

Sermon Title: **You Will Find a Donkey Tied**

Bible: **Matthew 21:1-11**

Where & When: Palm Sunday in Lent at Gilroy UMC on April 5, 2020

Audience: About 28 viewers at YouTube Live-streaming Worship

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, thank you so much for giving us this time. When looking at Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, please guide us to find your message. We need you and your presence. Please be with my lips in your love and grace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1. Donkey & Church Picnic

Today is Palm Sunday, and today's Scripture describes the moment of Jesus entering into Jerusalem. Jesus rode on a donkey to enter Jerusalem. Many people came and shouted out "Hosanna! Hosanna!" while waving palm fronds. When you hear or read this story, what word catches your attention? For me, the donkey caught my attention. Yes, "Hee-Haw," the donkey. I remembered our church picnic at Anita's house. It was a nice day. We really enjoyed the weather and our fellowship. We played ping pong; we ate BBQ together; some of us swam in the pool; we enjoyed the special museum; we saw the donkeys, and some of us fed the donkeys. One donkey's name is Miho. Because the name is similar to my wife's name, Mihyun, I still remember it. As we stay at home, I really miss the church picnic, our fellowship so much.

2. "You Will Find a Donkey Tied"

In the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, at first, the donkey was tied. It feels like us, who are tied to our homes. How long was the donkey tied? How long did the donkey wait for Jesus? How long do we need to be tied, to stay at home? How long do we need to wait for the green light to go out freely? To be tied makes it look like we are doing nothing and can make us feel

useless. However, in the story of the donkey, it was the time of waiting for Jesus. It was the time of becoming a loyal and humble donkey, before carrying Jesus on his back.

Staying at home does not mean that we are doing nothing or being unproductive. As we know, while we stay at home, we relieve our families' concerns. We at home definitely support our doctors and our nurses who are on the frontlines. We at home care about our friends and neighbors who are suffering from the new virus. Furthermore, we contribute our emptiness and our humbleness to our community, our country, and our whole world, in order to fight against the virus. In other words, our bodies are tied to our home; however, our love, care, and prayer cannot be tied to our home.

The donkey signifies patience and meekness. While we stay at home, I hope for us to learn and practice the donkey's patience and meekness. Following Jesus is neither doing what I want, nor doing what I can do. Sometimes, we need to wait for others. Sometimes, we need to give up our selfish desire. Sometimes, our wildness needs to be tamed. This week is Holy Week, a time to remember Jesus on the way to the cross. When Jesus prayed in Gethsemane, even Jesus first asked God to let the cross pass from him, if it was possible. However, Jesus prayed again that God's will be done, according to not what Jesus wanted, but what God wanted. Like the donkey and Jesus, our patience and our meekness can grow day by day.

3. "The Lord needs them."

The cross is not the end. There will be a resurrection and a new life! Likewise, being tied or staying home is not the end. We do not know how long we should stay at home. We do not

know when we can open our church buildings. But the time is coming. In the story of the donkey, if anyone says anything about untying the donkey, Jesus taught the disciple to say “The Lord needs it.” When the Lord needed the donkey, it was untied, and brought to Jesus. Like the donkey, when our Lord needs us, we will be brought to Jesus, and we will carry Jesus’s love to others. Until then, we can be ready. We can develop our patience, humbleness, obedience, and meekness. I would like to close with the legend of the Donkey’s Cross that I learned from our church picnic:

“Bring me the colt of a donkey,” was the Master’s request.

A young donkey was brought to Jesus to carry Him into Jerusalem.

A week later Jesus was ordered crucified.

The little donkey so loved the Lord that he wanted to help Him carry the cross.

But alas, he was pushed away.

The sad little donkey waited to say goodbye until nearly all had left.

As he turned to leave, the shadow of the cross fell upon his back and shoulders.

And there it has remained, a tribute to the loyalty and love of humblest of God’s creatures.

Closing Prayer

Our Lord, we are tied at home. Like the tied donkey, please guide us to be loyal and humble. Like Jesus in Gethsemane, please teach us to give up our will, and to be obedient to your will. In this unknown time, we want to follow you more and more. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Questions.

1. What character can we learn from the tied donkey?
2. What can we give up or learn in this Holy Week?