to, and prepare for, Jesus' return?



Almighty God, your word tells us that Jesus will come again to judge the earth and consummate his kingdom. Gladden and ready me, I pray, for that day. In his name I pray. Amen.