

Entering Jerusalem

Do we pray to the Lord when things aren't going as planned, and the world seems to be against us? God wants us to! Do we approach Him in prayer with humility? Remember, God is our Father and wants to see His children mold into the image of Jesus. We discussed this last week, but we have by no means exhausted the discussion of growing our relationship with God.

Note: I've enjoyed and recommend Mark E. Moore's "The Chronological Life of Christ." Some of my comments can be found in his material by coincidence (he's not the only one making such observations articulated in his material), and other times, I've leaned on his accurate and helpful observations. He's done an excellent job making 1st-century culture and practices available.

Events that occurred between last week's lesson and today: Jesus is anointed at Bethany (Mt. 26:6-13; Mk. 14:3-9; Jn. 11:55-12:11).

Triumphal Entry (Luke 19:28-40)

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*
 - This account is recorded in all four Gospels.
 - Jesus, who walked everywhere, is purposely riding a donkey, thus fulfilling prophecy (Zechariah 9:9).
 - The crowd is acknowledging Jesus as Messiah and King. A year earlier, in John 6, the crowd wanted to make Him king by force. That was in Galilee. Now King Jesus enters Jerusalem.
- *Something to meditate on:*
 - **Do you know where you're headed?** I can only imagine the buzz surrounding Jesus as He descends Mount of Olives and ascends to Jerusalem. They've heard of His healings, Lazarus, and the disciples He sent out in twos performed no telling how many miracles. Many love Him, and the leaders are seeking to kill Jesus and Lazarus. Yes, it's a great day for Jesus, yet He's not coming for earthly glory. He's headed to Jerusalem to glorify His Father and save humanity. Jesus didn't do this by accident. He did it fully aware of what was before Him. He also knew what was on the other side of the cross (Hebrews 12:2).

Jesus Weeps Over Jerusalem (41-44)

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*
 - Jesus has expressed His sadness over Jerusalem before (Luke 13) and will do so again (Matthew 23).
- *Something to meditate on:*
 - **Do you see those around you?** This isn't the only time Jesus weeps. He wept over the death of Lazarus. Yes, the pain and suffering of others touch the heart of God. It's an aspect of Jesus' life that we often overlook. We usually become so wrapped up in our own lives, problems, and challenges that we forget to invest in others. The reality is that Jesus was hyper-focused on the well-being of others. It may have seemed as though things were going great for Jesus, but what about others? Our trials and tribulations are meant to guide us in comforting others. Sometimes I think we're struggling with a sense of emptiness because we know we're made to serve, and when we don't, there's an internal tug at our hearts telling us something isn't right. Last week, I mentioned John 3:16 and challenged you to look up 1

John 3:16. Let me read that portion of scripture with you. Brethren, it's not bad to feel "off" when we're not loving our brethren as we should.

(Events that occur in between: Jesus curses a fig tree - Mt. 21:18-19; Mk. 11:12-14)

Jesus Cleanses the Temple (45-48)

- *Harmonizing and/or explaining the text:*
 - John 2 records the first cleansing of the Temple at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. We've come full circle.
- *Something to meditate on:*
 - **Do you keep the Temple holy?** We should remind ourselves that while we all make up the Temple of God, our own bodies are described as such in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Or consider again Hebrews 12:1-2. Brethren, another reason why you may not have confidence before God is that you're not walking in the light. Consider 1 John 1:5-7; 4:13-19. Our walking in darkness, due to our lack of love for God and our neighbor, results in anxiety as well. I think most people who see counselors due to depression/anxiety probably need to repent. Consider David's condition in Psalms 32, 38, & 51. We can never be like Jesus if we're not willing to "receive with meekness the implanted word," which can save our souls. We have to remove all filthiness and rampant wickedness - James 1:21. What are we willing to sacrifice? Because we've been making this point week after week. It's go time for Jesus, and brethren, it's go time for us. Don't worry about what others think. If your repentance or standing for God's truth upsets them, then so be it. Sometimes you've just got to clear the Temple, brethren.