

This, Your Day

Luke 19:37-44

It was an incredibly special day, unlike any other. After approximately three years of public ministry, Jesus was approaching Jerusalem on His Father's schedule. Quite some time earlier, after miraculously feeding between five and fifteen thousand people with only five loaves and two fish (see John 6:1-15), they had wanted to make Him their King. But, at that point, Jesus split the scene – you see, it wasn't time yet.

However, now, as He rode down the slope of the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey's colt (see Zech 9:9), the followers began shouting, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!" And, this time Jesus was 'in to it' – you see, this was the day, literally the set time.

True to form, the religious leaders nearby wanted Christ to shut them up, to zip their lips. They said, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples."

Jesus responded, "... if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

What? Was Jesus just being a bit enthusiastic? Perhaps euphemistic? Was this just some Middle Eastern saying of the time?

Now, I don't know about you, but I've never heard stones talk, and yet Jesus, the one Who commanded the winds and the sea, was indeed being literal here. Obviously, the moment was very, very special and the pronouncement of His arrival as the King was absolutely going to be made. But why?

Well, Jesus gave us the clue. As He drew near to the city, He wept (the word means to sob or wail loudly). In verses 42 – 44 He said, "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. For the 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** (literally, the set time) **of your visitation**."

Now, the word, "day" in verse 42 most frequently means 'daylight period' which makes sense for Jesus claimed that while He was in the world, He was the light of the world (see John 9:5), and the word "time" in verse 44 literally means a "set time" as in a time previously established.

What Jesus was claiming in all of this was that this was a day, a set time, which was foretold prophetically. It was a day and a situation that they could have recognized had it not been hidden from them. (He mentioned a set time or "my time" in other scriptures as well – see John 7:6, 30.)

And some astute disciple might have asked, "Lord, what so special about March 30, 33 AD (and that would have been especially astute seeing as they didn't use a Julian calendar then!)

But to answer this, Jesus would have taken him to a portion of scripture in Daniel that we know as

Chapter 9, verses 24 – 26. It says,...

V24 "Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy."

V25 "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again and wall, even in troublesome times."

V26 "And after sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; ..."

In this passage, the word translated as 'weeks' is literally 'sevens' so the prophecy starts with a declaration that 70 sevens have been determined or pre-established in which several awesome things will be accomplished. Note also that these 'sevens' are set specifically for the **Jewish people** and **Jerusalem**.

So what are these awesome things? First, he says, "To finish the transgression" or literally, the rebellion or break away. You see, mankind broke away from God back in the Garden of Eden and the Lord said that within this period, the rift would be healed – mankind (including the Jewish people) would be reconciled with our loving creator—the revolt ended, the rift healed. But for this to happen, the next promised occurrence had to take place – "To make an end of

sins" or literally offences and their penalties.

All of man's offenses before a just and holy God had to be paid for – all past, present and future offences. And furthermore, the slate had to be wiped clean so the true reconciliation of man with God could take place. That is, not only would all offences and their penalties be satisfied but it would be as if they never occurred in the first place – "to make reconciliation for iniquity."

Then he added the kicker – not only would the rift be bridged, offences and penalties ended and reconciliation produced, but then, a perfect future is guaranteed, for he said that "everlasting righteousness" would be brought in – eternal rightness in everyone and everything! Wow!

Finally, he said that vision and prophecy would be sealed or closed up and that the Most Holy would be anointed.

So what was revealed in this passage is clearly the grand and glorious plan of God, and the timepiece so to speak for it is also made obvious – the **Jews** and **Jerusalem** – like two hands on a clock. And they're ticking off 70 sevens or 490, but 490 what? We'll see that it is referring to 490 years. Verse 25 gives more detail.

Specifically, the passage says that from the going forth or issuance of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, and notably the wall of the city, until the coming of Messiah the Prince (i.e. Messiah hailed as royalty, in the line of David) would be total of seven plus 62 or 69 'sevens' or 483 years. Then verse

26 adds that after this period, the Messiah would be cut off or killed but not for Himself.

This prophecy is so explicit in its schedule – only God could pull it off. You see, just as Daniel predicted, the command which allowed the Jews to restore Jerusalem and specifically to rebuild the wall was given March 5, 444 BC by Artaxerxes Longimanus to Nehemiah. (Other similar decrees were given but this one included the rebuilding of the wall, i.e. restoring the city's defenses as mentioned in the prophecy.) We arrive at this date by looking at Neh 1:1 and 2:1. Then, by knowing that Artaxerxes succeeded his father Xerxes immediately after his death around Dec 17, 465 BC and had a year of accession before his own reign began, we come to Nisan 1, 444 BC (March 5).

Now, we're going to do a little arithmetic. Although the total period outlined in the passage was 70 sevens or 490 years, the declaring of the Messiah as King was pinpointed as being after the 62 sevens which are listed after the first 7 sevens. Therefore, this put it after 7 + 62 or 69 sevens. That equals 483 years.

Also, we must use the 360 day calendar for each year. This was the calendar of the day, the calendar originally used as shown in the Genesis account of Noah's flood – it's the prophetic year, if you would. So if each year holds 360 days and we want to measure out a span of 483 years, that is the same as 173,880 days.

Now, beginning with March 5, 444 BC, if we proceed forward 173,880

days, accounting for the 116 leap years, only one year between 1 BC and 1 AD, and a couple other slight imperfections in our own calendar -- we come to Monday, March 30, 33 AD exactly. There indeed we find Jesus, riding on the donkey, entering Jerusalem, hailed as the Son of David, that is, Messiah the Prince. Of course the rocks would have cried out!!

This prophecy is so stunningly accurate that numerous critics have tried to disprove it. But honest and thorough historical, theological and archeological research has validated it (as if God's word needed validation!)

And Jesus wept, for the people could have known – if they had not been blinded. And just as Daniel foretold, Messiah was cut off, but not for Himself. Jesus laid down His life freely on the crucifix of Calvary the following Friday, April 3, 33 AD – but not for Himself. You see, He was sinless, the spotless Lamb of God. He was 'cut off' for us!

Now, although Jesus said, no man would know the day or hour of His coming to rapture the church – to take us into heaven, (as seen in the parable of the five wise virgins in Matthew 25) He also gave us many prophetic indicators. Paul wrote, *"you are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief* (catch you unawares).

May we not repeat the blindness of His people concerning His coming as Messiah the Prince. He told us to watch, to be discerning of the signs of the times and to eagerly wait on His appearing!

As for Israel, Messiah the Savior is yet to be recognized, but we know

from Romans 11:25 that this will happen. See our letter "Seven Weeks" as a possible fulfillment for this. And then...

There's one 'seven' left out of the 70 then. Lord willing, we'll look at that in another study. God bless you as you seek to welcome our coming Savior-King!

Questions for discussion:

1. When the people whom He'd miraculously fed with loaves and fish wanted to make Him king, why did Jesus 'split the scene'?
2. Why did Jesus weep?
3. In what passage did Daniel prophesy of the grand plan of God?
4. 70 sevens were set specifically for what two entities?
5. What is the "transgression" in the phrase "finish the transgression"?
6. What is meant by "everlasting righteousness"?
7. The declaring of Jesus as Messiah the Prince came after how many 7's? How many years was this? How many days?
8. What was the starting date? Why?
9. How did Jesus fulfill the various aspects of this prophecy?
10. Are we blinded to the times like the Jews were?
11. What is the 70th seven?