



# Calvary of Albuquerque

A Day, a Donkey, a Deliverer, and a Decision - John 12:12-19

From the Series, Believe:879

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## MESSAGE SUMMARY

2000 years ago, on the final Sunday of Jesus' earthly life before His crucifixion, He did the most unusual thing—He sat on a donkey and was carried into the city of Jerusalem in parade fashion. This formal presentation of Him as Deliverer was both profound and predicted. What's the significance of such an act as this? What overarching principles emerge for us today? We'll dig in and discover them, but today you've got to write them down yourself:

## OUTLINE

- I. Jesus is More Appealing than \_\_\_\_\_ (vv. 12-13)
- II. Scripture is More Reliable than \_\_\_\_\_ (vv. 14-16)
- III. Following is More Important than \_\_\_\_\_ (vv. 16-18)

## Practicing the Principles:

1. If Jesus entered the room now, what would you shout? Why would you shout that?
2. What role does Jesus' fulfilling prophecy have in your faith? Why?
3. Consider what "simple" things you could let the Lord use to further His work. Think of a few and present them to Him, not passively ("Let me know, Lord, whenever You want them") but actively ("I will use this for God's glory starting today!").
4. As Jesus approached Jerusalem, He approaches our lives. What do you suppose His reaction is to what He sees? Rejoicing in our devotion? Weeping over unused potential?



## DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
  - A. Background
    1. Chapter 12 begins the Jesus' final week on earth
    2. The events of this final week before redemption are highly significant
      - a.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the book of John is devoted to Jesus' last week
      - b.  $\frac{2}{5}$  of Matthew devoted to it
      - c.  $\frac{3}{5}$  of Mark
      - d.  $\frac{1}{3}$  of Luke
      - e. From all gospels: four chapters cover first 30 years of Jesus' life
      - f. 85 chapters deal with last 3  $\frac{1}{2}$  years of His life
      - g. Of those, 29 focus on the last week
  - B. Triumphal Entry: Palm Sunday
  - C. After many claims and many signs, for the first and only time, Jesus presents Himself as Messiah
  - D. Donkeys
    1. Average lifespan 25-40 (up to 60) years
    2. George Washington owned the first donkeys in America; became a donkey breeder
    3. Favorite pastime: rolling in dirt
    4. Long ears: enable hearing and keep them cool
    5. Not only transport burdens and people, in some areas are used as guard animals
    6. According to the *London Times*, more people are killed annually by donkeys than die in airplane crashes
  - E. Palm Sunday
    1. 10th of Nisan
    2. Date Jewish families selected the sacrificial lamb for Passover
    3. First and only time Jesus presents Himself as the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world
- II. Jesus is More Appealing than Religion (vv. 12-13)
  - A. Religious people have come to Jerusalem for the religious feast Passover
    1. One of three mandatory feasts

2. Celebrated the deliverance of Israel from Egypt
3. Focal point of their history
4. Same thing every year
  - a. People wanted something more than their religion was giving them: more than endless rituals, prescribed prayers, and the same sacraments and ceremonies
  - b. "He sits on the slope and places a blade of grass in his mouth. He looks beyond the flock at the road below. ..For over a week a river of pilgrims has streamed through this valley, bustling down the road with animals and loaded carts. For days he has watched them from his perch... he knew where they were going and why. They were going to Jerusalem. And they were going to sacrifice lambs in the temple. The celebration strikes him as ironic. Streets jammed with people. Marketplaces full of the sounds of the bleating of goats and the selling of birds. Endless observances. The people relish the festivities. They awaken early and retire late. They find strange fulfillment in the pageantry. Not him. What kind of God would be appeased by the death of an animal? OH, the shepherd's doubts are never voiced anywhere except on the hillside. But on this day, they shout. It isn't the slaughter of the animals that disturbs him. It is the endlessness of it all. How many years has he seen the people come and go? How many caravans? How many sacrifices? How many bloody carcasses? ... Lamb after lamb, Passover after Passover... He turns his head and looks again at the sky. Will the blood of yet another lamb really matter?" -- from *Six Hours One Friday: Living in the Power of the Cross* by Max Lucado
  - c. "I want my religion like my tea—I want it hot." --John Wesley

B. Jesus Christ : a breath of fresh air in the malaise of dead religion

1. "'Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.' He answered and said to them, 'Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?'" (Matthew 15:2-3)
2. Jesus often hung out with tax collectors, sinners, prostitutes; His most scathing words were for the religious leaders: (see Matthew 23)
3. Multitudes followed Him
4. "Common people heard Him gladly." (Mark 12:37)

C. Passover scene

1. 256,000 lambs slain; 10 people for every lamb; approximately 2.7 million people
2. Thousands of people meet him and shout "Hosanna!" Save Now! "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"
  - a. Psalm 118:26: a Messianic victory song
  - b. They are asking Jesus to do for them what religion has not done: bring salvation and deliverance

D. Jesus: the most compelling figure in history

1. "I know men and I tell you that Jesus Christ is no mere man. Between Him and every other person in the world there is no possible term of comparison. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and I have founded empires. But on what did we rest the creation of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ founded His empire upon love; and at this hour millions of men would die for Him." --Napoleon Bonaparte
2. I am an historian, I am not a believer, but I must confess as a historian that this penniless preacher from Nazareth is irrevocably the very center of history. Jesus Christ is easily the most dominant figure in all history.--H.G. Wells
3. A man who was completely innocent, offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act. --Mahatma Gandhi
4. "I believe there is no one deeper, lovelier, more sympathetic and more perfect than Jesus, not only is there no one else like him, there never could be anyone like him."-- *Fyodor Dostoevsky*

E. Pharisees angered that the people have a longing that they cannot fulfill

III. Scripture is More Reliable than Opinion

A. A lot of people: a lot of opinions about Jesus

1. Prophet (John 7:40)
2. Not from God (John 9:16)
3. Sinner (John 9:24)
4. Prophet (John 9:17) (See Deuteronomy 18:15)
5. Has a demon and is crazy (John 10:20)
6. From Galilee, couldn't be Christ (John 7:41)
7. Three times John recorded there was a division because of Jesus (John 7:43; John 9:16; John 10:19)
8. What Scripture declares Jesus to be is more important than what anyone believes Him to be

B. Application of prophecy

1. Two old testament quotes: (Psalm 118:26; Zechariah 9:9)
2. The Donkey
  - a. During peace, kings rode on a donkey
  - b. During war, kings rode on a horse
  - c. Jesus is coming as the Prince of Peace, offering salvation through His death
  - d. First coming in peace
  - e. Second coming to judge and make war (Revelation 19:11-19)

C. Accuracy of prophecy

1. "Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 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. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 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.' " (Luke 19:41-44)
  - a. Jesus is referring to the Daniel 9 promise of the exact time of Messiah: "Learn and understand these things. A command will come to rebuild Jerusalem. The time from this command until the appointed leader comes will be forty-nine years and four hundred thirty-four years. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and a trench filled with water around it, but it will be built in times of trouble. After the four hundred thirty-four years the appointed leader

will be killed;" (Daniel 9:25-26 NCV)

b. Artaxerxes Longimanus commanded to restore Jerusalem on March 14, 445 B.C.

c. Sir Robert Anderson in his book *The Coming Prince* determined: 483 years, based on the 360-day calendar year was 173,880 days. April 6, 32 A.D. (the 10th of Nisan)

d. How precise is God? Does He keep His appointments? Can you trust Him?

2. The disciples didn't get it at first

3. "God's word is alive and working and is sharper than a double-edged sword." (Hebrews 4:12)

4. Opinion doesn't matter unless it is as accurate as the Bible

5. Scripture that reveals God with pinpoint accuracy is more reliable than anyone's opinion

6. A God this detailed, accurate, and caring: is He trustworthy?

#### IV. Following is More Important than Observation

##### A. Followers:

1. Disciples -followers, learners (v. 16)

2. Eyewitnesses to Lazarus' resurrection (v. 17)

3. Those who heard the eyewitness testimony (v. 18)

4. Pharisees-the religious elite (v. 19)

B. Only the disciples believed the Scripture and placed their trust in Jesus

C. Great to make observations and study the life of Christ: observation should lead us to conclusions, which should lead us to action

D. What are you doing about Him?

E. Apply the truth and live it out in obedience to Him

F. Of all the personalities, the donkey is the most compliant:

*The Donkey*, by G.K. Chesterton

When fishes flew and forests walked  
And figs grew upon thorn,  
Some moment when the moon was blood  
Then surely I was born;

With monstrous head and sickening cry  
And ears like errant wings,  
The devil's walking parody  
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,  
Of ancient crooked will;  
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,  
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;  
One far fierce hour and sweet:  
There was a shout about my ears,  
And palms before my feet.

**Publications Referenced:** *London Times*; *Six Hours One Friday: Living in the Power of the Cross* by Max Lucado; *The Coming Prince*, by Sir Robert Anderson; *The Donkey*, by G.K. Chesterton

**Figures Referenced:** George Washington; John Wesley; Napoleon Bonaparte; H.G. Wells; Mahatma Gandhi; Fyodor Dostoevsky

**Cross References:** Deuteronomy 18:15; Psalm 118:26; Daniel 9:25-26; Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 15:2-3; Matthew 23; Mark 12:37; Luke 19:41-44; John 7:40; John 7:41; John 7:43; John 9:16; John 9:17; John 9:16; John 9:24; John 10:19; John 10:20; Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 19:11-19