

LOOKING AT LUKE  
**TEARS OF JESUS**

Tuesday, September 1

Reading: Luke 19

**Luke 19:41** *As He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it* **42** *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. 43 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. 44 They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."*

How do we respond to sin and evil of the society around us? There are some so-called Christians who respond by picketing at military funerals or marching with signs declaring that "God hates fags." One church became infamous for this attitude and even named their church website [www.godhatesfags.com](http://www.godhatesfags.com). Is this really the attitude Jesus wants His people to display? We can find the answer in Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem on what today we call Palm Sunday.

Passover brought thousands if not millions of pilgrims to Jerusalem. However, Jesus' entrance on a donkey would be noticeable because it was customary for pilgrims to walk the final mile into the city. The disciples and some of the people would have recognized the significance of this action. Jesus was presenting Himself as the Messiah prophesied in the Scriptures, especially Zechariah 9:9 (see Matthew 21:4-5; John 12:14-15). Their excitement and cheers upset the Pharisees who demanded Jesus quiet them.

But amidst the joy and praise of the crowd, we see Jesus weeping. The Jewish people, and especially their spiritual leaders, should have realized who He was. They should have received Him as their long-awaited Savior. But instead, Jesus knew that their rejection of Him would lead to His crucifixion in just a few days. This rejection would be disastrous for Jerusalem as Jesus sees its destruction that would occur about 40 years later when the Romans would destroy the temple (70 AD) and eventually disperse the Jewish nation. Earlier, He had expressed His desire to gather them together "as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings" but they were not willing (Luke 13:34-35).

Even though He knew the torture, humiliation, and death their rejection would bring on Him, Jesus did not cry out for retribution. When He thought about the terrible destruction these Jewish people would suffer because of their sin, He wept over them. This should be the attitude of Christians toward our sinful and corrupt society. While we don't condone or ignore sin in our world, we are not called to drive people away with negative expressions of judgment. We can still call sin "sin" and do it with compassion and love. Jesus' weeping over the very people who were about to kill Him is our example. His words of forgiveness from the cross should be our guide.

"The tears of Jesus are the tears of God when He sees the needless pain and suffering in which men involve themselves through foolish rebelling against His will"<sup>1</sup>

May they be our tears as well.

<sup>1</sup> William Barclay. [Daily Study Bible - NT](#), note on Luke 19:41