

The Passion of Christ

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- [0 : 0 0] Good morning. I too welcome you here this morning as we've gathered to fellowship, to worship, to come under God's Word as well.
- And so welcome. Welcome to those that are visitors. Maybe a first time, and so may the Lord bless. A verse in Hebrews 10 says, Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves.
- This morning, as we've gathered, part of our purpose is to stir up love and good works.
- In one another, by assembling like this. And it was verse 24, if you're looking, Hebrews 10. But that is the purpose of God's people, to gather.
- It's not only to come under the Word of God, which is crucial as well, but to stir up good works. And I absolutely love when the service is done, and half an hour later, the ushers are anxious that people leave because they want to lock up.
- [1 : 2 9] That is where the stirring up happens, much of it. It's as important part of the service than this is while I'm speaking.
- And may we do that. May we continue love and good works. And some of us this morning might have had a tough week, or we're going through a tough time, even now.
- And we need to be stirred up. We need love. And others that are abounding can be the givers. And maybe next week it's turned around.
- But whatever. The Lord knows. We've been sitting for a while. Well, why don't we get up, stretch, and maybe give our neighbor a hand of welcome, and then we'll get settled down in a minute here.
- So get up and stretch if you want, and before we get into the message, greet your neighbor. Thank you. Thank you.
- [3 : 2 2] All right.
- Before, when Peter signaled me out as a grandpa and the privilege of being grandpa, I think he was referring to me as an old man.
- But I thought to myself, well, I have more hair than he does. So. What day do we celebrate today scripturally?
- Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday. And what happened on Palm Sunday? Jesus rode into Jerusalem.
- He rode on a donkey into Jerusalem. Why did Jesus ride into Jerusalem? He's going through the Passover.
- [4 : 3 7] He's going through the Passover. And what would happen ultimately? The crucifixion. He was riding into Jerusalem to his death.
- Palm Sunday. And I had said that we would finish the book of Hebrews.
- And we're maybe looking at the book of Romans. But I decided let's get Easter out of the way. And I'll do a topical this morning on Palm Sunday.
- And so Jesus riding unto his death. Why did Jesus want to die?

Or did he not want to? You think he did? Did Jesus want to die? Slush didn't.

[5 : 39] Got more questions. That's what he came here for. It was his purpose, right? Yeah.

And he was surrendered to the will of his Father. He was in unity with God. And so did his flesh want to?

Absolutely not. And we see that in the Garden of Gethsemane that he agonized. And yet unwaveringly the Father's will took priority.

And so he died for the purpose of redemption. More specifically, to pay for our sin.

To pay for our sin. And that is so key. That he rode with the purpose to pay for our sin.

[6 : 44] I thought I'd pick up a verse here in 1 John 2, verse 2. 2.

It says, And he himself, that is Jesus, is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.

So Jesus is the payment for our sins, and not only for ours, but for the whole world's sin.

Christ died, Christ died, not only for everyone here this morning, but for the sin of the entire world.

And as we heard in Sunday school this morning, that that forgiveness is acquired by faith.

[7 : 47] By faith. It's valid for everyone. It's there. It's available. By faith. And so that's the purpose of Christ.

Jesus had been preparing himself. He had been telling the disciples that he was setting his face to go toward Jerusalem. He knew that his time had come.

And John 17, verse 1. I'm going to read that one as well. The Gospel of John 17, verse 1.

And this is the last prayer of Christ, we could say, the night before his crucifixion, as he prays for his disciples, he prays for us.

But we see the purpose here. Jesus spoke these words, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour has come.

[8 : 53] The hour has come. It's here. For 33 years, he has been on earth, and the hour has come.

Glorify your Son, that your Son also may glorify you. So the weight of that, now we're there.

And I think all of us, in a much lesser degree, sometimes when we look forward to an event, to a wedding, to something, and maybe months or even years go by, and all of a sudden, the hour has come.

And for in God's timing, the hour is here. Now, that wasn't Palm Sunday when he prayed this. That was Thursday night.

So in a few days from now. But recognizing the hour had come. Let's read the story in Luke 19. It shows the Gospel of Luke, chapter 19.

[10 : 11] I've titled the message, The Passion of Christ. The Passion of Christ. And the... I want to focus this morning on Jesus' weeping over Jerusalem.

His weeping over Jerusalem will be the focus in the Passion of Christ. So Luke 19, verse 28 to 40. When he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

And it came to pass, when he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that he sent two of his disciples, saying, Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied on which no one has ever sat.

Loose it, bring it here. And if anyone asks you, why are you loosing it? Thus you shall say to him, because the Lord has need of it.

So those who were sent went their way and found it just as he had said to them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, Why are you loosing the colt?

[11 : 31] And they said, The Lord has need of him. And they brought him to Jesus and they threw their clothes on the colt and they set Jesus on him. And as he went, many spread their clothes on the road.

Then as he was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying, Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

And some of the Pharisees called to him from the crowd, Teacher, rebuke your disciples. But he answered and said to them, I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.

And now as he drew near, he saw the city and wept over it. So we have the account of Jesus coming to Jerusalem on this Sunday and preparing to ride on a colt, on a donkey, and sending a few men ahead to secure it.

And we also have a worship scene as the donkey is prepared as they put their clothes on the donkey, they put their clothes on the ground, and one of the other gospels says they put down palm branches for Jesus to ride on.

[13 : 24] All of it marking Jesus coming in as a king. And I asked George to put up a few pictures, so if you bring that up, George.

Anyone been to Israel? here? I know John has been. No one else?

Okay, so maybe someday. Someday. But I thought a few pictures. So this is the Mount of Olives right here, the forefront.

And this is a steep valley going down to the highway back up. That's the old city wall. And this is the Temple Mount that today has the Dome of the Rock.

And so this is what Jesus would have seen riding down the Mount of Olives and overlooking the whole city of Jerusalem.

[14 : 30] Now this is a picture of today. So it would have looked somewhat different. But the old city wall, the location is the same. And that part would be the same.

The Temple Mount would be the same, except there would have been the Temple back then and not the Muslim mosque. And so that's maybe gives us a bit of a picture.

The next one, George, it's a close-up also from up high on the Mount of Olives on the east. and then looking down, it's far down, and the highway at the bottom today.

And then there's the city wall and so same picture, just a close-up. So this Mount of Olives is where Jesus rode into Jerusalem.

It's where, from where he ascended into heaven. and it's where he has promised to come back to. It's right on top here. The garden is in the bottom just where you see the road there and the bus just on this side.

[15 : 45] There's the garden where he would have gone to pray on Thursday night. And so the next picture. Now I took, I looked for a reverse picture.

So we're looking behind the Temple Mount and this is the Mount of Olives. It's looking the other way now. And so this is today's picture. It's settled. Back then it likely wasn't.

It was a hillside. So we're looking east now, the opposite way. And you can hardly see the valley in between, but it's actually quite deep. It's quite a steep hill down.

And then one more. And here's a picture of Jesus riding in Jerusalem. It's a painting, so take it for what it is.

But what caught my attention is many people. Many people flocking to Jerusalem multitudes and surrounding him as he came.

[16 : 51] So thank you, George. Thought that gave us maybe a little bit better of a backdrop. So as Jesus comes over that hill, the Mount of Olives, it says he saw the city and he wept.

He wept. And the question this morning is, why did Jesus weep? Why did weep? Why did weep? Why did weep? Why did weep?

He saw the end of temple worship? Okay. Anything to add to that?

Okay. So there was a rejection. let's read a couple more verses where I left off there.

41. It says, Now as he drew near, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace, but now they are hidden from your eyes.

[18 : 25] For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you, and close you on every side, and level you and your children within you to the ground, and they will not leave you one stone upon another because you did not know the time of your visitation.

So Jesus weeps for the Jews did not recognize peace coming from God, the source of peace.

He says the things that make for your peace. We remember that Israel is under a bondage to a certain degree to the Romans, peace.

They have a longing to be freed, to be their own nation again, and they're looking for corporate peace, and overlooking that Jesus has come to bring personal peace by dying on the cross for each and every one of us.

peace. There is a time coming when He will bring national peace to Israel and that is yet future today as we look at the millennium.

[19 : 57] That is yet coming and yet He weeps because of rejection. So Jesus felt rejected very obviously and yet that was not the source for His the depth of His weeping.

It was sorrow for the Jews that they did not recognize what would make for their peace and that they were rejecting salvation as God had promised throughout the entire Old Testament.

And now that it through the Jews they by and large rejected it and Jesus wept over them. Now there's a lot of depth here and He says going back to the scripture here I'll reread verse 42 If you had known even you especially in this your day the things that make for your peace but now they are hidden from your eyes and as I was putting this together that really hit me but now they are hidden from your eyes.

You know Jesus came unto his own and his own received him not. I believe that's John 1 verse 11 He came unto his own to the Jews and they did not receive the Son of God.

Now He is saying because they did not receive him the things that make for their peace are hidden from their eyes.

[22 : 10] The lesson here is where is the Jewish nation at today spiritually? Spiritually? Spiritually? Spiritually? Spiritually? There is a veil hanging in front of their eyes.

They are blinded to what can bring peace to their hearts. They are still looking for national peace. They're fighting the Arabs, the Muslim world.

They're working toward world peace so they can have it. in Jesus came for personal peace. And Jesus says, but now these things will be hidden from your eyes.

Let's turn to Romans chapter 8. Romans chapter 8.

Romans chapter 11 verse 8. So Romans 11 verse 8.

[23 : 36] Just as it is written, God has given them a spirit of stupor. That word means slumber or to be insensitive to it.

Eyes that should not see and ears that they should not hear to this very day. And David says, let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a recompense to them.

Let their eyes be darkened so they do not see and bow down their back always. You know, 2,000 years almost have gone by and as a whole the Jewish race is in a spiritual stupor.

They're blinded. There are individual Jews that have come to faith throughout but as a whole they're blinded. I have a friend in Calgary he's Jewish himself and he spent his life he works for the Friends of Israel but he does ministry to Jews and he has shared how hard how hard it is to get through a Jewish heart with the gospel as if they're blinded.

They just can't see it. And this is a result of God's dealing with them because of the rejection and Jesus saw the whole picture and he wept and he wept for these people.

[25 : 26] There is a day coming and also in Romans 11 he speaks where all Israel will be saved and we know that after the rapture God will turn again to the Jews and reveal to them a second time his son and many Jews will then turn to God.

The depth of his weeping is there a lesson for us today as we think of this when we have the knowledge of God like the Jews did and yet they refuse to bow down they refuse to submit to him and God has given them a spirit of slumber is that possible that God does that today as well as we continue to push push away I think we need to glean a warning and if we're toying with it we do not know how long our life will be or if we too can receive that spirit through hardness and

Hebrews 13 explains it quite well I want to turn there Hebrews 3 13 he's talking about the Israelites coming out of Egypt out of the wilderness and their refusal to believe and all of them died in the wilderness but verse 13 in chapter 3 he says but exhort one another daily while it is called today lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin and and we harden our hearts and every time we push back on God we become harder this is I think this is a warning I know it is today is the day of salvation today is to make sure where do

I stand with God and to accept him God let's turn to Matthew chapter 21 and we have a bit of a different aspect to Palm Sunday Matthew 21 so after Jesus rode into Jerusalem we have the account of the fig tree and I want to just focus on that a little bit so Matthew 21 starting in verse 17 and so he's rode into Jerusalem and he's going back that evening to

Bethany which is about two miles out and to lodge and that's where our story picks up then he left them verse 17 and went out of the city to Bethany and he lodged there now in the morning as he returned to the city he was hungry and seeing a fig to the road he came to it and found nothing on it but leaves and said to it let no fruit grow on you ever again immediately the fig tree withered away and when the disciples saw it they marveled how did the fig tree wither away so soon so we have the next morning it's Monday morning or sorry yeah it'll be Monday morning he's coming out of Bethany back to Jerusalem and he's hungry and he goes to the fig tree and it has leaves but no figs and Jesus curses it and the next time they come back that evening the tree is dried up already by its roots next next we are told in one of the other gospels that it was not the season for figs in

[30 : 44] Mark chapter 11 we're told Jesus was looking for figs to eat but it was not the season for figs so is that not Christ to then curse the tree. And on the outward, we would think that perhaps, as we dig into it, in that part of the world, in Israel and so on, the Mediterranean, figs, fig trees, would bear an early fruit, a smaller, earlier fruit on the stem. And that was in the spring. And then after that, they would get full leaves.

And then towards the fall or midsummer and onward, the real crop of figs would grow. And these early figs were kind of the first fruits of the crop to come. And farmers could tell that if those early figs weren't there, it would not produce later either. But it would grow a full crop of leaves and no figs.

And so Jesus, being there at spring, was looking for the early figs. And it wasn't, the story isn't about Jesus being hungry and so on. He is illustrating what this represents. And so if we put this together, the coming down the Mount of Olives, the multitudes worshiping Him, laying down palm branches for Him, and just, Hosanna, to God be the glory, they worship Him. And Jesus sees past it, and He weeps. Now the next day, with the fig tree, He is illustrating what He is seeing. And the fig tree is more often in Scripture representing Israel. And so we would say spiritual Israel. Jesus is saying here, I'm not seeing the first fruits of faith. I'm not seeing the first fruits of faith among the Jews. You know, Jesus hadn't died yet. He hadn't forgiven our sins yet. Because there was no first fruit, He realized that after the Jews would reject Him. They would not come to faith.

And the fig tree representing this, as Jesus rode into Jerusalem, all the multitudes worshiping Him, and then five days later, crucify Him, crucify Him.

These multitudes are represented by the leaves on the tree, which give a false hope.

[34 : 25] It is the multitudes on Palm Sunday confessing, praising the Lord, only only had knowledge, not from the heart.

And so the fig tree kind of representing what was going on on a bigger spiritual scale here. The same people later crucified Him.

And so we have we have Jesus burdened by this. And so He cursed the fig tree and it dried up. And He went on in Luke to say that the days are coming when your city will be leveled and not one stone upon another.

And history has that well recorded that that happened around 70 A.D. under Titus, the Roman emperor. And Jerusalem was literally destroyed.

and the Jews were scattered. And the fig tree dried up. There was no fruit.

[35 : 43] We know that God does have a plan but they, like Romans 11 says, they've been set aside. and God is working through the church today.

But His attention will turn back to them. And it may not be that far ahead. So that's a few thoughts here out of out of Palm Sunday.

And for us as believers we can rejoice from the heart that Jesus rode into Jerusalem.

We can lay down our clothes well not our physical clothes but by submitting our lives to Him. By serving Him.

We too can weep with Him over the lost. The passion of Christ should we carry some of that as well?

[36 : 56] To have a burden for those of us? We should. We should.

2 Corinthians 5 tells us we are ambassadors for Christ to bring the word of reconciliation so that others too can be reconciled to God.

That's the gospel message or the call to missions. It's the call to carry that burden. And maybe there are there is family or people that you know or maybe even a people group that causes you to weep.

To weep with depth like Jesus did. We are not Jesus. We are not the Savior. But we have the love of God in us.

And so I think as we think of Palm Sunday, does God bring a burden on my heart for a certain individual or a group of people?

[38 : 25] It's something to pray about to search your hearts. As the Lord has reconciled us, He has saved us, and we are ambassadors.

We've come to represent Him here on earth because He's back in heaven. We are His vehicle to bring the good news.

So we have that side of it and it's a challenge that every believer needs to pray about. That God would burden us in a healthy way, motivating us to reach out to others.

So as we think of Palm Sunday, of Jesus riding down on the donkey, overlooking the city, and weeping, think of these things. And where do I fit in the picture?

And definitely our hearts are celebrating with joy as we look at the picture of the palm branches and so on. But at the same time, there's a part of us that maybe should be weeping that's burdened along with Christ.

[39 : 44] Let's close in prayer. Lord, we thank You for Your undivided purpose in riding to Jerusalem.

Lord, You rode to die, to take our place, to shed Your blood as payment for our sin.

And Father, as Your heart is that everyone be reconciled with You, Lord, my prayer this morning for us as Your people would be that You would burden us to do the work of that ministry.

Individually, Lord, each one of us. That we would be faithful and respond as You lead us. may You bless our day. May You bless each one. And as we part and go through the week, I pray this in Jesus' name.