# Matthew 21 • The Rejection of Jesus as Messiah

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Father, as we get into this chapter this morning, we just really pray for Your Holy Spirit to speak to our hearts, to guide and direct us, Lord, in our understanding of what we are seeing here in this chapter. And we just pray, Lord God, that You would help us to apply this Word to our lives because we know that's what creates such stability in our hearts and daily living. We thank You, Father, for the opportunity to dig into Your Word. And we just really pray that you'd use this in Jesus name, amen. Amen.

This is, as we get into chapter 21 of Matthew, this is a really pivotal chapter. It's an important one for us to go through here because Jesus is in the final stage of His public ministry. This is really the last time that He returns to Jerusalem during His public ministry. It sets the stage for all of the events that take place in this final week before His arrest, trial, death, burial, and resurrection. But it also serves to cement the final rejection of the Jewish religious leaders concerning Jesus as Messiah.

And you're going to find as we go through this chapter that is the primary theme, is rejection. Even though we're going to start off here with the triumphal entry, which all sounds and looks very promising. But it's like when you strike a match. It's a quick burn flame, bright, and then it's gone sort of a thing. And that's what happens here.

It says in verse 1, *"Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage,…" (ESV)*

And by the way, I'm not pronouncing that the way the Jews would have pronounced it. And if I did, you would hear it and you'd go, what? Cause it doesn't sound really much like what we see on the page. But what's interesting is that the name Bethphage means, house of unripe figs. So there you go. You're going to see how that title or how that name plays into this chapter in just a few verses here.

But it says they *"…came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, [2] saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and*

*immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. [3] If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once."* (in other words, return them very soon) *[4] This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,*

*[5] "Say to the daughter of Zion,*
*'Behold, your king is coming to you,*
*humble, and mounted on a donkey,*
*on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'""*

And that's a quotation from Zechariah chapter 9, verse 9. And the symbolism is all there, when a king returns on a donkey, it's a return of peace.

And it says, *"[6] The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. [7] They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. [8] Most of the crowd* (it says) *spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road."*

And those were very symbolic actions on the parts of the people. To put one's cloak on the road in front of someone was a symbolic gesture of submission and obedience to that individual. And the waving of palm branches, frankly, it meant lots of things to a lot of different people at that time. Many cultures incorporated palm branches into various activities and so forth in the Middle East. This is probably done mostly as a celebration, sort of a victory celebration, waving of the palm branches.

And in verse 9 it says, *"And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!""*

And this is probably a quotation of Psalm 118 that says, *"Save us, we pray, O LORD!"* (Psalm 118:25) Because Hosanna means, save now. It's a cry, it's a request of someone who they think is able to make a difference in their lives. Save us.

Remember that Israel at this time was under the thumb of Rome. And the Jews essentially believed that the Messiah would come and He would liberate them from their captors. And of course right now their captors are the Romans. But what they didn't understand is that the Messiah would come ultimately to liberate them from their sin. And that's the part they didn't really get. But then, the sentiment is the same. Save now, as they say, Hosanna. Anyway, it's exciting thing.

So they're saying *"Hosanna to the Son of David!"* And that's another thing that's very, we've said this many, many times. By saying *"Son of David,"* the people are proclaiming him to be the Davidic Messiah. By the way, this is important. This was the very first time in Jesus's public ministry where He allowed the public to proclaim Him for all to hear to be the Messiah.

Otherwise, every time He would do a miracle, you'll remember what He said. Don't tell anybody go and don't say anything. Don't make a big deal of this, but this is the first time that He was just fine, letting everybody just shout it from the rooftops as it were.

Verse 10 says, *"And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" [11] And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.""*

Verse 12. *"And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. [13] He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers.""*

All right, let's stop there for just a moment, because we need to talk about this a little bit. Back when the first temple was constructed by king Solomon, the temple itself had, well, it always had great meaning but you'll remember that the Lord made a promise to Solomon and to the people of Israel related to the temple. And essentially that it promise is what made it sacred. I want to show you that from on the screen from 1 Kings chapter 9, it says,

**1 Kings 9:1-3 (ESV)**

*As soon as Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD and the king's house and all that Solomon desired to build, the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. And the LORD said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you have made before me. I have consecrated this house that you have built, by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time.*

*As soon as Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD and the king's house and all that Solomon desired to build, the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. And the LORD said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you have made before me.* (and listen to this, this is concerning the temple) *I have consecrated* (in other words, I've set it apart ) *this house that you have built, by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time.*

And the Lord had previously made good on this promise when they were dedicating the temple. Let me put this on the screen from 2 Chronicles 5. It says,

**2 Chronicles 5:13-14 (ESV)**

*...the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.*

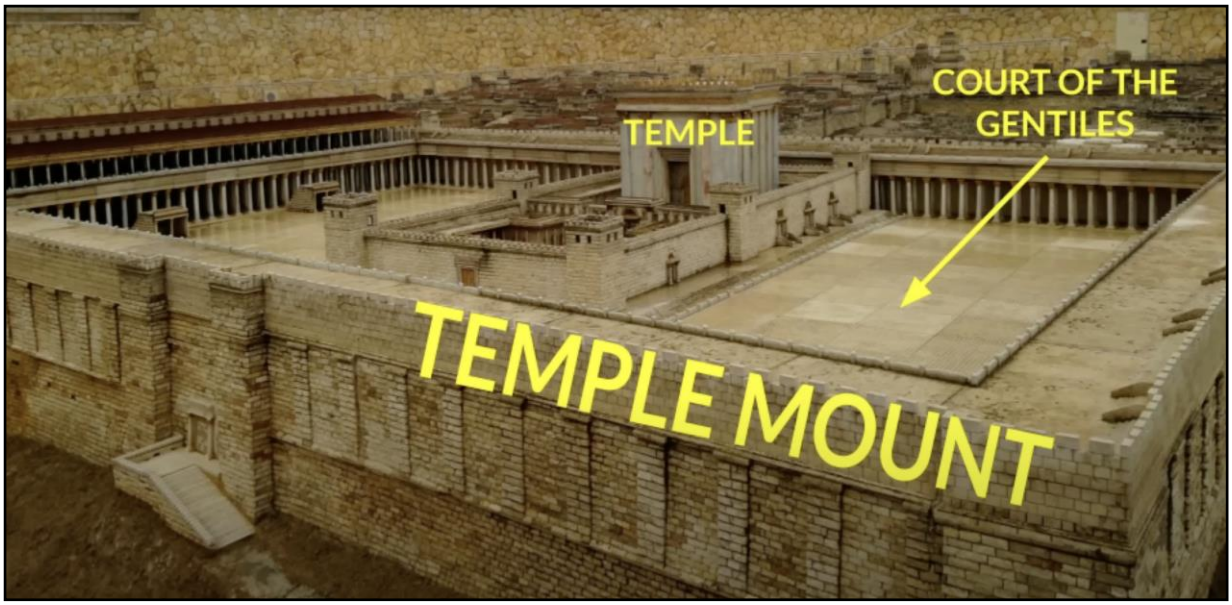
*...the house of the LORD,* (this is when they dedicated the temple to the Lord, it says, *the house of the LORD*) *was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house* (the Lord)*of God.*

Why have I just shared these two passages with you? Well, it's because Jesus made reference to the temple as it relates to the people that were buying and selling in the outer court area, and He was saying that's not appropriate here. Why? Why is that not appropriate here? Because this is the house of the Lord. This is to be a place of prayer. This is where people are supposed to come and seek the face of God. They're supposed to be coming to pray.

You can't pray when you got people, you got a flea market practically. I mean, it wasn't a flea market. You know what was going on. But, this was a special place where people came to meet with God. Alright? And He says, you've turned this into a circus? People come here to pray and there's all this noise and animals and you know what animals leave behind. And all the other stuff that goes along with it.

And it was really a desecrating of the temple in a very real way and Jesus drove them out. It says He made a whip out of cords and He used it to drive the animals out of that area. Let me put a picture of the temple area.

Now, this is probably a little bit closer to what the original temple looked like. You got this big, huge edifice around the side, which is the Temple Mount. And then the temple itself there in the center really doesn't take up very much space at all. And then you've got these courts. Now you can see on this picture that there is a court on either side of the temple and the outer courts of the temple.




At different times, there was a more court on one side than another. But the court of the Gentiles was on the side. Some scholars think it was on both sides. Some would think it was on one. It doesn't really matter. The point is that's, that was called the Court of the Gentiles because there were Gentiles who came to faith in the God of Israel, but they couldn't get very close. They couldn't go beyond the Court of the Gentiles. That's as close as they could get to the temple.

Now you go inside the outer court and you have the Court of the Jews or the Court of Israel. They could go in there by birth, this was okay, but not the Gentiles. The only place they could go was in this outer, much outer area, court of the Jews. And this is where the buying and selling was going on. Right.

And so what you've got going on here obviously is impinging on some people's ability to approach the Lord and even spend time in prayer. And the reason that they're buying and selling, it isn't just that somebody decided to set up a yard sale there. They were actually selling sacrificial animals.

And the reason they were selling sacrificial animals is that some of the people that traveled to Israel to worship the Lord and to offer a sacrifice came from such far away distant lands that it was just not, they weren't able to bring animals with them. It wasn't practical. And so they would just bring money and they would buy animals once they got to Jerusalem.

The problem was, many of them came in with foreign currency that wasn't accepted at the temple. And so you had to have money changers there as well. And they were shifty kind of people. But they would change the money from whatever currency they were bringing in wherever they lived. And they were,

changing it into money that the temple would accept. And then they could buy the animals that the people needed to buy in order to sacrifice to the Lord. And the problem again with all of this, is that this area had been set aside for people to come and pray.

And so Jesus objected rather strongly, rather forcefully, because, this was the, this was buying and selling that was putting the spiritual needs of the people aside, and so Jesus cleared the place.

There's something else though, that I want to bring up before we move on. And this is important. As we said earlier, what made the temple sacred was that God had promised that He would dwell there; His presence would be there. And that's why, that's primarily the reason why Jesus objected.

There are a good many Christians today, I find that think of our modern church buildings in the same way the Jews thought about the temple. And some people believe that the church building has replaced the temple in the sense that these buildings that we meet in are somehow now sacred. In fact some people refer to church buildings as, the house of the Lord. Nothing could be further from the truth.

These buildings that we have today are not the House of the Lord. You guys know what the House of the Lord is. The apostle Paul told you. Let me put it on the screen.

**1 Corinthians 3:16 (ESV)**

*Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?*

*Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?*

You see, the New Testament Temple is not a building. The New Testament Temple is you. It's every single believer. It's anyone who has received, God's Spirit by faith, by putting their faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross.

Ever since we built this auditorium, we started off, of course, in the other building, but ever since we built this building, we've basically jokingly referred to it as the onion shed because, this is just a metal building. There's a lot of buildings around here that look just like this and they're filled with onions and potatoes. The only difference really with this building is we put chairs in it, and a sound system, and lights, and things like that, and made it maybe a little more comfortable. But that's really the only difference.

If there is anything that makes this building special, it's you. But once you're gone, this is just a building, this is just an onion shed, there's nothing special. There's nothing sacred and this is not the house of the Lord.

We have got to get our language right you guys. You don't go to church, you are the church. You go to meet with the church. You go to assemble with the church. You go to gather with the church. But you don't go to church. You are the church. The word that is translated church, ecclesia, literally means the gathering. And it refers to people coming together. And it's all about people. Let me show you what Peter said about houses. 1 Peter chapter 2, he says,

**1 Peter 2:4-5 (ESV)**

*As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

*As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious,* (look at this) *you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

You are the house of the Lord. You. We are the house of the Lord. This building is going to go down one day. It's going to burn up into a crisp and there will be nothing left, but you will remain. Right? Because you're the sacred part. All right. We got to make sure we get that right.

I still have people say things to me that… I had a guy write to me this last week, it was all up in a tither because at his church, they were doing things in the building that he thought wasn't appropriate. And it may not, I don't know what was going on. It may not have been appropriate, for any building, who knows. But I had to write him back and say, just what I essentially told you.

And I remember a number of years ago, I had a gal come up to me and said, well, we want to get married in the church so that our marriage is legit. And I said, sweetie, isn't no such thing. Your marriage is legit when you get married in the name of the Lord and you promise to honor and cherish one another till death do you part. And it doesn't matter whether you got married in a building the church meets in, or a barn, or in no building at all. Right? What matters is the promise that you make before the Lord. And the keeping of that promise. That's what makes a marriage legit. There you go.

Verse 14. *"And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. [15] But when the chief priests and the scribes saw* (look at this) *the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant,"*

And that word means, they were grieved. Guys, get this. They saw the wonderful things that Jesus was doing and they were grieved. At the wonderful things that Jesus was doing. I mean, this tells you where they're at, where their hearts are at. Right.

*"[16] and they said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read,*

*"'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies*
*you have prepared praise'?"* (and that's a quote from the Psalms)

*[17] And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there."*

Now, the important thing to understand at the juncture, this juncture in Matthew chapter 21 is that Jesus has entered the city. He has been proclaimed Messiah by the common people, although that's going to die off pretty And, all of that. quickly.

But He has, note this, He has been thoroughly rejected by the Jewish religious leaders. Right? Who represent the people. And that rejection, frankly, is going to dominate the rest of the chapter. And you're going to see how it's powerfully illustrated in various things that happen in the remainder of this chapter.

Verse 18, it says, *"In the morning, as he was returning to the city, he became hungry. [19] And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he went to it and found nothing on it but only leaves. And he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once.*

*[20] When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?" [21] And Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' it will happen. [22] And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith.""*
I want you to stop there please for just a moment because we need to talk about this.

It's a very interesting section of Scripture which the disciples by the way, missed altogether. The disciples missed this. They missed the symbolism, they

missed the meaning of what was going on in this event, because you'll notice that they asked Jesus nothing about why He cursed the fig tree. Did you notice that? And neither did they ask Him, what does that mean? What is the symbolic meaning of what you just got done.

I mean, what a strange thing, frankly, for Jesus to do just randomly. To just walk up to a fig tree and go, no figs, may you never bear figs again. And the thing just starts to wither. I mean, how weird is that? But what's the question that it generates in them? How'd you do that? That's all they cared about.

And He's, so He answers them. He's like, if you had faith, you could do that too. In fact, you could even say to the mountain, be moved and it would move. So He answers them as far as their question goes, but their question didn't go far enough.

And there remains so much more to this important symbolic lesson that is going on here because what Jesus is doing here people is He is illustrating the spiritual condition of Israel and what is now their portion because of their response to Him and rejection of Him as their Messiah. Because you see, many times in Scripture, Israel is symbolized as a fig tree. And they've just rejected Him. And so He's showing in this beautiful illustration, that God has come to check on the fruit.

Remember those parables Jesus gave about the master who came back to check on, how his servants had done with the field that he left them in charge of? To settle accounts with them and so forth? Well, this is it. This is the master coming back and He's checking on the fruit. And He's saying, I put you in charge. What have you done with what I gave you?

Well, there's the appearance of fruitfulness. And that's what Jesus saw with this tree. There's this tree is in full leaf and it's like, whoa, that ought to, that looks like a fruitful tree, but upon closer inspection, what do we find? There's nothing there. Cursed are you. There's nothing there, and that's the picture. That's the one that disciples missed because they're all just like, whoa, how'd you do that? How'd that tree wither so fast?

And so the remainder of the chapter is, as we go on here from this, from verse 23 and on, is Jesus communicating this principle to the religious leaders of Israel that He basically says, I have come to see your fruit and you have been found wanting. There's nothing here. There's no fruit that I can find on your branches. And that's a serious charge.

Verse 23 and following it says, *"And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said,* (listen) *"By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?""*

And by these things they're talking about the fact that the day before He had gone in and cleared the temple. Where'd you get the authority to do that? And here You are teaching people in the temple precincts who gave You that authority, right?

*"[24] Jesus answered them, "I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things."* Okay. So here's His counter question. *"[25] The baptism of John, from where did it come? From heaven or from man?"* In other words, did John go out on his own, as his own authority, or did God send him? That's what He's asking.

*"And* (so it says) *they discussed it among themselves, saying,* (well) *"If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' [26] But if we say, 'From man,' we are afraid of the crowd, for they all hold that John was a prophet." [27] So they answered Jesus, "We do not know.""* In other words, they told him nothing.

What they're doing is they're refusing to answer the question by saying we don't know. Right? We don't know. *"And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.""*

And this is basically Jesus way of exposing the fact that while the Jewish religious leaders boldly walked up to Jesus and demanded His honesty. Where'd you get the—who gave you the authority to do this and so forth. They're less than willing to be honest themselves. And that's what this proves.

And so Jesus goes on to illustrate their duplicity using a parable. He says in verse 28, *"What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' [29] And he answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind and went. [30] And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go. [31] Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. [32] For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him."*

He's using this to illustrate their duplicity, saying one thing, doing another. Honestly, it was Charles Spurgeon in his commentary on this passage so many, many years ago that did such a good job. Way better than I could do. Let me put this on the screen. Here's what Spurgeon wrote. He said,

> They talk of repenting, but they do not repent. They speak of believing, but they never believe. They think of submitting to God, but they have not submitted themselves to him yet. They say it is time they broke up the fallow ground, and sought the Lord, but they do not seek him. It all ends in a mere promise.
>
> — Charles H. Spurgeon

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Isn't that good? I mean, that's just, they, there are a lot of people and there's people today still who say the right things, but there's nothing behind it. They'll talk about the Lord. They'll talk about being a believer, but they're not a believer. They'll talk about coming to the Lord by faith, but they don't come to the Lord by faith and so forth. And this is essentially the heart of the religious leaders and Jesus, illustrated that.

And then He goes on here in this final parable of the chapter that reveals, again, the real heart of the religious leaders. He says, *“[33] “Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. [34] When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. [35] And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. [36] Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them. [37] Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ [38] But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.’ [39] And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. [40] When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?””*

Listen to what the religious leaders respond, how they respond. *“[41] They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.”*

*[42] Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:*

*“‘The stone that the builders rejected*
*has become the cornerstone;*
*this was the Lord's doing,*
*and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”* And that's a quote from Psalm 118.

And so what you've seen here in this parable is what he illustrated just a little bit before with the cursing of the fig tree. I have come. He is the master. I have come to receive the fruit, to look and see what's the fruit. What have you done with what I gave you? And there's nothing. And that's why there was a curse.

He says in verse 43, *“Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. [44] And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.”*

*[45] When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them.* (smart men) *[46] And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet.”*

And this is a sobering passage, but it reveals the blatant unfaithfulness of the leaders of Israel and the consequences of their unfaithfulness. And how Jesus lined those consequences out in the parables that He told.

And it's incredible that they could understand the basic ideal when it comes from a parable. And Jesus said, so what do you think the master is going to do when he comes back and confronts those tenants? Well, and the religious leaders are like, well, he'll kill them. He'll put those wretches to a miserable end and they're literally prophesying their own future. And they get it from a standpoint of the parable, but they don't get it from the standpoint of the kingdom of God.

And then there's that statement that Jesus makes. We need to look at in verse 43 where He says, *“the kingdom of God will be taken away from you.”* That's an interesting statement, isn't it? But you got to be careful about how you perceive it.

You see, and when I…, be careful, what I mean is you got to interpret this statement in light of the rest of Scripture. You can't take this statement out of Scripture and then just, and out of its context, and out of the context of the Bible and just say, well, there you go, see the kingdom of God has been taken away from the Jews. You can't do that because it's just, it's not going to work. You're going to end up with Replacement Theology. You guys know what that is?

There's a lot of churches that are tying into buying into Replacement Theology. And it basically is the teaching that the church has replaced Israel. And there is a temporary work that God has given to the church in the kingdom of God to bear fruit. He said I'm taking the kingdom away. This is a temporary business and I'm giving it to those who will work the vineyard and bring forth the fruit, produce the fruit and so forth. And that's us. I believe in my heart, that's us. But that doesn't mean we replace Israel.

First, let's talk about the fact that this is us, okay. 1 Peter chapter 2 outlines this up on the screen. Peter writes, and this is to believers,

**1 Peter 2:9-10 (ESV)**

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

*But you are a chosen race,* (you're) *a royal priesthood,* (in fact, he even calls the church) *a holy nation,* (and he's using the language that only once applied to Israel, and he says,) *a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

Alright, praise the Lord. That's wonderful. And we've been given this awesome responsibility of producing fruit where Israel came up empty when God came to see what they had done with the kingdom. And now it's been given to us, but again, that does not mean that the church replaces Israel.

And what I mean by that is that God still has a purpose for Israel and a plan for Israel. And this is made abundantly clear in the Bible. I mean, I don't know how people can buy into Replacement Theology. I really don't. You just have to ignore whole sections of the Bible.

I mean, we've read through, we've gone through the Old Testament here at Calvary Chapel from, Genesis to Malachi. You cannot study through the Old Testament and really study through it with an open heart, and come away with the conclusion that the church replaces Israel. It's just, it's not…

And then you get into the New Testament and the apostle Paul starts talking about Israel's future. And what they have endured and what they've gone through. Let me show you this on the screen from Romans chapter 11. He says,

**Romans 11:1-2; 25 (ESV)**

*I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*

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A partial hardening. You see, now the church is made up of Jew and Gentile. It's not a divided church where you have Jews over here and Gentiles over there it. We've come together as one. We simply are the body of Christ. And just as you can't divide a human body and have it live, you can't divide a spiritual, the spiritual body of Christ either. We are one. Okay. Jew and Gentile doesn't matter.

And I'm a full Gentile and yet I am a son of Abraham and as are you guys and daughters of Abraham by faith in Jesus Christ, right? So we, we have this connection to Israel and we have this connection to the rest of the body of Christ and so forth.

But the thing we learn about Israel, Israel, is that God still has a plan. God still has the—and here's the deal. Here's the deal. I've said this many times to you guys, whenever we've studied last day's issues.

Now, I believe with all my heart, some of you disagree with me. I believe with all my heart that prior to the great tribulation, that the church is going to be caught up to be with the Lord. And I do not believe the church is going to be here for the great tribulation. However, Israel is going to be here for the great tribulation. And that's why I believe a lot of Christians get confused about that because there are references about Israel going through the great tribulation, and they think that's, those are talking about them. They're not. Israel is going to go through the great tribulation.

Now God's going to have his hand on them. And a remnant is going to survive the great tribulation, literally a remnant of Israel is going to come through the great tribulation. And at the end of the great tribulation, Jesus is going to return because you see all the nations of the world are going to gather at the conclusion, or right at the end of the great tribulation, and they're going to begin to attack Israel to wipe her off the map. It's what Iran has wanted forever. And they publicly and proudly say it. We want to wipe you off the map.

Well, it's going to finally begin to happen at the end of the tribulation and it's going to appear to be working. But then suddenly Jesus is going to return and He's going to fight against Israel's enemies. He's going to put them down and it's going to be a powerful thing.

And the remnant of Israel is going to see their redeemer for who He really is and what's going to happen then is their eyes are going to be opened. And they're going to realize this isn't the first time He came and we missed Him the first time. And the mourning and the crying in Israel is going to be off the charts. And this is actually prophesied to us in the Book of Zechariah. One of the most powerful prophetic books in the Bible. Up on the screen so you can see it, it says,

**Zechariah 12:10-11; 13:1 (ESV)**

*"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great.... "On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.*

*"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy,* (they're going to plead for mercy at the conclusion of the end of the tribulation there) *so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.* (and) *On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great.... "On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.*

Isn't that a powerful prophesy? I have always believed that Zachariah was one of the most underrated prophetic books in the Bible. We've already quoted it concerning the coming of Jesus in the triumphal entry. That's where that

passage appears in chapter 9 about Him coming on, riding on a donkey. And now we close our time here looking at Zachariah as it speaks of Jesus returning, looking, look at this, looking upon Him whom they pierced. This was written before they came up with piercing and crucifixion. And yet the prophecy is given specifically about how Jesus will be crucified and how the Jews at that time will recognize Him because He will come bearing his scars.

Jesus bears those scars for eternity. And when He, when their Redeemer shows up in glory, coming on a cloud with the hosts of heaven, and they're going to see those marks of His crucifixion, and they're going to realize this was Him. He came already, and we missed Him. We didn't believe, and now He's come to save us. And this is why the Bible says at that time, all Israel will be saved.