

"Weep with Jesus for our World"

Luke 19:28-44

Solomon observed in Ecc. 3 that

- 3** There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
- 2** a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
- 3** a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
- 4** a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,

And on the day of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem both weeping and rejoicing happened. The disciples and Jewish people in Jerusalem were coming to celebrate the Passover and there was great anticipation and expectation for Jesus to be crowned king and defeat the Romans and religious leaders. Yet while the people are dancing and sounding spiritual by quoting Scripture, Jesus is sad and even weeps in v.41. Why does He weep? Because He knows the future. He knows people are not prepared for the disappointments in life, the disasters that could happen anywhere – a random explosion in Beirut or a random tire flying off a vehicle on the 401 – nor are most prepared for the end of life. While Jesus did not spend all His life weeping for these things, there were occasions when He did.

And if Jesus is grieved at times over some of these things, shouldn't we, His disciples also be equally grieved at what Jesus is grieved about? Should we not weep with Jesus at times over our world, spurring us Lord-willing, to console them in Jesus' love or reach out to them with the message of hope and love in Christ?

Here at His triumphal yet sad entry into Jerusalem days before His crucifixion, we see Jesus weeping over people. What kind of people or what situations in people's lives does Jesus weep over? And if Jesus is grieved shouldn't we be grieved about as well?

Last week we were in the first part of Ch. 19, a few days prior to Palm Sunday. Jesus gave sight to a blind man named Bartimaeus (18:35-43) who believed without sight Jesus was the Messiah based only on what he heard about Jesus. Then Zacchaeus, a notorious chief tax-collector, who also had only heard about Jesus wants to see Him too. Jesus sees Zacchaeus and invites Himself to Zacchaeus' house where the formerly spiritually blind Zacchaeus also places his faith in Jesus. Mean-while the religious leaders are getting more upset at Jesus because they are spiritually blind and wont accept Him as the Messiah.

Here in v. 29 Jesus approaches Bethpage and Bethany, home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary. Sometime between Zacchaeus salvation and Palm Sunday Jesus has brought Lazarus back from the dead. That incident only made the religious leaders more angry at Jesus. And in John 11:53 that they plotted to take His life and v.54 says Jesus no longer moved around publicly. John 11 ends with:

⁵⁵ When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover. ⁵⁶ They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple courts they asked one another, “What do you think? Isn’t he coming to the festival at all?” ⁵⁷ But the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who found out where Jesus was should report it so that they might arrest him.

So Jesus secretly arranges to procure a donkey and hides in plain site! Surrounded by crowds of people who sing His praises, how could the religious leaders arrest Him now? The crowds would turn on them! But Jesus is doing something unlike He had ever done. Before whenever He healed someone He would tell them not to spread this around. But now He makes a clear statement that He is Israel’s king. The riding on a donkey with crowds waving palm branches and laying down a carpet with their cloaks into the capital of Israel, was a coronation parade. The riding of the donkey is a direct fulfilment of Zechariah 9:9 where we read,

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

And the next verse says “He will speak peace to the nations; and His dominion will be from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.” Also, the ‘Hosanna’ verses are quotes from Psalm 118 which is a celebration song about the return of Israel’s king from successful battle. Psalms 113-118 were sung traditionally at the Passover with prayer and expectation for what God would do one day for Israel. And, the riding on a colt is symbolic of the coronation of a king as we see in 1 Kings 1:33 when the newly crowned King Solomon rides on David’s colt with great shouts and trumpet blasts announcing His coming to the throne.

As well, Judah Maccabee, who led Israel in a revolt against the Syrian ruler Antiochus Epiphanes in 165 BC, returned to Jerusalem triumphantly, with the people waving palm branches in celebration. That Jesus would then clean the temple next was a two-fold illustration. Jesus symbolically cleansed the temple as Judah Maccabee had but also, it was customary for a king to return victoriously from battle to go to the temple and make a sacrifice. So Jesus’ coming on the donkey, to the waving of palm branches and then cleansing the temple was clearly intentional. Politically speaking, the people saw Jesus as the one who would deliver them from Rome. In Luke 19:11 Jesus was near Jerusalem and we read that the people “*supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately*”.

But in spite of the joy and adulation Jesus is bothered, and in v.41 we read He “*wept over the city*”. The word for weeping means ‘mourning’, usually associated with the wailing at someone’s death. Why such a strong emotion from Jesus? Because people are going to die without placing their trust in Him. The knowledge of the future changes how we live in the present. Once we’re saved, we have some knowledge about the future. Especially the knowledge about what happens to people who die without Jesus. Who was Jesus weeping for? Jesus weeps for people ...

Who Hear the Truth But Reject Him as Lord **(19:28-40)**

In v.41 we read

As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it ⁴² 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.

All these bible verses they were quoting were specific references to the coming Messiah from Ps.118:25-26 and Zech. 9:9. The Rabbis in Jesus' day and before, all attested that these verses referred to the coming Messiah. The Rabbis actually taught their people that should the Messiah show up on a donkey according to Zech. 9:9 then they were to greet Him with Ps. 118:25-26 – which they did! Problem being many actually didn't accept Jesus as their Messiah. This is the 'peace' Jesus was referring to. Jesus wept for ...

People wanting external peace, not internal (vv.37-38)

They were looking for peace from oppression. A military overthrow of the Romans. Jesus didn't come the first time to bring in the physical kingdom and military and political peace. Even if you have external peace in your life – an absence of strife, healthy relationships, physical health, enough money not to worry about bills and such – it doesn't mean you have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Jesus weeps for people who only want a stress free life but apart from Him who can give them peace with God and themselves through faith. Do we know people like that? People who are looking for a stress free, problem free life but not from God or Jesus? They're not prepared for life's problems or the afterlife.

Those were some of the people Jesus was weeping for. But if Jesus was weeping over the people of Jerusalem He must have had a tear or two for the religious, the Jewish leaders,

People wanting religion that they control (vv.39-40)

Some of the Pharisees approached Jesus asking Him to rebuke His disciples from using Ps. 118 to proclaim Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus says 'If they keep quiet then the stones will cry out.'

We usually assume Jesus means creation. But He is alluding to Hab. 2:11. Let's look at Hab. 2:9-11 where God uses a prophet to confront Israel's leaders:

"Woe to him who builds his realm [lit. 'house'] by unjust gain, to set his nest on high, to escape the clutches of ruin!

¹⁰ You have plotted the ruin of many peoples, shaming your own house and forfeiting your own life.

¹¹ The stones of the wall will cry out, and the beams of the woodwork will echo it.

The stones from the walls of their own houses and the temple that would be destroyed in 70 AD (which Jesus predicts in vv.42-43, thus giving evidence that the Word foretold their judgment and the destruction of Jerusalem, for failing to recognize the coming of Jesus as the Messiah.

Jesus weeps occasionally over people who want a religion they can control. Who want God on their terms, not a God who tells us how to come to Him on His terms. These people use Scripture to build their own 'house' and tell others that theirs is the only way to God. A sad commentary on the religions of the world, most of which hear the truth but reject it for their own version.

The most amazing thing about vv.41-42 is that the peace Jesus is referring to is something they should have recognized because His coming was prophesied in the Old Testament. And while we may just assume Jesus is referring to the Old Testament prophecies as a whole, He is not. Listen again to what He said,

If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.

⁴³ 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. ⁴⁴ 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."

Jesus weeps over people whom God has graciously allowed to

Who See Prophecy Fulfilled Yet Reject the Word **(19:41-42)**

If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace

He emphasizes 'you' and 'this day' meaning He's talking about the people who were there that very day in Jerusalem. You mean there's a prophecy in the Old Testament that Jesus would enter Jerusalem declaring Himself as the Messiah? Yes, they should have known because the angel Gabriel told Daniel all about this day in Dan. 9:24-25

²⁴ "Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. ²⁵ Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks.

Daniel was told that 69 x 7 years after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem (fulfilled in 445 BC in Nehemiah 2) that the Messiah the Prince would come; after which he would be cut off – killed. If you do the math taking into consideration a Jewish calendar year has 360 days, you actually come to spring 32 AD. The reason why some of the Israelites were excited about Jesus was they knew the Messiah would be coming soon, but they failed again to realize He would be cut off. So Jesus weeps over the spiritual blindness of the people because they did not recognize that in Jesus they could have peace. He is 'the thing' that makes for peace.

Has there been any specific prophecies fulfilled in our lifetimes that people have rejected? I believe so. If we believe that Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones representing Israel as a nation coming back to life, which was fulfilled in May 1948 when Israel was declared a nation with geographical boundaries, then yes, people who reject the clear fulfilment of Scripture are in for a big disappointment. But even within the last 100 years of technological advancements and archeological discoveries, the truth of the Scriptures continues to be affirmed, not denied. Jesus weeps over the people who are presented with the prophetic validated evidence of the Word of God yet reject it. While we praise the Lord when the Lee Strobel's' set out to disprove the Word, only to come to faith because they can't disprove it, there are so many others who refuse to see the evidence affirming the reality of Jesus, the fulfilment of prophecies about His life, death and resurrection. But even the evidence unfolding as we speak about future prophecies describing how the end time antichrist and life will be like when he shows up. People aren't ready for these things.

Which is another reason why Jesus weeps. He doesn't weep just for Israel's rejection of Himself but what rejecting Him will mean for the future. Jesus weeps for people ...

Who aren't Prepared for Life's Calamities **(19:43-44)**

V. 42-43 is a reference to 70 AD. Jesus was not predict-ing this event. It was already prophesied in Daniel 9:25-26. Jesus knows innocent people are going to suffer and die because the

religious leaders especially failed to believe this passage and recognize the time of God's coming, the time that could have brought them peace. For all the atrocities the Jews have suffered over the years, the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans in 70 AD was unparalleled.

All calamities act as God's reminders that people everywhere need to make sure they are spiritually prepared to die. Jesus reminded Israel of this 40 years prior to its happening. So all prophesy about the future and all calamities that happen around us are ...

Current warnings to repent (vv.43-44; 13:1-9)

Back in Luke 13 the people asked Jesus about an incident ordered by Pontius Pilate to kill some Galileans (suspected of rebellious activity of some sort) as sacrifices to the Emperor most likely. A horrific act. But the inference behind the question was 'Did calamity happen to them because they were bad people and its God's punishment?' Who hasn't thought along those lines when something bad happens in our world or even to us. Am I being punished by God for doing something bad? Listen to Jesus' answer:

13:2 Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? 3 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. 4 Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."

Jesus was saying 'Stop thinking that God is judging people because they are bad and you escaped it because you are good. The world is marred by sin and these things can happen to anyone. Every time any disaster happens, examine yourselves to see if you have repented of your sins and are right with God. Then to remind them of the patience of God he tells a parable:

A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. 7 So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

8 " 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. 9 If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'

God is slow to anger, abounding in love and compassion; not willing that any should perish. This idea that God is waiting to punish people is one of Satan's best lies. We fall for it. Jesus is weeping over the deaths of people unaware of their need to be ready to handle suffering or the afterlife. Listen to this verse in Ezek. 18:23 where God is announcing to Israel in exile please repent of your sins. Repentance leads to life.

23 Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?

Jesus and God weep at the effects of sin on the world and on individuals. God cries at the Beirut explosions in the world. At human trafficking. At genocides. At abortions. People need God to handle life's calamities. The death of a loved one. Bad news from the doctor. A job loss. A severed marriage or even broken friendships between believers. These things rip God and Jesus' heart. Do they rip ours? The major calamity people aren't prepared for is the ...

Specific warnings about the coming judgment (13:22-30)

The warning by Jesus about 70 AD is also a warning about future judgment in general. God is longsuffering but not eternally so. A day is coming when He will send Jesus to come back, right the wrongs, punish the wicked and establish His rule on earth. A day is coming for all of us when our time is done on earth. Every calamity, every close call, every death are sobering reminders of our own earthly limits. But eternity has no limits. And God has that all waiting for us when our time is complete. Even now Jesus is building an addition on to the Father's house just for you. Eternity is the real life God has prepared for us.

This life is the warmup, the pregame.

As unique and blessed and special it can be, it is temporary. And many of the people you and I live beside, work with, shop at their stores and some are related to, are unprepared to face's life's calamities without the power and peace of God and without the assurance of life everlasting.

Do we grieve for them?

Do we pray for them?

Are we willing to share Jesus with them? Like God, we don't enjoy anyone's death either but it does make our day when someone repents.

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