

JESUS BEFORE THE PEOPLE ON THE STREET: A KING RIDING ON A DONKEY (JOHN 12:12-19)

OPEN: The moment has finally arrived. The air is thick with excitement. The crowd is building. Jesus is entering the city of Jerusalem. Folks have come to celebrate the Passover.

- ✓ The dinner last night, thanks to Martha, was delicious. Friends gathering together, enjoying one another's company...who can forget Mary's extravagant gift and how the fragrance filled the room?
- ✓ It was a picture-perfect evening, except for that one awkward moment...Judas spoke up and Jesus called him out. "Leave her alone."

❖ Help the poor, they are everywhere, but occasionally do something extravagant (over the top) to show your love for Jesus. (Chest of Joash is December 3rd, 3 Sunday's away).

- ✓ After a night of rest, Jesus and an entourage from Bethany head into Jerusalem.

1) THE **TIMING.** (PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)

John 12:12a (NLT) – The next day, the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city...

- ✓ Let those who asked if He would show up...wonder no more (John 11:56)
- ✓ It is now 5 days (John 12:1) before Passover. The streets are crowded with pilgrims coming to the Holy City to celebrate their freedom from Egypt.

- ✓ Here we see the precision of God...according to God's sovereign time table...the Lord's death would coincide with Passover.
 - And not just any Passover, Daniel predicted this hundreds of years earlier (**Daniel 9:24-27**).
 - At a time when lambs were being sacrificed, Jesus the Lamb of God, would die for the sins of mankind.
 - The timing is noteworthy when you recognize the religious leaders were conspiring to kill Jesus and would have already done so if it were "possible."
 - **John 7:30 (NLT)** – Then the leaders tried to arrest Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His time had not yet come.
 - **John 8:20 (NLT)** – Jesus made this statement while He was teaching in the section of the Temple known as the Treasury. But He was not arrested, because His time had not yet come.
 - **Galatians 4:4-5 (NLT)** – ⁴But when the right time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. ⁵God sent Him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that He could adopt us as His very own children.
- From eternity past, the calendar of God declared...now is the time...angels sitting on the front of their seats (clouds) must have watched with great anticipation.
- Josephus (the historian) informs us that during the Passover Feast as many as 256,000 lambs would be sacrificed.
 - ✓ One lamb would serve a family (or two if small) of ten. The estimated crowd would be 3 million.
 - ✓ The lambs would be herded down the streets and to the Temple...there in the middle of thousands of lambs comes a special lamb...the Lamb of God.

2) THE **TRIUMPHANT ENTRY** (ALL 4 GOSPELS PROVIDE THIS ACCOUNT). *(PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)*

John 12:12b-13 (NLT) – ...A large crowd of Passover visitors ¹³ took palm branches and went down the road to meet Him. They shouted, “Praise God! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!”

- ✓ We now refer to this event as “Palm Sunday.” Luke tells us in his Gospel (**Luke 19:36**) they also spread their garments on the road ahead of Him.
- ✓ The palm tree is plentiful in Israel, we saw acres of date palms.
 - The branches are waved to celebrate victory.
 - Used in Festival of Booths...makeshift shelter.
 - In the days of the Maccabees, the palm branch was printed on their coins.
 - There is even a reference to palm branches in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 7:9-10 (NLT) - ⁹ After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ And they were shouting with a great roar, “Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!”

- ✓ They wave their branches to welcome Messiah ...their hope...He would liberate Israel from Rome.
- Notice what they say: **NKJV (vs. 13) Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The King of Israel.**
 - ✓ Hosanna – give salvation now, save us now...words that had political and military implications.
 - Save us from these dreaded Romans. Overthrow Rome and restore Israel to its glory days when King David ruled.

- ✓ It was a quote from **Psalm 118:26 (NLT)** – Bless the One who comes in the name of the Lord. They add...the King of Israel.
 - They were welcoming Jesus into their holy city and crowning Him King.

3) THE **TRANSPORTATION**. (PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)

John 12:14-16 (NLT) - ¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and rode on it, fulfilling the prophecy that said: ¹⁵ “Don’t be afraid, people of Jerusalem. Look, your King is coming, riding on a donkey’s colt.” ¹⁶ His disciples didn’t understand at the time that this was a fulfillment of prophecy. But after Jesus entered into His glory, they remembered what had happened and realized that these things had been written about Him.

- ✓ As for the young donkey, Mark provides more info on how they secured (nabbed) it.

Mark 11:1-6 (NLT) - 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.’” 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. (why didn’t you say so? ☺)

- Why a donkey? Budget cut backs? Couldn’t afford a white stallion?
 - When the President arrives he comes in Airforce One, a movie star might arrive in a limo, a music group in a nice bus...why a donkey?
 - The donkey is a burden bearer, humble animal.
 - It’s a symbol of peace not war.
 - It would disarm the Romans who you can bet were watching every move.

- Jesus will come riding on a white horse one day (**Revelation 19**) but on this day, He comes in humility. He comes to bear the burden of our sin so we could obtain peace with God.
- Plus, it was a fulfillment of prophecy, 500 years before it happened the Prophet Zechariah said:

Zechariah 9:9 (NLT) - 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.

- The fact that it is an unbroken colt, never ridden on before would show Jesus as Creator over creation.
 - ✓ Would you climb on the back of an unbroken horse or donkey?
 - ✓ Add to that the crowd...this animal would normally had been skittish, afraid...people milling around, throwing palm branches and garments down and shouting...what a miracle!

4) THE **TALK**. (CHATTER IN TOWN). *(PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)*

John 12:17-19 (NLT) - ¹⁷ Many in the crowd had seen Jesus call Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, and they were telling others about it. ¹⁸ That was the reason so many went out to meet him—because they had heard about this miraculous sign. ¹⁹ Then the Pharisees said to each other, “There’s nothing we can do. Look, everyone has gone after him!”

- The Pharisees wanted to kill Him while many in the crowd wanted to crown Him.
 - ✓ Two groups emerged that day...those who believed He could raise the dead and those who wanted to put Him to death.
 - ✓ As it was then, so is it now...some spend their life time opposing Christ, ridiculing Him...
 - ✓ You find them on college campuses, behind news anchor desk, they publish books, preach in liberal pulpits...
 - Know this, you cannot prohibit the sovereign plan of God.

- Frenchman Voltaire said: “You have seen what one Jew did to create Christianity, I will show you what one Frenchman will do to destroy it.”
- With his pen he attacked the Scriptures. He made this bold statement back in the 1800’s: “One hundred years from today the Bible will be a forgotten book.”
- After his death, his home was purchased by the Geneva Bible Society and Bibles were warehoused there and sent throughout the region.
- God will accomplish His plans!

CLOSE:

- What time is it? Time to get busy accomplishing God’s plans for your life.
- Don’t be fickle, one moment they shout His triumphant entry and the next they lack the courage of fortitude to faithfully follow Him.
- He entered Jerusalem on a donkey, He returns on a white horse (He offers you grace/mercy, He comes to judge).
- What’s all the talk about? He has the power to give life to the dead.

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Message Notes
November 12, 2017**