

# The Work of God In Our Midst

by Richard Owen Roberts

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*This sermon delves into the importance of recognizing the time of visitation from God, emphasizing the consequences of missing it, as seen in the example of Jerusalem's failure to recognize Jesus as the Messiah. It highlights the significance of living according to God's timing rather than our own agendas and the danger of turning places of worship into centers of merchandising instead of prayer.*

**Scripture:** Luke 19:41, Matthew 21:12, Matthew 23:37, 1 Peter 4:17, Revelation 3:20

**Topics:** "Divine Timing", "Recognizing God's Presence"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Have you ever given careful consideration to these words from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 19, speaking of course about our Savior, Jesus Christ? When he approached, he saw the city and he wept over it, saying, If you had known to this day, even you, the things which make for peace, that now may have been hidden from your eyes, for the day shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you and surround you and hang you in on every side and will level you to the ground and your children after you. And they will not leave in you one stone standing upon another because you did not recognize your time of visitation. What a critical matter, recognizing your time of visitation.

We don't really live on our calendar, we live on God's calendar. His timing is everything. If I'm so involved in my agenda, I may not notice what is occurring in his agenda.

Think now of the sobriety of the situation Christ is describing. From the very beginning of humankind, it was understood by the Jews that the day of visitation would come. The day when the Messiah longed for, prayed for, hoped for, would make his appearance.

All of their lives hung on that messianic visitation. All of their expectations were built around that expectation. But their spiritual integrity had disintegrated to such a point that when their day of visitation came, they didn't even know it.

And the very one that God sent in fulfillment of all his promises and in completion of all their expectations, they hung upon a cross. There's a danger that each of us might miss our day of visitation. Now immediately following the passage I read is a continuation.

And he entered the temple and he began to cast out those who were selling, saying to them, it is written, my house shall be a house of prayer, but you have made it a robber's den. Now think of that. What really was the result of Christ cleansing the temple? Why, he drove them out one door and they came back in another and continued their merchandising in the temple of God, the temple that God had designed for a house of prayer.

Every place of worship is designed by God as a house of prayer. And men have turned it into a place of merchandising. They sell the gospel at a price so cheap that every alien to Christ can embrace it.

They teach those who are foreigners to Christ that they are Christians when they come nowhere near salvation. But it's what followed that second cleansing of the temple that is so urgently needed to be faced honestly today. Christ mounted the hill overlooking the temple site and then he said, your house is left unto you, destined.

Oh, the urgency of those words. Shortly before, he had said, my father's house is a house of prayer. You've made it a place of merchandise.

And now he says, your house is left unto you, destined. And what does he mean when he says, your house, which is no longer my father's house, it's there. What does he mean when he says, desolate? He means he will never come again.

He has made his final visit. They are finished. And they were.

Now understand, of course, that he had predicted very solemnly that the time would come when Jerusalem would be overwhelmed, when it would be destroyed, when there would not even be one single stone left standing upon another. Did that happen the day he said, your house is left unto you, desolate? No. There were somewhere around 37 years in which they continued all that they were doing in the temple, but God never came.

And it's very, very reasonable to understand that God can leave the church never ever to return. And they could go on for years pretending to worship him, and he was never there. Because they did not recognize their day of visitation, and they turned the house of prayer into a place of merchandise.

Have you taken seriously what the Lord Jesus Christ has said? Every true believer ought to be constantly on the alert for the day of visitation. After all, the nearness of God is our God. His presence in our lives, in our churches, is mandatory to true worship.

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