

Sermon Title: **“Olivet-Rejection, Weeping, and Waiting”**

Sermon Series: The Final Hour

Text: **Supporting Texts**

Speaker: Pastor Damian Mericka

I. **Introduction: Déjà vu- Jesus Was Not the First to Weep on Olivet**

As we draw closer to Jesus along with His Disciples upon the Mountain Called Olivet (*meaning mount or place of offence*), the Spirit pressed on me the sense of déjà vu. *We have been here before.* This whole event is one that has been experienced before. Let’s pull back and take a larger look at everything going on in this final week of Jesus’ life where He unfolds this apocalyptic narrative.

Matthew, one of Jesus’ Disciples picked up on this conversation earlier that week.

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, 42 saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” 43 He said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying,

**44 “The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet””?**

45 If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” 46 And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions. -Matthew 22:41-46

In this question directed toward the religious leaders of the Temple, Jesus surfaces that their understanding of the Messiah was only that of a man. Certainly, no ordinary man, but a man none-the-less who would lead them in a deliverance from Roman rule such as Joshua or any of the Judges. Even Greater, like their King of Legend, David himself with God’s anointing!

Jesus brought this understanding to surface for His Disciples to see and understand, their expectation of the Messiah needs to be much bigger. Bigger than a man. A God who became man. Deliverance from the true enemy- an enemy greater than the Canaanites, Babylonians, Assyrians, or Rome. That of sin.

Israel wanted peace that comes through deliverance. The manner of Peace Jesus is offering is coming through a Messiah that is building the population of the Kingdom before it fully comes. For then, sin itself will be removed.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. -John 14:27

As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. -Luke 19:11

There will never be the peace this world is crying out for outside of Peace with God. What happens on the Mount of Olives is an offense in every sense of the word to this world- it breaks the expectation of Israel's religious leaders, and is an annoyance to Gentile Nations- *past, present, and future.*

Those who bring this message to the world face three common factors- ***Rejection, Weeping, and Waiting.***

II. A King's Rejection, Weeping, and Waiting

A. Rejection

Almost a millennia before Jesus we find another king who was facing rejection from the Nation of Israel. A Nation hungry for peace, but not trusting God to provide it. This King was David. His son, Absalom, was offering to do things better (faster) than his aging father.

After this Absalom got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run before him. 2 And Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the way of the gate. And when any man had a dispute to come before the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city are you?" And when he said, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel," 3 Absalom would say to him, "See, your claims are good and right, but there is no man designated by the king to hear you." 4 Then Absalom would say, "Oh that I were judge in the land! Then every man with a dispute or cause might come to me, and I would give him justice." 5 And whenever a man came near to pay homage to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him. 6 Thus Absalom did to all of Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. -2 Samuel 15:1-6

For four years Absalom (whose name means *the Father is Peace*) won the hearts of the inhabitants of Jerusalem leading to an abrupt departure by Israel's King, David (whose name means *beloved*). **See Matthew 3:17** -> "This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased." Hmmm. Interesting. *I'm sure there is no connection!*

13 And a messenger came to David, saying, “The hearts of the men of Israel have gone after Absalom.” 14 Then David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, “Arise, and let us flee, or else there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Go quickly, lest he overtake us quickly and bring down ruin on us and strike the city with the edge of the sword.” 15 And the king's servants said to the king, “Behold, your servants are ready to do whatever my lord the king decides.” 16 So the king went out, and all his household after him. And the king left ten concubines to keep the house. 17 And the king went out, and all the people after him. And they halted at the last house.

18 And all his servants passed by him, and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath, passed on before the king.
-2 Samuel 15:13-18

While there were those who followed David, they were fewer than those who were siding with Absalom. It would look as if all of Jerusalem, and Israel, were with Absalom and rejecting their King. However, David had something Absalom did not. David had an Ittai.

19 Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, “Why do you also go with us? Go back and stay with the king, for you are a foreigner and also an exile from your home. 20 You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, since I go I know not where? Go back and take your brothers with you, and may the Lord show[a] steadfast love and faithfulness to you.” 21 But Ittai answered the king, “As the Lord lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, there also will your servant be.” 22 And David said to Ittai, “Go then, pass on.” So Ittai the Gittite passed on with all his men and all the little ones who were with him. -2 Samuel 15:19-22

Ittai’s name means, *the Lord is with me*. God sent the least expected person to affirm that He was with David. Even at David’s urging to depart, Ittai would not. David was his king, and David’s God was his God! Just imagine God using Philistines to be David’s companions- the least likely of people. *It would be like God choosing common fishermen to dine at His table and commune!*

B. Weeping

As King David and those most loyal to him depart Jerusalem under the banner of rejection by the people the land weeps with strong lament. Jerusalem and King David were so knit together that to have one without the other is a tragedy worthy of Shakespearean note. *It is as if the land is having its heart torn out- the land that vomited up the former inhabitants finally has a taste of the Peace the Creator alone can bring, and now it looks as if that is all lost!*

23 And all the land wept aloud as all the people passed by, and the king crossed the brook Kidron, and all the people passed on toward the wilderness. -2 Samuel 15:23

David continues now to ascend the Mount of Olives which overlooked the city of Jerusalem, and he weeps. He and his follower's weep. They weep for what could have been but might not ever be.

30 But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered. And all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went. -2 Samuel 15:30

C. Waiting

And Abiathar came up, and behold, Zadok came also with all the Levites, bearing the ark of the covenant of God. And they set down the ark of God until the people had all passed out of the city. 25 Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back and let me see both it and his dwelling place. 26 But if he says, 'I have no pleasure in you,' behold, here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him." 27 The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Go back[a] to the city in peace, with your two sons, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar. 28 See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me." 29 So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there. -2 Samuel 15:24-29

As King David struggles with the reality of this moment, we are invited into both his heart and his relationship with God. In his moment Abiathar (abundance) and Zadok (righteous / just) come to him with the ark of the God (the Temple is not here yet) to inspire hope.

David recognizes the ark is a symbolism of God's presence, and he did not want to place more confidence in this than God Himself. Sending it back to Jerusalem, David both affirms that the prophetic anointing over Zadok and God's Word coming through him for David. Until then, David will wait on the Lord. David will wait on Absalom. David will wait for either life or death. Whatever God brings David will wait for as long as it is God's Hand that brings it. *Not my will, but thine be done...*

III. A Messiah's Rejection, Weeping, and Waiting

A. Rejection

The heart of the religious leaders was far from accepting Jesus as their Messiah, let alone even affirm that He is their king. Jesus knew, but also had to have been able to feel their rejection of Him. Consider these words from a parable about their rejection fulfilled later at His Crucifixion,

14 But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'” -Luke 19:14

21 So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” -John 19:21

B. Weeping

Jesus would weep over the very City in most likely the very spot David experienced such sorrow over what could have been.

37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! 38 See, your house is left to you desolate. 39 For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’” -Matthew 23:37-39

C. Waiting

As the ark was meant to bring comfort to David, the Disciples appeal to the Temple to bring comfort to the Messiah. However, something that symbolizes God is not God’s presence any more than a wedding ring on someone unfaithful to their spouse. *The heart is where God desires to be and it is the heart that qualifies or disqualifies.*

Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. 2 But he answered them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” -Matthew 24:1-2

Jesus upon the ascent of the Mount of Olives would turn and look over the City of Jerusalem as well, weeping with great lamentation over the plight that is coming upon her. There can never be peace in a home, city, nation, or world outside of peace with God. Because of this, Jesus needed to be our Messiah before He is our King. He has to redeem citizens for His Kingdom before His Kingdom is fully here.

41 And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." 43 And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. 44 And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. -Luke 22:41-44

IV. A Saint's Rejection, Weeping, and Waiting

What does this mean for us today? As we continue our study on what the Bible says about the Last Days, we must begin with an understanding on what those days meant for God's people both then and now- Rejection, Weeping, and Waiting.

A. Rejection

Jesus was clear that the peace He is bringing is peace with God, not this world. Because of this He warns us of what the journey with Him will look like in this life.

34 "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 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. 36 And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. 37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. -Matthew 10:34-39

While this will have a sense of reality and application in different waves during different times and locations, ultimately this will be a universal reality for the Saint found to endure in the time of Great Tribulation. (Those who become believers after the Rapture of the Church)

"15 And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. 16 Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave,[a] to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, 17 so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. 18 This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666." -Revelation 13:15-18

B. Weeping

We are called to bring the Gospel into the lives of those we do life with. Unique to each of us are the circumstances we face. In any rejection for our walk with Christ there is a sense of loss. In this we weep, but not without hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). For with our God, all things are possible (Mark 10:27). In this we continue to labor and trust in. Still, we must take time to mourn. Remember, our Savior did.

C. Waiting

For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, 3 if indeed by putting it on[a] we may not be found naked. 4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

6 So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others.”
-2 Corinthians 5:1-12

This message is one that I pray unites us with all of those who pick up their cross to follow Jesus. Both our family in the Old Testament as well as the New and those with us today, to follow Jesus is a journey of *rejection, weeping, and waiting*.

Next week we begin looking at what Jesus said on the Mount of Olives regarding the last days. While the greater fulfillment of those words are still yet to come, much is already here and in motion. This was the reality for the immediate Disciples of Jesus after His Ascension, this is our reality today, and it will be the reality of those going through what Jesus describes before His Glorious Appearing and the Installation of the New Heaven and the New Earth.

Let us celebrate the wins. Kingdom breakthrough in Salvation, Healing, Deliverance, Transformation, Restoration- all the ways Jesus brings abundant life into our lives and the world around us. However, let us be cautious that we do not invest in the things or symbols of God more than God Himself. For when times get hard, the measure of God with us being enough will keep us faithful to Him or find us falling away.