

Palm Sunday

Luke 19:28-44, "After Jesus had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. As He approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it.'" Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as He had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They replied, "The Lord needs it." They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it. As He went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When He came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," He replied, "If they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." As He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace - but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

THEME - GOD IS BOTH LOVING AND JUST (Luke 19:28-44)

WHY DID JESUS RIDE INTO JERUSALEM ON A DONKEY?

To deliberately claim to be the Messiah, God's appointed King of Israel. When Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem, He purposely fulfilled the prophecy recorded in Zechariah 9:9, between 465 and 424 B.C.

*Zech. 9:9, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! See your King comes to you,
righteous and having salvation, gently and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."*

So when Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey, He was making His last appeal to the High Priest, the Chief Priests, Teachers of the Law, Elders, the whole Sanhedrin and the entire Jewish nation to receive Him as their Messiah and King.

WHO WAS IN THE CROWD THAT DAY AND HOW DID THEY RESPOND TO JESUS' CLAIM?

There were two distinctly different groups in the crowd that day with totally opposite responses to Jesus.

THE FIRST GROUP - was made up of the 12 disciples and the many other people who accepted Jesus as the true Messiah and Jewish King. This group of people shouted,

Matt. 21:9, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

The word "Hosanna" means "save now" and it was the cry for help which people in distress used to call out to their King or their god. This group also shouted,

John 12:13, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel."

And a very large crowd ...

Matt. 21:8, 9, "... spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from trees and spread them on the road."

Spreading their cloaks on the road was an act of royal homage. (II Kings 9:13)

THE SECOND GROUP - was made up of Pharisees, and other Jewish religious leaders. The Pharisees and the other Jewish religious leaders understood the meaning of Jesus' actions, but rather than joining Christ's disciples in yelling, "Blessed is the King of Israel". Some of the Pharisees in the crowd told Jesus,

Luke 19:39, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!"

Or in other words, make your disciples stop calling you the King of Israel. But Jesus would not stop his disciples instead he responded to the Pharisees and Jewish religious leaders by saying,

Luke 19:40, "I tell you, if they keep quiet the stones will cry out."

The crowd yelling, Hosanna, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel." and spreading their cloaks on the road as an act of royal homage was so big that the Pharisees and Jewish religious leaders said to one another,

John 12:19, "... "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after Him!"

HOW DID JESUS REACT TO THE REJECTION BY THE PHARISEES AND JEWISH RELIOUS LEADERS

Luke 19:41, "As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it ..."

The Greek indicates that Jesus burst into tears and it implies that His crying was audible. One commentary described Jesus as sobbing. Jesus wept because of God's judgment that would come upon the city of Jerusalem.

Earlier in His ministry Jesus had said,

Luke 13:34, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have

longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

Look, your house is left to you desolate..."

Do these tears mean that Jesus is admitting he was defeated in his mission to save the Jews? Do Jesus' tears mean that God is disappointed because He graciously made overtures to the Jews over and over again through His prophets and finally His son, but they resisted all His efforts to save them? Do Jesus' tears mean that the Jews are sovereign over their salvation? No! God wasn't frustrated by the Jews wickedness. He had prophesied it. (1 Kings 8:33)

I believe the Lord Jesus Christ's tears show that He was truly a perfect sinless human being who was concerned about the salvation of His fellow man. The writer of Hebrews says,

Heb. 2:17, "For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that he might become a

merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, ..."

As Jesus approached Jerusalem He also said,

Luke 19:42, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring your peace - but now it is hidden from your eyes."

Accepting Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the King of Israel would have brought the Pharisees, Jewish religious leaders and people of Jerusalem peace with God and freedom from God's judgment. However, even though the High Priest, Chief Priests, Teachers of the Law, and the Sanhedrin knew God's terms of peace they rejected Christ as their Messiah and King. So, Jesus says, "but now it is hidden from your eyes." v. 42

In other words, the Pharisees, Jewish religious leaders and people of Jerusalem have no more chances to accept Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the King of Israel. God has already passed judgment upon them. God has forsaken them and given them up to their own sin. And so they are irreparably blind and all the terms of peace with God are hidden from their eyes (cf. Matt. 11:25).

APPLICATION - This indicates there is a too late in dealing with God. God may plead with people again and again to take refuge in His grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, but there will come a point when the God's pleading ceases and His judgment is passed and then it is too late for them to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as there Savior.

John Piper says, "Jesus reveals to us here something very deep about His heart. On the one hand He expresses His grief that Jerusalem rejected His peace proposal. He weeps and cries out, "O that you knew the terms of peace!"

But in the same breath He bows before the sovereign decree of His Father in heaven: God has hidden these things from their eyes.

The divine mind is not simple; it is complex. With Jesus we get a glimpse into the heart of God. Viewing reality in one set of relationships God is not willing that any perish. He does not delight in the death of the wicked. He is grieved at sin and destruction. But viewing reality in another set of relationships and from a larger, all-encompassing perspective He deems it right and praiseworthy sometimes to hide the terms of peace and to shut man up to his own sin, and bring him into judgment."

HOW DID JESUS REACT TO THE REJECTION BY THE PHARISEES AND JEWISH RELIGIOUS LEADERS?

- HE PRONOUNCED JUDGMENT ON THEM.

Jesus said,

Luke 19:43, 44, "The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another ..."

This prophecy was fulfilled in 70 A.D.

The Romans under the leadership of a General by the name of Titus attacked Jerusalem. Jerusalem was strongly fortified by three walls on every side. So, Titus began by battering down the outer wall. While he was battering down the outer wall, he continually offered the Jews leniency and pardon if they would surrender peaceably, but the Jews rejected his offers and treated him with contempt.

Five days after the beginning of the siege Titus broke through the second wall and was driven back by the Jews. He regrouped his troops and prepared to batter down the third wall, which was the Jews last defense. But first he sent Josephus, a Jewish historian into the city to persuade the Jews to give up, but the Jews laughed and argued with Josephus.

As a result, Titus' army made some more battering rams, which were immediately destroyed by the Jews. Finally, Titus surrounded the whole city with a trench and refused to let any food or relief supplies to enter the city. The conditions within Jerusalem became so bad that some Jews were forced to live on a little spoiled food, and others ransacked the sewers for rotting carcasses, but the Jews refused to surrender. The famine within Jerusalem was so bad, that a woman of distinction in the city boiled her own child to eat. When Titus heard this report, he declared that he would bury the Jews in the ruins of their state. He cut down all the trees within a considerable distance of the city, and began to batter down the third and final wall.

In five days, he entered the Jerusalem by force. Once inside the city Titus and his Roman soldiers burned the temple, slaughtered the people and leveled the city; so that not one stone remained upon another. So after a six-month siege, Jerusalem a city, which had been protected by God for about 2,000 years, was totally destroyed.

THEME - GOD IS BOTH LOVING AND JUST

WHY DID THIS JUDGMENT COME UPON THE JEWS WHO LIVED IN JERUSALEM'? (V. 44B)

Jesus said,

Luke 19:44b, "... because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

In the Old Testament God came to His people either to judge them or to save them. The High Priest, Chief Priests, Teachers of the Law, and the members of the Sanhedrin would have known the words of the prophet Isaiah.

Is. 35:5, 6, "... your God will come ... He will come to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be *opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy ...*"

The Lord Jesus Christ, God in the flesh came to His people to save them. God came to the Jews in the person of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, but they failed to recognize Him and rejected Him.

Jesus performed miracle after miracle to prove that he was God who had come to His people and had been promised by the prophet Isaiah. He made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and the mute tongue speak plainly. The Lord Jesus Christ cast out evil spirits, cured lepers, fed 4,000 people with seven loaves of bread and a few fish and even raised three people from the dead, but the religious leaders of His day failed to acknowledge that He was God, the true Messiah and rejected Him. Not only did they not acknowledge Jesus as God, the true Messiah, they said, that He was a sinner (John 9:24), demon possessed and received His power from Satan. (Mark 3:22, 30) The Apostle John said,

John 1:10, 11, "He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize

Him. He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him."

I BELIEVE THIS GIVES US A PICTURE OF HOW CHRIST DEALS WITH INDIVIDUALS.

JESUS CHRIST PRESENTS HIMSELF AS GOD IN THE FLESH, WHO DIED ON THE CROSS TO PAY THE PENALTY FOR THEIR SINS.

SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE IN HIM AND ACCEPT HIM AS THEIR SAVIOR. OTHER PEOPLE DO NOT BELIEVE IN HIM AND REFUSE TO ACCEPT HIM AS THEIR SAVIOR.

TO THOSE WHO ACCEPT HIM, JESUS CHRIST GIVES PEACE AND ETERNITY IN HEAVEN; TO THOSE WHO REJECT HIM JESUS CHRIST GIVES THE PROPHECIES OF ETERNAL JUDGMENT.

Every person has a decision to make about the person of Jesus Christ. They can choose to believe and accept His claim to be God in the flesh, who died on the cross to pay the penalty for their sins or they can choose to reject Christ's claim to be God in the flesh and reject his claim to die on the cross to pay the penalty for their sins.

Jesus said that the person who receives Him as their savior is freed from God's wrath, is given eternal life, and is taken to Heaven when they die. Jesus also said the person who rejects Him as their savior will be condemned, will experience God's wrath and will be sent to Hell when they die.

John 3:14-18, "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone

who believes in Him may have eternal life. For God so loved the World that he gave His one and only son that

whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to

condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in Him is not

condemned, but

whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."

No prophet or person in the Bible warned of hell as often or as vividly as Jesus did. And He warned the Pharisees about Hell just a few days after the triumphal entry. Jesus told the Pharisees,

Matt. 23:33, "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?"

APPLICATION - God gives the people of our day and age the same choice concerning His son Jesus Christ. Accept Him as the Messiah and King who brings salvation from the penalty of your sins and receive peace with God, freedom from His wrath and eternal life in heaven when we die. Reject Him as the Messiah and King who brings salvation from the penalty of your sins and experience God's condemnation and wrath by living eternally separated from God in a place of torment with no possible escape.

THEME - GOD IS BOTH LOVING AND JUST/RIGHTEOUS AND HOLY.

- 1) If you have received Christ as your savior, ponder eternal separation from God in a place of torment and what Christ has saved you from. Use your time talents and possessions to help others receive Christ as their savior as well.
- 2) If you have not received Christ as your savior, I challenge you to do so today. Jesus Christ is always eager and willing to make peace with anyone who will accept the terms of peace He offers. The terms of peace are simple:
 - Give up the idea that you are good enough to get to heaven in your own strength.
 - Admit that you are a sinner in need of a savior.
 - Put your faith in Jesus Christ as God in the flesh, who lived a sinless life, died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sin, and rose from the dead on the third day and ascended into heaven.

Is. 35:5, 6, "... Be strong, do not fear your God will come ... he will come to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy ..."

The Jews believed that only God could cure leprosy. So when Jesus healed the man with leprosy Jesus told him

Mark 1:44, "... go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them."

The Jewish religious authorities took notice of Jesus healing the leper and several days later when Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were in the crowd to check out Jesus. A paralytic was placed in front of Jesus and ...

Luke 5:20, "... He said, "Friend your sins are forgiven." The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Mark 2:8, "... he (Jesus) said to them ... "Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, "Your sins are forgiven," or to say, "Get up, take your mat and walk?" But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." He said to the paralytic, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Matt. 9:27, "...two blind men followed him (Jesus), calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"... He asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they replied. Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith will it be done to you"; and their sight was restored."

Matt. 9:32, "... a man who was demon possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."

In Decapolis...

Mark 7:31-37, "...some people brought to him (Jesus) a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged him to place his hand on the man. ... the man's ears were opened his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly. ... People were overwhelmed with amazement..."