**Lesson – 10 Jesus in Jerusalem**

**Read for your study: -** [Zech. 9:9](http://biblia.com/bible/niv/Zech.%209.9), [Matt. 21:1-46](http://biblia.com/bible/niv/Matt.%2021.1-46), 22:1-15; [Rom. 4:13-16](http://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rom.%204.13-16), [Rev. 14:7-12](http://biblia.com/bible/niv/Rev.%2014.7-12), [Acts 6:7](http://biblia.com/bible/niv/Acts%206.7)

**Memory Text: -** Jesus said to them, “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’? **(Matthew 21:42)**

**Introduction: -** In the ancient Near East, it was customary for a king to celebrate his victory in war by riding into the capital city on the royal means of transportation, followed by a large number of attendants, and then take his place on the throne. Jesus followed this practice, knowing that it would lead to His death. The day was filled with shouting, singing people who had no thought of doom and no conception of what Jesus really was doing.

As Jesus rode into the city, people saw only a victorious king and Redeemer who would only free them from the oppression of the Romans. But Jesus tried to express the coming dark days and the difficult time of suffering that He was about to face. Let’s dive into our lesson study and learn what Jesus wanted to teach them and us!

**A Prophesied Coming:-** After the 70 year captivity in Babylon, the Jews had returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the Temple. But it was never close to the glorious and magnificent Temple that Solomon had built. Thus, **Ezra 3:12** says they “wept aloud.”

**How did the prophet Zechariah describe this coming event? Zech. 9:9.**

The **NIV** translates the text: "See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey." Many have attempted to interpret this as a portrayal of a victorious king—after the pattern of Near Eastern kingship in Zechariah's day. But the real intent of the prophecy is to contrast the difference between God's way of ruling and the methods of earthly kings.

When the ancient Near Eastern king came riding into the capital, he nearly always had a certain arrangement – a protocol to follow. First there would be soldiers, then dignitaries such as judges and courtiers, followed by the king himself, dressed in colorful array. Finally, following along, bound, and with their heads shaven would be his captives. They were his pride and joy because they depicted his awesome power.

But when Jesus rode into Jerusalem, there was no such portrayal of His power. He came as the meek and lowly One in heart with "captives of His salvation" following joyfully behind, but freed—because the truth had set them free.

“Christ was following the Jewish custom for a royal entry. The animal on which He rode was that ridden by the kings of Israel, and prophecy had foretold that thus the Messiah should come to His kingdom. No sooner was He seated upon the colt than a loud shout of triumph rent the air. The multitude hailed Him as Messiah, their King. Jesus now accepted the homage which He had never before permitted, and the disciples received this as proof that their glad hopes were to be realized by seeing Him established on the throne. The multitudes were convinced that the hour of their emancipation was at hand. In imagination they saw the Roman armies driven from Jerusalem, and Israel once more an independent nation.”—**Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 570.**

**Jesus in the Temple: -** When Jesus arrived at the Temple, His action was unusual and far different than what the disciples and others have seen. His calm and patient nature had become agitated and angry that He turned the tables of the moneychangers and asked them to get out of His Father’s house. These actions of Jesus are also referred to as His “cleansing of the temple”.

The temple services that God had instituted to reveal His love and grace to a fallen world had become perverted by the time of Jesus. They had become so terribly perverted by the greed and avarice of the priests that **“in the eyes of the people the sacredness of the sacrificial service had been in a great measure destroyed.”**—**Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 590**.

**What message is taught by the cleansing of the temple and the events that immediately followed in regard to the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory? Matt. 21:13-17.**

Believers in Christ are described as temples for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit **(1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20)**. As Jesus drove the money changers out of the Jerusalem Temple, so He wants to drive sin out of our lives. "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" **(2 Cor. 6:16)**.

Those who are purified temples for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit will inhabit the temple of God in heaven **(Rev. 7:15)**. Are you allowing the Lord to purify your life?

**No Fruit: -** After cleansing the temple of the business dealings that were going on in the temple, Jesus and His disciples went out. When they returned back to Jerusalem the next day, Jesus saw a barren fig tree. It was unusual for the tree not to bear fruit since it was in its prime time of the season. Thus, Jesus cursed the fig tree and left.

**What two lessons did Jesus teach by cursing the fig tree? Matt. 21:18-22.**

Undoubtedly the disciples were familiar with the Lord's message given through Jeremiah regarding the spiritual fruitlessness of the people. **"When I would gather them, says the Lord, there are no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree; even the leaves are withered, and what I gave them has passed away from them" (Jer. 8:13, RSV).** The tree that Jesus cursed had all the signs of fruitfulness, but there was no fruit. Likewise, His countrymen appeared pious but were bearing no fruit for the kingdom of God. The externals of religion are not enough. **"Faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6, RSV)** is not merely a matter of words and appearances. When Christ lives within the believer, His life begets life.

Mark's parallel to this story indicates that the next morning **"they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots"** **(Mark 11:20, RSV).** The wonder of the disciples provided an opportunity for Jesus to stress the effectiveness of faith in our work for Him. (Compare Matt. 21:22 with John 15:7, 16; 1 John 5:14.)

**The Stone: -** The disciples wondered about the withering of the tree and question about the fig tree being cursed and withering. Jesus took this opportunity telling them several parables, trying to open their minds to the tragic circumstances they would soon witness in Jerusalem.

He began with a parable of the owner of a vineyard, who sent his servants to gather his share of the harvest from those who tended and looked after the vineyard. But the renters attacked and killed one of the servants. Afterwards he sent his own son, thinking that they wouldn’t harm his son. But he was also rejected and killed.

Then Jesus asked them what the owner of the vineyard should do. They answered that he should destroy those wicked men who had killed his son. And find new renters to tend his vineyard.

Jesus then quotes **Psalms 118:22** referring to the prophecy of the rejected stone. The prophecy is connected with the building of the first temple at Jerusalem. The stones for the walls and the foundation were prepared at the quarry. No instrument was to be used upon them and no sound of chiseling and hammering was to be heard after they were brought to the building place. The workmen just had to place them in position. However, there was one stone of unusual size and shape which did not fit into any place. It was rejected and lay for a long time there.

Commenting on this **Ellen G. White** writes, “But when the builders came to the laying of the corner, they searched for a long time to find a stone of sufficient size and strength, and of the proper shape, to take that particular place, and bear the great weight which would rest upon it … But at last attention was called to the stone so long rejected … The stone was accepted, brought to its assigned position, and found to be an exact fit.”—**Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 598.**

In ancient times the cornerstone was the stone at the corner of two walls that united them. It was the main visible corner of the foundation of the building and also the starting point of all future building above the foundation. It was costly because of its beauty and strength, size and carefully shaped. To cast aside the cornerstone would be to resist any future building on that foundation.

The ‘stone’ is the Messiah, the ‘builders’ were the Jews and today, it is us, the spiritual Israel. To reject the Jesus is to reject the ‘Cornerstone’ from the foundation of our lives. Jesus was not only the Cornerstone but the ‘chief’ Cornerstone.

**The Cost of Grace: -** Our salvation costed Jesus a great price - price of death on the cross. In **Matthew 22:1-15** Jesus told the parable of the wedding feast where a king sent out invitation to his guests to come for the wedding feast for his son. There are about three things that happen in this parable: **First**, the guests turned down the invitation. **Secondly**, invitation was sent randomly to the people on the streets. **Thirdly**, one of them came without a wedding garment that had been provided for each guest to wear.

**What does this parable teach us?**

* The kingdom of heaven is likened to a wedding feast – **Matthew 22:1-2**
* Revelation describes a future marriage of the Lamb and His Bride – **Revelation 19:7**
* The invitation is sent to all. (Gospel is given to all).
* The invitation rejected and extended to others – **Matthew 22:8-10**
* A Guest improperly attired - It was customary for the hosts to provide their guests suitable apparel
* To not to wear the provided garment showed a lack of respect and appreciation.

Whatis the meaning of the **“wedding garment”?** The garment represents the righteousness of Christ which is offered to all. Some accept it and some reject it. “By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess.... It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour... —**Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 310, 312.**

The invitation (call) of God is extended to many, but few receive it in such a way to be among the "chosen". "And those servants went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good; so the wedding hall was filled with guests" **(Matt. 22:10, RSV)**. The visible Christian church contains both "bad and good." Not all church members are born-again Christians; not all belong to the spiritual communion of true believers in Jesus Christ. "It was a mixed company. Some of them had no more real regard for the giver of the feast than had the ones who rejected the call."—**Christ's Object Lessons, p. 309.**

This parable was clearly told in response to the rejection of the King's Son and His Kingdom by the Jewish nation. However, elements of the parable apply to us as well, for the invitation to attend **"The Wedding Feast"** is still being offered through the call of the Gospel!

Are we accepting the invitation or rejecting the invitation of the call of God through His Gospel? We have truly been blessed to be given the opportunity to receive the Father's invitation to the wedding feast of His Son Jesus Christ! But we learn from Jesus and His parables that the "kingdom of heaven" is for those who thankfully and properly receive the grace that God has to offer.

The example of the nation of Israel should serve as a warning to all, both Jew and Gentile, that while God's call of the gospel is open to all, the saying of Jesus still remains true...**"For many are called, but few are chosen."** You have been called, but will you be chosen?

**God Bless You!!!**