

Day 3

LAST WORDS

Matthew 21:23–24:51, Mark 11:20–13:37, Luke 20:1–21:36, John 12:20–38

On Tuesday morning, Jesus and his disciples returned to Jerusalem. They passed the withered fig tree on their way, and Jesus spoke to his companions about the importance of faith. Back at the Temple, religious leaders, upset at Jesus establishing himself as a spiritual authority, organized an ambush with the intent to place Him under arrest. But Jesus evaded their traps and corrected them, saying:

"Blind guides! For you are like whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people's bones and all sorts of impurity. Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness...Snakes! Sons of vipers! How will you escape judgment?" Matthew 23:24–33

Later that afternoon, Jesus left the city and went with his disciples to the Mount of Olives, which sits due east of the Temple and overlooks Jerusalem. Here Jesus gave the Olivet Discourse, an elaborate prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the age. He speaks, as usual, in parables, using symbolic language about the end times events, including His Second Coming and the final judgment. Scripture indicates that this Tuesday was also the day Judas Iscariot negotiated with the Sanhedrin, the rabbinical court of ancient Israel, to betray Jesus (Matthew 26:14–16). After a tiring day of confrontation and warnings about the future, once again, Jesus and the disciples return to Bethany to stay the night.

Questions

1. What parable in the text grips you most?
2. Why?
3. Do you see that Jesus is trying to elevate your thinking?

Changing Your Mind

On this third day of our walk we journey with Jesus through intense, and somewhat strange conversations. We see Jesus answering questions with even more questions. He speaks in parables to help elevate the thinking of those around Him. These parables are packed with variable outcomes. We read them from our paradigm. We stand in 2019 knowing that Jesus finished/completed the work He came to do. We know of His death, and resurrection. But what would have been in the minds of the bystanders? How would they have felt hearing these things? We could think that Jesus is communicating a new perspective to them - in story form. He was lifting their heads out of the sand. Away from a religion set in stone, committed to a transactional reference. To one of faith and relationship. A relationship that does not end with His departure. But continues with the promise of His indwelling presence.

Moving Forward

Jesus has insight. Divine insight. He has a heavenly perspective. We face a life and future that includes insecurities and uncertainties. Variable outcomes confront our minds as we enter each new day and year. The only security we have is not set on our possessions or achievements. But in our relationship and unity with the creator of the Cosmos - The God revealed in Christ. He is a God who is close.

A God who is Love. And a God who has our "now" and "not yet" firmly held. There is no need to fear the outcome of anything we face. Because in Christ - we are eternally secure. Meditate on the scriptures. And pray that God gives you a divine perspective today.

