

The Triumphal Entry; The Second Cleansing of the Temple

Luke 19:28-48

Luke 19:28-44: When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 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, 30 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 and bring it here. 31 And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing it?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.'" 32 So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. 33 But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?" 34 And they said, "The Lord has need of him." 35 Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. 36 And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road. 37 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, 38 saying: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" 39 And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." 40 But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out." 41 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 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. 43 For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Background Notes

The old Roman road going from Jericho to Jerusalem is a good fifteen miles uphill. Verse 1 says that our Lord entered and passed through Jericho. He had crossed the Jordan River after His final ministry across the Jordan in Perea, and was on His way to Jerusalem for His final week before the cross. At Jericho He healed the blind man and brought salvation to Zacchaeus, and now He was heading up to Jerusalem. Verse 28 indicates that the Lord was leading the way as the crowd ascended through the Judean wilderness on the Roman road up to Jerusalem.

They were approaching Jerusalem from the east and thus they would go through Bethany, which was a couple of miles east of Jerusalem, and then through Bethpage, then over the crest of the Mount of Olives, and down into the Kidron Valley, where the Garden of Gethsemane is located, and finally up through the Eastern Gate into Jerusalem and the Temple area.

The Lord sent two disciples on ahead into Bethpage with instructions to bring a donkey colt for the Lord to ride on. How did the Lord know about this donkey's foal that no one had ever ridden? And how did the Lord know that the owners would let it go when the disciples said the Lord had need of it? There is the possibility that prior arrangements had been made, and even a rental fee paid. But on the other hand, this may be another indication, yet another evidence, of our Lord's omniscience.

Doctrinal Points

1. The Lord's triumphal entry was based on Old Testament Scriptures.

The Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday was specifically based on Old Testament prophetic Scriptures. One was the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 which said, *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey."* This prophecy was written more than five hundred years before the event. Unbelieving skeptics of the Bible will say that Jesus "artificially" fulfilled this prophecy. They say that Jesus knew about this Messianic prophecy, so He arranged the ride into Jerusalem on a donkey to appear to be the Messiah, and thus He would be accepted as the Messiah, even though He was really only a man. That would be the skeptic's position.

This, of course, is blind unbelief on the part of the skeptics. If Jesus was only a man, this plan does not make sense, in view of what the Lord clearly told the disciples. The Lord had already made it clear that He would *not* be received as the Messiah, so why would he "stage" the triumphal entry? And how does the critic explain away the inspiration of Zechariah's prophecy? Was this just something the prophet dreamed up on his own? If that were the case, you would think that Zechariah would at least have had the Messiah riding triumphantly into Jerusalem on a white stallion, not a donkey colt! The answer for all these skeptics and critics is that prophecy is supernatural, and the Lord fulfilled Zechariah's prophecy because He indeed was Israel's Messiah.

Another Old Testament Scripture on which the triumphal entry was specifically based is quoted in verse 38, from Psalm 118:26, which is a Messianic Psalm. *"Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord."* The Lord Himself quoted this verse back in Luke 13:35 when the Lord predicted His rejection by Israel and the resulting fall of Jerusalem: *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"* So Psalm 118, this Messianic Psalm, will only be completely fulfilled when the Lord returns. His triumphal entry then will not be followed by rejection, but rather by His Millennial Kingdom on this earth.

A third Old Testament prophetic Scripture on which the triumphal entry was specifically based is the prophetic Messianic timetable in Daniel 9. Depending on the specific starting date of the prophecy and a few other calendar details, it may be that Daniel's prophecy pinpointed the very day of the triumphal entry! If so, the Lord's statement here in verse 42 takes on special significance. Weeping over the City of Jerusalem, the Lord said, *"If you had known, even you, especially in this your day."* The Lord's triumphal entry was based on Old Testament Scriptures.

2. The Lord's cleansing of the Temple was based on Old Testament Scriptures.

Verses 45-48: *Then He went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, 46 saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" 47 And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him, 48 and were unable to do anything; for all the people were very attentive to hear Him.*

The Lord predicted the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans in 70 A.D. Let's read those verses again. *"For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."* There again, the words *"the time of your visitation"*, I think brings into play the Daniel 9 prophetic timetable. In any case, in verses 43-44 the Lord predicted the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans in 70 A.D. Why would Jerusalem be leveled? The end of verse 44 once again, *"Because you did not know the time of your visitation."* Israel failed to recognize her King and His offer of the Kingdom.

On the next day, the Lord entered the Temple courts to teach the people, but before teaching them, He cleansed the Temple. This is the second Temple cleansing. The first cleansing was at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, three years before this time, and it is covered in John 2. Notice in verse 46 that the Lord based His cleansing of the Temple on Old Testament Scriptures. *"My house is a house of prayer,"* Isaiah 56:7, and *"you have made it a 'den of thieves,"* Jeremiah 7:11. The people were using the Temple courts for commercial purposes, not only exchanging money for the right currency to buy sacrifices, but also ripping the people off in the process.

You would think that the chief priests, and scribes, and leading men among the people would have praised the Lord for cleansing the Temple of commercialism. But no, they were trying to do away with the Lord and destroy Him. Verse 47: *"And He was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people sought to destroy Him."* However, their hands were tied because the common people loved the Lord's teaching, and they loved seeing the rich moneychangers thrown out of the Temple! Because of these ordinary folks, the chief priests and scribes and leaders of the people could not get their hands on Jesus. The Lord's cleansing of the Temple was based on Old Testament Scriptures.

Practical Application

Don't miss the lesson of the stones.

In verse 39, the Pharisees told the Lord to rebuke His followers for using Messianic terminology for this event. The Lord answered them in verse 40: *"I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."* In other words, this particular week of time was **the focal point of human history!** Everything in the past pointed forward to these unequalled days of human history, and everything in the future will point back to these unparalleled days in the history of mankind. If the Lord's followers did not praise the Lord at this time, the stones would cry out in praise.

The hearts of the Pharisees were harder than stones. They would not have cried out in praise, even if the stones did. They *could* not believe, because they *would* not believe. Verse 42: *"But now they are hidden from your eyes."*

The same is true today. Some people today are so against the Lord that their hearts are harder than stones. Even if the stones were to cry out, "In God we trust," they would refuse to join in! In fact, they would try to silence the stones and continue to say that God does not exist. Their hearts are harder than stones. They *cannot* believe because they *will not* believe. Don't miss the lesson of the stones!