



**Messiah is the Lamb
Fulfilling Passover for Us
John 12:12-19**

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As we begin our study into the events of Jesus' last week of ministry here on planet earth, we begin by looking at what many call, the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. We celebrate this normally as Palm Sunday.

The narrative of the events we are looking at today are in all four gospels. Jesus will indeed present Himself as the King, but that is not the primary purpose for what He is doing at this point.

Many interpret Palm Sunday as the time that Jesus is officially presenting Himself as the Messiah and King of the Jews, and He is, but there is more to it.



For many looking on, especially those who are looking to prophetic fulfillment, that is indeed what they see. Some are there because Daniel 9:25 gave the date.

Many who show up with prophecy in mind, are not aware that Jesus was rejected as Messiah over a year ago. This is not a reoffering of the Kingdom, that ship has indeed sailed. But prophetically, we see the following in play here.

Zechariah 9:9

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.” (ESV)

The people who are gathering to see based on the date given by Daniel 9:25, will be looking for that.

They will also be looking for a fulfillment of what Psalms states.

Psalms 118:22–26

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD.” (ESV)

But there is a lot more going on here that we will need to unpack, especially since Messiah has already been rejected.

In his version of these events, John places the emphasis on the people and how they react to Jesus as He presents Himself in clear fulfillment of prophecy as their Messiah. He is still going forward with what the scriptures said would happen, even though we already know that He has been rejected by the nation as their Good Shepherd.

The nation has already taken huge steps to be identified as the flock doomed to slaughter (Zechariah 11:4-11).

For Jesus, it is morning in Bethany, time to meet an appointment. The Sabbath is over. Time to leave and finish out the plan. Not one member of His team knows what the events of the next week will bring, and that Jesus Christ will be walking out of a grave next Sunday, but there is much that still must take place before then.

As He and His team prepare to leave Bethany, the buzz begins. Some of the things we are about to read about this event requires us to think like a 1st Century Jew. Tough to do.

Those who know prophecy know that today is THE day. The King is coming, and He will be coming from the east. That happens to also be where Bethany is, east of the Temple and Jerusalem. But that is also no longer the primary reason this is happening.

The reality is, Israel rejected Him as Messiah about 1 ½ years earlier.

Matthew 12:22–32

“Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and unable to speak was brought to him. He healed him, so that the man could both speak and see. All the crowds were astounded and said, “Could this be the Son of David?” When the Pharisees heard this, they said, “This man drives out demons only by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.” Knowing their thoughts, he told them, “Every kingdom divided



against itself is headed for destruction, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons drive them out? For this reason they will be your judges. If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. How can someone enter a strong man's house and steal his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house. Anyone who is not with me is against me, and anyone who does not gather with me scatters. Therefore, I tell you, people will be forgiven every sin and blasphemy, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the one to come." (CSB)

The rejection has taken place. The work that Jesus was doing showing the nearness of the Kingdom of God, that work was attributed to the devil. This resulted in Jesus saying to that generation that they were guilty of committing the "unpardonable sin" and now would fall under the judgement predicted by Zechariah 11 that would come with the rejection of the Good Shepherd.

The majority of the flock has just self-identified as the portion of the flock doomed to slaughter. There will be a remnant, but the bulk of the nation is now doomed.

He now pronounces a special judgment on the Jewish generation of that specific time period. That generation had committed the unpardonable sin: the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. The unpardonable sin was not individual, but a national, sin. It was committed by the generation of Israel in Yeshua's day and cannot be applied to all subsequent Jewish generations, as it has often been taught. The contrast and definition of this unpardonable sin is the national rejection of the messiahship of Yeshua by Israel while He was present here on earth on the basis of being demonized. This sin was unpardonable and the judgment was now set. (Fruchtenbaum 2018)

It was at that point in Jesus' ministry that the offer of the Kingdom was also rescinded. He began teaching in parables and was even questioned by the disciples about it. The offer of the Kingdom has been pulled and is no longer on the table and it will not be reoffered anytime soon.

Matthew 13:10–13

"His disciples came and asked him, "Why do you use parables when you talk to the people?" He replied, "You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but others are not. To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them. That is why I use these parables, For they look, but they don't really see. They hear, but they don't really listen or understand." (NLT)

It will be offered to another generation in the future. The generation that realizes their deep need for Messiah and as one, pray for Him to save them, as outlined by Zechariah in Zechariah 12 & 13.

John 12:12–16

"On the next day, when the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began shouting, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, indeed, the King of Israel!" Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: "DO NOT FEAR, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT." These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things for Him." (NASB 2020)

Christ's entry into Jerusalem is now all about Passover.



Passover is coming, and this is one that is significant. Jesus knows that the final atonement for sin is about to be made. This day, predetermined by Daniel, is an important day when it comes to Passover. “The date when this event occurred, insofar as the Jewish calendar is concerned, was the tenth of the Jewish month of Nisan. According to Exodus 12:3–6, it was on the tenth day of the month of Nisan that the lamb was to be set aside. Between the tenth and the fourteenth of the month, the lamb was to be inspected and tested to be sure that it was without spot and without blemish (Ex. 12:5). Beginning on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan, the Passover occurred. So the Triumphal Entry was not the time that Jesus was offering Himself as the King, that was nothing new, but rather, this was the day of the setting aside of the Lamb of God.” (Fruchtenbaum, The Messianic Bible Study Collection 1983, 4)

Jesus is not reoffering the Kingdom. That has already been rejected and is gone from the current generation, yet to be offered to a future remnant during the day of the Lord. He has now come so that the period of testing could take place to prove He was without blemish or spot.

Sometime on Sunday morning, Jesus and all those traveling with Him say their goodbyes in Bethany and start heading towards Jerusalem.

Because of the events of the prior evening, a large crowd is there and as He heads towards Jerusalem, they follow. Some apparently run ahead and those who were in Jerusalem hear as well and some come out to see. And then there are those who knew, just like Mary and Martha.

In the distance, even before arriving there, the people could be heard.

John 12:13

“they took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began shouting, “Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, indeed, the King of Israel!”” (NASB 2020)

It is just before Passover and what they are doing has nothing to do with Passover, but it has everything to do with the Feast of Tabernacles.

Those palm trees in the immediate area are having branches trimmed off them and they take the branches with them out to meet Jesus. As they go out to meet Him, they begin shouting in Hebrew, Hosanna.

About the palm branches, they were normally associated with the Feast of Tabernacles. “Palm branches were a symbol of Jewish nationalism since the time of the Maccabees. This was a patriotic rally, and the crowds looked to Jesus as a political and national savior, but not a spiritual savior.” (Guzik 2013, Jn 12:12-16)

Another way to look at the palm fronds being used, is that the people were proclaiming Christ as a victor, ahead of time. What He was about to do on the cross would indeed achieve victory and they are celebrating Him being victorious over His enemies. The reality though is they hoped He would get rid of Rome.

They have not seen Jesus yet, but they have palm branches and are exclaiming “Hosanna” and “Blessed is the One coming in the name of the Lord, indeed the King of Israel.” “This they say in anticipation, before they have so much as seen Jesus. They have “heard” that he was coming (v. 12), but only in the following verse does he make an appearance (v. 14). The exclamation “Blessed is the One coming in the name of the Lord!” comes directly from Psalm 118:26 (LXX), preceded by the words “O Lord, save now! O Lord, prosper now!” (Ps 118:25). The Hebrew expression “Hosanna,” or “Save now,” used there as a petition, has become here (as in Mark and Matthew) an expression of praise to God. In Psalm 118, the last of the Hallel Psalms (Pss 113–18) sung at both Passover and the Tent festival, the phrase “coming in



the name of the Lord” was customarily understood to refer to each pilgrim in festal procession entering the temple. Here the expression takes on messianic overtones, made unmistakable by the added phrase, “even the King of Israel.”” (Michels 2010, 675-676)

These words are normally ones used during the Feast of Tabernacles, not Passover. The people are expecting the Feast of Tabernacles is about to be fulfilled by Jesus bringing in the Messianic Kingdom. They are expecting the Kingdom to be established right then and there. Jesus hears the people off in the distance.

He is coming to fulfill Passover. Passover is not fulfilled by the Kingdom being established. What they are expecting and what they see they will misinterpret.

As He approaches Bethphage at the Mount of Olives, Jesus provided transportation instructions for His disciples.

Matthew 21:1–2

“When they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage at the Mount of Olives, Jesus then sent two disciples, telling them, “Go into the village ahead of you. At once you will find a donkey tied there with her colt. Untie them and bring them to me.” (CSB)

No one had ever ridden this young colt before. Mark 11:2 makes that clear for us. For those who have never been around horses or donkeys before, you normally do not get up on an animal which has never been ridden before, one who has not been “broken,” and ride. Normally you would find yourself airborne in short order as the animal would buck you off.

That I learned from my uncle who competed in rodeo and bull riding for a while. For Jesus to be able to ride this colt is a miracle. He did not buck, not at all. The reason is simple, Jesus is the Creator, and the colt knew this. Besides, mom was still right there with him the entire time. This alone is a demonstration of Jesus being Messiah in that He has command over creation and calmly gets up to ride. Jesus gets on the colt and rides into Jerusalem, just like it says in Zechariah 9:9.

But before that, per John, we hear what it is the people are doing and saying.

John 12:13

“they took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began shouting, “Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, indeed, the King of Israel!”” (NASB 2020)

The cry “Hosanna!” renders the Hebrew of Ps 118:25, and similar Hebrew cries for salvation could address kings (2 Sam 14:4; 2 Kgs 6:26); coupled with the branches (see below), this suggests that the crowds hoped for him as a king or national deliverer. (Keener 2012, 869)

But because they are quoting a distinctly Messianic Psalm, from a Jewish perspective, the phrase being used is an official Messianic greeting. “The rabbis taught that, when the Messiah comes, He must be greeted with these words. When the people applied these words to Jesus, they were proclaiming Him, by the thousands, to be the Messiah of Israel.” (Fruchtenbaum, The Messianic Bible Study Collection 1983, 6)

John 12:14–16

“Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: “DO NOT FEAR, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY’S COLT.” These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things for Him.” (NASB 2020)



The disciples did not get it, as events were taking place, that prophecy was being fulfilled. After the resurrection they began to put the pieces together, but the one thing we clearly see, Jesus is in control of the event.

By riding in on a donkey, yes Jesus is doing no different than King Solomon did on the day of His inauguration. He is indeed King. But by choosing to have it be a young donkey in clear fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, He is righteous and endowed with salvation. He is humble, He is not coming into town as a Messianic conqueror. That will indeed come later, just look at Revelation 19:11-16 and Zechariah 14. But not now.

He is coming as the suffering servant of Isaiah 53

Zechariah 9 then like Zephaniah 3 promises a lowly king, a messianic deliverer who will rescue God's people from their oppressors and "proclaim peace to the nations," establishing God's rule "from sea to sea" (9:10). Jesus' procession into Jerusalem on a donkey was a prophetic act to counter the desire of the Jews for a nationalistic Messiah. His universal kingship would not be brought about by his military victory but by his death. Jesus would be royal King at his first advent and conquering Messiah at his second coming. (Osborne 2018, 293-294)

He has come to fulfill Passover. The nation had already committed the unpardonable sin and did so over a year earlier. There is no Kingdom being presented now. Luke clearly reflected that in his version where he relates what it is that Jesus says as He approaches Jerusalem.

They had already rejected His Messiahship on the grounds of demon possession; and because that sin was exactly what He said it was, unpardonable, under no circumstances could the judgment now be removed. (Fruchtenbaum, The Messianic Bible Study Collection 1983, 6)

Luke 19:41–44

"Now when Jesus approached and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, "If you had only known on this day, even you, the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and surround you and close in on you from every side. They will demolish you—you and your children within your walls—and they will not leave within you one stone on top of another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God." (NET 2nd ed.)

But for now, the people do not know that. They believe He is the Messiah they want, not the one God is giving them.

They want a deliverer who will do what they want Him to do. They want the Messiah to be on their terms, not YAHWEHs.

But they have already made their decision about Jesus. He is not what they were looking for and they have rejected Him.

People are fickle. If you haven't figured that out yet, just do a quick survey of people's attitude about Israel over September and October 2023. Remember how united our nation was on 9/12? What about today? This is one of the lessons Jesus is teaching us, trust Him, not people.

The people want a deliverer who will boot out Rome. But Jesus is here as the Lamb of God. Abraham is the one who predicted that God would do this as he and Isaac climbed to the top of the same mountain Jesus will be executed on providing a picture of what the Father intends to do. Abraham had been



instructed to sacrifice his only son, and in complete obedience, he and Isaac were moving towards completing that action when Isaac asked a question.

Genesis 22:7–8

“Isaac said to his father Abraham, “Father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” He said, “The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Abraham said, “God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them walked on together.” (NRSVue)

John picked up on this and John the Baptist testified to this as well.

John 1:29

“The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (NASB 2020)

Jesus, as the Lamb of God, has presented Himself and He will be set aside in order to be tested. Per the Passover instructions, that was to take place on the 10th of Nisan, the exact day Jesus presented Himself. Yes, He did indeed accept the worship and praise of the people, He is the Messiah. But the purpose He is here for is not the same purpose they were anticipating.

As the Lamb, from the 10th to the 14th, He would be tested to show whether He is without blemish or spot. In fact, in one of His illegal trials during the morning of the 14th He was declared to be so. By Pilate.

Luke 23:4

“So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, “I find no fault in this Man.”” (NKJV)

That by itself is amazing, but the timing of it to coincide with the same event taking place at the Temple makes it doubly so.

What about all of those folks who traveled from Bethany with Jesus as well as those who came from Jerusalem to meet them?

John 12:17–19

“So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify about Him. For this reason also the people went to meet Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign. So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are not accomplishing anything; look, the world has gone after Him!”” (NASB 2020)

The first group referenced are the eyewitnesses to the raising of Lazarus from the dead. They witnessed something that they cannot unsee. A dead man, walk out of the grave. Some of those same people, may be seeing the same thing in the near future as well with Jesus.

This group of eyewitnesses would have been a problem for the religious leadership. How do you stop someone from talking about that. They continue to testify about Jesus.

This alone has made another group that then shows up, those who the eyewitnesses have been talking to. They had heard the reports and now wanted to see for themselves who Jesus is.

Thousands of people, all wanting to make Jesus King, and if He had ridden into town on a warhorse, then they would have been happy, But He didn't. If He had started a rebellion right there, they would have been in, but He didn't.



He rides into town on a donkey. Noticeable by their absence are the Pharisees who are watching this from the Temple mount or from vantage points along the way. Don't forget, there are still spies hanging out with Jesus as well. They watch all of this and see the massive amount of popular support on Sunday and using hyperbole, comment "look, the world has gone after Him."

They want Him dead. The sooner the better but they are also politicians and seeing the show they have just seen puts a bit of fear into them. We thought we were going to have to be secret about this before, now it is obvious we must be.

The statement they make of the "world going after Him" touches on why He is here and why He came into town in the manner in which He did. He is here for the world. They used the word kosmos meaning people everywhere without racial distinction. Jew and Gentile. It is Passover, and they see people in town from all over the Roman Empire. Jew and Gentile and they see Jesus has attracted both groups to Himself.

For the Sanhedrin though, they are desperate. "In effect, they declare their inability to prevent the success of Jesus' mission in drawing all people to himself as Saviour of the world (cf. 4:42; 12:32)." (Lincoln 2005, 345)

When Jesus went into Jerusalem on the 10th of Nisan, Palm Sunday, He did indeed go into town in a manner intended to fulfill prophecy and at the same time show that His Kingdom, just as He had been talking about from the very beginning, was very different from the way people were used to living.

He is not fulfilling the Feast of Tabernacles, but rather the Passover. He is the Lamb of God and the time to test and examine Him has arrived.

If you are listening and do not yet know Jesus as the Lamb of God, now is your opportunity.

Romans 3:21–24

"But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins." (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

"If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced." Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved."" (NLT)

ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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