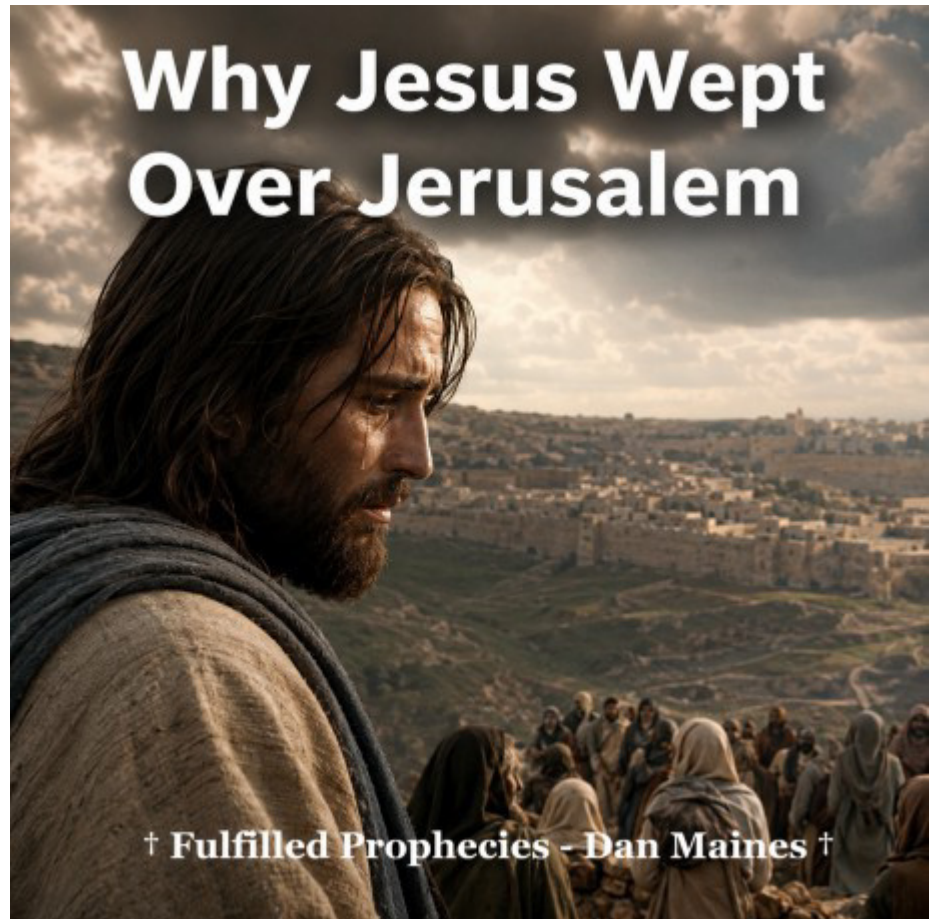


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Why Jesus Wept Over Jerusalem



By Dan Maines

Why Jesus Wept Over Jerusalem

Introduction

† When Jesus approached Jerusalem for the last time before His crucifixion, He did something many people overlook. He wept over the city. His tears were not because Rome would eventually conquer it. His tears were because Jerusalem had rejected the Messiah whom God had sent to save them. (Luke 19:41-44)

† This is one of the greatest covenant moments in Scripture. The city that had been chosen to receive God's blessings was about to experience the judgment foretold by Moses, the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles because it refused God's visitation. (Deuteronomy 28:49-52; Matthew 23:37-38)

† The wow moment is this: Jesus wasn't mourning Rome's victory. He was mourning Israel's rejection of her Messiah and the covenant judgment that would soon fall upon Jerusalem.

Jerusalem Did Not Recognize The Time Of Her Visitation

Luke 19:41-44

When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known on this day, even you, the conditions for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will put up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground, and throw down your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

† Jesus identified the real reason for Jerusalem's coming destruction. They failed to recognize that God Himself had visited them through His Messiah. (John 1:11; Luke 1:68)

† The siege Jesus described happened exactly as He foretold when the Romans surrounded Jerusalem in AD 70 and destroyed both the city and the temple. (Luke 21:20-24)

† This wasn't political judgment against a nation. It was covenant judgment against the people who rejected the One promised throughout the Old Testament. (Matthew 21:42-44)

Jesus Desired To Gather Jerusalem

Matthew 23:37-39

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who have been sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

† Jesus wasn't expressing a lack of power. He was exposing Israel's unwillingness to receive the One whom the Father had sent. (John 5:39-40)

† The words your house is left unto you desolate announced the end of the temple system and the Old Covenant order. (Hebrews 8:13)

† Their desolation wasn't random. It was the fulfillment of the covenant warnings given centuries earlier through Moses and the prophets. (Deuteronomy 28:15-68)

Temple Judgment Was Certain

Matthew 24:1-2

Jesus left the temple area and was going on His way when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him. But He responded and said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down."

† Jesus' tears over Jerusalem were immediately followed by His announcement that the temple itself would be destroyed. (Luke

19:41-44)

† The temple represented the Old Covenant system that had rejected its Messiah. Its destruction marked the end of that covenant age. (Hebrews 8:13)

† Jesus' prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70 when the Romans completely destroyed the temple, exactly as He foretold. (Luke 21:20-22)

The Kingdom Was Taken From Unfaithful Israel

Matthew 21:42-44

Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures,

'A stone which the builders rejected, This has become the chief cornerstone; This came about from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruit. And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and on whomever it falls, it will crush him."

† Israel's leaders rejected the cornerstone, Jesus Christ, even though He was the very foundation God had chosen. (Psalm 118:22-23; Acts 4:10-12)

† Jesus declared that the kingdom would be taken from unbelieving Israel and given to His New Covenant people who would bear its fruit. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

† Jerusalem's destruction wasn't the beginning of God's plan. It was the conclusion of the Old Covenant age and the establishment of the New Covenant kingdom. (Hebrews 12:28)

These Were The Days Of Vengeance

Luke 21:20-22

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near. Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those who are inside the city must leave, and those who are in the country must not enter the city; because these are days of punishment, so that all things which have been written will be fulfilled.

† Jesus identified the Roman siege as the fulfillment of everything written concerning Jerusalem's covenant judgment. (Daniel 9:26-27)

† The phrase all things which are written points to the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies regarding the end of the Old Covenant system. (Luke 24:44-47)

† The believers obeyed Jesus' warning and escaped before the city was destroyed, demonstrating His faithfulness to His promises. (Matthew 24:15-22)

The Blood Of The Prophets Was Required Of That Generation

Luke 11:49-51

For this reason also, the wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill, and some they will persecute, so that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation.'

† Jesus placed the coming judgment squarely upon His own generation, exactly as He repeatedly declared throughout His ministry. (Matthew 23:35-36; Matthew 24:34)

† This wasn't a prediction for thousands of years later. It was an imminent covenant judgment against first-century Jerusalem. (Revelation 1:1-3)

† Jesus' tears reflected His compassion, but His words also confirmed that God's justice would not be delayed forever. (Romans 2:5-6)

He Came Unto His Own

John 1:10-11

He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, and yet the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not accept Him.

† Jesus wasn't rejected because the evidence was lacking. He was rejected despite fulfilling the Scriptures before their eyes. (Luke 24:25-27)

† John's words explain why Jesus wept. The very people chosen to receive the Messiah refused Him. (Luke 19:41-44)

† Their rejection brought the covenant judgment that Jesus had repeatedly warned was coming upon that generation. (Matthew 23:35-38)

Paul Shared The Same Burden

Romans 9:1-5

I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying; my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and

unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my countrymen, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and daughters, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the temple service, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

† Paul's sorrow reflected the same burden Jesus had for Israel.

† Israel possessed extraordinary covenant privileges, yet many rejected the Messiah to whom those privileges pointed. (John 5:39-40)

† God's judgment didn't come because He lacked compassion. It came after generations of patience and repeated calls to repentance. (Romans 10:21)

Historical References

† Josephus vividly describes the Roman siege of Jerusalem, the embankments built against the city, the famine, and the complete destruction that fulfilled Jesus' words. (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 5-6)

† Eusebius records that the Christians remembered Jesus' warning and fled to Pella before Jerusalem was destroyed. (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5)

† Tacitus confirms the Roman campaign against Jerusalem and the destruction of the city and temple. (Tacitus, Histories, Book 5)

How It Applies To Us Today

† Jesus' compassion reminds us that God desires people to receive His grace rather than experience judgment.

† We should never ignore God's revealed truth when He has clearly spoken through His Son.

† Our confidence today rests in Christ's finished work and the fully established New Covenant kingdom.

† We don't wait for another destruction of Jerusalem because the covenant judgment Jesus foretold has already been fulfilled.

Q & A Appendix

Q: Why did Jesus weep over Jerusalem?

A: Because the city rejected its Messiah and did not recognize the time of God's visitation, bringing covenant judgment upon itself. (Luke 19:41-44; John 1:11)

Q: Was Jesus weeping because Rome was going to win a military victory?

A: No. He was weeping because Jerusalem had rejected God's Messiah, making the coming destruction the result of covenant judgment rather than merely a political event. (Matthew 23:37-38; Luke 19:41-44)

Q: When were Jesus' words fulfilled?

A: They were fulfilled in AD 70 when the Romans surrounded and destroyed Jerusalem exactly as Jesus foretold. (Luke 21:20-24; Matthew 24:34)

Q: Did believers escape the destruction?

A: Yes. The early Christians obeyed Jesus' warning and fled before Jerusalem was destroyed. (Luke 21:20-22; Matthew 24:15-22)

Q: What is the great lesson from Jesus' tears?

A: God's compassion and His justice are both revealed. Jesus sincerely desired His people to receive Him, but covenant judgment came upon those who rejected Him. (Luke 19:41-44; Luke 11:49-51)

Q: Did Jesus want Jerusalem to repent instead of being judged?

A: Yes. Jesus sincerely desired Jerusalem to receive Him as the promised Messiah. His tears reveal God's compassion even as He announced the judgment their rejection would bring. (Matthew 23:37-39; Luke 19:41-44)

Q: Why is Jesus' weeping over Jerusalem important to fulfilled eschatology?

A: Because it shows that the coming judgment was directed against first-century Jerusalem for rejecting the Messiah, not against the entire world at the end of history. Jesus' prophecy was fulfilled just as He declared. (Luke 19:41-44; Luke 21:20-22; Matthew 24:34)

Q: Why didn't Jesus weep over Rome?

A: Because Rome was only the instrument God used to execute covenant judgment. Jesus wept over Jerusalem because she rejected her Messiah and refused the time of God's visitation. (Luke 19:41-44; Matthew 23:37-38)

This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies. †

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Source Index

† Luke 19:41-44, Matthew 23:37-39, Matthew 24:1-2, Matthew 21:42-44, Luke 21:20-22, Luke 11:49-51, John 1:10-11, Romans 9:1-5

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 5-6; Tacitus, Histories, Book 5; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5

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