

May 6, 2018

The Fig Tree

Matthew 21:18-22

- Jesus had indeed entered Jerusalem as their delivering King, but Rome was not the enemy. Satan was the enemy who had captured God's people through Adam's sin.

***Rom. 5:12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned...*

- Satan had become "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4) enslaving man's will to his own will (2 Tim. 2:26).
- However, in Gen 3:15 the Lord promised to send the Seed of the woman, Who would deliver His people from their sin to restore them to fellowship with God by the shedding of His blood.

***Gen 3:21** And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them*

- Therefore, from the very beginning of humanity's history after the fall, God's intention has always been to bring His people back to Himself through the sacrificial work of the Son, to be received by faith and not by the work of man (Eph. 2:8).
- The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the Gospel, the Message of God's grace for His enslaved (Rom.6:20) people.

- It is the Gospel of God's grace that was announced and given to Israel at Mt. Sinai in the Law and the Levitical legislation of the Old Covenant.
- This means that the all of the rituals of the Old Covenant sacrificial system were effective because they looked to being replaced by the permanent New Covenant.

Jer 31:33-34 *"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be My people. 34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."*

- All of the requirements and activities of the Old Covenant were to be entered into *by faith*.
- This is the Covenant that God had established with Israel so that Israel would be His special nation through whom He would reveal and apply His redeeming Grace to the Gentiles throughout the world (Gen. 22:18; Gen. 3:15).

The Failed Fig Tree

- In Hosea 9:10, the Lord likens Israel to a *fig tree*. God created Israel to be His fruit bearing nation so that His Name would be honored among all the nations.

John 13:35 *By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love [Gal. 5:22-23] one another.*

- However, as we know from their history, Israel failed miserably to produce the fruit of Righteousness.
- The morning after cleansing the temple of its corrupt activity, Jesus and the disciples return to Jerusalem. He finds a fig tree with leaves but no figs.

Hosea 9:10 Like grapes in the wilderness, I found Israel. Like the first fruit on the fig tree

- In cursing the tree, Jesus was declaring that Israel would no longer be God's primary means of Self-revelation to the world.
- Jesus was declaring that He had come to replace the Old Covenant which was God's relational means of relating to and maintaining Israel. He had come to establish the New and everlasting Covenant (Heb.13:20) in His blood (Luke 22:20; Jer. 31:33).

Jer 8:13 When I would gather them, declares the Lord, there are no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree; even the leaves are withered, and what I gave them has passed away from them."