

Participant's Guide 5

The Temple Cleansed

I. Celebrating Christ as the Chief Shepherd

1 Peter 5:4, " and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away." It is wonderful to have shepherds to guide us but to know that the Chief Shepherd cares for us is reassuring.

II. Read this week's story: Matthew 21: 12-16, 23-46; Mark 11: 15-19, 27-33; 12: 1-12; Luke 19: 45-48; 20: 1-19 DA 65 and look at the Harmony of the Gospels to Find when each occurred.

III. For Meditation:

- a. **After the temple cleansing:** After a season the priests and rulers ventured back to the temple. When the panic had abated, they were seized with anxiety to know what would be the next movement of Jesus. They expected Him to take the throne of David. Quietly returning to the temple, they heard the voices of men, women, and children praising God. Upon entering, they stood transfixed before the wonderful scene. They saw the sick healed, the blind restored to sight, and deaf receive their hearing, and the crippled leap for joy. The children were foremost in the rejoicing. Jesus had healed their maladies; He had clasped them in His arms, received their kisses of grateful affection, and some of them had fallen asleep upon His breast as He was teaching the people. Now with glad voices the children sounded His praise. They repeated the hosannas of the day before, and waved palm branches triumphantly before the Saviour. The temple echoed and re-echoed with their acclamations, "Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; He is just, and having salvation!" [Psalm 118:26](#); [Zechariah 9:9](#). "Hosanna to the Son of David!" DA 592
- b. **Jesus Authority questioned:** Luke 20: 2-8. "Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?"³ But He answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me: ⁴The baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men?"⁵ And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why ⁶then did you not believe him?' ⁶ But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet."⁷ So they answered that they did not know where *it was* from. ⁸ And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."
- c. **The Cornerstone:** Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?"⁴³ "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it."⁴⁴ And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." Matthew 21: 42-44.

V. Prayer this week:

1. Five People who need your prayer support;
2. Your Church in its witness for Christ;
3. Your Family it will be close and united.
4. The leaders of your church, conference, city and province.
5. That you will have the courage to leave your comfort zone to fulfill a calling from God.

Monday—The Second Cleansing of the temple and ministry in the temple (Jesus day again begins and ends in Bethany)

On Sunday, after His weeping over Jerusalem, Jesus descended the Mount of Olives and without much fanfare entered Jerusalem and spent a brief time in the temple. On Monday His mission, as the now declared Messiah, is to make the temple the blessing God intended. At the beginning of His ministry He dramatically cleansed the temple of practices and business contrary to the spirit of true worship of God. Now in the climactic days of His ministry He does it again. Although the cleansing was not a permanently adhered to, the leaders had been shown with unmistakable clarity God's ideal. Jesus again declared His messiahship by saying " My House is to be a house of prayer but you have made it a den of thieves." A worship center for God is to be a Spiritual place. It is never to be a place for the exploitation of people for personal gain.

When the temple courtyard cleared of all the business commotion related to the sale for sacrifices, people who desperately needed Jesus crowded in. All those who needed Christ's healing power— sick, blind, lame-- gathered around Jesus. People were praising God and singing as they witnessed Christ's compassion and power. What a contrast to what was happening there just a short time before. It never ceases to amaze me how the marginalized in the world find help and healing in Jesus. I can picture people coming today during Covid 19 and His healing them. The dedication of the front line health workers give me a picture of Jesus.

Then the children, as if inspired, broke into singing, "Hosanna to the Son of David." The chief priests and scribes appealed to Jesus, please stop all this commotion. Please stop all the children from shouting. Jesus however quoted psalms 8 prophesying the affirmation of the messiah by children. Jesus took His position as guardian of the temple on this day.

With our churches closed complying with government health regulations, perhaps it is a good time to reflect how we can more meaningfully make our worship center a place of spirituality and blessing. It is encouraging to witness how people show their care for one another even over social media. Can we anticipate that when we get back together there will be a renewal of care, greater expressions of gratitude, and depth of spirituality in worship as a result of our long time for reflection?

Countdown to Calvary—5

Tuesday—Teaching in the Temple-- Christ's final day of public ministry (Jesus begins the day in Bethany and retires to the Mount of Olives)

Monday was a day to cleanse the temple and perform healing ministry there. Jesus knew there were still many questions about him by religious leaders and people that needed clarification. So He decided to use Tuesday as a day for teaching in the temple.

After the events of Monday the Sanhedrin met early Tuesday morning to determine how to deal with Jesus. They decided they would try to find some basis by which they could condemn him and bring Him to trial.

As Jesus taught the people in one of the courts of the temple Tuesday morning the religious leaders appeared. Several chapters in the gospels contain the teaching and dialogue which followed which must have lasted for hours. Jesus used parables, teaching, appeals and, when necessary, rebukes to help people, including His critics, understand the message of His Kingdom. In the end his critics became silent as Jesus continued to teach. It was His final day of public ministry and He tried every way He could to appeal to the hearts of His hearers. His final words to the Pharisees recorded in Matthew 23 may have seemed harsh but all through the Bible people who are supposed to be representing God but are coercive, harsh and uncaring receive some of God's strongest rebukes. If we are to represent Him, He longs to have us minister with hearts warm with God's love and not harsh and critical as is manifested so often in our world.

One encouraging event that day in the temple happened when the Greeks came to the disciples saying, "we want to see Jesus." With the Greeks in the crowd, Jesus told the people what was soon to happen to Him. These powerful words

were a part of this message; “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth will draw all peoples to Myself.” The Greeks were an illustration of people from many nations who would be drawn to Jesus. As we today view the power of the gospel in the countries of the world we can witness the truthfulness of Jesus comments. How wonderful to be the part of lifting up of Jesus—the hope of this world.

After a heavy day of teaching, Jesus retired to the Mount of Olives with some of His disciples and as the sun was setting He gave them the message about His second return in Matthew 24 and 25. Thank You Jesus for your teaching on this Tuesday which has given lasting help for over 2000 years.