

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

A Walk through the Holy Land: Jerusalem

Scripture Reference: [Luke 19:41-44](#), [Matthew 23:37](#)

Study & Reflection:

In preparation for the upcoming travel to the Jerusalem, this week's lesson will look at this special city. Jerusalem has stood at the center of the Jewish people's national and spiritual life since King David made it the capital of his kingdom in 1003 BCE. The city remained the capital of the Davidic dynasty for 400 years, until the kingdom was conquered by the Babylonians.

As we study and reflect on the scripture passages, **Jerusalem has a special significance to Jesus**. What was it about Jerusalem that Jesus would weep over this historic city? Was it simply the geographic location of his home land? I tend to believe that Jerusalem has a *spiritual significance* for all of humanity but even more so for those who are Christ's followers.

According to Jewish scholars, the name Jerusalem is a combination of two names united by God, Yireh ("the abiding place", the name given by Abraham to the place where he planned to sacrifice his son) Gen.22:1-19 and Shalem ("Place of Peace", the name given by high priest Shem).

"The abiding place", Jerusalem is the abiding place of God. This holds spiritual significance because *Jerusalem represents a place of continual fellowship, relationship with God and the community of Jesus followers*. In Matthew 23:37, Jesus weeps because the people of God refused his invitation of fellowship and relationship. To refuse is abide in a position of disconnection.

"Place of Peace" Jerusalem is a place of peace. When we consider the current conditions in Jerusalem today, this does not seem apparent or possible with the decades of hostilities and violent war between Palestine and Israel. What does it mean to fight over the place of peace? We live in a culture that is in a constant warfare and conflict. Violence is more common than it ever was. Jesus weeps because the people of God have rejected peace.

Action Items:

- Reflect and consider with a deep level of transparency and rate yourself in the areas of "abiding with God" and "peace with God and others". 1.....3.....5.....7.....10 (1-dissatisfied, 10-Completely Satisfied)
- Reflect on your relationship and fellowship with God, how do you respond daily to his invitation to abide with him?
- Reflect on both inward and external battles for peace in your daily living, what would it take to gain peace?
- Who are the person(s) that you are in conflict with, how would a refocus on Jesus help you to gain peace?

Involving Others:

In your small group discussion, talk about the action item questions and talk about the impact this study has had on you in reflection. Talk about what **new** action steps you are committed to making.