

Expectations

The disciples asked Jesus a final question:

“Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”

(Acts 1:6)

All Israel expected their Messiah to come as a conquering King.

He would bring peace to their nation and destroy their enemies.

Isaiah said,

“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;

And the government will rest on His shoulders;

And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase

of His government or of peace. On the throne of David and over His

kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and

righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of

hosts will accomplish this.” (Is. 9:6-7).

The Old Testament is filled with these promises – that when Messiah comes He will bring in the Kingdom of God. When Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar’s dream he spoke of the final kingdom,

“And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people: it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever” (Dan. 2:44).

The Jews of Jesus’ day expected Messiah’s coming to bring about His Kingdom, and destroy all others. That’s why they stumbled over Jesus Christ.

The scene was the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

Luke 19:28-40

The culmination of Jesus’ earthly ministry had come, about a week before He was to be crucified. Jesus was at the peak of popularity.

I. Identifying Prophecy

Matthew writes,

And when they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them, and

bring them to Me. And if anyone says something to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them.' And immediately he will send them. Now this took place that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold your King is coming to you, gentle, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'" And the disciples went and did just as Jesus had directed them, and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid on them their garments, on which He sat. And most of the multitude spread their garments in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees, and spreading them in the road. And the multitudes going before Him, and those who followed after were crying out, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!" And when He entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" And the multitudes were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee." Matt. 21:1-11

Zechariah prophesied that Israel's future King would enter Jerusalem riding on a donkey. This prophecy identified Jesus as their long awaited, promised Messiah.

Now Jesus and His disciples lived the prophecy exactly as it was spoken by Zechariah some 500 years earlier.

The people of Jerusalem (daughter of Zion) would hail their Messiah as King as He entered the city riding on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden. Jesus didn't come to slay Israel's enemies but to save all mankind.

This was the time of Jesus' incarnation – his humiliation, not the time of His glorification. What burdens did Jesus come to bear: the burden of the world's sin. Jesus said,

“...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28).

II. Incredible Praise

“And as He was now approaching near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, saying, 'Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!'” (Luke 19:38).

It was the time of the Passover and as Jesus neared Jerusalem He was about to reach the finish line of God's purpose. He was nearing the cross. The crowds that were following along with Him didn't know that they were actually with God's Passover Lamb. MacArthur writes,

"During a census taken about ten years after this time, the number of sacrificial lambs slaughtered at the Passover was determined to be some 260,000. Because one lamb was allowed to be offered for up to ten people, the worshipers in Jerusalem that week could have numbered over 2,000,000. ... the city was teeming with people."¹

Imagine the crowds that were with Jesus – hundreds of thousands on the hillside.

- They threw their garments on the road.

Ancient custom symbolizing respect and submission to a monarch's authority. It was like saying:

"We place ourselves at your feet, even to walk over if necessary."

- Some were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them on the road.

The palm branches were symbolic of salvation and joy.

They were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David;
Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest!" (Matt. 21:9)

Hosanna is an exclamatory plea meaning "save now."

What did they mean by it?

Save their nation.

Is this the time when Jesus will conquer the Romans with His supernatural powers? That He would manifest Himself as a Conqueror?

They were about to celebrate the Passover. It was the right time for Jesus to demonstrate deliverance just as God did through Moses against Pharaoh in Egypt. MacArthur writes,

¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Matthew 16-23*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988), Pp. 256-257.

“The people wanted a conquering, reigning Messiah who would come in great military power to throw off the brutal yoke of Rome and establish a kingdom of justice and righteousness where God’s chosen people would have special favor. But Jesus did not come to conquer Rome but to conquer sin and death. He did not come to make war with Rome but to make peace with god for men.”²

In effect they were actually saying, “Save us now, great Messiah! Save us now!”

III. Impossible Plan

Ignorant expectations never work out.

As long as Jesus did what they wanted they would follow Him.

What they wanted was external peace and prosperity. As long as their desires are met they will loudly cheer and acclaim Jesus. Their words were right but their hearts were wrong. They refused to be delivered from their greatest enemy: sin. From the perspective of the people Jesus’ coronation was worthless – “a hollow, empty pretense.”

Jesus was crowned to be crucified – to wear a crown of thorns.

And when He entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?” And the multitudes were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.” (Matt. 21:10-11)

Jesus was the Son of David, the Messiah, the great Deliverer, just a few hours before. Now a Prophet from Nazareth.

What happened next?

- Jesus cleansed the Temple.
- Jesus cursed the fig tree.
- Jesus is challenged in the Temple.

Jesus answers the challenges with parables: Two Sons, Landowner, and the scriptural reference to the chief Corner stone, which He applied to Himself.

² MacArthur, 261.

THE STONE THAT THE BUILDERS REJECTED HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE. THIS IS THE LORD'S DOING; IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES. THIS IS THE DAY WHICH THE LORD HAS MADE; LET US REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT." (Ps 118:22-24)

This refers to something that happened in the building of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem. Stones were quarried far from the Temple site.

Detailed plans by temple architects, transported to the site and assembled without the noise of stone cutting tools. "Early in the construction a stone was sent that did not seem to fit. Since the builders did not know what to do with it, they laid it aside and forgot it. Later when they came to place a large capstone on their now nearly completed structure and sent to the quarry for it, they were told that it was not there, that it had already been sent up. They searched for it, found the stone that had been laid aside earlier, and installed it. It fit perfectly. This "the stone the builders rejected [became] the capstone."

JESUS APPLIED THIS verse to himself, saying,

"Have you never read in the Scriptures:
'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

(Matt. 21:42-44)

PETER QUOTED,

"See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

(1 Peter 2:6-8)

Later on when Jesus was on trial before Pilate the crowds were given the choice to free Jesus or Barabbas, they chose Barabbas.

- Barabbas – was convicted of insurrection and sentenced to death.
Bar - "son"
Abba – "father"
- Jesus though innocent and the true Son of the Father was crucified.

Pilate ask the question: "What should I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"
They cried, "Let Him be crucified!"