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What’s so Special about Palm Sunday?

Matthew 21:5: (NASB) *Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold your King is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.*

The events of the Sunday before Jesus’ crucifixion were monumental. They not only began the culminating process for the greatest human life ever lived, they also retold the story of the ancient Passover and gave it a world-wide meaning. Stay with us as we look into all of the pieces of the Passover, Palm Sunday and the road Jesus walked to sacrifice his own life for our deliverance.



What was the deliverance from Egypt all about?

It starts with oppression and degrades to outright cruelty: **Exodus 1:8-14:** First, the Egyptians pushed them hard. There was physical and emotional bondage. Next, they abused them. It is the outright cruelty that pushes this oppression far over the edge: **Exodus 3:7**

There was probably about 142 total years of slavery in Egypt. The deliverance came through great peril and suffering: **Exodus 5:15-23** These were difficult circumstances made worse by Moses! So God allowed great suffering. The Ten Plagues would come and take their toll as well.

What did the first Passover look like?

Exodus 12:1-14

Key Points:

²*This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you.*

This was to truly signal a new beginning and was the first aspect of their new Law: (Source: *Bible Commentary from Matthew Poole*) but as to sacred and ecclesiastical matters, this shall henceforth be your first month.

³*on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household.*

Take this lamb (very specific timing) and “keep it” (verse 6) - this singling out would create some attachment, like a pet.

⁵*Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.*

...of perfect form and in the early prime of its life.

⁶*You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight.*

This sacrifice for each household all done simultaneously denotes the personal and national nature of the event to take place. (Twilight in the Jewish day would have been about 3pm.)

⁷*They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.*

The blood being the unmistakable evidence of the sacrifice, for the life is in the blood.

⁸*They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.*

Roasting was the quickest preparation method and a fitting picture of the true Lamb’s experience. There would be no time for the bread to rise, so unleavened bread was used.

¹⁰*You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.*

This would become a standard for sacrifices under the Law in order to prevented misuse, etc.



¹¹This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly.

Showing the immediacy of their deliverance and the necessary preparedness to capitalize...

It is the Passover of the LORD.

This passing over would ultimately leave them unharmed and finally free.

¹³The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

The passing over would only be possible through the sign of blood on their doorways.

¹⁴you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

This was to be always remembered! Note, there weren't additional Passovers; future observances were remembrances of this first one.



The Feast of Passover - Intro, A Stauros Film Production

- *There was only one Passover. It occurred over 3500 years ago in Egypt. It was then that the lamb was sacrificed and the blood applied to each doorpost. When this was done, that home was "passed over" by the Death Angel of God's wrath. All subsequent observances of the Feast of Passover over the centuries were memorials of that one and only original Passover. In Exodus 12, God outlined in detail the steps to be taken by those who trusted in Him so that they, unlike the Egyptians, would not be struck down by the final plague.*

So, what does this have to do with Palm Sunday?

First the timing of the matter: (The 9th of Nisan) John 12:1-8: Jesus was at the home of Lazarus the day before entering Jerusalem when he was anointed by Mary to prepare for his death. No one told her to do this, yet it was the most appropriate thing to do! Mary unknowingly is preparing him for his death.

John 12:9-13: (NRSV) ⁹When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, ¹¹since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus. ¹²The next day (the 10th of the month) the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem...

Observations:



- Lazarus was a dramatic spectacle to the public;
- The chief priests and Pharisees were waiting for Jesus - and now Lazarus as well, because he was living proof of the power of God through Jesus;
- Word traveled through the multitudes and they also waited for Jesus;
- Jesus entered Jerusalem and the hearts of the people on the 10th of Nisan. (Note this corresponds to when the lamb was brought into the household for Passover.)

To get a sense of the story, we will begin to work with a compilation from the four Gospel accounts of Palm Sunday (Nisan 10): A compilation of [Mark 11:1-11](#), [Matthew 21:1-11](#), [Luke 19:28-44](#) and [John 12:12-19](#) (See the Bonus Material at the end of this Full Rewind for more.)

Mark 11:1-3: (NRSV) ¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'" Matthew 21:4-5: ⁴This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the



prophet, saying, ⁵Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey. **John 12:16: His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.**

Jesus, the last week, *John Dominic Crossan*

- *Matthew says he comes in on a donkey and a colt. Is Jesus riding two animals? Of course not, he is riding a donkey with a colt alongside it, which means it is a female donkey. So you are on the lowest hierarchy of coming into the city - not a horse, not a mule, not a male donkey, but a female donkey with a colt trotting by her side.*

This was a very humble entrance.

Here was the original prophecy of Palm Sunday: Zechariah 9:9-12: (NKJV) ⁹Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! **Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.** ¹⁰I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. **He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be ‘from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.** ¹¹As for you also, because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. ¹²Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope. Even today I declare that I will restore double to you. (See the Bonus Material at the end of this Full Rewind for more.)

Exactly how do the Passover and Palm Sunday connect?

Exodus 12:3: (NASB) ...On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household.



Connection:
The Lamb enters the house and Jesus enters Jerusalem.

Zechariah 9:9: (NKJV) Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.

John 1:29-30: (NASB) ²⁹The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰This is he on behalf of whom I said, After me comes a man who has a higher rank than I, for he existed before me.

They connect through prophecy, through perfect timing and through the recognition of Jesus as the Lamb!

Luke 19:37: *As he was now approaching the*

path down from the Mount of Olives, Mark 11:8: Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields...(among them was) the whole multitude of the disciples, John 12:17-18: ¹⁷the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead. ¹⁸It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him.

So this was a sign of the public's recognition that Jesus was their king, even though he didn't come with all the trappings of kingship like a jeweled robe, trumpets, etc.

How many people were in the multitude? Some commentators estimate even higher, but here is what John Trapp said: (Source: John Trapp, an English Anglican Bible commentator) (a very great multitude) Bondinius saith he was met at this time by 300,000 Jews, some whereof went before Christ, some followed after, according to the solemn rites and reverence used to be given to earthly kings in their most pompous triumphs. This was the Lord's own work.

Exodus 12:5-6: Did Jesus know he was THE lamb pictured in the Passover? We think most definitely. This would mean he also knew he was just days away from his death. He had absolute humility even among adoring followers yelling, "Hosanna!"

So, who was delivered first? Who was delivered second?

Step 1: Firstborn delivered through the blood of the lamb.

Step 2: The entire nation is freed from slavery.



Connection:
The liability of the firstborn to death and the deliverance of the nation through them, all by the blood of the Lamb.

Step 1: True followers of Christ are delivered through the blood of the Lamb, Jesus.

Step 2: The entire world is freed from the slavery of sin.



Exodus 12:7-13: God assured their deliverance if they did as told.

The Old Testament tells us how important blood is: Leviticus 17:11

The only salvation available as a deliverance from slavery for Israel and as a deliverance from certain death for the firstborn was the blood of the lamb. This blood was to cover them completely, as symbolized in the striking of it on the two door posts and the lintel. As a result of the deliverance of the firstborn, the whole nation was freed from slavery.

After this Passover event, the firstborn became a sacred part of Israel's Law: Exodus 13:1-2: The firstborn were to be in service to God. In time, the tribe of Levi became the servants and each firstborn had to be redeemed, bought back, so that their service would be transferred to the tribe of Levi. The tribe of Levi had no inheritance in the land. So what does this mean to us?

We are told that true followers of Christ are correlated with the firstborn: Hebrews 12:22-24: The book of Hebrews was written as a teaching tool for the Jewish Christians at that time. They needed to learn that because of Jesus' sacrifice, the rituals of the Law were no longer of great importance if one was following Christ. What does it mean, *to the church of the firstborn*? The church, the called out ones who are following after Christ, are now metaphorically the firstborn. At the original Passover there was the redeeming of the firstborn by the blood. If we are truly seeking Christ as the firstborn class, it is necessary to LIVE under the blood. 1 Peter 1:18-19: It's no accident that this verse speaks of an unblemished lamb. The church of the firstborn - in a direct relationship to the Passover - were redeemed. Hebrews 9:12: The blood of bulls and goats were a picture of Christ who did take away our sins. So, the nation of Israel was delivered through the deliverance of the firstborn.

Luke 19:37: *...(they) began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen,* ³⁸*saying, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!"* Matthew 21:9: *Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!* Mark 11:9-10: *⁹Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!"*

What about the crowd shouting "Hosanna"? What does that mean? When we look at the use of the Hebrew words, in every instance the thought is not only "oh save" but "Save Us Now!" So, why didn't Jesus save them then?

Luke 19:39-44: ³⁹*Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop."* ⁴⁰*He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."* ⁴¹*As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it,* ⁴²*saying, "If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God."*

Jesus gave the prophecy that Jerusalem was going to fall. Matthew 21:10-11: ¹⁰*When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?"* ¹¹*The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."* John 12:19: *The Pharisees then said to one another, "You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!"*

So, the appearance of the event was that Jesus had won an immediate and resounding victory and had replaced the Pharisees as the leader in Israel. But what was the reality? Jesus was winning a resounding victory - the effects of which would not be truly felt for thousands of years.

This victory began with ancient promises: Genesis 22:16-18 This victory matured through the development of the "stars of heaven" part of the promise: Galatians 3:27-29 This victory maintained its wide scope as a result of the "stars of the stars of heaven" also known as "the church of the firstborn" being directly delivered by Jesus the Passover Lamb: 1 Timothy 4:10 1 John 2:2 Through the deliverance of the church of the firstborn, the rest of the world has deliverance as well. Romans 8:18-21: ...just like Israel was set free from its slavery.

**What's so special about Palm Sunday?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!**