

I. The Background of the Triumphal Entry: The Glory Returns

A. The Glory of God departs the temple in Ezekiel 10

1. The saddest day in the history of Israel
 - a. A people uniquely chosen for fellowship and favor with God in all His glory
 - b. A people with whom the Almighty Creator of the universe, the God above all gods, the King above all kings has chosen to enter into eternal covenant of love and care and blessing
 - c. A people chosen by God, delivered by God, nurtured by God, sustained by God, established by God, loved by God
 - d. This people, favored by God above all the peoples of the world, drives God away by their sin of faithlessness.
 - e. The saddest day in Israel's history is the day the glory of God departs!
2. The sequence of God's reluctant departure from the people He loves is recorded in Ezekiel 10
 - a. v. 4 The glory leaves the throne above the cherubim and goes to the outer door
 - b. v. 18 -19 to the entrance of the east gate of the temple
 - c. 11:23 "And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain that is on the east side of the city."
 - (1) From the eastern gate, across the Kidron Valley
 - (2) To the Mount of Olives
3. God's departure from the city indicates God actively assigning His people to the curses they agreed upon when they ratified the covenant He offered them.
 - a. He has been patient
 - b. He has been faithful
 - c. Now He is just
 - (1) As He leaves the city on account of their faithlessness
 - (2) So they will leave the city on account of their faithlessness
4. Ezekiel told the exiles in Babylon all the Lord had shown him in the vision of the departure of the glory of God from the temple in Jerusalem
 - a. They knew their city was destroyed and they were in exile because their sin drove away the grace and glory of God
 - b. Imagine their sorrow, but imagine also the hope and longing for the glory to return
 - (1) Chapter 11:1-13 God reveals the faithlessness of Israel that drives him away
 - (2) Chapter 11:14-21 God reveals future hope -
 - (a) **Ezekiel 11:18-20 (ESV) ¹⁸ And when they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable**

things and all its abominations. ¹⁹ And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, ²⁰ that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

- (b) That promise, that He would one day, again, take them as His people and be their God is a promise that the glory one day will return to the temple and the people of God!

B. The Glory of God returns to the temple

- 1. Christ is the glory of God
 - a. Not merely a good teacher, or a nice guy, or a compassionate healer, or a worthwhile example
 - (1) **Hebrews 1:3 (ESV)** ³ *He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*
 - (2) **John 1:14 (ESV)** ¹⁴ *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*
 - b. When Jesus Christ, the Son of God rides into Jerusalem and the enters the temple that day, he takes the very same route that the glory of God took when He left the temple in Ezekiel's day!
- 2. Christ returns to the temple
 - a. "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord"
 - (1) The people do not miss the significance of the event
 - (2) The people do miss the significance of Jesus
 - (a) Prophet
 - (b) Zealot
 - (c) Healer
 - (d) Champion
 - (e) Trouble-maker
 - b. Christ leaves the temple after the indignation of the people
 - (1) The second saddest day in Israelite history
 - (2) They caught the significance of the event but missed the significance of Jesus.

T.S. Unless we too should observe an event but miss the significance of Jesus, I want to remind you of why Jesus came.

II. Why does Jesus come?

A. To fulfill the Law so that we might enter a covenant of grace

- 1. **Matthew 5:17** *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*

- a. The Law is a covenant,
 - (1) an agreed upon set of terms that define the nature of a relationship from both sides.
 - (2) Since the Law is not merely a set of rules but terms for a relationship, there is the expectation that once all the terms have been met by all the parties, then the covenant itself has been fulfilled and the relationship may be revised according to new terms.
- b. The Law is an expression of God's will for the relationship He will have with the people of His choosing
 - (1) **John 6:38** *For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.*
 - (2) Jesus declares that He has come to meet all the terms of the covenant God has made that rules the relationship He has with His people.
- 2. Israel demonstrated the inability of even the best intentioned human beings to fulfill the terms of the covenantal relationship God desires with His people.
 - a. Jesus fulfills the Law, accomplishing God's will without sin, as the representative of the entire human race.
 - b. Once Jesus has fulfilled the former covenant, by living under it without infraction, a new covenant can be ratified.
- 3. This is what God offers in Ezekiel 11!
 - a. God offers one heart and a new spirit
 - b. God offers to remove the heart of stone and give a heart of flesh
 - c. God offers to enable us to walk in His statutes and keep his commandments
 - d. God offers that we may be His people and He will be our God
- 4. This covenant will be effected through Jesus Christ and faith in Him

B. To clarify the distinction between the reality of the Kingdom of God and the reality of the kingdom of this world

- 1. Jesus
 - a. **Matthew 10:34-35** *"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."*
 - b. **Luke 12:49** *"I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!"*
- 2. Jesus' activity of sinlessness brings sinfulness into uncomfortable clarity.
 - a. Jesus knows this
 - b. and knows that this recognition leads to repentance, freedom from sin, and eternal joy.

C. To save sinners who cannot and do not fulfill the Law or accomplish God's will, and who are thus in need of a Savior

1. **Mark 2:17** *And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”*
 - a. **Luke 5:32** *I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”*
2. Christ offers Himself to God on your behalf in three ways
 - a. He offers His sinless life as your success (faithful fulfilment of law)
 - b. He offers His sinless life as your replacement (death on the cross)
 - c. He offers His sinless life as your champion (enduring intercession)

III. The Glory Has Come in Christ

A. What will you do?

1. Welcome Him
 - a. Repent
 - b. Put your faith in Him
 - c. Walk in His ways
 - d. Entrust every detail of your heart and life to Him
 - e. Be His people and let Him be your God
2. Drive Him away
 - a. Refuse to see Him as He is?
 - b. Refuse to His purpose?

B. What will you do with God's glory?