



# HICKORY GROVE

BAPTIST CHURCH

Tears of Mercy

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Luke 19:41-44

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*<sup>41</sup> And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, <sup>42</sup> saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. <sup>43</sup> For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side <sup>44</sup> and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."*

*(Pastor prays)*

I've been praying and searching all week for a way to get at the story in Chapter 19 and especially this passage because, of the four Gospel writers, Luke is the only one who recorded this particular scene. Palm Sunday is peculiar. Next Sunday is the Resurrection and this Friday we meditate on the crucifixion. But the triumphal entry is confusing because the picture is of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey with the praise of people in His ears but tears of sorrow in His eyes.

What's happening here? Luke takes us there and in Chapter 19 we join the Lord Jesus on the final journey to the Holy City. Prior to Chapter 19, the story of Jesus is beautifully written and especially inspiring in Luke's account. In Chapter 19 the pace builds, and in verse 28 Luke says, "He went up to Jerusalem." That's where the last sacrifice would be made, the one that would reconcile God and man at the cross.

That's all days away. In this passage, the people don't know what they don't know. What they *do* know is that there is a lot of excitement. But Jesus knew that the excitement of the crowds

did not correspond to a change in heart. It didn't then and it doesn't now. What a striking contrast: a weeping Jesus and a happy crowd. This is a profoundly tragic passage. This is the tragedy of what is thought of in light of what might have been. This is the story of missing it, the story of missing the true and real Jesus and receiving judgment. They had their own concept of Jesus and because of that they missed the real Jesus.

That happens so often even today. People formulate a personal Jesus, a therapeutic Jesus, a friend Jesus, an easy going and understanding Jesus. They formulate a helpful, friendly and even activist Jesus and they miss the *real* Jesus, the Jesus who is the holy and righteous lamb of God; the real Jesus who died on the cross in the place of sinners thereby taking the wrath of God in the place of sinners; the real Jesus who was bodily raised from the dead, who has ascended into Heaven and now sits at the right hand of God the Father; the real Jesus who is Lord of Heaven and earth.

I think this passage speaks to modern Christianity because so many who claim to be Christian have missed the real Jesus and according to the words of Christ Himself.

### **Judgment Happens When You Miss Jesus**

There are 3 things that bring judgment.

### **Judgment happens when you miss the mission of Jesus**

Notice what Luke tells us in verse 41. <sup>41</sup> *And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it,* You see that little phrase, "drew near" or "came near"? Luke has used that phrase to show pace and intensity and intentionality. What you have here is the triumphal entry of the King and Jerusalem failing to receive the King on His terms. They hosannaed Jesus, praised Jesus, but never believed the mission of Jesus. Let's not fall into the same rabbit hole of confusion and claim that everything is a Gospel issue. If everything is a Gospel issue, then nothing is a Gospel issue. We read of Jesus that He set His face toward Jerusalem for one purpose. Paul gives it straight in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. <sup>3</sup> *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,* <sup>4</sup> *that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,* That's the Gospel. The people in the text missed the mission of Jesus. Judgment happens when you miss the mission of Jesus.

## **Judgment happens when you miss the compassion of Jesus**

As the singing crowd comes to the top of the mountain, they catch their first glimpse of the city, and the sight of that city hits Jesus with a wave of emotion because He knows what is coming. Think with me for a moment about how great the tendency and compassion of Christ is toward sinners! He knew who was down there. Pilate was down there. The Pharisees were down there. He knew the inhabitants of Jerusalem. He knew their cruelty, their self-righteousness, stubbornness, their prejudice. He knew well what was going to happen to Him down there. And yet knowing all of this, Jesus wept for doomed sinners. He wept. This is not the same word used by John in John 11: 35 when Jesus wept at Lazarus' grave. This is the strongest Greek word for "weeping." It's when Peter wept bitterly after he had denied Jesus three times. G. Campbell Morgan wrote, "The son of God in tears. The wondering angels see. Be thou astonished, Oh my soul. He shed those tears for thee."

He wept over their superficiality, hypocrisy, shallowness, and rejection. I have a couple of thoughts about Jesus weeping. Crying is a gift, an expression, a sign that you are feeling and do feel, and God uses that. J. C Ryle says, "We know very little of true Christianity if we do not feel a deep concern about the souls of unconverted people." The Bible says that it is God's kindness that leads to repentance. Here is Jesus weeping over the doomed. Don't let Him weep over you. Judgment happens when you miss the mission of Jesus. Judgment happens when you miss the compassion of Jesus.

## **Judgment happens when you miss the mercy of Jesus**

Verse 41 tells us he is weeping but verse 42 tells us what he says. Let's read verse 42.

*<sup>42</sup> saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. Now if you were to read the whole passage you would see the word "you" 15 times in three verses making this a very personal indictment. Not only that, do you remember what Jesus said back in chapter 13 when He lamented over Jerusalem the first time? Luke says in Chapter 13:34, <sup>34</sup> O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! Jesus was filled with mercy, loving the unloveable, and beseeching the hard-hearted. When Jesus says, "if you — even*

you—“ He is saying that the mercy of God found in Jesus reaches out to the hardest, worst, twisted, most lost person there is.

Mercy is not giving what sin calls for but it has to be on his terms. Verse 42 says the things that make for peace. When you have peace with God and peace with yourself, you believe the cross, you have repentance and are yielding and you surrender, you are believing and trust in Jesus. Verse 42 ends with an ominous statement. It is judgment. Let's read it and take it to heart.

*<sup>42</sup> saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.*

There is an end to the offer of mercy. The day of mercy is gone and hidden from you. The cup of wrath is full but hidden from you. Willful human blindness becomes divine judgment. This is God hardening Pharaoh's heart. This is Romans 1 when God gave them over. This is having ears and not hearing and eyes but not seeing.

In verses 43 through 44, Jesus describes what's going to happen in 70 AD. The Roman general Titus will destroy Jerusalem. Do you see why? It's at the end of verse 44. *<sup>44</sup> and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”* The time of your visitation. This is one way the Bible talks about God moving. In Exodus 4, God saw the afflictions of His people and visited them. In Luke 1, Luke reminds us of Zachariah as he was prophesying about Jesus when he said, “the tender mercy of God from on high will visit us.” In Luke 7, Luke tells us about how Jesus raised the widow's son from the dead and the people realized that God has visited His people! Here in Luke 19, Jesus, with tears in His eyes says, judgment comes when you miss Him.

I wonder, will history repeat itself in you? When is the time of your visitation? I want you to bow your head and close your eyes as we close. I want you to remember when someone witnessed to you, a parent wept and prayed for you. Remember a Bible that was given to you or a tragedy that sobered you. God is here and He is known in Jesus. He is known in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Ask God to save you based on what Jesus has done. Judgment happens when you miss Jesus.

*(Pastor prays)*

