

BRIEF PERSPECTIVE ON PRAYING IN FAITH

The account of Jesus' triumphal entry is a wonderful and necessary prelude to His declaration that His house shall be a house of prayer for all nations (Luke 19:28-48)

There are many lessons in the account of the triumphal entry of Jesus (Ansy highlighted that Jesus chose the donkey over the colt signifying that He entered the city in peace as opposed to hostility). Another important truth was that Jesus' triumphal entry was a fulfillment of the prophecy that the King was coming to take His rightful place among His people.

The question here is to ask if the King is in His rightful place in our lives.

We read in verses 41-44 that some lacked the spiritual discernment of God's visitation and suffered the consequence. We read further in verses 45-46 that the desecration of the Temple resulted from ignorance of the Scriptures.

It became clear that the fulfillment of 'my house shall be a house of prayer for all nations' (Mark 11:17) was not by the Jewish people but by a people of faith who firstly, had enthroned Jesus as Lord of their lives and received understanding by the Spirit of God, that their new lives included the mandate that they were to carry the gospel to all nations (last week's message).

May the Easter of 2013 not pass us by without a fresh revelation of why Jesus the King came, died and rose again.

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WARMING UP

1. Have you ever been invited to meet with Queen Elizabeth or know of anyone who has?
2. Imagine that you had been invited to Buckingham Palace. What sort of preparation would you need?

INTO THE PASSAGES

Read John 12:12-13, Matt 21:1-5

3. Why were there so many people in Jerusalem at that time? What were the longings of the people at that time?
4. Did the people acknowledge Jesus as King (John 12:13)? What was the understanding of the people of the king of Israel?

Read Luke 19:37-44, Matt 21:8-11

5. Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. What were the varied responses of the people to this account?
6. What was Jesus' assessment of the people's understanding of His triumphal entry (Luke 19:41-44)?

Read Luke 19:45-46, Mark 11:15-17, Matt 21:12-13

7. What did Jesus say about the role of the temple?
8. Suggest a reason why the people desecrated the temple.

MOVING FORWARD

Only the spiritual man can understand spiritual truth (1 Cor 2:14, paraphrased).

Our theme this year of Life Alive brings to focus the need to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, without Whom we cannot understand the wonderful truth in God's Word.

In the week leading to Easter, invite the Holy Spirit to reveal afresh the truth of God, in particular, the wonderful work of Jesus on the cross at Calvary.

LIFE TOGETHER

A lack of understanding of Scriptures led some to misunderstand the purpose of the Temple. Similarly, a lack of spiritual understanding could lead us to misunderstand what Church life is all about.

Determine to encourage those in your small group to grow deeper in the knowledge of the Word of God.

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These notes are primarily for the Into the Passage portion, and are to be used just as guidelines or commentary notes. Most of them are my own thoughts, so take that with a grain of salt. Let the Word of God lead you to truth, not these notes.

INTO THE PASSAGES

Read John 12:12-13, Matt 21:1-5

3. Why were there so many people in Jerusalem at that time? What were the longings of the people at that time?

The Jewish people were in Jerusalem for the Passover. The Romans captured Jerusalem in 66 BC. So, the longings of the people were for a physical king to deliver them. Their felt need was for a physical king without realizing that their deepest needs for a Saviour.

4. Did the people acknowledge Jesus as King (John 12:13)? What was the understanding of the people of the king of Israel?

Although some acknowledged Jesus as king of Israel, their understanding was that Jesus came to deliver the people nationally. Even some of the disciples misunderstood Jesus' mission. Jesus had a greater mission - to be the Saviour of all mankind not just the Saviour of the Jews.

Read Luke 19:37-44, Matt 21:8-11

5. Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. What were the varied responses of the people to this account?

Some burst into enthusiastic praise over all the mighty works they had witnessed (Luke 19:37, John 12:17-18)

Some were incensed that Jesus was praised (Luke 19:39)

Even the disciples did not fully understand (John 12:16)

Some did not know who Jesus was (Matt 21:10)

Some acknowledged Jesus only as a prophet (Matt 21:11)

6. What was Jesus' assessment of the people's understanding of His triumphal entry (Luke 19:41-44)?

Jesus declared that many did not understand (aware) that this was indeed God's visitation.

Read Luke 19:45-46, Mark 11:15-17, Matt 21:12-13

7. What did Jesus say about the role of the temple?

It was already prophesied in Isa 56:7 that 'My temple will be a house of prayer for all nations'. God's heart is for the nations (the different people groups) and that His chosen vehicle to bring this Good News to all nations was His people. When the Jews failed to realize God's purpose, God turned to the Church (Gentiles and some Jews) to become His vehicle.

My temple - Reaching out to all nations is God's idea, not a human idea. And as one poster illustrated clearly, this is not a suggestion but a commission.

House of Prayer - the resource is God's through prayer. God looks for the man but it is He who does the work in the hearts of men to draw them to Himself.

For all nations - God's vision is for the nations and so must our vision. In the last Mission Conference, it was wonderful to hear the testimonies of BCEC workers who went out to the nations (Turkey, Middle East, Philippines, Cambodia, HK, even Scotland!).

8. Suggest a reason why the people desecrated the temple.

A lack of understanding of Scriptures. The modern day extrapolation is that the people either do not read the Word of God or they read without understanding or they are not aware of the role of the Holy Spirit in illuminating the Word of God to them.