

Matthew 21-04-01a

Good evening. This is the 1st of April, 2021. And we're going to continue the look that we are taking at the Passion Week.

Beginning last Sunday, we looked at the Tragic Entry, the Face Palm Sunday, whatever you would like to remember it by in my view. We're going to pick up at that point and look at the next two days, which are Monday and Tuesday of this week. This of course, as we speak, if we were on Jerusalem time, which of course we're not, but Zulu time here, we're fast approaching sundown.

And this would be the time between the evenings when Jesus was taken down from the cross, rapidly prepared for his burial on that Thursday, Day of Crucifixion. So that as the sun went down and the high Sabbath of Friday, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread began, no one could be accused of having violated the law by doing work. They were also able to observe that Sabbath because coming in contact with something that had died would render one ceremonially unclean until the sun went down.

So by handling the body of the Lord before sunset and going and doing ritual purification, they could still observe the Feast on Friday, the high Sabbath, then the regular Saturday Sabbath, and then early in the morning on the third day, which would be the first day of the week, Sunday, this is the day of the Lord's resurrection. So that's where we are this week. Local time is the sun is still up, but it is after 3 p.m. And the Lord Jesus was on the cross from noon until 3 p.m. and then was taken down and his body was given to Joseph, of Arimathea who put him in his own unused tomb.

We saw last Sunday that the Lord Jesus wrote a cult that had never before been written. You have Samson talking about ropes that had never before been used and so on. These uniquenesses are an intriguing study in themselves, but not the one we're going to do tonight.

We're going to take a moment here at the beginning to ask God's blessing on our fellowship and on our study. And we have some very pertinent and applicable observations, interpretations, and applications to make from what Jesus said and did on Sunday, on Monday, and on Tuesday, the week before his crucifixion. Let's ask God's blessing and we'll get started.

Father, what a comfort it is and an encouragement and a source of strength to reflect on your promises that when we ask that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our heart be acceptable in your sight because you are our strength and our redeemer. We have confidence that you fulfill those promises. We know that if we ask and we seek and we knock, you will provide, doors will be opened, answers will be given.

We will find what we are looking for. Sometimes we are looking for one thing, but we find

something even better. It is by your grace, it is through the love that is shed abroad in our hearts by your Holy Spirit, based on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross that we observe and commemorate this week, that we enjoy these wonderful privileges.

We pray that you will bless our study tonight as we look together at your word. May your Holy Spirit minister it profitably and powerfully to each heart so that we can live the remainder of the time that is allotted to us in a way that reflects your glory and brings credit to our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ. We pray these things in his name, amen.

Turn with me to the gospel of Luke. We began on Sunday, looking at Matthew. We're going to pick up in Luke chapter 21, if my, actually chapter 19, which parallels Matthew 21.

Luke chapter 19, beginning at verse 11. Luke 19, 11. This is the run-up to the events we saw on Sunday.

The question might arise, the question has arisen, why are you so negative about the event traditionally known as the triumphal entry? It wasn't it right for people to sing Hosanna and put their clothes in the road and celebrate and declare Jesus to be the son of David and the king. What's wrong with that? Didn't Jesus arrange for the donkey and the colt? Did he himself not straddle the colt and ride in? He wasn't forced to do so. So how can this be a bad thing? It isn't a bad thing, but it proves a bad thing.

It demonstrates a problem, a severe, critical, fatal problem. And it is as though you do an exploratory surgery. Here's the doctor, here's the surgeon with his scalpel.

He makes the incision, he retracts the tissue from each side. There is swabbing and forceps and all of the usual. And in exposing this particular area of the body, here is made visible this tumor, this terrible problem.

And the only way to confirm and to expose and to make it clear is to do this operation. Well, aren't operations normally done to save and to improve and to fix and to repair? Yes, they are, but sometimes exploratory surgery is also done to confirm a diagnosis done by other means that yes, this really is a malignant, incurable, untreatable problem. And you can think of this action of entering Jerusalem on Sunday, the first day of the week by the Lord Jesus in conscious fulfillment.

We saw this on Sunday. He spoke the words and gave the instructions to fulfill the prophecy. Why? Because it exposes everything the people do not know.

This would be the equivalent after God walks with Abraham and Abraham says, but if there's 50 righteous people in Sodom, would you spare the city? Well, what about 40? What about 30, 20, 10? And God says, if there were 10 righteous people in Sodom, I would spare it. And then Abraham were to go into the city, like who was it, Diogenes that went in with the lantern looking for a righteous man. And so Abraham goes in and maybe

he's riding on a colt going through the city.

Bring out your righteous, bring out your righteous. And there are not 10. In fact, there really aren't any.

Lot is going to prove how degenerate and infantile he is after he and his wife and daughters are rescued. The wife doesn't even make it clear out of the area. And the daughters defile themselves and implicate their father.

And you get Moab and Ammon as a result. And the whole thing's a complete fiasco. They're not obedient.

They don't go where the angels tell them. They don't stay where they're supposed to stay. They beg off and dissemble and argue and get drunk and fornicate and incestuate and everything else.

There were not 10 righteous. Well, Jesus riding into Jerusalem makes this point. And the disciples, both the immediate group of 12 and the larger group, we know that there was an inner circle beyond the immediate circle of 70 disciples that Jesus sends out at one point, right? And there are multitudes of disciples.

And one of the things that you notice in the gospel of Luke at which we are looking tonight is in earlier chapters prior to chapter 19, Jesus works with the disciples as we see him doing in Matthew. How many loaves? How many baskets did you take up? How many loaves with the 4,000? How many baskets? Do you not yet understand? Let me explain these parables to you. And he's working with them and he's trying to inculcate and to instill in them the truth and get them to remember it.

One of the things you observe as you go through the gospel of Luke in particular is that by the time you reach this point, the narrative no longer really distinguishes the disciples. And we talked about this on Sunday that the two who were sent in to get the donkey and the colt aren't even named. And part of that is that hardly any of the disciples get named at this point because they're just indistinguishable from the masses.

It's not exactly that Jesus has given up on them. They're going to be the apostles. But at this point, their faith and their knowledge and their insight is virtually indistinguishable from anybody else.

They just don't stand out. They don't ask any more questions. Lord, increase our faith, teach us to pray, explain the parable.

Didn't you just say X? Why are we doing Y? And when I say X and Y, that's part of what we're going to look at right now. So this is just a few days before the triumphal entry. As we pick up here in 1911, Jesus has just visited the house of Zacchaeus.

You see that at the beginning of the chapter. Then in verse 11, as they heard the things that he said, the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. That is verse 10.

Memorize that as a child. Luke 19.10, the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. Of course, it's always pitched to children and to most Christians as a evangelism verse, but it's not evangelism.

The Israelites were not lost in the eternal salvation sense. They were lost in having strayed from the covenant. All day long, I have held out my hands to a disobedient and stiff-necked people of my own.

The lost sheep of the house of Israel. Israel belongs to God and God belongs to Israel, but they have strayed. There are, you know, 99 in the fold and the one that is lost, he's every bit as related to the shepherd and the owner as the other 99.

Being lost in that sense, it's almost a misnomer when we talk about the saved and the lost today in terms of evangelism. Lost are believers who have lost their way and lost sight of God. It's the Ephesian church in Revelation having lost its first love and become lost and astray from mission and purpose.

So having said that in verse 11, they heard these things. Jesus spoke another parable, why? Read this out loud with me together. As he heard these things, he spoke another parable because he was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.

Circle it, underline it, put a star out by the side. This is right before the triumphal entry. Jesus is going to tell them something because they're approaching Jerusalem and because these people all think the kingdom is going to appear right away.

He says, you shouldn't think that. That's what this is going to. And then he tells the parable of the talents.

We've covered this several times in the gospels and in our parable study. I'm not going to go over it again. Just remember that in that parable, there are two parties who are evaluated, two groups, two types.

Remember just real briefly, there is a nobleman who is going to go away and receive royal rights. He's got to travel. He is going to have rulership conferred on him and he's going to return.

Because he is leaving, two things happen. The citizens of that area don't want him to rule over. And so they're going to send a delegation to the same place he's going to say, please don't let this guy rule over us.

We don't like him. So those are the citizens who hate the nobleman and don't want him to be the ruler. That's one group.

The second group is his servants. As he is leaving, he calls 10 of his servants in verse 13 and gives them 10 minas. These are the minas or the minas, whatever you want to call them.

Sometimes it's translated pounds, kind of like English pounds. Each servant gets one. 10 servants, each of them is given the same starting capital to do something with.

So he goes away, he comes back and evaluates the, when he gets the kingdom, he's given the royal rights. He comes back and calls his servants first. So he evaluates them.

What did you do with the talents? And you're well familiar to the first servant, your mina has earned 10 minas. The second one, your mina has earned five minas. The third one, here's your mina.

I kept it in a handkerchief. I feared you because you're a hard man. You collect what you did not deposit.

You reap what you did not sow. The Lord says, out of your own mouth, I will judge you, you wicked servant. Notice, out of your own mouth, I will judge you.

If this was your premise that I'm, he's not admitting that he's a hard man and he reaps where he doesn't sow. This is the servant's evaluation of his master. How many servants are qualified, you know, to really judge the business practices? He's a servant, this guy's a nobleman, a businessman, and now a king.

And this servant from his perspective says, well, he's a hard man, he gets illicit gain. How many people in this land think that the rich and the well-off shouldn't have what they have because they don't think they deserve it. They don't think they're entitled to it.

And they think they should have it instead. Is that legitimate or not? Well, this nobleman doesn't even take up that question. He just says, I'll judge you based on what you have said, based on your premise.

Your premise is that I collect what I did not deposit. So that's bad business. I reap where I have not sown.

That's bad agriculture, right? So why didn't you take the money and put it in the bank where I wouldn't be ripping off business customers and I wouldn't be thieving somebody else's crops. The bankers would do right with this money and I wouldn't be involved. Why didn't you put it there? That way you could fulfill by your own standard of what is right, what you were tasked to do.

But you didn't even do that. You've used an excuse to be a bad servant. So take the miner from him and give it to the one who has 10 miners.

But those who are standing by say, but he's already got 10. And Jesus says to everyone who has, more will be given from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. Then he deals with the first group, the citizens who sent the delegation saying, we hate this guy, don't let him rule over us.

Bring here those enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them and slay them before me. Now, remember the fate of the servants and the fate of the citizens is in a parable. It's similar to the guy that shows up at the wedding feast without a garment, cut him in two and apportion his lot with the hypocrites.

If you literally cut a guy in two, you don't have to worry about his lot because he's not around to own it, collect it, enjoy it, watch it disappear or whatever. To cut in two or to slay in parable terms means you're a dead tree, you're treated as dead. Your relationship is dead, so I don't know you.

Depart from me, workers of iniquity. It doesn't literally mean that they are cast into everlasting judgment. Slay means you got nothing in this paradigm.

You've got nothing in this environment. You are not functional. You're not present.

You're not recognized. You have no privileges. Then look immediately after that, the triumphal entry.

When he had said this, he went on ahead going up to Jerusalem. It says triumphal entry in my Bible. Came to pass and we saw all of this on Sunday.

As he went in verse 36, many spread their clothes on the road. Then as he was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice. Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.

Peace in heaven, glory in the highest. Verse 39, some of the Pharisees called to him from the crowd, teacher, rebuke your disciples. Jesus answered and said to them, I tell you, if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.

This entry and this proclamation is supposed to happen. But it's kind of like what Jesus says about Judas. These things must happen, but woe to them by whom they happen because it exposes the truth.

Do you remember in the story of the threshing floor of Arona or Ornon, depending on if you read, which account you read. I like Arona, I think that's his name. But when God gives David a choice for numbering the people and he says, I don't want to fall into the hands of the enemy, I'll take divine judgment.

And so the angel comes and thousands of Israelites are dropping. And the angel pauses over the threshing floor and David makes appeal. And then he is going to offer a sacrifice to God on that spot.

And Arona says, well, look, here's my oxen and my wagon, just take my oxen and I'll give you the wagon. Use the wagon for the wood, stack up your rocks and offer your sacrifice in that. What was David's reply? I will not offer to the Lord that which cost me nothing.

I will not offer to the Lord that which cost me nothing. David has to first own those things before he is willing to sacrifice them. These people that are casting their clothes in the road, what's going to happen after Jesus passes? Did they leave the clothes there? No, they picked them right back up.

The robes that were thrown over the donkey in the colt, what happened to those? The owners picked them back up. They have lost nothing. The people that are cutting branches and palms and such and waving them and throwing them in the road, do they own any of that? They do not.

They are making a procession and a celebration with no personal investment of any kind. It costs them nothing. Secondly, and far more importantly, that's really just sort of a, almost a symbolic observation.

Here's something more important. Flip back one page to chapter 18, verse 31. He's talked about, it's easier for Camel to go through the eye of the needle than a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

Those who heard it said, who then can be saved? These things which are impossible with men are possible with God. Peter says, we've left all and followed you. Talking about sacrifice.

This is the contrast. Jesus said in verse 29, assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times more in this present time and in the age to come eternal life. Now, what does he mean by eternal life? How many times have we said it? Do you have to give up all and follow to have eternal life in the sense of simple salvation? What does eternal life mean? Not duration, not the fact of avoiding the lake of fire.

This is eternal life in its quality, in its source, in its nature. Many times more in this present. What's he talking about in this present time? What kind of riches are they going to gain in this present time by giving up material things and following the Lord? Receive many times more in terms of treasure laid up in heaven, blessing in time, reward in eternity, peace that passes understanding, rest.

Come unto me, you who labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest. My yoke is easy,

my burden is light. You will find rest for your souls.

You can enter into that rest. You read the early chapters of Hebrews, the letter where it makes such a point about this. The blessing of fellowship with the Lord, learning at his feet.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. If you saw an advertisement, the Lord Jesus Christ is coming and teaching a Bible class in Duluth, Minnesota. Would you drop what you're doing and head up there, leave behind family, whoever? Some of you wouldn't have to travel as far as others, that particular town I picked, but some of us would have to go a fair distance, right? But look at the gain compared to the momentary light affliction, which is working for us an eternal weight of glory.

That's Paul in Romans, right? So, and in the age to come, eternal life, Jesus says, this is the blessing and reward package. This is the privilege and opportunity and potential package. This is all of the overcomer rewards on the line here that you find in Revelation 2 and 3. Eternal life sums up and implies all of these wonderful things.

It's not just simple existence eternally. This is being presented by the Lord Jesus to his father. This is dwelling in the new Jerusalem and everything that goes with it.

So notice what has been given up here. This is, these men, the Lord Jesus' disciples, the 12 have been away for months, months at a time from their businesses, their families, their loved ones, because like the donkey, the master has need. And they see that, and that simple act of faith and obedience is earning for them an eternal weight of glory.

Unlike the shallow, momentary, ephemeral Hevel of the triumphal entry, quote unquote, where people throw down their clothes, pick them right back up, cut somebody else's tree branches down, throw them in the road, leave them there to rot, right? That's the first thing. The second thing is, keep reading in Luke 18. Those of you that have left these things for the sake of the kingdom of God will receive many times more in this present time, something far more valuable and in the age to come eternal life.

Look at verse 31. Then he took the 12 aside and said to them, behold, we are going up to Jerusalem. Remember he told the parable of the talents because they were near Jerusalem.

Now he says explicitly, we are going to Jerusalem. Here's what's going to happen. All the things that are written by the prophets concerning the son of man will be accomplished.

It's in the prophets. What is he thinking of? He was wounded. He was bruised by his stripes.

We are healed. He has no former comelessness that we should desire him. He is led like a sheep to the slaughter and like a lamb to the slaughter, he opens not his mouth.

The prophets have spoken of this over and over. That's just Isaiah. All of these things will be accomplished.

He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. Now, this is immediately before going to Jerusalem. They will scourge him and kill him.

And the third day he will rise again. Verse 34, they understood none of these things. They didn't understand it.

They didn't ask him questions about it. They didn't struggle with it. They didn't remember it.

Understand here has the idea. It was just water off a duck's back. It was there and it was gone in one ear out the other.

They just thought, well, I don't know, maybe a little too much sun on the master's head today. What is that all about? This is why they say nothing. They ask no questions on facepalm Sunday during the tragic entry.

They're shouting with the loudest of them. Not a thought, not a care in the world. Celebrate, wave of emotion, praise band is playing.

The 7.11 choruses are going. Hosanna, Hosanna over and over and over again. Nobody even remembers what Hosanna means.

They're just saying it to say it to say it. So much so this gets repeated so much that the next day when Jesus goes to the temple, there's gonna be little boys repeating the songs that they heard yesterday. They heard it so much.

It's like hearing something on the radio and now you can sing it. And you know all the words without even trying. These little boys are gonna be echoing what they heard the previous day from all of the adults because it's just mindlessly repeated.

It's bubble gum for the brain. It's chewing gum for the heart. It's just shallow repetition.

They understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them and they did not know the things which were spoken. Now, when it says it was hidden from them, did God say, I don't want you to remember this.

I don't want you to know. If God didn't want them to know, Jesus wouldn't have said it. Why was it hidden from them? If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them who are lost, in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of whom? Those who are faithless.

Those who are faithless, right? Well, we have much more to say about this, but there is no excuse for us to not know and not remember what the Lord Jesus says. There was no excuse for the disciples and we need to learn from their bad example here and not in

this week of all weeks, not be blind and deaf to the words and the works of the Lord Jesus. And it requires Sabbath time.

We are gonna see that in the second session like you can't believe. Sabbath time, a seventh part or more of our time should be devoted. If it's on a commute and you're driving, if you've got a few minutes to sit in a chair, if you get up early, if you stay up after others have retired, whatever it takes, carve out that time.

We're gonna see it. It is one of the most convicting things I've seen in a long time. And we'll see it right after the break.

But we're going to pause here and enjoy our wonderful Resurrection Week special music. And then we shall return.