

The Weeping Humble King

There are many reasons that cause people to shed a tear: grief, pain, depression, even joy. Usually the cause is an event or experience that affects us personally. It is much less common for us to cry over the needs of others. Whether this is due to narcissism and selfishness or a lack of compassion and empathy, is hard to say. However, the fact remains that we are moved to a greater degree by our own condition than by the condition of others.

This is not the case with the Lord Jesus. As He completes His journey to the cross by entering Jerusalem on the first day of the Passover week, Luke's readers are reminded of why the Messiah came and how deeply He is moved by His mission (Lk 19:28-44). As a matter of fact, after sovereignly preparing every detail for his mode of transportation and fulfilling prophecy, the disciples rejoice and praise God, saying, "Blessed is **the King who comes** in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" (Lk 19:37-38; see also Zech 9:9). The reference to the one "who comes" is a reminder to the reader who Jesus is and why He has come (Lk 3:15-17; 7:19-23). Jesus has come to bring salvation and judgment, and these two purposes are inseparably linked.

On the one hand, Jesus - the once-and-for-all Passover Lamb - came to save the lost (Lk 19:10). He was fully obedient to the Father. His humble submission to His Heavenly Father is to be our example. Paul leaves no room for debate, when he points to Jesus as our model for humility and sacrifice:

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, **he humbled himself by becoming obedient** to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)

On the other hand, Jesus is the perfect judge who has the power to condemn. In offering Himself as the substitutionary sacrifice for rebellious sinners and as the propitiation for objects of wrath, the Savior becomes judge, jury, and redeemer. Those who are guilty and lost now have an invitation and hope. Rebels are now offered peace and freedom. However, the offer must be accepted and appropriated. The Apostle John puts it this way: "Whoever believes in [Jesus] is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already,

because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God” (Jn 3:18). Every person must make a choice.

With the reality of the cross looming and eternal destinies standing on a knife’s edge, Jesus looked across the Kidron Valley toward Jerusalem, the city of peace, and began to weep. He knew the hearts of men and the plight of those in peril. He knew that the crowds that were laying palm branches before Him and shouting “Hosanna!” (Matt 21:8-9) would shout “Crucify, crucify him!” in just a few short days (Lk 23:20-21). He saw the horrific consequences that would result from their failure to recognize His kingdom. He realized the delay that this failure would cause in fulfilling the promises to God’s people. Jesus “audibly sobbed” because the ones He came to save had rejected His lavish love and peace-giving reign.

While the Bible is clear that God remains faithful to His covenant people, Israel, and has a future plan for their salvation, the Jews of Jesus’ time missed the day of His visitation. Since they did not believe, they were condemned. The gravity and urgency of the situation should break our hearts, fill us with compassion, and bring us to tears for those who need Jesus’ gracious visitation in their life. Don’t wait! Plead with the lost: “... now is the favorable time; **behold, now is the day of salvation**” (2 Cor 6:2). Pray for, talk to, and share the Gospel with those Jesus came to seek and save.

***Isaiah 53:3-6 (ESV)** - “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; **upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace**, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”*