

Luke 19:29-44
“The Old Jerusalem”
Buildings In the Bible Series
Palm Sunday March 25th, 2018

Last week I spoke about how, in the advent of Jesus Christ, where you met God, went from a place to a person. It went from the Holy of Holies in the temple to the Holy Person Jesus the Christ. It went from an Ark that went missing (probably in 587BC) to a body, the Body of Christ who contained the very Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit.

And then most awesome and humbling of all the place to meet God went to the Body of Christ, the Church, you and me. I pray that you have taken Jesus to pleasant places this week and great sites of ministry.

Today in our story we see Jesus making specific claim to be the Messiah. He had taught and preached and prayed and produced signs and miracles for 3 years and yet many still didn't believe. There were those who refused to believe out of personal self-interest and greed. They were hungry for position power and money; so they refused to acknowledge who Jesus was. It was inconvenient.

So Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, **“Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”**

He himself became an object lesson a living children's moment for all to see and understand. He, by riding a donkey, claimed to be the Messiah.



He rode in from the East of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. The Jews believe that the Messiah will come from the east. He will come

down on the Mount of Olives to enter Jerusalem and the Temple mount through the Golden Gate.



This is the rebuilt Eastern Gate or “Golden Gate” that Jesus would have entered Jerusalem by. This is what it looks like from the Mount of Olives across the Kidron Valley.



The golden gate was rebuilt and sealed in 1542 by the Muslim Sultan Suleiman. He rebuilt the walls of the city and sealed the gate in the belief that doing so would stop the Jewish Messiah from entering that gate. A graveyard was also put into place there by the Muslims, because they believed a Jewish Messiah will not cross a graveyard.

Some believe this gate is to remain shut because of a verse taken as prophecy from Ezekiel 44:2, The Lord said to me, “**This gate is to remain shut. It must not be opened; no one may enter through it. It is to remain shut because the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered through it.**” They believe it will remain shut until Jesus or the Messiah comes.



Now to this day if you visit Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives you will see that the western side of the Mount of Olives is covered with the tombs of faithful Jews awaiting the coming of the Messiah and the resurrection of the dead. We as Christians are waiting for the return of that same Messiah.

From the Mount of Olives you can see all of Jerusalem. As Jesus descended the hill he could see all of Jerusalem and wept over it. God wept over the city because God knew the hardness of heart and selfish self-interest of the leaders of the Jewish people. The courtyard the

Jesus cleared of the money changers and animal sellers was known as the “Booths of Annas” and were the property of the family of the High Priest” . The Gospel of Luke Barkley p. 287

Everyone was taking their cut and the worshipers were being exploited as they came to worship God.

But Jesus wept for he knew what was coming.



by James Tissot

Their blindness to see and know who stood before them was the same blindness to see that their actions towards the Romans would lead to the utter destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.



The Romans knew the power the Temple held in the minds and faith of the Jews; so under the Roman general Titus, who later became the Emperor, the city was utterly destroyed and the Temple torn down to the very dirt on which it stood. The Romans thought that would break and destroy the power of the Jews.



This event is immortalized on the Arch of Triumph of Titus and Vespasian that stands in the City of Rome to this day. In it you can see the victorious Romans carrying off the gold Minora and other Temple artifacts.



The coins that were struck in Jerusalem from 64AD to the destruction in 70AD show the growing desperation of the situation.

The engraving on the coins from year 1 of the revolt say, "Freedom of Zion", which was a statement of great confidence and faith. Those from year 4 say, "To the Redemption of Zion". You can feel the desperation.

The destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem lead to a great spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For the most part Christians were as happy as clams in the mud in Jerusalem after Jesus was raised from the dead. Oh, there was persecution, but those at the source of Christianity had to be forcefully spread out over the Roman world shortly before and after the destruction of Jerusalem, which lead to a great increase of the faith.

In the O T Joseph says to his brothers, when they were truly in fear of what he would do to them, because they sold him into slavery, their father was dead and Joseph held all the power of Egypt. Joseph said, *"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."* Genesis 50:20

God took the evil of Joseph's brothers and turned it into good. God took the evil of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple and turned it into good, the spread of the Gospel. As Jesus said, *"Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."* John 12:24 This saying indeed applied to him and to many others that died the death of martyrs, a hard saying yet true, which Jesus lived.

So this leaves us all with the question that each of us must ask ourselves and answer, *"Who is Jesus"*. Is he simply a great teacher as the Pharisees addressed him on that first Palm Sunday so long ago? Was he simply a miracle worker and healer? Was he a lunatic, a charlatan? Or is Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God? Is Jesus the Christ truly God?

Now that the Temple and the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy seat is gone is Jesus the person through whom we meet God?

It is the question each of us must consider ask and answer.

Consider it as we listen to our Musical Production "Who Do You Say that I Am? Sit back. Listen carefully. Enjoy fully.

Consider deeply who Jesus is to you! And when you answer, live that answer fully in your lives.

In his name Amen!