

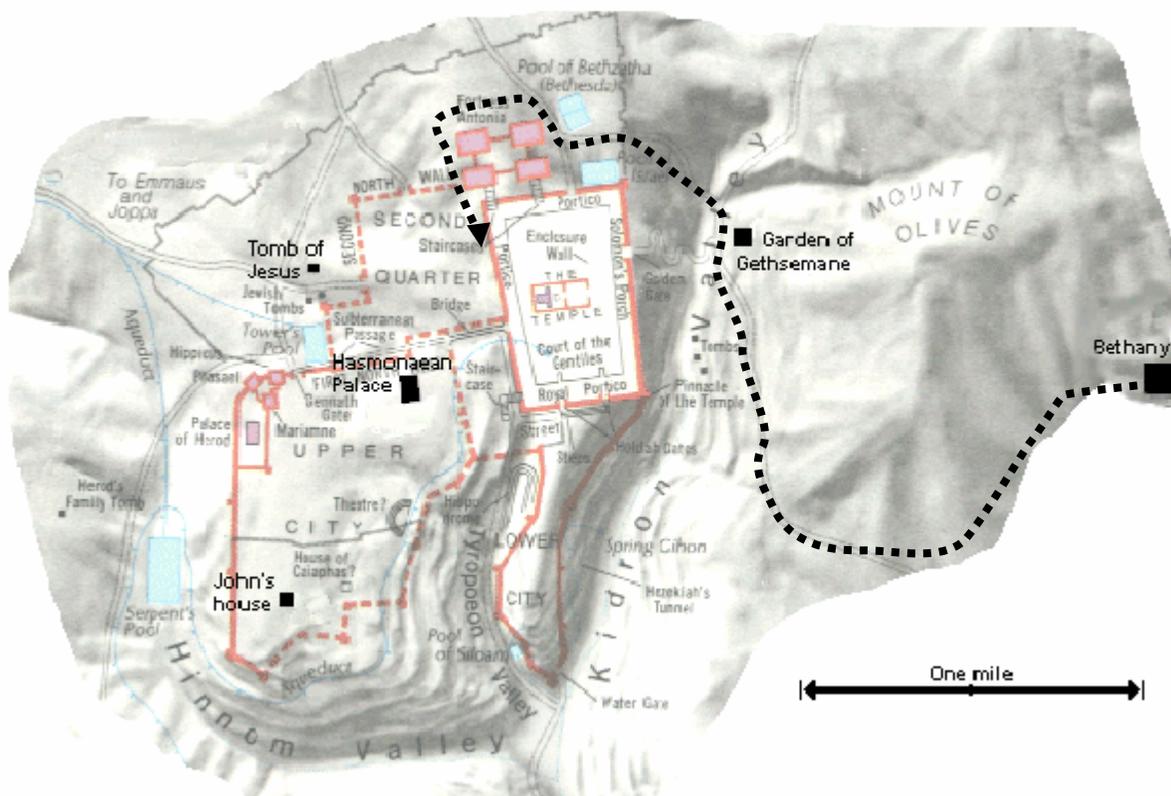
## Lesson 41

Time –3/31/30 AD, 11 Nisan -the Last week - Sunday

In our last lesson we saw Jesus receive an anointing on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan, the first month in the Jewish Calendar. The anointing was done with perfume by Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. According to Exodus, the tenth of Nisan was the day that the lamb for the Passover sacrifice was to be selected. As I pointed out, I believe that Mary's anointing of Jesus fulfilled in reality the meaning of the 10<sup>th</sup> day selection of the Passover lamb. The fragrant aroma spoke to the fact that Jesus was the righteous Lamb of God who was without defect.

Then we saw the procurement of the colt on which Jesus wound His way around the shoulder of the Mount of Olives which was packed with the tents of at least several hundred thousands of pilgrims who were camped there awaiting Passover.

We also saw the significance of the chant the crowd took up "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" We saw the prophecy of that chant in Psalms 118,



*Map of the Entry into Jerusalem  
On the Way into the City.*

As you can see from the map above, Jesus' journey into Jerusalem and the Temple was a little less than four miles. Yet we learn later, in Mark 11:11, that when He arrived it was already late. That probably means it was close to sunset, which at that time of year was about 6 PM. We

aren't told when Jesus left Bethany, but even if it was as late as noon, it meant that Jesus took close to six hours to travel four miles. That gives you an idea of the massive crowd that must have thronged around Jesus, making progress nearly impossible.

I think we can conclude that not only did many thousands want to see Him, but many thronged close hoping to be healed by Him. We also will see a passage where Jesus addressed the crowd. Finally, He came to the part of the road which was in front of the Eastern Gate of the Temple which sat on Mt. Moriah above. Many of the crowd would have gathered on the side of the Mount of Olives opposite the Temple Mount. The site of Jesus' remarks would have been a sort of natural amphitheater with the eastern wall of the Temple Mount on one side and the Mount of Olives on the other. Although Jesus' remarks recorded here can be read in a few minutes, I expect the full text of what He said would have been considerably longer. I believe that He must have repeated most of the high points of the message that He had been delivering again and again for three and a half years.

**John 12:17-18** **Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. Many people, because they had heard that he had given this miraculous sign, went out to meet him.**

Part of the excitement was due to Jesus' miracle which even the Sanhedrim and the Pharisees couldn't deny. That was the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead. This passage tells us that the crowd on the road wasn't just made up of the pilgrims camped on the Mount of Olives. Many of them "went out" (*from where they lived in Jerusalem*) where Lazarus was well known.

**John 12:19** **So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"**

These Pharisees evidently weren't "in the crowd" as were those described next in Luke (verse 39). They must have been on top of the eastern wall of the Temple looking down on the vast crowd and hearing their chants of "Hosanna" which must have filled the valley. To them, it seemed like, "the whole world has gone after Him!" There were probably at least several hundred thousand in that crowd. Josephus recorded that thirty-five years later, in 65 AD, that the Jewish leadership claimed that 2 ½ million pilgrims attended that Passover. Each year most of them camped on the Mount of Olives just next to the road from Bethany.

**Luke 19:39-40** **Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out."**

Not all the Pharisees were looking down from the Temple Mount. Some were in the crowd. Jesus knew that this reception had been ordained from eternity past and prophesied in Psalms 118 which we studied last time. A few months earlier, while He had been avoiding Jerusalem, He had told the Pharisees that the next time He came to Jerusalem the people would shout this refrain:

Mark 13:35b “I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

**Luke 19:41-42 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.**

Notice that even though the people were celebrating and acclaiming Him, Jesus knew that they didn’t believe in Him as the Son of God, the savior of the world. They were looking for a material savior who would bring them political “peace and prosperity.” Most of them hadn’t reached that needful first stage where they were able to say, “be merciful to me, a sinner.” They also did not realize that the Lord was about to create a far better “peace” from Jerusalem than the one for which they were wishing. This was the peace that Psalms 122:6 was talking about when it enjoined people to “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.”

**Luke 19:43-44 The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another,<sup>1</sup> because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.”**

Here Jesus was referring to the second great siege and destruction of Jerusalem which had been prophesied in Ezekiel. Considering that prophecy had been given over six hundred years before, and that it prophesied the timing of events in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD to the day, it is one of the most remarkable prophecies in Scripture. We will take a little time to study that now.

***The Prophecy of the Two Sieges of Jerusalem – Ezekiel 4:1-8***  
***Old Testament Passage fulfilled with: “Your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side.”***

This prophecy was revealed to Ezekiel by the LORD in about 593 BC, or about eight years before the destruction of Jerusalem. It begins with the LORD speaking to Ezekiel in a vision.

**Ezekiel 4:1 “Now, son of man (Ezekiel), take a clay tablet, put it in front of you and draw the city of Jerusalem on it.**

In the Book of Ezekiel, it is recorded that this instruction took place on the plain outside of Tel Abib (*a town in Babylon*). It took place in the presence of a vision of the glory of the LORD. That vision included images which portrayed the First Advent of the true Son of Man (the four living things) and the Second Advent (the Son of Man on the throne). Everything that played out here was part of the vision. Everything related to the promised Messiah.

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<sup>1</sup> *This was fulfilled by the Romans in 70 AD.*

First Ezekiel was instructed to take a clay tablet and draw on it an image of the city of Jerusalem.

**Ezekiel 4:2 Then lay siege to it: Erect siege works against it, build a ramp up to it, set up camps against it and put battering rams around it.**

In the vision, Ezekiel was told to add to the depiction of Jerusalem additional details. Those details made clear that the Jerusalem illustrated on the tablet was under siege. We are to understand that as the “son of man” Ezekiel represented Jesus Christ,<sup>2</sup> the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Trinity which was the LORD. It was the LORD who laid siege to the historical Jerusalem represented in this image. The LORD did it in 586 BC through His instruments, Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians.

**Ezekiel 4:3a Then take an iron pan, place it as an iron wall between you and the city and turn your face toward it.**

So what was this additional detail to the illustration supposed to communicate? We should understand that to see a ruler face to face implied that he was willing to listen to one’s petitions (Genesis 44:23). The same applied to someone like Moses who “saw God face to face” (Exodus 33:11). When the LORD’s face was exposed toward Israel blessing followed as was illustrated by the verses below:

Numbers 6:24-26 “The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.”

Psalms 4:6 “Many are asking, ‘Who can show us any good?’ Let the light of your face shine upon us, O LORD.”

Psalms 11:7 “For the LORD is righteous, he loves justice; upright men will see his face.”

However, when the LORD’s face was hidden, destruction followed:

Deuteronomy 3:16b-17 “They will forsake me and break the covenant I made with them. On that day I will become angry with them and forsake them; I will hide my face from them, and they will be destroyed.”

The LORD had said the following through Jeremiah about the upcoming 18 month siege prophesied here in Ezekiel:

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<sup>2</sup> “Son of man” is the title by which the LORD calls Ezekiel in the Book of Ezekiel.

Jeremiah 33:4-5 “For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says about the houses in this city and the royal palaces of Judah that have been torn down to be used against the siege ramps and the sword in the fight with the Babylonians: ‘They will be filled with the dead bodies of the men I will slay in my anger and wrath. I will hide my face from this city because of all its wickedness.’”

So, in Ezekiel 4:3a, the iron pan between Jerusalem and the face of “the son of man” meant that the LORD would hide His face from Jerusalem because of its wickedness. He wouldn’t hear the pleas of Jerusalem for deliverance. He would allow the disaster which was to follow. The “iron pan” represented the inflexibility of that judgment.

Ezekiel 4:3b **It will be under siege,<sup>3</sup> and you shall besiege it.**

Ezekiel, who was a part of the vision, represented Jesus Christ, the “Son of Man.” This is clear from the fact that Ezekiel was called “Son of Man” 93 times in Ezekiel. Daniel was called “Son of Man” once. The only other person called the “Son of Man” was Jesus Christ. He was called “Son of Man” 5 times in the Old Testament and 82 times in the New Testament. The Hebrew name Ezekiel (יְחֵזְקֵאל {yekh·ez·kāl'}) means “God will strengthen.” Jesus was also “the LORD” who would besiege the city.

Ezekiel 4:3c **This will be a sign to the house of Israel.**

The record of this vision was to be a sign to the house of Israel. It was a sign to the united people of Israel which included all of the twelve tribes which had come out of Egypt and had last been united under the kingship of David and Solomon.

Ezekiel 4:4 **“Then lie on your left side and put the sin of the house of Israel upon yourself. You are to bear their sin for the number of days you lie on your side.**

Ezekiel, representing the “Son of Man” was to lie on his left side (facing to his right) looking at the picture of sixth century BC Jerusalem under siege. He was not only to besiege Jerusalem, but as the “Son of Man, he was to bear their sin. The days he was to lie there were to represent a particular sin of “Israel.”

Ezekiel 4:5 **I have assigned you the same number of days as the years of their sin. So for 390 days you will bear the sin of the house of Israel.**

He was to lie there in his vision for 390 days. Each day Ezekiel laid there represented each year of Israel’s sin.

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<sup>3</sup> *This prophecy was given in the fifth year of the exile of Jehoiachin (Ezekiel 1: 2) 593-592 BC or 4-5 years before the siege of Jerusalem began in 588 BC.*

We must ask the question: “What was the sin that had occurred 390 years before the Babylonians laid siege to Jerusalem in 586 BC?”

“Israel” was the name by which the Northern Kingdom was often designated after the split of the United Kingdom of Israel. Because of this some commentators have speculated that this part of the vision referred to the sins of the Northern Kingdom which was created by Jeroboam after the reign of Solomon. This Kingdom was often referred to as “Israel” in the scriptures of this period to differentiate it from the Southern Kingdom, which was called “Judah.” However, this passage cannot be related to the Northern Kingdom of Israel because the Northern Kingdom was formed in 931 BC and ended in 721 BC. It lasted only 210 years. How could it have sinned for 390 years? Also, if this was related to the sin of the Northern Kingdom why was Jerusalem involved? Jerusalem was the capital of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. It is a Biblical principal that each one pays for their own sin (*Deut. 24:15, Jeremiah 31:30, Ezekiel 18:18*). Samaria, the capital of the Southern Kingdom had already been destroyed at the time of this vision! Whatever the sin of “Israel” was, it had to involve Greater Israel, all the sons of Jacob, of which Jerusalem had been the capital. What was the sin?

First, you must comprehend the great sin that Israel had sinned when, under the misguided instructions of both David and Solomon, they proclaimed that Solomon was the promised Messiah and King. Below is the passage where David misrepresented to Solomon the LORD’s promise:

1 Chronicles 22:7-10 “David said to Solomon: ‘My son, I had it in my heart to build a house for the Name of the LORD my God. But this word of the LORD came to me: ‘You have shed much blood and have fought many wars. You are not to build a house for my Name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in my sight. But you will have a son who will be a man of peace<sup>4</sup> and rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon,<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Isaiah 9:6 tells us that one of the names of Jesus, the real “Son of David” described here, was the “Prince of Peace.”*

<sup>5</sup> *Solomon means “peace.” This account of David here where he said that the LORD had told him in the Davidic Covenant that “Solomon” would be the name of the one who would fulfill the LORD’s promise was a lie. This was not included in either Biblical account of the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7, 1 Chronicles 17). Years beforehand, David had seen from the superscription in Psalm 72 that the great King would be called “Solomon,” the “Prince of Peace.” He had also seen beforehand that the perfect bridegroom described in the Song of Songs was named “Solomon.” When Bathsheba’s second son was born David decided to name him “Solomon” and try to impose on him a destiny that wasn’t his. David persisted in the naming error although the LORD subsequently told him to call the baby “Jedidiah” (2 Samuel 12:26). Clearly, in neither Psalms 72 nor in the Song of Songs did the “Solomon” prophesied there match the Solomon who was the second son of Bathsheba. David tried to set the LORD’s timetable. In failing, he misled the Israelites. We know that God’s promise in the Davidic Covenant clearly was speaking of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace and bridegroom of Israel*

and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign. He is the one who will build a house for my Name. He will be my son, and I will be his father. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.”<sup>6</sup>

The following account in 1 Kings recorded Solomon later claiming that he was “the son of the promise.”

1 Kings 8:20 “The LORD has kept the promise he made: I (*Solomon*) have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel.”

After we come to suspect that this was the great sin of “Israel” referred to in Ezekiel 4, it is easy to do the appropriate math to confirm it. Solomon became King in approximately 971 BC. Jerusalem fell in approximately 586 BC. The gap between the two dates is 385 years. However, David had declared Solomon was the one who was to fulfill the Davidic Covenant several years before. I believe it must have been 5 years before. If you add those five to the 385, you get 390 years. So, for 390 years Israel had been guilty of having accepted the idea that Solomon was the promised “son of David.” He was definitely the wrong son. He built temples to other Gods and worshipped them. He died the sin unto death.<sup>7</sup>

The true “son of David” was yet to come. Because of the downward spiral of the people of Israel after that, events brought the LORD to a place where He had to bring about the destruction of Jerusalem at the siege that ended in 586 BC. Of course, for all the sins committed in that period, there was still a personal payment to be made. It was made by Jesus Christ, the true “Son of Man.”

After the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 586 BC, there was never again a King from the House of David. There was a Jewish King from the Hasmonean line, which was from the tribe of Levi, from 142 BC to 63 BC (79 years).

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*and the Church. The consequences of David’s lie led to great confusion in Israel when Solomon proved to be the idol worshipper he became and the husband of a thousand women. See my paper “The Enigma of Solomon.”*

<sup>6</sup> *Compare Nathan’s recitation of God’s covenant with David in 2 Samuel 7:1-16 and 1 Chronicles 17:3-15 with David’s version of it here. You can see the changes David made to it.*

<sup>7</sup> *So, how did the Jews interpret this remarkable prophecy? The Jews in Jesus’ time also connected the sin to something that happened just before Solomon became King. They speculated that the great sin of Israel was Solomon’s marrying the Pharaoh’s daughter. That would also have clocked in at about 390 years. The Jews thinking was recorded by Edersheim: “But the very origin of the wicked world-Empire had been caused by Israel’s sin. It had been (ideally) founded when Solomon contracted alliance with the daughter of Pharaoh. The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, by Alfred Edersheim, THE CROSS AND THE CROWN CHAPTER VI*

Ezekiel 4:6a **“After you have finished this, lie down again, this time on your right side,**

Then, in the vision, Ezekiel was to stand up and lie down again, this time on his right side (facing to his left).<sup>8</sup> Again, he would be facing the depiction of a Jerusalem under siege that he had previously drawn. Again, as the “Son of Man,” he would both besiege it and bear the sin.

We know from history that there was a second great siege of Jerusalem which also resulted in the total destruction of both the city and the Temple! It was connected to this first siege by the LORD in that the ends of both sieges occurred on the same calendar day. That siege occurred in 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed by the besieging Romans under Titus the son of Emperor Vespasian. This was 40 years after Jesus Christ had entered Jerusalem in 30 AD.

On the third day after that, they finally rejected Him and crucified Him. Then for 40 years Judah (*or Judea*), the remnant of Greater Israel, sinned in rejecting the Son of David that the LORD had promised as Eternal King. These would be the years of sin before the second siege of Ezekiel’s prophecy. Jerusalem and its Temple was destroyed in the siege that ended in 70 AD in fulfillment of that prophecy. Their “shadow” Temple was destroyed because its existence prevented believers from seeing that the true Temple that Jesus Christ had built out of His life, death, and resurrection. This replacement of the old shadow worship with the worship of the reality that was Jesus Christ was the subject of much of the epistles of Romans and Hebrews.

According to Josephus this second siege was initiated on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan, which was Passover.

Before the second siege the Lord told Ezekiel to “turn your face toward the siege of Jerusalem and with bared arm prophesy against her.” What does this mean? It meant that before the second siege Jesus Christ would be revealed.

We can deduce that two sieges are in view here. The Lord Himself made the connection for us in the pages of history by causing the destruction of the first Temple to occur on the very date that the destruction of the Second Temple occurred as Josephus notes in his description of the destruction of the Second Temple:

“So Titus retired into the tower of Antonia, and resolved to storm the temple the next day, early in the morning, with his whole army, and to encamp round about the holy house. But as for that house, God had, for certain, long ago doomed it to the fire; and now that fatal day was come, according to the revolution of ages; it was the tenth day of the month Lous, [Ab,] upon which it was formerly burnt by the king of Babylon; although these flames took their rise from the Jews themselves, and were occasioned by them; for upon Titus's retiring, the seditious lay still for a

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<sup>8</sup> *Perhaps it is instructive that the chronologically first siege was seen to Ezekiel’s right and the second siege was seen to his left. Hebrew reads from right to left.*

little while, and then attacked the Romans again, when those that guarded the holy house fought with those that quenched the fire that was burning the inner [court of the] temple; but these Romans put the Jews to flight, and proceeded as far as the holy house itself. At which time one of the soldiers, without staying for any orders, and without any concern or dread upon him at so great an undertaking, and being hurried on by a certain divine fury, snatched somewhat out of the materials that were on fire, and being lifted up by another soldier, he set fire to a golden window, through which there was a passage to the rooms that were round about the holy house, on the north side of it. As the flames went upward, the Jews made a great clamor, such as so mighty an affliction required, and ran together to prevent it; and now they spared not their lives any longer, nor suffered anything to restrain their force, since that holy house was perishing, for whose sake it was that they kept such a guard about it.” --- Wars of the Jews, BOOK VI, CHAPTER 4. Verse 5.

**Ezekiel 4:6b and bear the sin of the house of Judah. I have assigned you 40 days, a day for each year.**

We know from history that Jesus was crucified on Passover in 30 AD.<sup>9</sup> The second great siege which resulted in the utter destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple took place exactly 40 years later, to the day. According to Josephus, this second great siege was raised by the Romans on Passover in 70 AD as is recorded below:

“And, indeed, why do I relate these particular calamities? while Manneus, the son of Lazarus, came running to Titus (*the Roman commander*) at this very time, and told him that there had been carried out through that one gate, which was entrusted to his care, no fewer than a hundred and fifteen thousand eight hundred and eighty dead bodies, in the interval between the fourteenth day of the month Xanthieus, [Nisan,] (Passover) when the Romans pitched their camp by the city, and the first day of the month Panemus [Tamuz]” -- Wars of the Jews, Flavius Josephus, Book V, Chapter 13, Verse 7.

Many accounts by other Roman historians also affirm that this siege occurred during the year that Vespasian became Emperor which was 70 AD.

**Ezekiel 4:7 Turn your face toward the siege of Jerusalem and with bared arm <sup>10</sup> prophesy against her.**

In this case there was no iron pan in front of the face of the LORD. This time “the Son of Man” held up a bared arm and prophesied. In Old Testament prophecy, the coming Messiah and King was called the LORD’s “bared arm.” Two passages from Isaiah make that connection:

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<sup>9</sup> See my paper “*The Chronology of the Life of Christ.*”

<sup>10</sup> *Isaiah 52:10, Isaiah 53:1*

Isaiah 52:10 “The LORD will lay bare his holy arm <sup>11</sup> in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.”

Isaiah 53:1 “Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?<sup>12</sup>

**Ezekiel 4:8 I will tie you up with ropes so that you cannot turn from one side to the other until you have finished the days of your siege.**

This just means that, in the LORD’s omniscience, this was an unalterable prophecy.

The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans was described by Josephus:

Flavius Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, BOOK VII, CHAPTER 1, Paragraph 1 – “NOW as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury, (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other work to be done,) Caesar (*speaking of Titus who was co-emperor with his father Vespasian*) gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne; and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison, as were the towers also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued; but for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited. This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind.”

There is another remarkable prophecy in Daniel about the Christ. Daniel was a contemporary of Ezekiel. It is found in Daniel 9.

***The Prophecy of Seventy Weeks Daniel 9:25-26a***  
***A Relevant Old Testament Passage – “Until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes.”***

The time of Jesus’ coming had actually been prophesied in Daniel:

**Daniel 9:25a “Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’**

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<sup>11</sup> Other passages that make this connection are our passage in Ezekiel 4:7 and Isaiah 51:5, Isaiah 50:2, and Isaiah 40:10.

<sup>12</sup> This is quoted in John 12:38 and Romans 10:16.

A popular interpretation of this passage is the one given by Sir Robert Anderson in “The Coming Prince” which I read over sixty years ago when I was just a teenager. Anderson proposed that the decree “to restore and rebuild Jerusalem” which Gabriel prophesied here in Daniel was the decree by Artaxerxes which Nehemiah received as recorded in Nehemiah 2:1-8. We know that decree occurred in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (445 BC). Daniel’s prophecy called for 483 years from the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the Anointed One (the Messiah). From 445 BC to Christ’s coming to Jerusalem as ruler, in 30 AD is 474 years. Sir Robert Anderson accounted for the discrepancy of 9 years (483-474) by asserting that Gabriel was talking about so called “Prophetical Years” of 360 days. If we grant Anderson’s assumption, then the 483 “prophetical years” of 360 days would work out to 476 actual “Solar Years.” One problem is that sets the date of Christ’s crucifixion in 32 AD, which is manifestly wrong.<sup>13</sup> Anderson’s problem was that he identified the wrong decree as the starting point for the prophecy. If we examine Ezra 4:7-24 we see that sometime before the events of Nehemiah 2:1-8 when Artaxerxes granted a decree to Nehemiah, some of the leading officials of the region of Trans-Euphrates (the region west of the Euphrates which included Syria, Samaria, and Judea) sent a letter to Artaxerxes complaining that the Jews were in the process of rebuilding the defenses of Jerusalem. As a consequence of this letter Artaxerxes (or one of his representatives) sent a letter authorizing those officials to stop construction. They followed up by going to Jerusalem and stopping the construction by force. By implication from Nehemiah 1:3 they had also destroyed much of the work that had been accomplished to that point. It is obvious that the Jews began construction of the defenses on some authority. Whose? Or did they do it without regard to Persian authority? We find the answer in Ezra 7:1-28. In the seventh year of Artaxerxes (458 BC), Ezra arrived in Jerusalem with supreme authority over all the people of the Trans-Euphrates region and power to do with their treasure what seemed best to them. It seems obvious that Ezra issued the original decree to begin to rebuild the defenses of Jerusalem! The original decree must have been about 453 BC. That would have met the conditions of Gabriel’s prophecy for beginning to count off the 483 years. A count that began in 453 BC would have ended in 30 AD, 483 regular years later. Sometime in the next four or five years after 453 BC the letter was sent to Artaxerxes which resulted in the destruction which Nehemiah lamented about before Artaxerxes in Nehemiah 2:1-5.

The decree continues below:

Daniel 9:25b **It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench,**

This further undermines Anderson’s contention that Daniel’s prophecy began with Artaxerxes’ decree to rebuild the “walls.” Note that the prophecy speaks of a “trench,” not a “wall” as was decreed by Artaxerxes. Why a trench? That was the most effective defense to be had before the

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<sup>13</sup> Another problem is that when the Bible speaks of a year everywhere else in scripture it is speaking of “Solar Years.” The “Prophetical Year” was Anderson’s invention.

building of a city wall. Indeed, in 63 BC when Pompey besieged Jerusalem, that was the defense of Jerusalem:

Antiquities of the Jews, Flavius Josephus, Book XIV. Chapter 4, Paragraph 1 – “At this Pompey -- came himself to the city, which was strong on every side, excepting the north, which was not so well fortified, for there was a broad and deep ditch that encompassed the city.”

Unfortunately, I have observed that Anderson’s error has been persistently carried forward by many Bible teachers since it was published in 1894. This trench (and its gate) was almost certainly built by a decree of Ezra during his administration (459-446 BC), and under the authority of Artaxerxes’ decree recorded in Ezra 7:18 “You and your brother Jews may then do whatever seems best with the rest of the silver and gold, in accordance with the will of your God.”

That would put the end of the period during the ministry of Jesus Christ (26-30 AD). Although we have no precise way to date what year the decree was issued by Ezra, we have reason to believe its precise fulfillment was when Jesus entered Jerusalem before the last Passover in 30 AD. 483 years before that would have been 453 BC. The Jews of Jesus’ day therefore had no excuse not to be looking for the Messiah prophesied by Daniel 9.

Daniel 9:25c **but in times of trouble.**

The “times of trouble” referred to the constant opposition and attacks made on the returning Jews by the surrounding peoples and recorded in both the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Daniel 9:26a **After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing.**

I can’t tell you why the sixty-nine sevens are broken down into two sections of first seven sevens and then sixty-two sevens. I have never yet been able to discover a plausible reason, although I am sure there is one. However, at the end of all 483 years, “the Anointed One,” Jesus Christ the Messiah, would be cut off (killed) and have nothing. That is, Jesus died on the cross, naked, not even owning His own clothes.

The order to rebuild Jerusalem with streets and a trench was issued by Ezra in 453 B.C. Sixty-nine sevens later (i.e. 483 years) was 30 A.D. the year of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem after which He was crucified. That date was also exactly prophesied in Daniel 9, which we will study later in this lesson. And as the prophet Zechariah had also foreseen, He came riding on a donkey:

Zechariah 9:9 “Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

## Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem – Continued

**John 12:20** Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Feast.

There are two possibilities as to who these Greeks were. First, they could have been Greeks going up to worship. Second, they could have been non-Jews walking among those who were going up to worship. If they were going up to worship, they had to be Greeks who had converted to Judaism. Otherwise, they wouldn't be allowed to participate in the worship. If they were just walking among the Jews as non-Jewish Greeks you can understand their reluctance to approach Jesus as they understood the hostility of the Jews toward Gentiles. The term "Greek" in this context just meant anyone who spoke Greek as a first language. In that time that included everyone in the Roman Empire who didn't speak Latin as a first language, but Greek. That included almost everyone from Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Thrace, and Greece.

Personally, I am looking forward to learning why these Greeks were on that road that day. Were they Gentiles who were there by accident? Were they Gentiles who had come to seek out Jesus and were surprised to find themselves caught up in the huge throng? Were they Gentiles from the Decapolis who had been converted by the preaching of the former madman from Gadara who wanted to know their place in God's plan for the world? Also, I would like to hear what happened to them during the next days and years after they saw Jesus Christ crucified? The fact that John, writing to the Greeks sixty years later, mentioned them, suggests to me that they became part of the Church. Maybe we will get to speak to them ourselves one day.

**John 12:21a** They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee,<sup>14</sup> with a request.

Philip is a Greek name, and Bethsaida was a town with a large Greek population, so it is probable that Philip spoke Greek very well. That may be why the Greeks sought him out.

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<sup>14</sup> It has been contended that because Bethsaida of "Galilee" is mentioned here that this proves that there were two cities called Bethsaida, since we know that there was a Bethsaida in what was Philip's territory in Gaulonitis in Jesus' time just across the border from the Roman administrative region called "Galilee." There are two explanations of this. First, Galilee may have been used here as a geographical designation (as was Capernaum). Certainly, Bethsaida was on the Sea of Galilee and was within the territory which was known as Galilee in the Old Testament (Joshua 20:7). Second, cities were often moved from one Roman jurisdiction to another as a means of rewarding the ruler of the territory with the revenues of the city. The Gospel of John was written over 60 years after the crucifixion of Christ, so he could have been referring to its inclusion in the jurisdiction of Galilee at the time of writing, rather than at the time of the narrative. It seems unlikely to me that there would have been two cities called Bethsaida within two miles of each other.

The Gospel of John skips from here straight to the last supper. Therefore, some have assumed that this event occurred after the entry into the city. However, an examination of the events as recorded in the other gospels makes it clear that this must have occurred during that entry. Furthermore, the confirmation from Heaven by the Father which occurs just after this could have occurred at no more propitious time than during this entry which was a fulfillment of prophecy. It would have occurred as Jesus was on the road in the valley just to the east of the Temple.

John 12:21b **“Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.”**

I think they hoped for a private interview where they, as Greeks, wouldn't draw the anger of the crowd for interposing themselves on a Jewish Festival.

John 12:22 **Philip** <sup>15</sup> **went to tell Andrew;**<sup>16</sup> **Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.**

This event took place in the context of the entry into Jerusalem along the Jerusalem to Bethany to Jericho road which ran around and in front of the Mount of Olives on the east and the Temple on the west. The disciples must all have been in a very close group coming down the road. For

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<sup>15</sup> *Philip was one of the first six disciples of Jesus. Along with his friends, Peter and Andrew, he was originally from Bethsaida (Julias), a Jewish-Syrian city on Sea of Galilee. He may have been a disciple of John the Baptist and is mentioned as one of the Apostles in the lists of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and in Acts. Aside from the lists, he is mentioned only in John in the New Testament. Philip was present at the miracle of the loaves and fishes, when he engaged in a brief dialogue with the Lord. Just before the Passion, Jesus answered Philip's query to show them the Father, but no further mention of Philip is made in the New Testament beyond his listing among the Apostles awaiting the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room in Acts. According to tradition he preached in Greece and was crucified upside down at Hierapolis in the Roman province of Asia which is near both Laodicea and Philadelphia. His death is said to have occurred under Emperor Domitian sometime after 90 AD, or about the time John wrote this Gospel. John also spent much of the last part of his life in the province of Asia, so he probably saw a lot of Philip in those last years.*

<sup>16</sup> *Andrew was the brother of Peter. He, along with John was one of the first two disciples of Jesus. He was a disciple of John the Baptist. Along with his brother and Philip he was originally from Bethsaida (Julias), a Jewish-Syrian city on Sea of Galilee although he had moved to Capernaum by the time of Jesus' ministry. He and Peter were partners in the fishing business with James and John. He shared a home in Capernaum with Peter and his wife and mother-in-law. He was evidently close to Philip. It is believed that he later went to preach among the Greeks. He is said to have been put to death on a cross, to which he was tied, not nailed. He lived two days in that state of suffering, still preaching to the people who gathered around their beloved Apostle.*

Philip to seek out Andrew, and then the two of them to question the Lord was probably a matter of a few steps. When the voice of the Father thundered, it was probably as they were before the front of the Eastern wall of the Temple and the Priests and Pharisees who were looking down on them.



*The Kidron Valley before the Eastern Wall of the Temple*

**John 12:23** Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

It seems obvious that at this point Jesus must have stopped and addressed the crowd around Him on the road and assembled on the flanks of the Mount of Olives. At first glance it seems like Jesus ignored the request that Philip and Andrew brought to Him from the Greeks who wanted to see Him. On deeper reflection Jesus’ reply, probably made within earshot of those Greeks, was saying that they had come at that hour when they could actually “see” Him fully. They were about to be eyewitnesses to the central event of all of time and eternity which would reveal the great mystery of God’s salvation and love which was for all peoples. These Greeks didn’t need to talk to Jesus. All they needed to do was watch what was about to happen.

**John 12:24** I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

Jesus was the seed that would die. Throughout the Old Testament, Jesus had been called “the Seed.” He was “the Seed” of the Woman (Genesis 3:15). He was “the Seed” of Abraham (Genesis 17:7), Isaac (Genesis 26:4), Jacob (Genesis 28:14), and David (2 Samuel 7:12). While in the sense of modern biology a seed doesn’t die, it does cease to be what it was. That is what Jesus was talking about. He would cease to be what He was because His death would change Him forever. But in His death He would become many seeds because of the life He would give to those who are in Him.



*View of the Mt. of Olives across the Kidron Valley to the East*

**John 12:25** **The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.**

This was the fifth time over the last two years that Jesus had made this promise which is fundamental to the power of the Christian life. He had made the promise in Galilee (Matthew 10:39), in the Decapolis (Matthew 16:25, Mark 8:35, Luke 9:24), and in the borderlands of Samaria and Galilee (Luke 17:33). The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Christian martyr and missionary Jim Elliot pondered these lines and wrote: “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

**John 12:26** **Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.**

Anyone who wanted to serve Jesus must be willing to walk out a life of self-sacrifice as Jesus was walking. The Father would honor that disciple's sacrifice even as He would honor Jesus's sacrifice.

**John 12:27** “**Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.**

Jesus knew His physically unbearable death on the cross was facing Him in just three days. He also knew that His incomparable and unknowable spiritual death and separation from the Father would have to be accepted at the same time. It is little wonder that His heart was troubled. Yet He had known from His earliest youth that this was the hour for which He was destined. He couldn't turn back now.

**John 12:28a** **Father, glorify your name!”**

The very purpose that Jesus, the Son, had taken on humanity was to reveal to mankind the “name” or character of God. Because He came in the weakness of the flesh, they could comprehend His love and compassion without being terrified at the power of God. As the Lord later explained to Paul:

2 Corinthians 12:9b “My power is made perfect in weakness.”

Jesus' prayer here was that, in completing His mission, He would glorify the character of the Father. As Jesus demonstrated His character, He was also demonstrating the Father's character. As He later explained to His disciple Phillip:

John 14:9b “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”

**John 12:28b** **Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.”**

This was the Father answering Jesus and confirming that Jesus' ministry to that hour had glorified the Father. All the rest of His life, the next three days, would glorify it again.

**John 12:29** **The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; <sup>17</sup> others said an angel had spoken to him.**

Much of the crowd couldn't believe their ears and decided it was just thunder. Others in that valley between the Temple on Mount Moriah and the Mount of Olives could discern the voice but thought it was an angel. Only those closest to Jesus understood that it was the Father answering back to Jesus' prayer: “Father, glorify your name!”

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<sup>17</sup> *This was prophesied in the Messianic Psalm 18: Psalms 18:13 “The LORD thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded.”*

Many of the High Priests and Pharisees were gathered on the Eastern Wall of the Temple above Jesus, who was on the road below them. I must wonder what they made of it when they heard the voice of the Father. It was the very sign which they had been asking Jesus to give them for years. Predictably, it bounced right off their hardened hearts.

**John 12:30** **Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine.**

Remember, those in the crowd included the Greeks who had wanted to see Jesus for a private word. Instead, they had a word from the Father Himself.

**John 12:31a** **Now is the time for judgment on this world;**

Jesus would bear the judgment of this world in His own body on the cross.

**John 12:31b** **now the prince of this world**

Satan is “the prince of this world.” At the Fall, Adam relinquished his rulership of the world. In Job, Satan boasted of his rulership of the earth:

Job 1:6-8 “One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, ‘Where have you come from?’ Satan answered the LORD, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.’” NRSV

When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness he had offered Him the kingdoms of the world because Satan was “the prince of this world”:

Matthew 4:8-9 “Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I will give you,’ he said, ‘if you will bow down and worship me.’”

**John 12:31c** **will be ~~driven out~~ cast out to the outside .**

The Greek word is ἐκβληθήσεται ἔξω {ek-blas-thetai}. Although the NIV translated the word as “driven out,” it is more literally translated as “thrown out to the outside” or “cast out to the outside.” It also reminds me of the description of the condemned in Revelation:

Revelation 22:15 “Outside (*the eternal Jerusalem*) are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral,<sup>18</sup> the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices

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<sup>18</sup> The Greek word here is πόρνος {po'-nos}. It comes from a root which means “to sell to oneself to another.” It is like the “adultery” against God in the Old Testament.

falsehood.”

This casting out was portrayed and prophesied in Isaiah:

Isaiah 14:12 “How you (*Satan*) have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!”

This tells us that besides being the means of our salvation, Jesus Christ’s death on the Cross is the final justification for Satan’s condemnation. His persistent rebellion against the LORD of such love and forgiveness is unjustifiable.

**John 12:32** **But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.”**

Jesus was speaking of the Crucifixion during which He would be lifted up and hung on a “tree.”<sup>19</sup> As the second Adam <sup>20</sup> He would also become the second tree of life. Like the first tree of life, anyone who ate from the tree (eating is a figure of believing) would live forever in God’s presence.

Notice that He said He would draw “all men” to himself. This included the Gentiles. This is unlimited atonement.

**John 12:33** **He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.**

This showed again that Jesus knew He would die at the hands of the Romans who used crucifixion rather than stoning like the Jews.

**John 12:34** **The crowd spoke up, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this ‘Son of Man’?”**

The Jews didn’t understand any of the passages in the Old Testament which described the First Advent and death of the Messiah. As they had demonstrated in this procession, they thought this was to be the Second Advent, the coming of the Messiah as King of Israel. They obviously understood that Jesus was representing Himself as the “Son of Man.” They also knew that the Christ was to be the Son of David who would be the new King of Israel. They didn’t understand that He had to come first as the “Son of Man” who would die for the sins of all mankind.

They also didn’t understand that Jesus meant He would be lifted up on a cross. They might have thought He meant He would return to Heaven. They understood the prophecies of Jesus’

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<sup>19</sup> *1 Peter 2:24a “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree.”*

<sup>20</sup> *1 Corinthians 15:45 “So it is written: ‘The first man Adam became a living being’; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.”*

Second Advent, which indicated that He would come as a King who would reign forever. However, they didn't understand the prophecies of the First Advent at all. Their teachers had obscured for most of them all the prophecies and shadows showing the coming of a Savior who would be the Son of God and Son of Man. In the Pharisees' theology they really didn't need a Savior. They thought they could justify themselves before God without the atoning sacrifice of the perfect Lamb of God.

**John 12:35a Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you."**

This stands as a warning to all mankind to heed the revelation of the Gospel the first time they understand it. It was also a poignant warning to one standing there who wouldn't survive the Passover. I am speaking of Judas Iscariot. Darkness, in the form of Satan, would shortly overtake him.

**John 12:35b-36a The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light."**

Jesus ended His message with a final appeal to the massed crowd to seek the truth of the word of God. This was the last message Jesus gave to a mass audience. It had even been ratified by the approval of the Father speaking from heaven.

**John 12:36b When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.**

At this point Jesus chose to vanish into the crowd. How He did this we don't know, but He had the power of the Father at His disposal. He had used this method several other times recorded in Scripture. The first was when the people of Nazareth had tried to throw Him off a cliff outside of that town (Luke 4:29-30). The other time was a few months earlier when the Jews in Jerusalem had sought to stone Him (John 8:59).