

Last week we read about the beginning of what is called the Triumphal Entry. The disciples found the foal of a donkey and set Jesus on it. It was the day for each family to choose their Passover lamb. Jesus came in on that donkey as King David had done so long before. The crowds were praising Him for all the miracles they had witnessed but especially the news of the resurrection of Lazarus (John 12:17,18<sup>i</sup>). The Pharisees wanted Jesus to rebuke the crowds. They feared the Romans would see it as an uprising. They also detested the idea that the crowds saw this humble man as the Messiah. Jesus told them that if the crowds were quieted the very stones would cry out. It looked like Jesus was about to be declared king, but things were not as they appeared.

*<sup>41</sup> And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, <sup>42</sup> saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.* Luke 19:41,42 On the inauguration day of a king, the king will sit proudly on his coach or limousine and wave to the people with a wide smile on his face. Not so the King of kings. He already knows His exalted position as the Son of God. And His heart is quite different from earthly kings. **More than any earthly king who ever lived, His heart longs for people to embrace the truth.** His eyes saw into the future and the devastating effects from their rejection of Him as the Lamb of God and King of their hearts. In stark contrast to the shouts of praise, Jesus began to weep with a loud and deep lamentation, His chest heaving with the sobs<sup>ii</sup>. That is implied by the Greek word used here for weeping, which is different from the word used for the quiet tears He shed at Lazarus tomb (John 11:35<sup>iii</sup>).

In a matter of days, the multitude whose souls He came to save would be shouting to have Him crucified (Mark 15:11-13<sup>iv</sup>). His salvation was not the salvation they were hoping for. The result would be the horrible end we read descriptions of concerning the conclusion of the first Jewish revolt. But infinitely worse is the damnation of souls who refuse the steadfast love the crowd sang as Jesus entered the city (Psalm 118:25-29<sup>v</sup>).

Do we share Jesus' grief over those who reject us because we embrace Him? I find myself getting angry with those who persecute Christians, when my heart should be broken over their eternal fate if they do not repent. Do we weep over the consequences they face because of their rejection of His love? Are our hearts broken for them as Jesus' heart was?

Jesus riding on that donkey had crested the Mount of Olives. Before Him was the whole city of Jerusalem and the temple glistening in the sun. Crowds had gathered on the roadway waving palm branches and hailing Jesus as the king. At that time there was a road that went halfway down the mountain to a double tiered bridge that led to the Golden Gate which was nearest the main temple gate. This gate and bridge were used by the priests to take the sin offerings that were to be burned outside the camp. The scapegoat was taken over the same bridge and was driven into the wilderness with the people's sins upon it. The temple had an altar near the ridge of the Mount of Olives outside of the boundaries of the city where the hide and dung from the sacrificial animals were burned. Jesus knew that this was his soon to be his fate, taken out of the camp and sacrificed as a sin offering (Hebrews 13:11,12<sup>vi</sup>). He had most likely seen crucifixions in His youth and knew the horror of that kind of slow death.<sup>vii</sup>

He could also see into the future the consequences of their rejection of Him as the Messiah, even while they hailed Him king and shouted "Save now!" **They did not know the things that make for peace, for it was hidden from their eyes.** What a statement! They were blinded to the fact that kingdoms of man come and go, but the real need was the transformation of their hearts. They could not see that He had come to save their souls. Their shouts were for temporal passing things rather than the cry of the blind Bartimaeus who pleaded, "Son of David, have mercy on me" (Luke 18:39<sup>viii</sup>)!

I have wondered what would have happened if the crowd was weeping and pleading for the salvation of their souls. What would have followed if they could have truly seen that our great need is for a Savior, for His forgiveness and mercy? But then, without Jesus taking on their sins and the justice our sins deserve, there would have been no path to forgiveness. Despite the fact that they offered sacrifices twice a day and much more at special times of the year, and knowing those sacrifices were not sufficient to remove their sins, they could not see that there had to be an ultimate sacrifice that was acceptable to God as true justice (Hebrews 10:4<sup>ix</sup>). It was hidden from their eyes.

Skeptics point to the cross as a barbaric and bloody idea that we have outgrown. They ask what kind of a God would kill His son? What does that really say? It tells me it is hidden from their eyes as well. They cannot see that our sins are worthy of death. We accept the fact that traitors in time of war are executed for treason, but we cannot see that our sins make us traitors in the greatest war, the war over the souls of men. They cannot see that rebellion against the goodness of God must be judged.

Isaiah the prophet's eyes were opened when he saw the LORD. Isaiah was in the temple mourning the death of King Uzziah when he had a vision of the LORD. His immediate response was "Woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:1<sup>x</sup>;5<sup>xi</sup>)! He said he was unraveled at the sight of God's holiness. Living in this fallen world we compare ourselves with one another. That is like a pig in a mud pit being comparatively cleaner than the other pigs. But when we are before the glorious holiness of God, we do not see anyone else. The contrast drops us to our knees and then down on our faces. We are wretchedly vile and filthy. Isaiah said our righteousness is like filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6<sup>xii</sup>). What are we to do? Jesus was on His way to do it for us.

Even after His sacrifice it was hidden from the eyes of most. They still could not see the things that make for peace between us and God and others (Acts 10:36<sup>xiii</sup>). If the majority had converted to follow Jesus and accept forgiveness, they would not have sought other physical saviors which was one of the reasons for the Jewish revolt and all the destruction that followed including the crucifixion of thousands of Jews. They would have loved their enemies, and just as in Babylon, they would have prospered. They would have become the kingdom of priests that God wanted them to be and become a light to the world (Exodus 19:6<sup>xiv</sup>). There would have been no Jewish revolts. Tens of thousands would not have needlessly perished. But there was a veil over their eyes (2 Corinthians 3:14-16<sup>xv</sup>). It is a veil that in our day is beginning to lift.

*<sup>43</sup> For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side <sup>44</sup> and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.*" Luke 19:43,44  
Jesus prophesied the coming consequences of the first Jewish revolt. It would happen just forty years after He uttered the prediction. It began in Caesarea, but it had been brewing

for years. The Jewish forces suddenly overran the fortress of Antonia and Masada. One Jewish commander had success in one of the first major battles, which was one of Rome's greatest losses. That bolstered the faith of the Jews and caused them to believe that God was with them. But from there on Rome held the upper hand, sending in legions to crush the rebellion. It stalled for a while as the power in Rome changed hands, but General Titus, son of the new emperor, then laid siege to Jerusalem. Just as Jesus predicted, a barricade was erected to surround the city.

Fighting within the Jewish ranks made the fall of Jerusalem come even sooner. The zealots burned the food supply in hopes it would cause the people to fight for their lives. It only caused mass starvation. When Rome finally made their move there was little resistance. The temple was burned. Gold seeped down through the rocks which is one reason no stone was left on another. You can still see little flecks of gold on some of the broken column heads on the temple mount to this day. Titus ordered everything to be leveled, just as Jesus said, "tear you down to the ground."

Why all this devastation and loss of life? They did not know that this was the special time in the history of man when God became flesh and visited His people (John 1:14<sup>xvi</sup>). They wanted a physical savior instead of a spiritual one. They wanted improved physical conditions rather than a solution to their sin problems.

The story is repeated every day in the lives of millions. God visits us through the Holy Spirit and moves our hearts. He reveals to us our true condition and need for a Savior. We hear the Gospel message and the price paid for our sins, and we too are visited. Around the world today the Holy Spirit is visiting hearts and calling us to look to God for His grace and mercy, calling us to turn from our sins and embrace the grace that He offers in accepting Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29<sup>xvii</sup>). Missionaries and evangelists reinforce the message telling how it is possible. People grab a Gospel of John in front of our church or see the message on the internet and lately on commercials on TV. Or they hear from one of God's children of the good grace of God reaching out to them. A few are willing to open their eyes.

Do we weep for those who will not see, just as Jesus did for those in Jerusalem? We know sin will produce similar consequences in their lives: ruined homes, suicides, drug addiction, and life without the anchor of faith and assurance. Our brother David Witt was staying in the home of one of the church planters in India. At night he could hear an awful wailing noise. In the morning he asked the man's wife if he was ok. She told David that he often has nightmares of people going to hell. No wonder his Bible school has planted thousands of churches.

The people of Israel longed to be back in power with a better life more than they wanted the salvation of their souls. Their destruction came at the wrath of Rome. The destruction that follows a sinful life may not come as an invading army, but it will be devastating, nonetheless.

<sup>45</sup> *And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold,* Luke 19:45 Jesus had just fulfilled Zechariah 9:9<sup>xviii</sup> as the King entering Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey. In this passage He is fulfilling Malachi 3:1<sup>xix</sup>, *"The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple."* The Passover crowds must have been abuzz with expectation. Jewish belief that the Messiah would enter the eastern gate came to pass.

John tells us Jesus also cleansed the temple the first year of His ministry (John 2:15<sup>xx</sup>). There was one year in between that cleansing and this one. Did the priests

voluntarily keep the merchants out in that second year? And why did the temple guards not stop Jesus either time?

This lucrative practice of selling animals and currency exchange started by Ananias was making the chief priest family a fortune which helped the family bribe Rome to keep the successive priests to be family members. It was gouging the worshiper in their efforts to meet standards that were required by the Levitical Law, and that law was made overly strict by the priests. All this was disgusting to the public. They called the practice "Annas' bazaar." They likely cheered Jesus on when He drove the merchants out and flipped the tables of the money exchangers. I think that is why the temple soldiers didn't stop Him. But that wasn't all He did. Mark tells us that He stopped anyone who tried to carry merchandise through the temple (Mark 11:16<sup>xxi</sup>). The crowds approved, and as this was at Passover, they were too numerous for the temple guards to handle.

What happened to meek and mild Jesus? Meekness is not weakness! He will not defend Himself, but He will give His all for us, that we might know the truth and be saved. He can become violent against those who would harm His children. Let the con man and religious fraud be warned. Jesus defends His flock for He is the Good Shepherd (Psalm 23:1<sup>xxii</sup>). But as we are the present temple of God, let us beware that our hearts are not given to greed lest He come in the same manner to us.

*<sup>46</sup> saying to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers."* Luke 19:46 Jesus employed *gezerah shavah* (a comparison of two equals) two passages with the same expression, which was "my house." Isaiah 56:6,7<sup>xxiii</sup> and Jeremiah 7:9-12<sup>xxiv</sup>. As Shiloh which had been the place of the tabernacle was destroyed because of idolatry, so the greed of Annas' booths would result in the destruction of the temple. Paul referred to greed as idolatry (Colossians 3:5<sup>xxv</sup>). It is the idol of wealth. Josephus called Ananias "the great procurer of money" (Antiquities 20:205<sup>xxvi</sup>).

Jesus was cleansing the court of the Gentiles, the house of prayer for all nations/people. While the chief priests thought it was less sacred than the temple and could be used for profit, Jesus' has the heart of God to reach the world. All people are made in the image of God, something the chief priests seemingly had forgotten. When Solomon dedicated the temple, he prayed that Gentiles would come to know the God of Israel there (1 Kings 8:41-43<sup>xxvii</sup>). The outer court was for Gentile evangelism, not merchandising.

Jesus quoted Scripture to justify His actions. Did you know that long-ago Senators in the U.S. Congress would give a Scripture as the reason for a proposed bill? How far we have fallen! Do we gauge our actions by Scripture? Does Scripture come to mind that causes us to act? Jesus knew the Scriptures so well He could compare and quote them.

When we studied the end of chapter nine, we saw would-be disciples give excuses of "let me first..." (9:59<sup>xxviii</sup>) Had they known this was the only opportunity in the history of the world to walk with the Word manifest in the flesh for a few short days, would they have said the same? We can walk with the Word, Immanuel, God with us, but will we take the time to know and value Him above all or do we have "let me first" excuses?

*<sup>47</sup> And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him,* Luke 19:47 Jesus cleansed the temple to prepare it for His teaching. Every day until His arrest, the temple will be His pulpit. He knows He has but a few days. The crowds are gathering for Passover.

The news of Lazarus resurrection and Jesus' kingly entrance to the city had spread. Jesus is using the opportunity of the last few days of His ministry to open the Scriptures to the people. This was His last chance to speak to the public the true understanding of the Word of God. We only have a record of a few of the things He said, but I would imagine He was correcting false interpretations that had become accepted as truth. That is what He did with His healings on the Sabbath.

I remember serving under a pastor who was backsliding. The further he fell the worse his messages became. One time he used a Bible passage and what he taught was contradicted in the verses immediately following his text. I started making a list of things to correct in the event I would fill in after he left, but those higher up were happy with the numbers of people he brought in. Only when his sin became public did they finally act. I had resigned long before. The disgust and sadness I felt was only tiny fraction of what Jesus must have felt among His chosen people who had so corrupted the Word He had long before delivered to them for their good (Deuteronomy 10:13<sup>xxxix</sup>).

Furious that Jesus was stealing the spotlight and ruining their money-making schemes while contradicting some of their interpretations, the chief priests were eager to execute Jesus, but they feared the crowds (22:2<sup>xxx</sup>). They had to find a reason that they could hold up to the public to justify such an act, but they couldn't find anything. Jesus was a perfect example of living above reproach (John 8:46<sup>xxxi</sup>).

*<sup>48</sup> but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.* Luke 19:48 That temple would soon be destroyed. Those days of teaching in it were its final days of glory. Jesus was about to become the cornerstone of the new temple made of living stones (Ephesians 2:19,20<sup>xxxii</sup>). How ironic that the priests who were so eager to kill Jesus and preserve their system were only aiding Jesus in bringing it to pass. The great shift taking place was from a temple of stone and precious metals where God was worshiped to Jesus as the temple and focus of our worship. The temple's structure and rituals only pointed to Jesus and all He means to us. God does not live in temples made with hands. He lives in the hearts of those who trust Jesus for their salvation (Acts 7:48-50<sup>xxxiii</sup>, Ephesians 2:22<sup>xxxiv</sup>). We, who have been redeemed by grace, make up the eternal temple of living stones. In the Holy of Holies is Jesus, our Immanuel. O come let us adore Him. But let us also weep with Jesus for those who cannot see all that God's love is offering us.

## Questions

- 1 Why was Jesus weeping? What kind of weeping was it?
- 2 What is the significance of the Eastern Gate?
- 3 What did Jesus see? Predict?
- 4 What was hidden from their eyes?
- 5 Describe the fulfillment of Jesus' prediction.
- 6 Why didn't the temple guards stop Jesus?
- 7 What was Jesus' explanation for His actions?
- 8 Why did Jesus cleanse the temple? Application?
- 9 What did Jesus do with His last few days?
- 10 Where is the temple?

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<sup>i</sup> **John 12:17-18 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. <sup>18</sup> The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign.

<sup>ii</sup> The Greek word for weep here is klaio – to bewail

<sup>iii</sup> **John 11:35 (ESV)**

<sup>35</sup> Jesus wept. (The Greek word dakryo means to shed tears.)

<sup>iv</sup> **Mark 15:11-13 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. <sup>12</sup> And Pilate again said to them, “Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” <sup>13</sup> And they cried out again, “Crucify him.”

<sup>v</sup> **Psalms 118:25-29 (ESV)**

<sup>25</sup> Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success! <sup>26</sup> Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD. <sup>27</sup> The LORD is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar! <sup>28</sup> You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you. <sup>29</sup> Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!

<sup>vi</sup> **Hebrews 13:11-12 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp.

<sup>12</sup> So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.

<sup>vii</sup> A zealot revolt in Galilee ended in many zealots crucified on the roads even around Nazareth where Jesus lived as a child.

<sup>viii</sup> **Luke 18:39 (ESV)**

<sup>39</sup> And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

<sup>ix</sup> **Hebrews 10:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

<sup>x</sup> **Isaiah 6:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple.

<sup>xi</sup> **Isaiah 6:5 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

<sup>xii</sup> **Isaiah 64:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

<sup>xiii</sup> **Acts 10:36 (ESV)**

<sup>36</sup> As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all),

<sup>xiv</sup> **Exodus 19:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

<sup>xv</sup> **2 Corinthians 3:14-16 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. <sup>15</sup> Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. <sup>16</sup> But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.

<sup>xvi</sup> **John 1:14 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

<sup>xvii</sup> **John 1:29 (ESV)**

<sup>29</sup> The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

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<sup>xviii</sup> **Zechariah 9:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

<sup>xix</sup> **Malachi 3:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> “Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

<sup>xx</sup> **John 2:15 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables.

<sup>xxi</sup> **Mark 11:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple.

<sup>xxii</sup> **Psalms 23:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>xxiii</sup> **Isaiah 56:6-7 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> “And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant—

<sup>7</sup> these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

<sup>xxiv</sup> **Jeremiah 7:9-12 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, <sup>10</sup> and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, ‘We are delivered!’—only to go on doing all these abominations? <sup>11</sup> Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the LORD. <sup>12</sup> Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it because of the evil of my people Israel.

<sup>xxv</sup> **Colossians 3:5 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

<sup>xxvi</sup> But as for the high priest, Ananias <sup>1</sup> he increased in glory every day, and this to a great degree, and had obtained the favor and esteem of the citizens in a signal manner; for he was a great hoarder up of money

<sup>xxvii</sup> **1 Kings 8:41-43 (ESV)**

<sup>41</sup> “Likewise, when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for your name’s sake

<sup>42</sup> (for they shall hear of your great name and your mighty hand, and of your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this house, <sup>43</sup> hear in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name.

<sup>xxviii</sup> **Luke 9:59 (ESV)**

<sup>59</sup> To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

<sup>xxix</sup> **Deuteronomy 10:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?

<sup>xxx</sup> **Luke 22:2 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death, for they feared the people.

<sup>xxxi</sup> **John 8:46 (ESV)**

<sup>46</sup> Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?

<sup>xxxii</sup> **Ephesians 2:19-20 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

<sup>xxxiii</sup> **Acts 7:48-50 (ESV)**

<sup>48</sup> Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands, as the prophet says, <sup>49</sup> “‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest?

<sup>50</sup> Did not my hand make all these things?’

<sup>xxxiv</sup> **Ephesians 2:22 (ESV)**

<sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.