

“How to Conquer Jerusalem”

Luke 16:28-44

6 in our series “Jesus Stories”

April 13, 2014

Peter Hiatt

[At the beginning of the service the children have a palm branch parade and read from Luke 19:28]

The Worship leader sings “Love and Peace or Else” by U2

"Love And Peace Or Else" by U2

Lay down Lay down Lay your sweet lovely on the ground Lay your love on the track We're gonna break the monster's back Yes we are... Lay down your treasure Lay it down now brother You don't have time For a jealous lover	I don't know if I can make it I'm not easy on my knees Here's my heart and you can break it I need some release, release, release We need Love and peace Love and peace Baby don't fight We can talk this thing through It's not a big problem It's just me and you You can call or I'll phone The TV is still on But the sound is turned down And the troops on the ground Are about to dig in	We need Love and peace Love and peace Lay down Lay down your guns All your daughters of Zion All your Abraham sons And I wonder where is the love? Where is the love? Where is the love? Where is the love? Love and peace I don't know if I can make it I'm not easy on my knees Here's my heart and you can break it I need some release, release, release
I don't know if I can take it I'm not easy on my knees Here's my heart you can break it		
I need some release, release, release	And I wonder where is the love? Where is the love? Where is the love? Where is the love? Love and peace	We need Love and peace Love and peace
We need Love and peace Love and peace		
Lay down Lay down your guns All your daughters of Zion All your Abraham sons		Baby don't fight We can talk this thing through It's not a big problem It's just me and you You can call or I'll phone The TV is still on But the sound is turned down And the troops on the ground Are about to dig in

Prayer

Lord God, in Jesus' name, we ask that you would help us to preach. We ask that you would help us to see Jesus the Christ, Amen.

Message

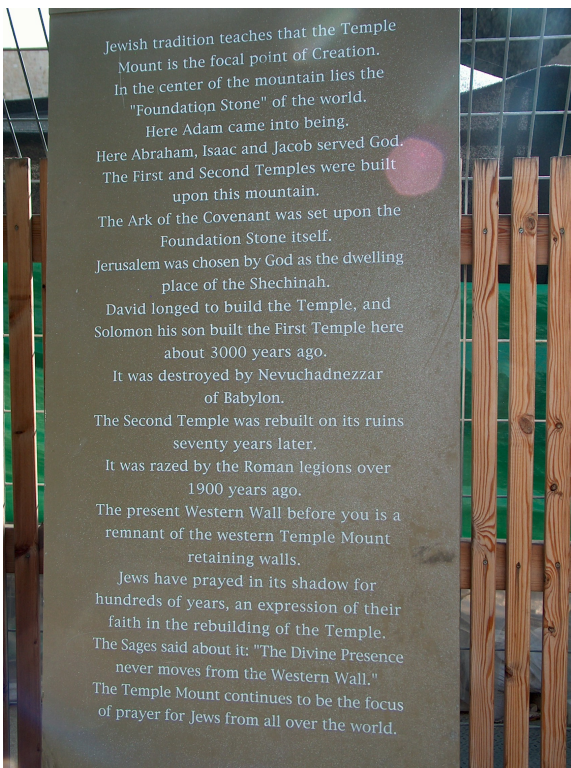
Luke 19:28 (What the children read earlier.)

“Having said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.”

Traditionally Jerusalem has been understood to mean “city of peace,” derived from the ancient Sumerian words: *uru* and *salim*. So some have argued that “Jerusalem” is a Hebrew derivative in which case it may mean, “teach peace” or “foundation of peace.”



Seven years ago, I was in Jerusalem with some of you.



At the temple mount we saw this sign describing the significance of the spot and the significance of the “foundation stone,” which is in the middle of the mount, currently under the Muslim shrine.



The Dome of the Rock.

Orthodox Jews believe that here,



on the “foundation stone,” Adam was created.

And so here...



or near here, the bride of Adam sold out to the devil, taking from the tree of knowledge to make herself in the image of God. She fell and Adam fell with her.

Genesis 14 may be the first biblical reference to Jerusalem. It tells of the king of Salem, named Melchizedek, priest of the God Most High, who meets Abraham in the King's Valley (most likely the bottom of *Gehenna*) and there blesses Abraham with bread and wine.

The first solid biblical reference to the location of Jerusalem is in Genesis 22 where God refers to "Moriah." From 2 Chronicles 3, we know that Mount Moriah is the location of the temple. In Genesis 22:2 God says to Abraham: *"Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I shall show you."*

Now, you cannot begin to understand this story unless you understand:

That this son of Abraham is the miraculous gift from God,
for which Abraham has waited his whole life.

And that this son is the "promised blessing,"
through which God has promised to "bless all the families of the earth."

And that this seed is the judgment on all humanity, for God says,
"I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you."

That's why some people say you must bless whatever the nation-state of Israel decides to do—because they are "the seed of Abraham." Interestingly enough, Muslims also claim to be "seed of Abraham," and according to Scripture they are: Isaac and Ishmael are brothers. The New Testament argues that the "promised seed" of Abraham is not plural but singular, and His name is Jesus.

Well, in Genesis 22:3 we read that Abraham rose early, saddled his ass, took Isaac and traveled to Moriah. He gathered wood and placed his only begotten son on the wood (the *ates*, also translated "tree" or "gallows"). He prepared the fire, lifted the knife...and surrendered his control of the promised blessing.¹

He trusted that God was good and even if Isaac died, God could raise him from the dead. As he prepared to plunge the knife into his son, the Angel of Yahweh—a weird Old Testament God-man sort of figure—stopped Abraham's hand and provided a substitute for sacrifice...on the foundation stone.

About one thousand years later, a son of Abraham named David captured Mount Moriah, which had become a fortress named "Mount Zion" or "Jerusalem." King David wanted to build a house for God, and God revealed the spot for that house through David's own sin.

In 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21 we read David's sin was "numbering his troops." That is, David relied on his military might rather than the grace of God to defend Jerusalem. Because of that, a plague falls on Israel and seventy thousand of David's men die (men that he just numbered). David sees an angel standing on a threshing floor on Mount Zion. He stands between Heaven and earth with his sword stretched out over

¹ In other words, He didn't trust His own "knowledge of good and evil" and his own ability to make good."

Jerusalem. David's heart breaks, he drops to his knees, confesses his sin, and calls for God's judgment to fall on himself and his lineage rather than Jerusalem.

Jesus is called "The Son of David" that builds the temple; for God tells David that his hands are covered in too much blood. Solomon is the immediate son of David; Solomon means peace..."prince of peace." The temple is built with stones prepared at the quarry, so no human tools can touch them on the Holy mountain...like a temple not made with human hands.

The temple is built on the threshing floor where David saw judgment. A threshing floor is the place where the wheat is separated from the chaff, and where grapes are often trodden in a press. I remember our Jewish guide telling me that archeologists had found one of these on the temple mount—a place for making bread and wine—the harvest of this earth.

Well, David's descendants rule Jerusalem for the next 550 years. However, the kingdom divides and Jerusalem begins to suffer great violence as the Israelites war among themselves. But prophets begin to foretell the most amazing things about Jerusalem...that it will be destroyed, and yet one day, a King will come to Jerusalem and command peace to all nations: *"The government will be on his shoulders and the of the increase of his peace there will be no end."* He will swallow up death forever and wipe the tears away from all faces on His Holy Mountain. (Isaiah 25:8)

In 720 B.C. the Northern Kingdom falls to Assyria and one hundred twenty-five years later, Jerusalem, in the Southern Kingdom, is besieged three times and finally falls to the Babylonians. The Jews had broken the covenant by trusting in foreign alliances rather than God.

All the major prophets refer to Jerusalem as a "harlot." It's rather shocking! Read Ezekiel 16 to see what I mean. God says: *"She played the whore"* with Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, and they all raped her. The prophet Hosea is even commanded to marry a harlot—to feel what God feels.

Well, around 540 B.C. Cyrus the king of Persia (that's Iran) saves the Jews from Babylon (that's Iraq). They return and rebuild the temple.

In 312 B.C. general Ptolemy, under Alexander the Great, attacked and captured the city on the Sabbath. For the next one hundred forty years Jerusalem was ruled by Greeks and was subject to their wars and desecrations.

In 167 B.C. The Jewish Maccabean Revolt began. But when the Jews came to rule, once again, they were as ruthless as any foreign power.

Eighty years before the birth of Christ, Alexander Jannaeus (the high priest) killed six thousand Pharisees and barricaded the temple to all but Sadducees, of which, he was one.

Six years later, when the Pharisees finally surrendered to his rule, he had eight hundred Pharisees crucified outside the city walls while his soldiers slit the throats of their wives and children, and made these crucified men watch from their crosses.

In 63 B.C. the son of Alexander Jannaeus and his friend, who became Herod the Great, appealed to the Roman general Pompey, asking him to lay siege to the city in order to win a civil war in their favor. They made an alliance with Rome, and eventually Jerusalem was raped by Rome.

Exactly one generation (40 years after Jesus prophesied the destruction of the temple) in 70 A.D., Titus besieged and destroyed the city.

Josephus estimates that 1.1 million Jews were in the city for Passover, and thus trapped when the siege began. The siege lasted five months. Each night the Romans would catch about five hundred Jews trying to escape the famine in the city. The Romans would crucify them all.

In 135 A.D. the Romans literally ran a plow over the site of the temple so that “not one stone would be left on top of another.” And the emperor of Rome banned all Jews from ever stepping foot in Jerusalem...ever again...absolutely no Jews.

Then something truly amazing happened over the next three hundred years. The Empire of Rome surrendered to a Jew. From the 4th Century to the 7th Century, Jerusalem was ruled by people that called themselves “Christians,” followers of the King of the Jews. In early 7th Century, Jerusalem fell twice to the Persians, and then in 745 to Muslims and then to various Muslim nations at war with each other.

Three hundred fifty years later, In 1095, thousands of miles away, a man who called himself the “vicar of Christ” summoned the Christian nations of Europe to a crusade promising a remission of sins for all who undertook the journey to conquer the city of peace—Jerusalem.

On June 7, 1099, the first crusaders arrived at the city walls. On July 15th the crusaders breached the city wall. For three days, they killed virtually every inhabitant of Jerusalem: Muslims, Jews, and undoubtedly Christians. Some of the crusaders record their “glorious conquest.” William of Tyre wrote, “No mercy was shown to anyone, and the whole place was flooded with the blood of the victims.” Raymond of Aguilers wrote, “In the Temple and porch of Solomon (which was actually the Dome of the Rock), men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins.

Fulcher of Chartre wrote:

Within this Temple about ten thousand were beheaded. If you had been there, your feet would have been stained up to the ankles with the blood of the slain. What more shall I tell? Not one of them was allowed to live. They did not spare the women and children...our squires and poorer people split the bellies of those dead Saracens, so that they might pick out bezants [gold coins] from their intestines, which they had swallowed down their horrible gullets while alive. After several days, they made a great heap of their bodies and burned them to ashes and in these ashes they found the gold more easily.

Crusader is based on the Latin word *crus* or cross. “Crusader” means “One who bears a cross,” not “one who nails other people to a cross.”

Well, Muslims took the city back on October 2, 1187, the exact anniversary of Muhammad’s night journey, when it’s said that he ascended to heaven from the rock on the temple mount.

From 1244 to 1917, six hundred seventy-three years, Jerusalem was ruled by various Islamic empires at war with each other.² On December 9, 1917, the British captured Jerusalem from the Turks. December 9th was also the first day of Hannukah that year. And now, of course, I’m walking into an incredibly controversial bit of history involving the creation of the State of Israel. Some view it as a massive humanitarian effort following the unspeakable horrors of the Nazis. Others view it as an invasion.

In 1917, there were about fifty-four thousand Jews in Palestine. Today, there are about five million. In 1920, before World War II under Arab pressure, the British began to limit immigration to Palestine. In response, Jewish paramilitary groups resorted to terrorist tactics. They killed thousands. In the 1940’s they assassinated the British minister of Middle Eastern affairs and blew up a wing of the King David Hotel.

In 1948, the United Nations partitioned Palestine...creating a Jewish State and an Arab State, and making Jerusalem a protectorate of the UN for all nations. The surrounding Arab countries immediately declared war on the new nation called Israel, and Israel prevailed. Despite five wars and Palestinian terrorism (that’s killed thousands) Israel prevailed. And Israel has prevailed...backed by some very powerful foreign entities, chief of those being us.

Since 1948 (adjusted for inflation), the U.S. has given Israel 233.7 billion dollars in foreign aid. [Haaretz digital edition 5-11-14] 3.1 billion is budgeted for 2014.³

There are some wonderful humanitarian reasons for that much aid⁴ There are also strategic reasons for that much aid. And sometimes I wonder if Jerusalem is a reason for that much aid.

² Yet, during that time Jerusalem contained Muslims, Christians, and some Jews. Often, the Christians and Jews were persecuted; sometimes they all lived in peace.

³ Many say that the existence of the State of Israel is a miracle. Millions of Palestinians would agree that billions in foreign aid takes it out of that category.

⁴ I hope we would help all persecuted people groups including Palestinian refugees, and we do.

In the last one hundred fifty years or so, a particular brand of end times theology became really popular in Great Britain and the U.S. It advanced the idea that Jesus would return forty years after the creation of the nation-state of Israel and the rebuilding of a stone temple on the spot of the Dome of the Rock shrine.

I find that theology impossible to square with Scripture, but I think it's so attractive to Brits and Americans because it seems to make the city of God something we can conquer with guns, tanks, and cash.

So even though the world didn't end in 1988 as predicted, and even though the State of Israel defines herself in such an un-American way (by race of religion), we American Christians are extra supportive because we'd like a stake in the city of Jerusalem.

After 9/11 folks would wonder: "Why do they hate us?" Well...listen to them. Lots of bad reasons: jealousy, greed, fear, a corrupt religion. And also this one: They say, "You take our land and are trying to take our city."

Well, how do you conquer Jerusalem—"the city of peace"?

Clip of the Six Day War

[Brief footage of the occupation and methods (bombs, tanks, infantry) used during the Six Day War is shown while it is narrated with the following:]

The six day war, third of five Arab Israeli wars. A conflict whose outcome was made inevitable by air of the first day. A war fought on three fronts, each quite different Sinai dessert the scene of dramatic tank battles and the destruction of an entire army. The largely urban street battles in Jordan as the Israeli's fought their way into the holy city of Jerusalem and the mountainous Golan heights, torn from Syrian control by bulldozers, tanks and infantry.

That's footage from the last time Jerusalem was conquered eight hundred sixty-eight years to the day, after those Medieval crusaders first appeared at the city walls.

Below is a chart of all the times Jerusalem has been attacked or conquered:

TABLE 1—Jerusalem Conflicts from 2000 BCE to 2000 CE			TABLE 1—Continued			TABLE 1—Continued		
Date	Opponents	Action/Result	Date	Opponents	Action/Result	Date	Opponents	Action/Result
About 1350 BCE	Abdi-Heba vs. Canaanites/Habiru	Possibly attacked	54 BCE	Crassus vs. Judeans	Revolt	1239 or 1240 CE	Moslems vs. Crusaders	Besieged; captured
About 1120 BCE	Joshua and the Israelites vs. the Jebusites	Possibly attacked	40 BCE	Parthians and Antigonos vs. Ptolemy and Herod	Besieged; captured	1241 or 1243 CE	Crusaders vs. Moslems	Attacked; captured
About 1100 BCE	Tribe of Judah vs. the Jebusites	Possibly attacked and captured	37 BCE	Herod the Great vs. Antigonos	Besieged; captured	1244 CE	Khwarizmians/Turks vs. Crusaders	Besieged; captured
About 1100 BCE	Tribe of Benjamin vs. the Jebusites	Possibly attacked and captured	4 BCE	Judeans vs. Herod	Revolt	1246–47 CE	Khwarizmians vs. Egyptians	Attacked; captured
About 1000 BCE	King David and the Israelites	Besieged; captured	4 BCE	Judeans vs. Archelaus	Revolt	1246–47 CE	Egyptians vs. Khwarizmians	Attacked; captured
925 BCE	Egyptian pharaoh Shishak/Shoshenq vs. the Jebusites	Probably besieged; ransom or tribute paid	4 BCE	Judeans vs. Varus	Revolt	1246–47 CE	Kerakians vs. Egyptians	Attacked; captured
875 BCE	Basah of Israel against Aza of Judah	Threatened; possibly attacked	4 BCE	Judeans vs. Pontius Pilate	Riot/protests	1247–48 CE	Egyptians vs. Kerakians	Attacked; captured
800 BCE	Hazeel of Aram vs. Jehoash (Joash) of Judah	Attacked	27 CE	Judeans vs. Pontius Pilate	Riot/protests	About 1248–50 CE	Aleppoans/Damascenes vs. Egyptians	Attacked; captured
785 BCE	Jehoash (Joash) of Israel vs. Amaziah of Judah	Attacked	41 CE	Judeans vs. Caligula	Protests	1253–54 CE	Egyptians vs. Damascenes/Aleppoans	Returned peacefully
734 BCE	Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel vs. Ahaz (Jehothan) of Judah	Threatened; possibly attacked and besieged	48 CE	Judeans vs. Cumanus	Riot	1254 CE	Damascenes/Aleppoans vs. Egyptians	Attacked; captured
701 BCE	Sennacherib and the Neo-Assyrians vs. Hezekiah of Judah	Besieged; ransom or tribute paid	58 CE	Judeans and Paul vs. Romans	Riot	1260 CE	Mongols vs. Damascenes/Aleppoans	Attacked; captured
598 BCE	Nebuchadnezzar and the Neo-Babylonians vs. Judah	Attacked; deportation	66 CE	Judeans vs. Florus and Gallus	Revolt	1260 CE	Mamlukes vs. Mongols	Attacked; recaptured
597 BCE	Nebuchadnezzar and the Neo-Babylonians vs. Judah	Besieged; captured; deportation	68–70 CE	Simon bar Giora vs. John of Gischala vs. Eleazar bar Simon	Civil war	1300 CE	Mongols vs. Mamlukes	Attacked
586 BCE	Nebuchadnezzar and the Neo-Babylonians vs. Judah	Besieged; destroyed; deportation	70 CE	Titus and the Romans vs. Judeans	Besieged; destroyed	1348 CE	Bedouins vs. Mamlukes	Attacked
582 BCE	Nebuchadnezzar and the Neo-Babylonians vs. Judah	Possibly attacked; deportation	132–35 CE	Judeans vs. Hadrian	Revolt; city renamed	1480 CE	Selim I and the Ottomans vs. Mamlukes	Captured
312 BCE	Ptolemy I vs. Jerusalem inhabitants	Attacked; captured	614 CE	Shahr-Baraz and the Persians vs. Byzantines	Besieged; captured	About 1590 CE	Bedouins vs. governor of Jerusalem	Attacked
201 BCE	Antiochus III vs. Ptolemy IV	Attacked; captured	629 CE	Heraklius and Byzantines vs. Persians	Attacked; captured	1625 CE	Mohammed ibn Faroukh vs. Ottomans	Attacked; captured
200 BCE	Antiochus III vs. Ptolemy IV	Besieged; captured	638 CE	Caliph Umar and the Umayyads vs. Byzantines	Besieged; captured	1627–28 CE	Ottomans vs. Mohammed ibn Faroukh	Attacked; recaptured
200 BCE	Antiochus III vs. Ptolemy IV	Besieged; captured	745 CE	Abbasids vs. Umayyads	Attacked	1703 CE	Nagib al-ahraf revolt vs. pasha of Jerusalem	Revolt
180 BCE	Seleucus IV/Heliokorus vs. Judeans	Possibly apocryphal revolt	807–15 CE	Doerret tribes vs. Abbasids	Revolts	1705 CE	Nagib al-ahraf revolt suppressed	Attacked; recaptured
172 BCE	Judean uprising vs. Menelaus and Lysimachus	Revolt	841–42 CE	Abu Harb Tamim vs. Abbasids	Revolt	1757 CE	Greek Orthodox Jerusalemites vs. Catholic Jerusalemites	Riot
169 BCE	Jason vs. Menelaus	Attacked	966 CE	Anti-Christian riots (Ikshidites vs. Christians)	Riots	1798 CE	Moslem Jerusalemites vs. Catholic Jerusalemites	Riot
169 BCE	Antiochus IV Epiphanes vs. Judeans	Attacked; captured	About 973 CE	Fatimids vs. Abbasids	Presumed attacked; captured	1806–7 CE	Governor of Sidon vs. Jerusalem rebels	Revolt
167 BCE	Antiochus IV Epiphanes vs. Judeans	Attacked; captured	975 CE	Alptakin and alliance vs. Fatimids	Reportedly attacked; possibly captured	1819 CE	Moslem Jerusalemites vs. Greek Orthodox Jerusalemites	Riot
164 BCE	Judah Maccabee vs. Antiochus IV	Attacked; Temple Mount captured	1009 CE	Arab rebels vs. Fatimids	Riots	1825 CE	Jerusalem inhabitants vs. Ottomans	Attacked; recaptured
162 BCE	Judah Maccabee vs. Antiochus V	Akra attacked	1024 CE	Fatimids vs. Arab rebels	Attacked	1831 CE	Mohammed Ali and the Egyptians vs. Ottomans	Attacked; captured
145 BCE	Jonathan vs. Demetrius I	Akra attacked	1025 CE	Fatimids vs. Arab rebels	Recaptured	1834 CE	Jerusalem inhabitants vs. Egyptians	Revolt
142–41 BCE	Simon vs. Tryphon	Akra attacked and destroyed	1073 CE	Seljuks (Turcomans) vs. Fatimids	Besieged; captured	1840 CE	Ottomans vs. Egyptians	Attacked; captured
135 BCE	Antiochus VII vs. John Hyrcanus	Besieged; ransom or tribute paid	1076 CE	Fatimids vs. Seljuks (Turcomans)	Revolt	1917 CE	Allenby and the Allies vs. Ottomans and Germans	Attacked; captured
94–88 BCE	Alexander Jannaeus vs. Jerusalem inhabitants	Revolt (and civil war)	1077 CE	Seljuks (Turcomans) vs. Fatimids	Attacked; recaptured	1920 CE	Arabs vs. Jews	Riot
67 BCE	Antiochus II vs. Hyrcanus II	Attacked; captured	1098 CE	Fatimids vs. Seljuks (Turcomans)	Besieged; captured	1921 CE	Arabs vs. Jews	Riot
65 BCE	Hyrcanus II, Antipater, and Artavas II vs. Aristobulus II	Besieged	1187 CE	First Crusade vs. Fatimids	Besieged; captured	1929 CE	Arabs vs. Jews	Riot
63 BCE	Pompey and Hyrcanus II vs. Aristobulus II	Besieged; captured	1191–92 CE	Saladin vs. Crusades	Besieged; captured	1942–46 CE	Arabs vs. Jews and British (Arab Revolt)	Revolt; terrorist attacks
57, 56, and 55 BCE	Gabinius vs. Hasmoneans	Revolt	1229 CE (February)	Frederick II and Sixth Crusade vs. Moslems	Peace treaty signed	1947–48 CE	Israelis vs. Arabs	Attacked; besieged; captured
			1229 CE (February to March)	Moslems vs. Crusaders	Attacked	1949–66 CE	Israelis vs. Arabs	Terrorist attacks
						1967 CE	First Intifada: Palestinians vs. Israelis	Attacked; captured
						1987–93 CE	Second Intifada: Palestinians vs. Israelis	Revolt; terrorist attacks
						2000 CE–present		

Note: Winners, if any, are marked in bold. "Besieged" is surrounded and with supplies cut off for more than a few days.

The City of Peace is easily the most violent and violated city in the world. Look at this list of conquerors...and yet, if you study this incredible list, you might notice one Conqueror is missing. And we Christians claim that He entered the city, conquered the city, and indeed conquered all things.

This is how He did it...

Clip from *The Passion*

A close-up of Jesus' face, beaten and bruised, is shown. Filming cuts to Jesus' view of Palm Sunday (the back of a donkey's head and waiving palm branches). We then see Jesus being whipped and carrying His cross. Again we see Jesus' view of Palm Sunday, as if He's remembering His entry to Jerusalem while being beaten. Jesus continues to carry His cross while Satan and Mary are walking on either side of Him through the crowds. Satan and Mary are watching each other intensely as Jesus continues to bear His cross.

That's the definition of "crusade."

Luke 19 describes how Jesus entered the city, and I hope you caught these things:

- Jesus is the last Adam who redeems Eve, His harlot bride.
- Jesus is High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, King of Salem.
- Jesus is the Promised Seed sacrificed on Mount Moriah in obedience to His Father, and given to us as bread and wine—bread from the threshing floor, and wine from the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God.
- Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem is like the culmination of a story that God has been telling for all time.
- Jesus is the plot.

- Jesus is the Seed of Adam, Seed of Abraham, and Son of David who builds the temple. He said, *“Destroy it and I’ll build it in three days.”*

Zechariah prophesied:

“Rejoice greatly oh daughter of Zion! Shout aloud oh daughters of Jerusalem! Look: Your king is coming to you righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the warhorse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off. And he shall speak peace to the nations. His rule shall be from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.”

Some act like Jesus failed, and so He will come back with new attitude the second time around. Yet Scripture says, “He doesn’t change.”

And Jesus told Caiaphus: *“From now on you will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of Heaven,”* and He told His disciples that all that was written of Him in the prophets had to be fulfilled (Luke 24:41) On the cross He cried, *“It is accomplished.”* So Isaiah prophesied saying, *“Comfort Jerusalem; cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished—that her iniquity is pardoned—it is finished.”*

Yet, we don’t see it finished, or maybe we don’t see so well.

In Luke 19 Jesus said, *“If these disciples are silenced the very stones will cry out.”* And you know, Scripture talks quite a bit about living stones that sing praises. And in the Revelation, John sees a New Jerusalem coming down; she’s built with living stones and she is a Bride. And that’s not some obscure theme in just the Revelation. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekial, Hosea all refer to Jerusalem as a Bride, a harlot bride, a bride who cheats on her bridegroom, but a bride that *will* be redeemed by covenant blood.

In John 12, on Palm Sunday, John records Jesus as saying, *“NOW is the judgment of this world.” “NOW will the ruler of this world be cast out.” “And I when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all people to myself.”* And this He said to show by what death He would die. *“I will draw”* can be translated: *“I will romance all people to myself.”*

On Palm Sunday, Jesus was conquering Jerusalem...not with tanks but with romance.

If Jerusalem is real estate, you can use brute force, guns, and money.

If a woman is just a body, you can use brute force, guns, and money.

But if a woman is more than a body,

and you want her heart,

well it takes a different sort of weapon.

If Jesus is a bride you cannot conquer her like this...



It must look something more like this...

Clip from *The Princess Bride*

Man in Black: *He died well, that should please you. No bribe attempts or blubbering. He simply said, "Please. Please, I need to live." It was the "please" that caught my memory. I asked him what was so important for him. "True love," he replied. And then he spoke of a girl of surpassing beauty and faithfulness. I can only assume he meant you. You should bless me for destroying him before he found out what you really are.*

Buttercup: *And what am I?*

Man in Black: *Faithfulness he talked of, madam, your enduring faithfulness! Now, tell me truly. When you found out he was gone, did you get engaged to your prince that same hour, or did you wait a whole week out of respect for the dead?*

Buttercup: [standing up, more indignant than before] *You mocked me once, never do it again! I died that day!*

[The Man in Black turns to see Humperdinck's hunting party riding past on the hill above them.]

Buttercup: *And you can die too for all I care!* [Buttercup pushes him down the hill]

Man in Black: [tumbling down the hill] *Aaaass yooooooooo wiiiiish!*

Buttercup: [shocked] *Oh, my sweet Wesley, what have I done?* [Buttercup jumps down the hill after him and both tumble down the entire length of the mountainside.]

Wesley: *Can you live at all?*

Buttercup: *You're alive! If you want...I can fly.* [Wesley and Buttercup begin kissing passionately.]

Wesley: *I told you I would come for you. Why didn't you wait for me?*

Buttercup: *Well...you were dead!*

Wesley: *Death cannot stop true love. All it can do is delay it for awhile.*

Buttercup: *I will never doubt again.*

Wesley: *There will never be a need.* [The couple kiss each other again.]

You haven't conquered a bride until she opens her gate and lets you in; anything else is rape. I certainly hope you've seen that movie *The Princess Bride*. Wesley has been romancing Buttercup from the start, when he was just a farm boy, and would always say to her: "As you wish."

He left to seek his fortune and return for Buttercup. When he does finally return for Buttercup, she is engaged to an evil prince, thinking Wesley is dead. She doesn't know that the one she fears is actually her one true love.

It's not until she tries to kill him that she sees who it is and surrenders her heart. As he's falling, he cries, "As you wish," and she wished to fall with him, and he gets his wish, for he wished that she'd wish for him.

Luke 19:37

As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out." And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it..."

That's an amazing scene: There were throngs of people shouting, "Hosanna." You would think Jesus would be overjoyed...but look closely. He's weeping. It's so ironic; we set the kids up with palm branches and sing "Hosanna," but look kids...Jesus is weeping! Why's He weeping? And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it saying,

"Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace!"

Could it be that the U.S. government, the nation-state of Israel, and much of the institutional church does not know the thing that makes for peace? We say, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem and don't know what makes for peace; for perhaps, we don't see Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a bride not made of stone but people.

How do you capture the city? Well...

How do you capture a bride, or your child's heart, or an enemy's heart?

Isaac, how do you capture your brother Ishmael's heart? Well, you speak a word at the right time like: "As you wish" or "Father forgive them."

You may feel like an ass, but the Word rides an ass, and conquers the city, even makes the city...the city of peace.

Now I know what you may be thinking: "Come on Peter, what's Israel to do? What's the U.S. government to do?" Listen closely: I don't know what the kingdom of the U.S. is to

do, but I know they can't make real peace. That takes weapons from the Kingdom of God.

And you may say, "Look, if you go into a situation like that with no guns, no tanks, no military, you'll get yourself killed, and what good will that do? If you go in with nothing but a Word, you'll get yourself crucified..." Exactly! You'll become a crusader or at least the Body of the crusader. His Body broken, and His blood shed.

And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation. "

Maybe He's weeping because we don't know how to conquer the city and because He knows we don't want Him to conquer the city (we are the city).

Maybe we don't know the time of our visitation; for we don't truly see the One who is visiting. We see but don't see.

Evil men only see a woman's body, and evil women only see a man's power. Jesus knows that in five days, when he performs no "mighty works," Jerusalem will chant, "Crucify him, crucify him, crucify him." "The evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign."

They want signs, and miracles, and mighty works.

They want the power of God and not the heart of God.

They want a new Herod or new Caesar to kick out the old Caesar, but they don't want to open the gate of their hearts to King Jesus.

Jerusalem is a whore.

She wants Jesus' stuff and not Jesus.

She does not wish to be conquered by Love, and it's as if Jesus says:

"As you wish.

Kill me.

Have Rome.

You hate Rome, but you want Rome and you will get Rome.

And be violated by Rome."

The wrath of God is that He hands us over to the abusers that we have chosen. We are delivered up...but delivered up for the destruction of our flesh, the destruction of arrogance, pride, and independence, the destruction of the city that we have built in order to become the city that God has built, the city that opens her gates to Jesus...for He refuses to take our hearts another way.

He waits for us to say, "As you wish."

He refuses to take our hearts by force.

He refuses to conquer us with His strength until we choose Him in weakness.

He refuses to let us see Easter until we've been to His cross.

So when the crowds of Jerusalem do not know the time of their visitation, they deliver Jesus to Rome for crucifixion, and Jesus does not resist with His limitless strength; He surrenders to His bride in weakness as if to say, "As you wish. Do you see what you wish? And now would you begin to wish for Me, as I have wished or you?"

She delivered Jesus to Rome for crucifixion, and God delivered Jerusalem to Rome for destruction. But when Jerusalem was destroyed, Jerusalem and the whole world began to see Jesus Christ and Him crucified. She began to see and wish what He wished, and she is the New Jerusalem coming down: A temple destroyed and rebuilt in three days, a temple cleansed of money changers and filled with Grace. No longer a harlot but the Bride.

In the Revelation, John sees the Great Harlot destroyed by the kings of the earth, and then He sees the Word riding a warhorse, and then He sees the New Jerusalem coming down.

It's in the midst of the destruction of our old city, in the midst of pain, that we hear the Word of God. It looks weak, and we may be riding an ass, but nothing is more powerful!

Through Hosea speaking to His Harlot Bride, God says,

Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. And there I will...make the Valley of Achor (that means valley of trouble). There I will make the valley of trouble a door of hope...There she shall...call me "My Husband." (Hosea 2:12-14)

In the midst of trouble and pain He speaks His Word and makes a door of hope—His name is Jesus.

I used to take Susan to scary movies so she would cling to me. The movie wasn't real, but my love was real. This world isn't very real, but Jesus is real. He is the Word of God that creates all things...including Jerusalem.

Well, Jesus knew He would conquer Jerusalem and capture her heart, and yet He wept; for she did not know the time of her visitation. I wonder if we know the time of our visitation. They sure missed it two thousand years ago on Palm Sunday. I wonder if we miss it today...

We worship power, money, and strength and miss our Lord who comes in weakness—in the sick, and the poor, and the persecuted. He said, "*Whatever you do to the least of these, my brothers...*" You know, Ishmael is Isaac's brother.

I wonder if we miss the time of our visitation...because we are Jerusalem, and we seem to forget how we have been conquered.

Communion

It may be that the Word of God has ridden into your city, on an ass, this morning. Don't be offended but open the gates and invite Him in.

On the night He was betrayed, He took bread and broke it saying, *"This is my body given to you; take and eat; do this in remembrance of me."* And in the same way, after supper, having given thanks, He took the cup and said, *"This cup is the covenant in my blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins; do this, all of you, in remembrance of me."*

Lord Jesus, I confess to you that you, well...you kind of terrify me because although the world is so profoundly evil, you are so profoundly good. I think to myself: "There's no way I can love like that!" And then Lord, I realize that I need to first *be* loved like that. That terrifies us as well...that you love us with such abandon, such relentless fury, and you stand at the door and knock; you stand at the city gates, even bleeding and broken, calling to us to open our hearts to you.

I don't know what exactly this means for you, but maybe you can say this now in your heart: "Lord Jesus, I surrender my city to you."

Come to the table and be conquered, in His name, Amen.

[The worship leader sings "He loves us, oh how He loves us..."]

Benediction

Hebrews chapter 12:18 and 22-25

For you have not come to what may be touched. You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. See that you do not refuse him who is speaking.

And I don't think you do because I saw you. I don't mean to freak you out, but do you realize what just happened? Jerusalem, Bride of Christ, you came forward and you participated in a covenant, an eternal blood covenant and you received seed, eternal seed into yourself, Bride of Christ. Because you did that, you might just get pregnant, with fruit, with the love that has been given to you.

Believe the gospel—and you see—you begin to live the gospel.

Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.