

Ir-nt-20
“Woe Unto You ... Hypocrites”
(Matthew 21-23; John 12:1-8)
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(This material is set up to give inspirational background).

The beginning of Christ’s Final Week

- I. Christ openly announces He is the True King of the Jews and their Messiah
- A. He came in open fulfillment of prophecy. “... behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass...” (Zech 9:9).
 - B. David and Solomon both rode upon asses when they entered Jerusalem to be crowned as Kings. In doing so, **they bore witness of how Jesus would come.**
 - 1. The ass was chosen because it taught of the Savior: **It was the lowliest of creatures, and He, like it, was destined to become the bearer of men’s burdens, and to become a byword of the people.**
 - C. Israel understood the Messiah would come of David’s lineage and be the true “Son of David,” as witnessed in the life of Solomon.
- II. There were many other parallels between Jesus’ entrance and David’s coming up to Jerusalem as King in ancient times.
- A. David had been denied his kingship until he removed “the blind and the lame” (2 Samuel 5:6). Similarly **it was Jesus’ healing of others like the blind and lame which caused the people finally to accept Him as their King.**
 - B. When David entered Jerusalem, his own bride rebuked him for uncovering himself “in the eyes of others.” **And for her despising, she was left barren** (2 Sam 6:21-21).
 - 1. Similarly, Jesus was now formally “uncovering” His true identity as Messiah and the people were worshipping Him. Thus the Jewish leaders, [who were supposed to be “His Bride” as they had covenanted to worship Him as their only God], felt rage. And they despised Him. “... Rebuke thy disciples,” they demanded (Luke 19:39).
 - 2. They thus set themselves upon a course which would lead to their downfall and **their own barrenness! (See Matthew 21:17-22, where this actually occurs as Jesus curses the barren fig tree, a symbol of Israel itself).**
 - C. We should also note that the **homage paid to Jesus at His entry showed what would occur in His Millennial reign: the palm fronds symbolized the great shelter He will then provide; the “Hosanna Shout” teaches of men’s joy is His salvation; the title, “Son of David” promised that once He fully ascended the throne, His reign would never cease.**
- III. Jesus, hesitant to judge previously, now openly identifies Himself as the Judge of Israel and judges men for hypocrisy.
- A. Once in Jerusalem, Jesus went directly to the temple. Solomon’s Temple had a **Throne of Judgment** symbolizing the need to be found worthy before entering.
 - B. It symbolized that **Jesus will ultimately make final determination from His Heavenly Throne as to who is worthy to enter God’s presence.**

B. Standing near this Throne, He now judges those who ministered in the Temple, for the Temple was representative of His Kingdom.

1. He cleansed the temple to show He had come to cast out the unworthy who served there.
2. This temple was built by Herod, for political advantage. **Its High Priesthood had obtained position there through bribery.** And they had rejected their God.
3. Going **into Solomon's Porch where the Throne of Judgment stood**, Jesus passed judgment, and "cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers... And said unto them... My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Mat. 21:13). **The real thievery was that the current controlling priesthood sought to steal God's Kingdom from its true leader --- the Savior.** The cleansing of the temple had far more meaning than just to get rid of dishonest money changers.
4. When Jesus cursed the fig tree the next day, He bore further witness that the old **Israelite priesthood and those who still followed them were now judged, found fruitless, and would become mostly barren thereafter.**
5. When He promised His apostles that if they had sufficient faith they could remove a mountain (Matthew 21:20-22), this was **actually in process of fulfillment.** God's Kingdom was itself as a "Mountain." **And the rulership of God's Kingdom had been taken from those ruling in Judea and had now been given to Jesus' apostles.**

III. His further teachings verify these same truths.

- A. He showed how ancient warnings concerning Israel **applied to Him and His time.** The Lord had sent prophets to Israel through the centuries, only to be slain by apostate leaders. Now those of that day **would slay not only the prophets, but God's Son** and cause Israel's utter destruction (Compare Matthew 21: 33-41 and Isaiah 5:1-7).
- B. He was the chief corner stone prophesied to be rejected (Psalm 118:22), but He would establish a new Kingdom and they would be rejected (Matthew 21:42-4).
- C. They had been invited to the Wedding Feast Israel had so long anticipated, but they had refused, and lepers and strangers (the Gentiles) would eat in their place and receive their inheritance (2 Kings 7: Matthew 22:1-10).

IV. When someone posed the conundrum (whose would be the wife of seven brothers who married the widow of the first dead brother), **they proved their ignorance of its foundational law --- whose purpose was to witness of Him!**

And the answer He gave was very meaningful for all that was soon to occur!

- A. The Mosaic Law given by God had commanded that kinsmen marry the wives of deceased Israelite men in order to raise up seed to the deceased.
- B. **But this law taught of Jesus the Christ --- mankind's Kinsman/Redeemer.** Because Adam and thus all his seed had become subject to both physical and spiritual death, **Christ would have to come and be the Kinsman/Redeemer who would again raise up Adam and Adam's seed!**
 1. He would be the rightful **bridegroom** of all faithful saints of all seven periods of earth's time.

2. Furthermore, because that generation, for the most part, were rejecting Him, it would be they who would be denied the sealing powers [now bestowed on Peter], and thus in the resurrection could neither marry nor be given in marriage, but remain barren in heaven (Le Grande Richard, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, pp. 204-6).

3. This loss was highly pertinent!

V. For the Messiah who had entered meekly upon an ass was required by the stonehearted to pass His judgments and to make two cursings. *Both cursings were reversals of the covenants previously offered to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. These were:*

- A. The covenant of the inheritance of land and
- B. The covenant of multiplicity of seed.

C. That is, *when He cast out the rebellious from the temple, He was showing that the unbelieving would soon be cast out of their Promised Land (Judea), but more particularly out of their True Promised Land --- Eternal Life with Him.*

D. And when He cursed the fig tree, and answered the questions regarding the seven brothers, *He manifest the loss pertaining to multiplicity of seed. Not all, but the unbelieving of that generation, would not have Eternal Seed, nor even marriage in the resurrection.*

E. Tragically, because of their choice to reject Him, who had come to fulfill these promised blessings, *not only would they be spiritually barren in this life, but barrenness would become their Eternal Lot.*

VI. Thus here was witness of profound reversals of Lot.

- A. The beginning of "Israel" through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was to be chosen to receive covenants offered by the Lord of **two great blessings: A Covenanted Land, and Seed without number.**
- B. All of the Lord's dealings with Israel until this time consisted of His working with them as a people to inherit these two great blessings.
- C. But now, they had rejected Him!
- D. And He who had come to make those blessings a reality, now had no choice but to turn the promised blessings into two terrible cursings!
- E. Those cursings were "Desolation" and "Barrenness" --- the very opposite of all they had been promised.

VII. Each of us as individuals within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been given the same promises in these Latter-days. And now we too must make our own choices. Will we choose "Eternal Life" and "Fruitfulness?" Or will we also choose "Desolation" and "Barrenness?"