

Shalom, everyone! Thank you so much, Melissa, and thank you so much, the entire Circle team who's helping to, help us dial this in, and

Shalom from...

Chicago! Which was an interesting day. We're running around the country right now and had an amazing opportunity to come to Chicago and meet with a... it was a last-minute thing, a group of pastors that were assembled... to stand with Israel, assembled by a Jewish organization, and it was an honor to be the first Messianic Rabbi to speak at one of their events. And we had one of the most prominent rabbis in the country that was a part of it. And, some Israeli governmental officials, so it was a great, great opportunity, and God blessed, and... It's exciting times we're living in, so it's pretty incredible to see what God is doing. So, so excited you guys are all here. We're going to jump in, and as you know, we are going through the life of Yeshua and his... and this... part of the, in Season 1, in a sense, we're going... we're starting with the last week of his life. We began Part 1 last week with the triumphal entry on that Sunday before he gave his life as the Korban Pesach, as the Passover lamb. He rode in on a donkey, what is traditionally known as the Triumphal entry, or Palm Sunday, and we looked at a number of things related to the donkey, but of course, there is more!

## **The Donkey and the Material World**

We talked about how Yeshua rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and I want to look at another aspect of it. So, what we need to understand is that the Hebrew word for donkey is chamor. Can you say chamor? You got to get the in there, okay? And every Hebrew word comes from a Hebrew root, and so Hebrew words are built on roots, and so you can have words that share the same root. And when they share the same root, it means there's some sort of relationship between those words. So, the word for donkey, chamor (חמור) shares a root with another Hebrew word, chomer (חומר) You can say chomer, and chomer, it means material or physical substance. So literally, at the root of donkey is the concept of the material physical substance that the world was made of.

The donkey, in this sense, represents:

- The material world.
- The physical realm
- The body
- The tangible.

## **A Pattern Through Scripture**

We talked about the pattern in Scripture last time that the donkey is always there at key moments.

- Abraham saddles a donkey. (Genesis 22)
- Moses places his family on the donkey. (Exodus 4:20)
- Yeshua rides the donkey into Jerusalem.

This is not random, it's a pattern.

The point is this, the righteous don't reject the material world or reality.

They direct it or redirect it.

- The donkey represents the physical world, earth, material
- Yeshua represents heaven, he represents the spiritual, and it represents the coming together of the two.

## **The Lie of Separate (Gnosticism)**

Oftentimes, people think, well, the spiritual is good, and the physical is bad. There was this ancient heresy known as Gnosticism that taught that in ancient times, in the first century context, in which a lot of the New Testament was written.

- The physical world is evil, the spirit is good, and they actually taught that Yeshua only appeared to have a body, but didn't really have a physical body, and that's why we talk about the physical, bodily resurrection of the Messiah, not just that He rose spiritually.
- 1 John direct... confronts this error, saying, Yeshua came in the flesh.

## **The Biblical Vision**

God does not reject the material world. In the beginning, Bereshit, God creates the heavens and earth, and he says it is Tov-Meod -- It is very good.

- And the problem is not the material physical world
- The problem is the misuse of the material.

## The Fall: Misusing Material

So, with the fall came the misuse. Sin came through the material, it came through the physical, it came through the fruit.

Adam and Eve, use creation for themselves instead of for God. They use it to serve themselves instead of to serve God.

- At that moment, when they partook of the physical fruit, heaven and earth became disconnected.
- The material world became misaligned
- Human focus shifted to
  - Survival
  - Desire
  - Self
- That is why we struggle with the physical, oftentimes, or with our urges or desires.

## The Calling: Elevate the Material

The calling, it doesn't make the physical bad, but the calling is to elevate the material for the sake of the spiritual, and Yeshua riding the donkey into Jerusalem represents heaven. It's harnessing everything on earth for the sake of heaven.

- Our responsibility is not to escape, but it's to transform.
- Avodah (עבודתה) - the Hebrew word for **worship** is also the same word as **work**.
- In Hebrew, work and worship are the very same word, have the same root.
- And by the way, it's also the root word that **slavery** comes from.
- What's the difference between work and worship? **It's who you do it for.**
- Either the material becomes something we worship and serve God through, or the material becomes something we become enslaved to.
- Becomes sanctified through a tithe. A part sanctifies the whole. All your work becomes raised to a spiritual level of Kedusha, holiness, when you take some of those... that... some of that money and use it to give back to the work of God.

## **Everyday Redemption of the Physical**

And so, in Messiah, He redeems not only the spiritual, He redeems the physical, so there's an everyday redemption of the physical. Think about it.

- Give God our tithe and offerings,
- Praise God when we eat food by saying a blessing.
- Work done unto God
- Relationships, marriage, sex. When it becomes about covenant, not consumption.
- Then it becomes holy.
- Paul's saying, whatever you do, whether eating or drinking, do it unto the Lord.
- The goal is to use the material, to harness the material to worship God

## **The Prophetic Vison**

As it says in the book of Zechariah 14:20 (TLV) “who in that day, Holy to Adonai, Holy to the Lord, will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, even the pots and the pans.”

So ordinary things become holy.

- Not just the altar, not just the temple. Everything becomes set apart when we choose to use it for the purposes in the Will of God.

## **Yeshua and the Donkey**

Yeshua riding the donkey into Jerusalem is about humility, but it's more than humility.

It is a Prophetic picture:

- The donkey equals the material world
- Yeshua represents heaven.

Yeshua riding the donkey represents the perfect union of heaven and earth.

## What It Means

That moment that he rode the donkey, and what does it declare?

- It says that the material world is not rejected
- it is being reclaimed.
- It is being realigned.
- Being brought under the authority of the King, the Mashiach, the Messiah.
- And this is important. The donkey isn't removed, it is ridden.

## The Order Matter

Yeshua is on top of the donkey.

And that is the important point.

- It's spirit over matter.
- It's purpose over desire
- It's calling over craving

## The Great Reversal

People oftentimes live like this.

- They're driven by money
- They're driven by comfort
- They're driven by status

But Scripture flips it, so think about it. The streets of heaven are paved with gold. Why is God just bling, blinging out heaven, showing off Robin Leach, Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous, MTV Cribs? He's got it like that. He's the ultimate hip-hop artist, he's frosting out, everything's frosted.

No, it's because...

- People will do anything for gold. It is a biblical symbol of wealth. They will sell or do anything to get it.

But the reason why the streets are paved with gold is because it is a complete reversal of the values of this world.

- Basically, gold is only pavement in heaven. Why would you make your whole life about the pursuit of pavement above all else?
- You're gonna gain the world, but lose your soul over a pavement?
- That's the point. It's a complete reversal, a flipping of the values.

## **Identity Shift**

And there's this identity shift that reminds us

We are not physical beings having a spiritual experience.

But we were actually created to be spiritual beings having a physical experience. That's why your spirit lives on after your body dies.

- So we can't miss that. We're not primarily physical beings, we're primarily spiritual beings.
- And the physical body, the goof, is just a vessel for us in this world.
- it's to help train us and prepare. So Earth is not the destination, the body...
- Is used, and this physical world is used as a training ground And so here's the question.

## **The Question**

Are you riding the donkey?

Or is the donkey riding you?

- Because if you make the pursuit of the material or the physical, if that is your primary pursuit, if you don't have time for worship or study or community, or relationship, you are the donkey. You're being taken for a ride. Don't be the donkey. Don't be Shrek.

## **Hidden Detail**

Think about the owner of the donkey.

- He didn't fully know Yeshua.
- But he'd still release what he had.

And it became part of redemption history.

Use what you have.

- Your resources, Your physical being, your time, Your influence, not for yourself.
- But for the *KING*, and for the *Malkut Shamayim*, the Kingdom of God.

The donkey was never the problem.

The question has always been, who is sitting on it?

Who is on top.

And that's the challenge to us, to make sure that Yeshua is the one, that we become the donkey, we become the instrument that is used in the service of God to advance His plans and purposes in the world.

And that's when our work becomes worship.

And even our work is used to glorify Him. Otherwise, our work becomes a form of slavery.

But it adds dignity and meaning to our work and invests it with Holiness and Kedushah.

## **Part 2 – Jacob's Messianic Prophecy of the Donkey**

And we talked about that Yeshua came riding in with a donkey, and the mama donkey, the older adult donkey, and a colt. It's young, young unriden.

So the question is why? Well, in part, we looked at Zechariah 12, and it... I mean, we looked at Zechariah 9, and it talked about these two, the mama and the baby, and that's why it's a partial fulfillment of Zechariah 9, 9. Behold, your king comes to you riding in a donkey. But of course, there's something more that actually didn't strike me until I was preparing for tonight, so I like this. This is new even for me.

One of the earliest and most foundational messianic prophecies in the Scripture, Genesis 49:10-11. Jacob gathers his children, he's blessing the 12 tribes before he dies, his 12 sons.

And he says, let me tell you what will happen in the B'ach Hayameim in the latter days, and then he gives his blessing to Judah. *"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet until Shiloh comes, and to him will be the obedience of the peoples, binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine."*

This messianic passage is understood as referring to Melecha, Meshiach, the Messianic King, the Messiah, who would come from the tribe of Judah.

## **Rabbinic Interpretation**

### **Targum Onkelos**

There's a rabbinic text known as the Targum Onkelos, the ancient Aramaic translation.

Because many Jews spoke Aramaic in the first century, coming back from Babylon. So, it says this, it says, on this passage, *"Until the Messiah comes, whose is the kingdom."* So, Shiloh is interpreted as the Messiah.

The donkey imagery is associated with the reign of the Messiah from Judah.

### **Midrash**

There's something known as the Midrash. Now, I want you to understand, I sent... you guys all should have a source sheet to be able to follow along with these key sources, biblical sources, rabbinic sources, and in that, I gave an explanation of what the Targum is, of what the Midrash is, I gave a shorter explanation before I cited the passage, the source, and then at the end, there's a longer explanation, so I encourage you to look at that, because we will reference that continually as we study.

It says in the Midrash.

It says, describing the days of the Messiah.

It talks about the imagery of tying a donkey to the vine suggests a time when vines are so plentiful that they can be used as fence posts.

That's amazing, right? The vine is so plentiful, it's actually used to tie a donkey to it. It doesn't make a difference if it gets destroyed. It's irrelevant.

The donkey and the vine speak to the Messianic Kingdom.

### **The Connection Most People Miss**

And I want you to understand that these two moments are not separate, and this is key, they're actually bookends.

The first miracle Yeshua does is water into wine. The wine flows

The Kingdom begins, joy is revealed. So one of the reasons why he turns water into wine is because wine is associated with the coming Messianic king in Genesis 49.

the vine?

They'll dip their clothes in the blood of grapes, And so...

This messianic promise in Genesis 49 connects to the first miracle of the abundance of wine, a sign of prosperity.

And then at Jerusalem, he rides a donkey. Why?

The Kingdom is confronted, and the path to his death on the cross begins. Here's the deeper prophetic pattern.

The vine and the wine equal abundance, the donkey equals Kingships.

Yeshua fulfills both. The first miracle is wine, the final sign before His death is the donkey, same prophecy, same Messiah, two moments.

One at the beginning, and one at the beginning of the end. Cana is the beginning of his revelation of who he is as the Messiah.

And Jerusalem is the beginning of his sacrifice. At Cana, he provides for a wedding. In Jerusalem, he becomes the wine of the New Covenant by pouring out His blood like wine. And this is the turning point.

The first sign says the kingdom has come.

And the final sign says, the cost of the kingdom is here now.

The first miracle, the kingdom has come, and the last is the cost of the kingdom is now here.

So he begins with overflowing wine, he ends with pouring out his life like a wine, like a drink offering. He began at a wedding feast, and he ends preparing for a greater wedding that we'll celebrate with him the marriage supper of the lamb.

He began in quiet revelation, and his time ended in public confrontation.

And between these two moments is an entire mission to bring the joy of the Malchut Hashamayim, the Kingdom of God.

But it comes about through the suffering of the king, for the joy set before him, he endured the cross.

The first miracle, the water into wine, reveals who He is.

And the final entry on the donkey reveals what it will cost.

And I think this is significant. And one more thing before we take questions.

The vine is symbolic of the messianic kingdom.

Micah 4:4, *"everyone will sit under his vine."*

When Yeshua turns the water into wine The Scepter in Genesis 49 is the kingship will come from Judah, the donkey represents the humble messianic king coming.

And the vine represents the peace and prosperity that He offers us.

He says, fill the pots to the brim. Why? Because he came that we might have life and have it more abundantly, that we might live not out of the lack, but out of His overflow. And that's what He does for us as our Messiah. Even if we don't have physical.

Even though we don't have financial prosperity, we can still have spiritual prosperity, which is the most important form in Him. So let me stop there, and we can take some questions.

### **Part 3 The Two Ways Messiah Comes**

There's this rabbinic tradition that says, if Israel is worthy. They say, how can Messiah both come with heavenly glory and on a humble donkey?

And they resolve this tension this way. They say if Israel is worthy, he'll come riding on the clouds of heaven, and if Israel is not worthy of the Messiah, he will come humbly riding on a donkey.

And the insight... the reason why they raise this question is that there's these two key passages that seem... there's a tension between them.

Or is, you know, they're wrestling with Daniel 7, verse 13,

Daniel says, *"I saw it in the night visions, and behold the clouds of heaven there came one like a Son of Man, and he came to the Ancient of Days."*

Daniel sees the Messiah, this one like the Son of Man, and he appears in heavenly glory and authority.

The image is unmistakable, clouds of heaven, divine authority, universal dominion. It's the picture... it's a picture of the triumphant king.

But then, there's a passage we've been looking at, Zechariah 9:9. *"Behold, your king comes to you humbly riding on a donkey."*

It seems to be the complete opposite. One is the triumphal king, and one is the servant king. And so the rabbis wrestle with, you know, How are both True?

The rabbinic solution to that is they make dependent upon the spiritual condition of Israel.

- Israel is worthy, clouds of heaven.

- Not worthy, humble and riding on a donkey.

Redemption is shaped, in part, by the readiness of the people to receive the King.

And there's truth in this, because Israel wasn't ready. They were not ready to receive him as a whole. Many Jews believed, but many did not, and ultimately most didn't.

And so, He comes humbly riding on a donkey.

But of course, we know there has to be something more.

So, The cloud and the donkey point to something very significant. It points to his two comings.

On the one hand, the triumphal entry, he comes riding on a donkey, but on the other hand, Matthew 24:30:

*“Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heave(Notice it uses the same word, Son of Man in Heaven. It connects directly back to Daniel 7) n And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”*

Matthew 26:64 *“You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”*

We won't go too much into it. The religious leaders weren't upset when he called himself the Son of God.

Son of God does not point to his divinity, it points to His humanity as the descendant of David.

When he uses the term Son of Man, when you read the Gospels, they get very upset because they understand he's connecting himself to this divine figure from Daniel chapter 7.

So go back and read the account of his life and see how upset the high priest gets when he says this, right? This is blasphemy.

So when he... in their minds, it's blasphemy. So when he comes on a donkey, he comes in humility. When he comes on the clouds of heaven, at his return, he comes in glory.

The rabbis teach two Messiahs, a suffering Messiah, son of Joseph, a ruling and reigning Messiah, son of David. They see donkey in clouds. No, not two Messiahs, two comings. The first time as a suffering servant, the donkey. The second time, the ruling and reigning Lamb of God on the clouds of heaven.

## Part 4 - The Messiah Arrives on a Donkey

So the Messiah arrives on a donkey, and even the route into Jerusalem is a deliberate fulfillment of prophecy.

So the gospel tells us that the donkey, that he enters in from a city known as Bethpage.

Why is this important? Because Bethpage means the house of the unripe Figs.

Why is that significant? It ties into what we just said, why he rode the donkey.

Fig... the fig tree in Scripture often symbolizes Israel.

Hosea 9:10 *"Like the first fruit of the fig tree in its season, I saw your fathers."*

And Yeshua Himself, in the Olivet Discourse, in Matthew 24:25 uses a fig tree to symbolize Israel's spiritual condition. He encounters a fig tree, leaves, but no fruit. And it becomes a picture of the Jewish people who appear ready, but are not yet ready to produce the fruit of faith.

So, we see it's connected to Israel, and it's also connected to that earlier verse, Micah 4:4, the Messianic Kingdom. *"Every man will sit under his vine and under his fig tree"*, so the vine and the fig tree.

Again, it begins with him doing a miracle of the fruit of the vine.

Kingdom has come!

He begins his descent into Jerusalem on the donkey from the place of unripe fig, so at the end, again, we see this connection.

They're not ready for the kingdom.

And so, he comes from the place of the unripe fig.

Because it captures the spiritual state and condition of what is about to happen, and why he's even riding a donkey. So the rabbis say, if they're not ready, worthy, riding a donkey. He comes from the place of the unripe fig, which represents Israel, not in bringing forth its fruit in its season that it should.

The unripe fig tree represents Israel is not yet ready for redemption.

And that's why we see the fig tree episode that follows in the Gospel narrative.

So, Messiah arriving from Bethpage represents Israel's spiritual condition.

And Messiah approaches from Jerusalem, a place that represent... from Bethpage to Jerusalem, a place that represents unripeness, and the leadership of Israel, many of

whom were not spiritually ready to receive Him, so in the language of the sages, Israel was not ready.

So the Messiah came, riding the donkey.

Like Zechariah spoke of, and the rabbis understood.

Which is, I think, significant.

We have to make sure that we are not unripe.

That we are bearing fruit. A good tree brings forth good fruit.

In and out of season.

So, again, I hope you see, God is in all of the details.

So this is... The deep dive into the donkey?

## **Part 5 – Israel’s King has Come (John 12:12-19)**

But we can't talk about his entry into Jerusalem without mentioning something else that's important. The palm branches. It's called Palm Sunday among believers.

Right? So, John 12 says, *“The next day, the huge crowd that came up for the feast of Passover was there. They heard Yeshua was coming to Jerusalem, to Yerushalayim, so they took palm branches and went out to meet Him, shouting, Hoshiana!*

*Salvation in the highest, blessed be he who comes, Hoshiana as Lord Save. Adonai, Hoshiana is Psalm 118.*

*Blessed be he who comes in the name of Hashem, in the name of the Lord The King of Israel.”*

### ***Palm Branches***

And so people tend to think that palm branches are a sign of peace.

It is the absolute furthest thing from the truth. It is the absolute complete opposite.

Palm branches were something that symbolized something completely different.

The palm branches is not about casual praise, it is a prophetic national declaration.

Prophetic National Declaration. So, what do they mean?

- Not peace.

Biblically and historically in Jewish history and in Roman history, palms represent victory and freedom in national identity.

And we'll see that in a moment.

But it's also connected to the biblical foundation, which is, Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles, you wave palm branches: the Lulav and the etrog, lulav, hadass and aravah, the four species that you wave Leviticus 23 in all directions.

And why is it important that the palm branches are connected to Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles? Because Sukkot is the holiday that celebrates the Messianic Kingdom.

Zechariah 14 tells us all the nations of the world will go up to worship the king in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles.

So the crowd is not just quoting Scripture, they are declaring the Messiah has arrived, his kingdom is going to come, he's gonna overthrow Rome and deal with the Gentile enemies of Israel and establish a physical, earthly, messianic kingdom as a military messiah.

And so when Jewish people gained their independence from a Gentile nation, it's connected to the story of Hanukkah. from, Antiochus Epiphanes, from the Syrio-Greeks, from the Hellenistic Syrians.

1 Maccabees 13:51 says, "Simon Maccabee was welcomed into Jerusalem with palm branches".

So, palm branches represents victory over foreign oppression and domination.

When Jews minted coins to celebrate their independence, they put a palm tree on it.

So it's a symbol of freedom, the land, fruitfulness, Jewish identity, sovereignty, and independence.

Even in the Greco-Roman context, the word for palm, palma, meant victory. Victors were crowned with palm branches.

And so, it's a symbol of a triumph, triumph or success.

And then...

The Romans after sent a counter message. They understood this. So there was a revolt of the Jewish people in 70 AD that led to the destruction of the temple, and there was a second Jewish revolt under a false messiah by the name of Bar Kokhva in the days of a famous rabbi, Rabbi Akiva.

in 136 AD, and when they defeated the Jews and conquered them, put down the revolt a second time.

They put a caption on the coin that says, Jerusalem Captured. Judea captured.

And there was a weeping Jewish woman and a Roman soldier standing over her and a palm tree beside her. They were mocking them.

Basically saying, we have conquered your people and usurped your symbol.

So, what the crowd was actually declaring by the waving of the palm branches was, liberate us.

Restore Israel, bring sovereignty, defeat Rome. This was not welcome, peaceful teacher. This was, you are our King

So, save us, Hoshana was a temple cry, a festival declaration, a messianic expectation, and again, Messiah has arrived.

They were saying, we believe you're the king, a conquering king, a political messiah, but Yeshua comes riding a donkey, not a war horse. He's not rejecting kingship, and this is key, he is redefining it

For the moment.

The crowds wanted clouds and conquest.

And Yeshua came in humility first.

They waive... this is the prophetic irony. They wave palm branches for victory.

But the true victory was not over Rome.

The true victory was over sin, it was over death. It was over spiritual exile from disconnection and restored relationship with God?

And that is why Sukkot language is used at Passover. The language is more Sukkot than Passover.

Because Sukkot represents God dwelling with His people, represents the Messianic kingdom, Zechariah 14, and the people instinctively recognize this is the king and the final redemption.

They were right about who he was, they were wrong about the timing and what He came to do first.

And let's understand, the disciples were wrong, too on the 40th day after He rose from the dead, He'd been teaching them the mysteries and meaning of the kingdom for 40 days, and they turn to Him and they say to Yeshua, is this the time you're going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?

Notice he doesn't say no. This is important for those who say God is done with Israel, that they don't belong in the land, that they rejected Him, that there's no prom... No, he doesn't...

If he... if he... if they were wrong about, are you going to restore the physical, literal kingdom to Israel now, which is what the people believed when he rode in, he would have said, no, no, no, you don't get it, you're wrong, it's... No, he doesn't correct their expectation, he corrects the timing.

They cried... they waved palms for freedom, but didn't understand their bondage. They cried, save us now, but didn't see they were the ones needing saving on a spiritual level.

From sin and death, They welcomed a King, but rejected the way he chose to reign.

Generally speaking.

So, they took up palm branches, expecting political victory.

But they were standing at the doorway of eternal redemption.

Many miss the moment.

Because He did not meet their expectations

And how many times has that happened to us?

When we expect God to do it one way, or to do something, and He doesn't, or does it a different way.

And we begin to lose heart or begin to lose some faith.

You know, the crowds loved him when he fed them, when he healed them.

When he gave an inspirational message, But...

They didn't like the idea of having to go all the way to the cross.

Even his own disciples.

You know, he could get a crowd of 5,000 when he fed them.

He get a multitude when he taught them.

You get a bunch of his disciples at the upper room last Passover Seder, but only one was willing to go with him all the way.

to the cross.

And I think that's the question God asks of us.

Will you go with me all the way?

Even when it looks different.

Even when the process is painful, Will you still praise Him?

Will you still serve him?

And will you still be the donkey?

The tool, the instrument that he uses to advance his plans and purposes, the kingdom and the world.

Because if you're... if not, You're the donkey.

Who misses it?

Because you got it backwards.

So, I hope that, Is meaningful to you all.

as we approach Palm Sunday this Sunday.

Yeah, and I just want to say, there's nothing not Jewish about Yeshua.

Everything that he did was to fulfill the Torah and the Prophets, and didn't do anything that contradicted the Torah.

The problem is, over time as the nations came to believe, which was always God's promise, that in Abraham and his descendants, the Jewish people, all the nations of the world would be blessed, Israel was to be a light to the nations, but as the nations came in and didn't have a Jewish context, they began to read the Bible out of context.

And so a lot of theology, if it's not learned in the Jewish context is taken out of context.

And unfortunately, that is what has happened, and that's what we're trying to restore.