

Meet the Real Jesus: He Is the Lamb of God John 12:12-19

Welcome to the Celebration of the greatest week in the history of the Universe.

The Biblical events of this week that are reflected by the holidays called Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter, are when we gather as a church to focus on each step of God's plan for Christ's sacrifice of Himself as the Lamb of God.

Palm Sunday was the largest public impact of Christ's ministry. Josephus calculated that more than a million may have been around Jerusalem the Passover season of Christ's Crucifixion, and God's Word that doesn't exaggerate, says that the whole city was moved by His arrival (Mat. 21:10).

He rode in like a king. He arrived upon on a prophesied donkey, accompanied by crowds crying for God to save them through their Hosannas. But as the week wore on those cries turned to crucify Him.

Jerusalem's desire for deliverance by a powerful king was reversed by the ignominious death march of the apparently weak and helpless Jesus. But that death was amazingly God's exact plan all along.

Today we begin our journey through these three events on God's eternal calendar in a series called: Meet the Real Jesus. At each stop along the way for the next week that we will share, we will see Jesus Christ clearly as He follows God's plan as the Lamb of God.

THE REAL JESUS IS REVEALED

Today, on Palm Sunday, we can see Jesus. *He arrived as the Lamb of God.*

At the end of this week on Good Friday, we can see Jesus. *He faced the Wrath of God.*

Then, next Sunday on Resurrection Day, we can see Jesus. *He rose as the Son of God.*

As you turn in your Bibles to John 12, by the wonder of our inspired copies of God's Word, we can watch each detail of that day nearly 2,000 years ago recorded flawlessly for us by God Himself, and sent as an eyewitness testimony so that we too can see and believe. Join me now as we:

WITNESS THAT DAY

Today, God invites us to see to the events of the Triumphal, Palm Sunday entrance of

Christ. Please stand with me as we read John 12:12-19 (NKJV):

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!”

¹⁴ Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written:

¹⁵ “Fear not, daughter of Zion;

Behold, your King is coming,

Sitting on a donkey’s colt.”

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.

¹⁷ Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. ¹⁸ For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. ¹⁹ The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, “You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!”

Pray

THE REAL JESUS IS THE LAMB OF GOD

Palm Sunday was the launch of Holy Week or Passion Week in the events of Christ's life.

There was a Mosaic requirement that sacrificial lambs for Passover be selected on the tenth day of the first month (originally called Abib but after the Exile called Nisan) and kept in the household until sacrificed on the fourteenth (Ex. 12:2–6).

In the year Jesus was crucified (whether taken as AD 30 or 33), the tenth of Nisan was the Triumphal Entry of Passover week. As Jesus entered Jerusalem, He was received into the hearts of the Jewish people as a nation much as a family received the sacrificial lamb into the home. In so doing our Lord would have fulfilled the Passover symbolism even in that small detail, being received by His people on the tenth of Nisan. Continuing that perfect fulfillment, He was then crucified on Friday the fourteenth of Nisan, as the true Passover Lamb sacrificed for the sins of the world.¹

Jesus had to be crucified during Passover week. That is why the Lord asked that this event of the deliverance of His people from Egypt be commemorated so often. That is why the Lord asked that they remember this event for 1,500 years.

Palm Sunday is when we see Jesus as the promised Lamb of God, who came to take away the sin of the world. Chapter 12 of the Gospel by John is just a continuation of chapter 1. When

¹ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew* (Mt 21:1). Chicago: Moody Press.

Jesus is first introduced to us in this Gospel by John we see a title that describes Christ's coming from Genesis through Revelation as the Lamb of God.

Turn back to John 1 with me as we look at what was really happening at Palm Sunday. Jesus knew that the Hosannas were mostly empty words, He knew the crowds would thin, the praises turn to murderous threats, and as His disciples fled, that He would be cruelly mocked, beaten, scourged, crucified, murdered, and then hastily buried in a borrowed tomb.

In John 1:29, the last and greatest of all the OT prophets gives the introduction we need to understand the depth of what we see on Palm Sunday. John points at Jesus Christ and explains that He is the One who has been promised, foreshadowed, and longed for all these centuries.

JESUS CAME TO BE THE LAMB SLAIN

The Bible concludes with another insight about the Lamb of God. Listen to Revelation 13:8's words, they are an amazing explanation of Palm Sunday.

Revelation 13:8 (NKJV) All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the **Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**

From God's perspective, before Scriptures, and before Creation: Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God who would be slain.

Jesus as the Lamb of God according to God is before creation.

So Christ's death on the Cross, burial, and resurrection are not plan B.

The Cross on which Christ died was Plan A. That is big. That is how the Bible opens. That is what ties the Bible together in the unfolding drama of redemption.

Jesus as God's Lamb to die in place of sinful humans is the precreation plan. What we see unfolding today on this Palm Sunday is God's one and only plan to save lost sinners.

God offers eternal forgiveness, and endless delights only to penitent believers who reach out in faith to the Lamb of God who died in their place on the Cross.

JESUS CHRIST SUPREMEY EXPRESSED GOD THE FATHER

The Holy Week of Christ's Passion that we enter today is the high point of human history. God always guided Jesus and all of redemptive history towards the Cross where the Lamb of God would be slain.

Christ's death, burial, and resurrection is the supreme expression of each of God's attributes: His omnipresent goodness, His omnipotent love, His omniscient wisdom, perfect righteousness, and unfailing mercy. The Cross on which the Lamb of God died, is where God

had been directing Jesus to go since before Creation².

ALL OF SCRIPTURE POINTS TO JESUS COMING AS THE LAMB OF GOD

1. **The Coming Lamb of God was Bruised as He Crushed Satan.** (Genesis 3:15) In Genesis 3:15 we have the first explanation of the Gospel. God says that a very special, Virgin-born descendent of Eve would crush Satan. The coming One, who as the Lamb of God would get bruised in His heel, would crush the Serpent Satan.
2. **The Coming Lamb of God Covers Guilty Sinners.** (Gen. 3: 21) Then the sinners hiding from God were clothed by God to cover their shame. Sin brought shame. God made a covering but He made it by shedding blood. Adam & Eve were clothed in garments made by shedding the innocent animals blood.
3. **The Coming Lamb of God was Personally Needed to Approach God.** (Genesis 4:4) Abel obedient offered to God a lamb, which reflected the coming Lamb of God. Here we have the Lamb of God portrayed in the firstlings of the flock slain by Abel in sacrifice.
4. **The Coming Lamb of God will be Provided by God at Calvary.** (Gen. 22:8) And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” So the two of them went together. Here we see a picture of the future Lamb of God that would be offered on the very same spot (Mt. Moriah) as Abraham took Isaac. It was here on Mount Moriah that Abraham offered his only son Isaac – and God intervened. Then God promised that He would provide a lamb.

So Golgotha was Moriah. Jesus was crucified on the exact spot that God had promised.

In Genesis 22 Isaac carried the wood on his back – so Jesus carried His own Cross.

As Abraham offered his only son, so God the Father offered His only Son.

5. **The Coming Lamb of God was Shown by Passover Lambs³.** (Exodus 12:3) Jesus Christ was exemplified in the Passover Lamb. Like that Lamb Jesus was the first born and a male, He was spotless and innocent, He was slain as a substitute.

PASSOVER LAMBS PORTRAYED CHRIST AS THE LAMB OF GOD

Jesus was crucified as the Passover lambs were being slain. He was fulfilling God’s plan to take those who trust in His sacrifice to Heaven. Now as we turn to Exodus chapter 12, note how completely God portrayed the Lamb of God through each Passover. That is why Paul says in 1 Cor. 5:7 that Christ is our Passover. Yes, Christ as the Lamb of God is our Passover. Everything

² Ideas reflected from John MacArthur, April 10, 2011; Players in the Drama of the Cross, Part 1, Mark 14:1-2, Code: 41-71

³ We could go on and also see: **The Lamb of God would be Lifted Up to Save Others by Faith:** Jesus was “lifted up” as Moses foresaw 1,500 years earlier in Numbers 21.8 (cf. John 3.14) with the brazen serpent. **The Lamb of God would be Pierced by Crucifixion:** David saw 1,000 years before Calvary that Christ would be “pierced” in His hands and feet, His garments were “divided” and His clothing was won by “casting lots” as Psalm 22.2, 4, 16-18 records. **The Lamb of God would be Bruised for Other’s Iniquities:** He was “bruised” as Isaiah saw 700 years before in chapter 53.5-6 “for our iniquities”.

about Christ's coming on Palm Sunday speaks of God's plan for Jesus as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world..

God made the Passover as the start of everything in the Jewish year of worship.

Exodus 12:1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2 "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

God explained that He wanted special lambs for each household. *Ex. 12:3 Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.*

God asked for a spotless lamb, a male, of the first year, and unblemished. *Ex. 12:5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year.*

Jesus Christ was—the only begotten of the Father. Jesus was spotless--- no sin was found in Him. Remember at His trial when He stood before every one--- Herod, Pilate, Sanhedrin, the ruling council, he stood before all of them and everyone agreed--- what? No Fault. I mean even people that had not known Him His whole life couldn't find one thing that he'd ever done wrong. When He was a little boy, even when he was a young man, you know in youth, in teen years, never did anything wrong.

God asked them to pick their Passover lambs on the 10th but not to slay it until the 14th. *Ex. 12:6a Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month.*

God asked that the lambs be slain from 3PM onward. *Ex. 12:6b you shall kill it at twilight.*

When does twilight begin? 3 pm. When is the evening? At 6 pm. So twilight was the hours before evening. Remember their day started at 6 pm and went to 6 pm; and so at sunset, 6 pm, a new day started. And so before sunset from 3 pm Jesus Christ the Passover Lamb of God said it was finished and died.

God asked that no bone of the lambs be broken. *Ex. 12:46 In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.*

Do you see how completely the Passover lambs reflected Christ's crucifixion? Jesus was the Lamb a special lamb, a spotless lamb, He was set apart for 4 days He was sacrificed, died on the cross, He was sacrificed specifically at 3 pm just like the Passover lamb and scripturally--- not one of His bones was broken—isn't that amazing?

God asked them to hide behind the blood applied to their doors. *Ex. 12:7 And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.*

The Passover requirements were: pick a lamb, keep it for four days, put your hands on the head of it and confess your identification with it, slay it, collect the blood in a bowl, skin the lamb, roast it; and then take the blood and put it on the doorposts.

HIDE BEHIND THE BLOOD & EAT THE LAMB

Do you see they couldn't partially obey? They had to obediently do two things: If they didn't eat the roasted lamb and if they didn't put the blood on the door posts the death angel would have gotten them.

You know what I think--- in America there are a lot of people walking around—who know all the facts but they have never personally applied the blood and hid inside the house in the protection of the sacrifice of Christ. What does that mean? It means they've never partaken of Jesus Christ personally.

Do you know what the tragedy of the church is today? It is young people from Christian families that had never gotten saved. I was in the largest Christian college in the world. I was on staff there for almost five years—do you know what the biggest problem we had? Unsaved supposed Christian kids!

They knew everything about the Lord, they knew all the verses, they won all the awards, but God had never transformed them. They had not partaken of Christ.

They were trying to be a Christian on their own; but they were empty, helpless and frustrated because they couldn't do it.

HOW DO WE GET SAVED?

By the partaking of verse 7—hide beneath the shadow of the blood—in other words saying by faith, “Jesus Christ—You died for my sins, not just the world, mine and I personally receive You.”

God says, “Don't wait”. *(Ex. 12:8-10) Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. 9 Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire--its head with its legs and its entrails. 10 You shall let none of it remain until morning*

What does the writer of Hebrews say? While you hear His voice don't harden your hearts. Today is the day of salvation. Don't wait.

Jesus is the only hope we have. He is the only one who is the specific sacrificial lamb set apart spotless who was sacrificed for us. That's the fact, but the Passover was not effective unless you partook of the blood that was put on the doorpost and stayed in side of that house and ate the Lamb.

Are you trusting that Jesus Christ the Lamb of God was sacrificed to take your sins away?

Have you personally received Jesus Christ?

Your family can sit around the table and eat the lamb; but if you didn't you were not protected. You must partake of Him.

There's something about the Passover that brings salvation down to a personal interaction, relationship, a personal intimate knowledge of the sacrifice of Christ.

The question we each need to answer is: Was Jesus Christ the Lamb of God slain for me?

Let's bow before Him. As we bow I ask you to just do what the Apostle Paul says, examine yourself whether you're in the faith--- whether or not this morning you are resting beneath His blood.

WITH HEADS BOWED

Doesn't this make all of us who know Him want to fall on our knees and worship our God, praise Him, and continually thank Him for sending for us the ... *lamb slain from the foundation of the world?*

And for any of you today who have not received the free gift of salvation, God's Word tells you: "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Why not call on Him right now? What would keep you from reaching out by faith and asking Him to save you?

WONDERFUL, MERCIFUL, SAVIOR

Wonderful merciful Savior, Precious redeemer and friend, Who would have thought that a Lamb could, Rescue the souls of men? O, You rescue the souls of men!

CHORUS: You are the One that we praise, You are the one we adore; You give the healing and grace, Our hearts always hunger for; O, our hearts always hunger for.

Counselor, Comforter, Keeper, Spirit we long to embrace; You offer hope when our hearts have, Hopelessly lost the way, Oh, we've hopelessly lost the way (Chorus)

Almighty, Infinite Father, Faithfully loving Your own; Here in our weakness You find us, Falling before Your throne; O, we're falling before Your throne. (Chorus)