

## John 12:12-19, “The Coming of Jesus”

12.25.22

Tim was singing “O Holy Night,” with these lyrics: “Long lay the world in sin and error pining, till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.” And church, on this Christmas morning, that’s why we know that Jesus had to leave heaven and come to earth as a baby...for you see Christmas is the coming of the Christ...coming to bring deliverance from sin...to a world in “sin and error pining.”

That’s why the song continues: “A thrill of hope...the weary world rejoices...for yonder breaks, a new and glorious morn.” Jesus came to this world of darkness...marred by sin and decay because His creation had chosen to do it their way. Adam and Eve chose sin versus obedience and thus, darkness and sin consumes the earth. But thanks be to God, He gave us a way out, through Jesus.

This Christmas morning we’re going to see: “The Coming of Jesus,” as we continue in our series:



in three ways. One: by way of a manger, two: by way of a donkey into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and 3: at His return to set up His eternal rule and reign over the world. Our main text for today comes from our study of John, chapter 12. You’ve made your way there, look at verse 12.

### **John 12:12-19**

<sup>12</sup> The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” <sup>14</sup> And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, <sup>15</sup> “Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!” <sup>16</sup> His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. <sup>17</sup> The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. <sup>18</sup> The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. <sup>19</sup> So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.”

It was on Saturday, five days before His crucifixion, that Jesus was at a dinner celebrating His arrival to Bethany, and the fact that He had raised Lazarus from the dead, that Mary, Lazarus’ sister...



took a jar of very expensive perfume and anointed Jesus from head to toe. This was an act of devotion and an act that marked the upcoming death and burial of Jesus.

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Jesus was now ready to make the journey back to Jerusalem and the next day was Sunday and the appointed time for His entry into Jerusalem. We call this the “Triumphal Entry” and we’ve named that Sunday “Palm Sunday” because of the fact that the crowds laid down palm branches to mark His coming...and all of this was being done as the nation of Israel made preparations for the Passover to start (in five days). Watch verse 12.

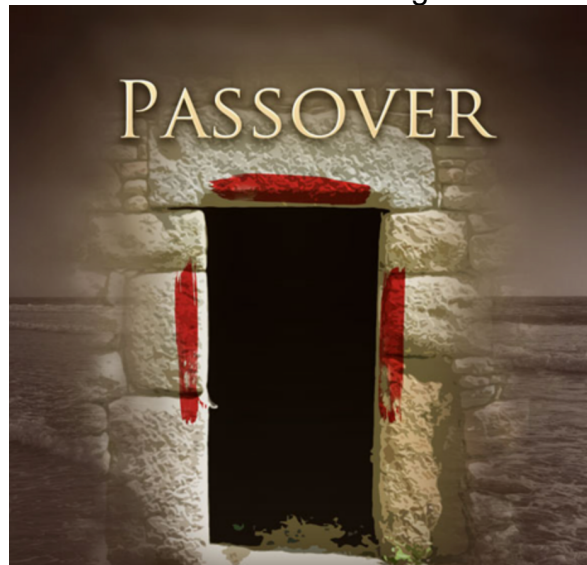
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**John 12:12**

**<sup>12</sup>The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.**

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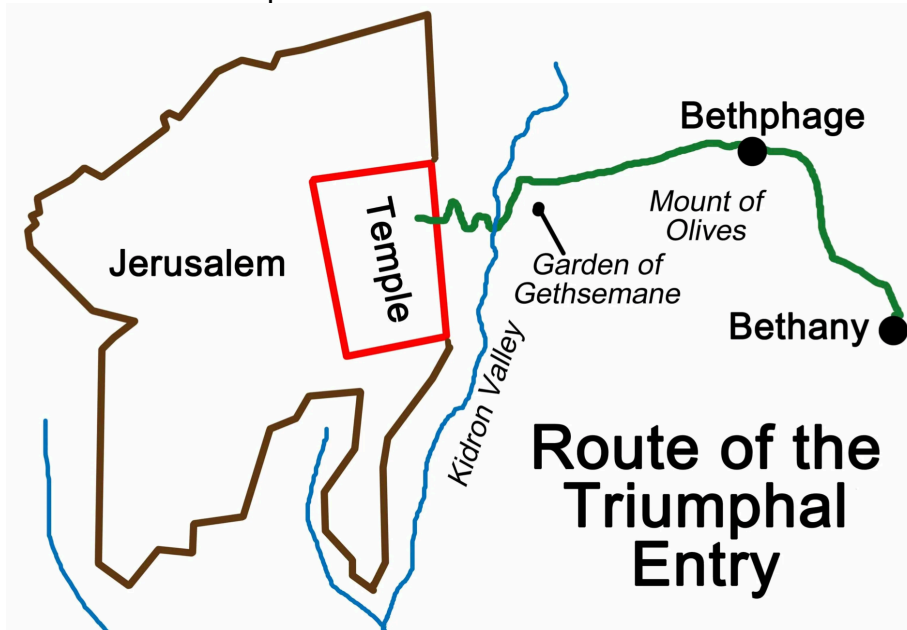
Now, the large crowd coming to the feast is a description of the number of people coming to the Passover celebration. Scholars tell us it could’ve been as many as 2 million people descending upon Jerusalem for this high and holy celebration of God’s deliverance of the nation of Israel from Egypt. You’ll remember, Passover commemorates the Death Angel...



“passing over” the homes that had the blood of a lamb placed upon the door posts, and the lentil... This indicated their faith and trust in God that when the Angel saw the blood, he passed over those homes and only destroyed the firstborn of those homes, not covered by the blood, which would have been those of the Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

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So, it's Passover season in Jerusalem and word has traveled quickly that Jesus was making his way to Jerusalem. His trek...see this map...



would be from Bethany (right side) through Bethphage (Beth-fog-eh), into Jerusalem via the Mount of Olives, crossing the Kidron Valley, through the Eastern gate. Church, I want to juxtapose Jesus' arrival to Jerusalem that day...(see the depiction):



that celebratory entry into Jerusalem with his arrival to Bethlehem (see the depiction):



There was no fanfare in His arrival to that manger in Bethlehem. No shouts of praise! No: “Hosanna to the King!” Only the sound of animals at a roadside inn...in a cave that was used to keep the animals of the travelers. I’ve been to that cave in Bethlehem.

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Church, when Jesus came to this earth as a baby...



He came in the most humble way imaginable... Joseph, acting as a midwife to his betrothed, delivering the Son of God...and placing the Creator of the universe in a stinking feeding trough for animals. There were no royal robes in which to wrap baby Jesus, only strips of cloth. Rags. Rags, strips of cloth that would wrap His body as a baby and then 33 years later...



strips of cloth that would wrap His body after He was mutilated on the cross...taken down and wrapped rags, strips of cloth, and placed in a borrowed tomb.

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Yes, Jesus would come on Palm Sunday, riding into Jerusalem on a donkey as part of a mission. What mission? A mission to provide salvation for those walking in darkness...who were in “sin and error pining...until He appeared.” Isaiah prophesied 750 years before Jesus was born, about this mission...His mission to come rescue us out of the darkness of sin:

**Isaiah 9:2**

**<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.**

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We were singing “Hark the Herald Angels Sing” earlier: see the lyrics:

**Hark the herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born king  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled**

**Joyful all ye nations rise  
Join the triumph of the skies  
With angelic host proclaim  
Christ is born in Bethlehem**

**Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born king**

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Jesus came to this earth as baby, just like us...Jesus has a belly button... He came to a little town called Bethlehem, the homeplace of David...and we were singing that too...

**Oh, little town of Bethlehem  
How still we see thee lie  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by**

Yet, in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight

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Only Shepherds would come to Bethlehem. No fanfare, no parade of people...



The King of the universe came with to animal feeding trough, a manger. But, 33 years later...Jesus would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey to shouts of praise to large crowds!

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Why the large crowds? Well remember, by the time we get to Palm Sunday, Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead and the people who had witnessed that miraculous event were excited and telling everyone! Thus, it makes sense that there were tremendously excited crowds. I believe some of those people truly believed that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah! But, likely for most, not the Messiah they wanted. They wanted a military leader and they wanted to overthrow Rome. They were such oppressed people. They were excited about conquest over Rome, and that's why they were waving palm branches...which was what was done when a King returned after a military victory. They thought they had their military Messiah. Watch verse 13.

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**John 12:13-15**

<sup>13</sup> So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" <sup>14</sup> And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, <sup>15</sup> "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

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You see, church family, the fact that Jesus was riding on a donkey should have been an indication to the people that Jesus was not going to be a King...not during His first coming to earth. That's why He was riding a donkey...representing meekness and humility.

But the part that struck me was this: “AS IT IS WRITTEN.” Written where? Well, church, this entire scene was prophesied in Scripture! Jesus is following to a “T” exactly what was spoken of over 500 years before Jesus was born by the prophet Zechariah. Verse 15 is a direct quote of Zechariah 9:9.

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Folks, I’ll say over and over again... NEVER, EVER FORGET, the Bible is a book of FULFILLED PROPHECIES. No other “religious text” can make that claim. In other words, there is no way to prove the authenticity of any other “holy book” if there is nothing to judge it against. We have in the Bible over 300 Messianic prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ! You can take the Bible to the bank! It’s the Word of God and the fulfilled prophecies prove it!

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Yes...(see the scene again), it’s a celebratory scene, no question about it...



But, again...it’s honestly, kind of pitiful for a King. Just a donkey...people’s cloaks and palm branches. But He meant it to be that way...He’s the lamb on this trip to earth...but He’s coming again as the Lion of Judah! More on that in a moment. For now the disciples didn’t understand all that was happening...but, that’s pretty normal for them...

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**John 12:16**

**<sup>16</sup>His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him.**

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No, the disciples didn’t totally get it until after the resurrection...it was then that everything started to become clearer. And isn’t this how life is? We can’t truly understand things well until after the fact? Hindsight is 20/20, right? We often look back at the very hard and difficult times in our lives and we can see God’s hand where we didn’t before (at the time). We can often look back and actually say to people, “Yes, at the time, I thought the Lord was nowhere to be found, but as I look back on it now, He was there all along.” **Maybe that’s you today**. Maybe it seems dark, or you don’t understand, or you are in pain...don’t stop trusting in the Lord. Galatians 6:9 says:

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**Galatians 6:9**

**<sup>9</sup>And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.**

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Don't give up! Please don't give up! Yes, Jesus came to this earth in **total obscurity**, but as His ministry grew and the miracles became more pervasive...the crowds grew...and boy did they grow exponentially after the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Verse 17...

**John 12:17-18**

<sup>17</sup> The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. <sup>18</sup> The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

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You see, those crowds were convinced Jesus was the Messiah after He raised Lazarus from the dead...and they continued to bear witness to other people...meaning...they were telling people. They “witnessed” of all that Jesus had done! And so, the crowds swelled. And isn't that our job, church? To tell people about Jesus? Sure, it is. But so few do. I think back to the night Jesus was born...the shepherds told people. Luke records what happened after they were startled by the angels out in the fields...

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**Luke 2:16-18**

<sup>16</sup> And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. <sup>18</sup> And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

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They “made known the saying,” that this baby is the Messiah and they bore witness to that fact. I believe they said what the angels said: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

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How does Jesus bring peace, church? How is He the Prince of Peace? The answer is a hard one: He could only bring peace by dying! The Apostle Paul tells us this in:

**Colossians 1:19-23**

<sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. <sup>21</sup> And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, <sup>23</sup> if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation<sup>[a]</sup> under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

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Yes, Jesus came to bring peace to you and me. This is why I love the third verse of O Holy Night, that Tim was singing earlier: See those lyrics...they're beautiful:

**Truly He taught us to love one another  
His law is love and His Gospel is Peace  
Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother  
And in His name, all oppression shall cease**

**Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we  
Let all within us Praise His Holy name  
Christ is the Lord; O praise His name forever  
His power and glory evermore proclaim**

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And so, the crowds on Palm Sunday raised grateful choruses of praise: “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord...” And this petrified the Pharisees:

**John 12:19**



**19** So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.”

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Obviously, this is more political hyperbole, (exaggeration), from the Pharisees. The whole world...no...that had happened... Just more scare tactics for the Elites to intimidate and scare the common people. But I want to ask you this on this Christmas morning... HAVE YOU GONE AFTER JESUS? What does Jesus mean to you? Are you following Him? Have you surrendered your life?

**I told you earlier we’d come back to this**...and here we are. Here for what... The fact that Jesus came the first time and He’s coming again. Do you believe that? Do you believe He came the first time? Duh, yes, we’re keeping time by Him. Okay, well, do you believe He’s coming again. Listen, as sure as He came the first time to a manger in Bethlehem, He’s coming back! The Bible prophesies both events. I want to show you the lyrics to the fourth verse of “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear,” that we were singing earlier. This is speaking of His Second Coming...

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**For lo!, the days are hastening on  
By prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years  
Comes round the age of gold**

**When peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendors fling  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing**

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Oh church, just as the world waited for Him the first time, we are once again waiting for Him. It almost feels like we’re back to where we started:

**“Long lay the world in sin and error pining, till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.”**

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Church, He’s coming again to fix all this mess and reverse the curse...but, when He comes again, it won’t be meek and lowly in a manger...nor will it be in humility riding on a donkey...no...when He comes again, He’ll be coming as the Conquering King! See the screens. In the book of the Revelation (the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ) it says this:

### **Revelation 1:5-8**

**5** and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood **6** and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. **7** Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. **8** “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

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Hallelujah...He’s coming again...and the next time He comes...He’ll come in all of His glory and all of His magnanimous and majestic power and for those who don’t know Him...they will, (as verse 7 said), “wail on account of him,” because it will be too late. The prophet Zechariah says:

### **Zechariah 14:9**

**9** And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day the Lord will be one and his name one.

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He’s coming again, but until then we wait...we wait as Joseph and Mary waited for Jesus to be born:



We wait for our King to come and live in expectant joy and peace until then!

You were given candles as you came in...please locate them...we're going to light them in a moment and we're going to sing, "Silent Night." I love the words: "Silent night, holy night, all was calm, all was bright..." See the screens...



"round yon virgin mother and child, holy infant, so tender and mild...sleep in heavenly peace."

Tim's going to lead us as we sing in a moment, and as we often do, when we have a candlelight service, I want you to see that it's going to get darker...

That's our world. "Long lay the world in sin and error pining, until He appeared and the soul felt it's worth."

It's true: there was no hope for humanity and still isn't, without Jesus. And so as Christians, we've got a job to do as His people...we've got to go...and be the light of the world...is the dark world...we must share Him...and as we do...His light will spread. Let's do that now!

