114. The Gospel of John—12:9-16

"The King is Coming—AGAIN!"

(9/13/20)

Now, before we start looking at John 12, keep in mind that it was the events of chapter 11 that really set in motion much of what goes on in chapter 12.

Chapter 11 deals with the death and resurrection of Lazarus.

It was the resurrection of Lazarus by Jesus that really began to heat up Kingdom fever in the hearts of the Jewish people as the news spread like wildfire that, *"Jesus of Nazareth raised a man who had been dead for 4 days—He must be the Messiah!—The Kingdom of God is near!!"*

So, the emotion and excitement in the hearts of the people in chapter 11 began to build and by chapter 12 reached a fever pitch as chapter 12 opens up six days before the Passover.

Last week in our study of John's gospel, we finished a two-part message I entitled, *"The Fragrance of Worship"* as we looked at John 12 verses 1-8 and Mary's act of true worship in anointing Jesus for burial.

That brings us to verses 9-11—

John 12:9-11 (NKJV)
9 Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there [in Bethany—v.1]**; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. 10 But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, 11 because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.** (Comment)

Let me stop here and remind you that, as we come to John 12, we enter the final week of Jesus' life before His crucifixion—this final week is referred to as *"Passion week."*

"Passion week" begins with His Triumphal Entry and culminates with His resurrection on Easter (Resurrection) Sunday a week later.

In order for us to get a more complete understanding of the events of this day—I'm going to cut back and forth between John's gospel and Matthew's gospel and take a composite look at this story.

Let me begin by drawing your attention back to verse 1 of John 12—

John 12:1 (NKJV)
1 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.

From the timeline of John's gospel, it seems that Jesus came to Bethany 6 days before the Passover—sometime Friday afternoon.

When the sun went down, it became Saturday (our Friday evening) and it seems that Mary anointed Jesus' head and feet with the oil of Spikenard for burial *that* evening—again their Saturday, our Friday night.

John 12:12 says—**"The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast…"**

This next day would have been Sunday, the 10th of Nisan (NYE-san)—the day we call *"Palm Sunday."*

John 12:12 (NKJV)
12 The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem…

Matthew 21:1 (NKJV)
[1] Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage (pronounced-" bayth-fag-ay")**, at the Mount of Olives…**

Matthews tells us that Jesus and His disciples were coming from Jericho (Matt.20:29) traveling up the Jericho Road to Jerusalem and as they did, they came to the east side of the Mount of Olives where Bethany and Bethphage were located.

Matthew 21:1-3 (NKJV)
[1] Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, **then Jesus sent two disciples, [2] saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose *them* and bring *them* to Me. [3] And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."**

I see no point in reading a miracle into this—although many people do.

I believe that when Jesus was in Jerusalem on His last visit, He made arrangements with a friend to use his two donkeys (a mother and her colt) the next time He came to the city.

I believe Jesus told this man that He would send a couple of His disciples to get them and that the owner of the donkeys would know they were Jesus' disciples, because when the owner challenged them for untying his donkeys, they would respond with the words—*"The Lord has need of them."*

Matthew 21:4-5 (NKJV)
[4] All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:
[5] *"Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.' "* (John 12:14-15)

As we mentioned in our study of Matthew's gospel—Matthew was a Jew who wrote his gospel primarily to the Jewish people to present Jesus to them as their long-awaited Messiah and King.

To prove to his Jewish audience that Jesus was in fact the Messiah of Israel, the One Who's coming was foretold in the Jewish Scriptures—he quotes 16 Messianic prophesies and identifies

each of them with something Jesus did by saying—*"All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet saying…"*

This was Matthew's way of proving that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies which were spoken by the O.T. prophets concerning the Messiah's coming—thus authenticating Him as the Messiah.

The prophecy that Matthew quotes in Matthew 21:5 comes out of Zechariah 9:9 which literally says:

Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV)
9 "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.

Since the Jewish people were very familiar with this prophecy—they would have been looking for their Messiah and King to come riding into Jerusalem on a donkey.

Matthew 21:6-8 (NKJV)
6 So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set *Him* on them. 8 And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches [palm branches-John 12:13] **from the trees and spread *them* on the road.**

John 12:12-13a (NKJV)
12 The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem [from Jericho]**, 13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him…**

Again, this was the 10th day of the Jewish month is Nisan (NYE-san)—the day we call *'Palm Sunday'.*

We call it Palm Sunday, because it was on this day, as Jesus was enroute to Jerusalem to make His Triumphal Entry into the city—as He was riding up the Mount of Olives His disciples laid palm branches on the road and also waved them in front of Him celebrating Him as Messiah!

However, before this day became significant to Christians around the world—it was an especially important day in the history of the Jewish people back then.

You see, it was a day the Jews had been waiting for, for 1500 years—and mankind in general for 4000 years! (Ever since the Fall of Man in the Garden of Eden—Gen.3:15)

It was a special day, first of all, because it was the only day in the ministry of Jesus that He *accepted* the cries of the Jewish people to make Him their King.

Why was it that on this day (when He had rejected every other attempt by the people to make Him King), why was it on this day that He not only accepted their cries to make Him King—He actually planned, promoted and now participated in this public demonstration to make Him King?!

Why? —Because the time had come to fulfill one of the greatest prophecies in the Bible—that's why!!

You see six-hundred years earlier God gave one of the most important prophecies in all the Scriptures to Daniel while he was living in Babylon during the Babylonian captivity—a prophecy that indicated the exact day their Messiah would come and present Himself to them as their King.

According to the prophecy given to Daniel (9:25)—from the time the commandment would go forth to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem to the coming of Messiah the King—would be 483 years.

Sir Robert Anderson in his book, *The Coming Prince*, does a masterful job researching this and tells us that—the commandment to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem was given to Nehemiah by King Artaxerxes on March the 14th, 445 B.C.

And because Daniel was prophesying during the Babylonian era and they were using the Babylonian calendar of 360 days per year—if you times 483 years by 360 days it equals 173,880 days.

If you add that number of days to March 14, 445 BC (adjusting for leap years and that there is no year 'zero')—it brings you out to April 6, 32 A.D. on the Julian calendar.

April 6, 32 A.D. is the day Jesus made His Triumphal Entry into the city of Jerusalem presenting Himself to the nation as their long-awaited Messiah and King!

But this was also a special day for another reason—Jesus was crucified on Passover which fell on the 14th day of the month of Nisan on the *Jewish* calendar.

On the 10th of Nisan the lambs that were to be killed for the Passover celebration had to be presented to the priests in Jerusalem where they would be carefully inspected for 4 days.

The priests would watch each lamb closely from the tenth to the fourteenth day of Nisan in order to ensure it was in the best of health and was without spot or blemish (birth defect or acquired scars, broken bones etc.).

Now in the Law, God had mandated that there must be a minimum of ten people for each lamb eaten for the Passover.

During Passover time in Israel the city of Jerusalem and its suburbs were crowded with pilgrims who had come from all over the known world to celebrate the greatest of their national feasts.

Thirty years later from the time of Jesus' crucifixion the Roman government wanted to take a census to determine how many Jews came to Jerusalem for the Passover each year.

They knew that Jewish law mandated that they had to have a minimum of 10 people eating from one lamb—so they figured it was easier to count the number of lambs brought to Jerusalem on the 10th of Nisan for inspection than it was to count the people themselves.

They counted 250,000 lambs that were slaughtered for the Passover that year—which meant that there was roughly 2 ½ million people in Jerusalem for the Passover.

Why am I going thru all of this?—Because I want you to try and picture this in your mind's eye.

On this day there were thousands and tens of thousands of lambs being brought into the city of Jerusalem where they would remain and undergo 4 days of rigorous inspection before they were pronounced '*perfect'* and therefore worthy to be sacrificed on the Feast of Passover.

These lambs would be sacrificed to remind the people of how the blood of those first Passover lambs some 1500 years earlier had delivered their forefathers and foremothers from the judgment of God coming upon Egypt (death of the firstborn).

And here among all of these lambs coming to Jerusalem to be sacrificed—we see another Lamb making His way to the city.

This was the Lamb of God Who presented Himself to the chief priests (every day for 4 days while He was in the Temple teaching during the final week of His life) who could find no sin to accuse Him of.

Eventually He was turned over to Pilate who after examining Jesus declared—*"I find no fault in this Man <u>at all</u>."* (John 18:38; 19:4, 6)

And after being declared sinless (without spot and blemish) He, as the Lamb of God, was then sacrificed on Calvary's Cross.

And so now, when a person applies the blood of Christ to their lives by faith—He becomes their 'Passover' Lamb (1Cor.5:7).

Their Passover Lamb in the sense that His shed blood atones for their sins—and causes the judgment of God coming upon this world ('Egypt') to pass over them!

Matthew 21:6-9 (NKJV)
6 So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set *Him* on them. 8 And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread *them* on the road.
9 Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! *'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'* Hosanna in the highest!"

John 12:12-13 (NKJV)
12 The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! *'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'* The King of Israel!"

Jesus disciples are quoting from Psalm 118—which is a Messianic psalm announcing the Messiah's coming.

"Hosanna" in Hebrew literally means *"save now"*.

So, this psalm they were crying out (Psalm 118)—is a prophetic psalm of the Messiah's coming.

The prophetic part begins in v.22 with, *"The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone"*—then declares in v.24, *"This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it"*.

This is the day that God has established for the presentation of Messiah to the nation —the One promised by God and prophesied about in the Holy Scriptures.

The psalm continues in v.27 *"Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar"*.

So, Psalm 118 is a Messianic psalm which is prophetic of Messiah presenting Himself to the nation—but being rejected and then—becoming our sacrifice for sin.

In the prophecy in Daniel 9 that we mentioned earlier which predicts the exact day Messiah would come presenting Himself as King—the prophecy goes on to say that Messiah would be *"cut off"* (v.26—the Hebrew means "executed for a capital crime") *"but not for Himself"*—in other words, <u>He would be innocent</u>.

Of course, we know why He was executed—He was executed for us.

He died in our place—and when He hung on that cross the Father laid on the Son the sins of us all (Isa.53:6).

It's interesting that when Matthew quotes the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 he leaves out the beginning which says, *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!"* (The nation of Israel).

The reason being because Jesus would not be received by the nation as their Messiah—they would not rejoice, not at His First Coming.

O sure, His disciples believed in Him and were shouting '*Hosanna'*, they were rejoicing—but the leaders of the nation had already rejected Jesus as their Messiah and King—and were now trying to kill Him.

They were either ignorant of the prophecy of Daniel or their blind hatred of Jesus had caused them to forget about it—either way they did not understand the significance and importance of this day to the nation.

Meanwhile, inside the city there was a mixture of excitement and bewilderment as to His identity—

Matthew 21:10-11 (NKJV)
[10] And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" [11] So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."

From this we realize that all of Jerusalem knew Jesus was a prophet from Nazareth—but they were blind to His true identity as Messiah, the Son of God and Savior of the world.

John records that even Jesus' own disciples were a little disconnected from fully understanding the events that were unfolding before their eyes on that day—we read:

John 12:16 (NKJV)
[16] His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that* they had done these things to Him.

However, as one author put it—this confusion about Who Jesus really was including the rejection of Jesus by many Jews as their Messiah—wasn't held by all the Jews in Jerusalem on that day.

He writes—
"Here we see the disciples of Jesus crying out 'Hosanna, Hosana' to Him as He rides up the Mount of Olives. By this time word has reached Jerusalem that Jesus was coming and so something interesting happened. That mob of people coming from Bethany is joined by another mob that came surging out of the Eastern Gate of the city of Jerusalem and like two great tides flowing together to make one sea—a mass of humanity now surrounds Jesus. All of them waving palm branches and crying out 'Hosanna, 'Hosanna'! Everyone is beside themselves with emotion and excitement. Can you imagine the electricity of this moment—the Jews had waited thousands of years for this day as this their Messiah had finally come."

And yet, how did Jesus respond to all this emotion and excitement directed towards Him?

As He reached the top of the Mount of Olives and He saw Jerusalem laid out before Him—He began to weep—

Luke 19:41-42 (NKJV)
[41] Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, [42] saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

Why did He weep? —wasn't this the day He had waited for?

The people were crying out 'Hosanna' which means *'save now'*, they were hailing Him as the Messiah—what was the problem?

The problem was that Jesus knew they were only concerned with their physical needs and desires—like many today (explain how the people were looking purely for a political Messiah and not a spiritual Savior).

Jesus knew these people weren't accepting Him as the Messiah He truly was or the Savior He came to be.

No, much of their acknowledgement of Him as their Messiah was nothing more than *emotion* fueled by carnal desires and not by true repentance and acceptance of Him as their spiritual Savior Who had come to save them from their sins.

Their cries to Jesus to, *"save now, save now"* (Hosanna)—were cries to save them from Roman *oppression* and *occupation*, from *poverty* and *sickness*—but not *"save me from my sins".*

This crowd, for all intents and purposes, had rejected Him also—how do we know that?

Because, in just 4 days this same crowd—this same fickle crowd would be crying, *"Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"*

And that's why we read in Luke's gospel chapter 19—

Luke 19:42-44 (NKJV)
42 …"If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things *that make* for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

As Jesus looked *ahead*, He wept as He saw the terrible judgment that was coming upon the nation, the city, and the Temple (Matthew 23:37-39; 24:2).

In A.D. 70, the Romans would come, surround the city of Jerusalem, and after a siege of 143 days, kill 600,000 Jews, take thousands more captive—and then destroy the Temple and the city.

Why did all of this happen?

It happened because as Jesus said in Luke 19:44—the Jewish people did not know the *"time of their visitation"*—they did not know the day God had told them in the Book of Daniel (in our chapter 9) that Messiah would present Himself to the nation.

In other words, He held them accountable for not knowing and understanding the prophecies God had clearly given to them.

You might be thinking—*"Okay, even if they didn't know the prophecy of Daniel 9—they still had Him with them declaring Himself to be their Savior—why did they reject Him?"*

They rejected Jesus as their Savior back then for the same reasons people reject Him as their Savior today—they didn't want a Savior Who would save them from sins—they wanted a practical savior who would heal them and feed them and basically take care of them—they wanted a 'welfare state savior'! (Explain)

Apparently, they either thought they were so religious and/or moral that they didn't need a Savior to save them from sin—but a person will never see their need for the Savior if they don't first see themself as a sinner.

Others are so caught up in the daily cares of life that they are oblivious to the reality that He is coming again to judge this world and is offering them an opportunity right now to repent, accept Him as their Savior and apply His blood to their life which will cause the judgment of God to 'pass-over' them.

Remember Jesus indicted the people of His day for not knowing the signs that pointed to His First Coming—and those that ignored it suffered the consequences.

But what about the signs of His Second Coming—there are over 500 prophecies in the Bible that give us detailed signs to look for.

If all the prophecies of His First Coming, came to pass with 100% accuracy what makes anyone think the prophecies concerning His Second Coming will not come to pass with the same flawless accuracy?

The Bible says, *"Today is the day of salvation."*

If God is speaking to your heart this morning—listen to what He is saying and receive Jesus right now as your Lord and Savior before it's too late!

Remember tomorrow isn't promised to anyone. Be prepared—the King is Coming—AGAIN!!