

Jesus in Jerusalem

Luke 19: 41

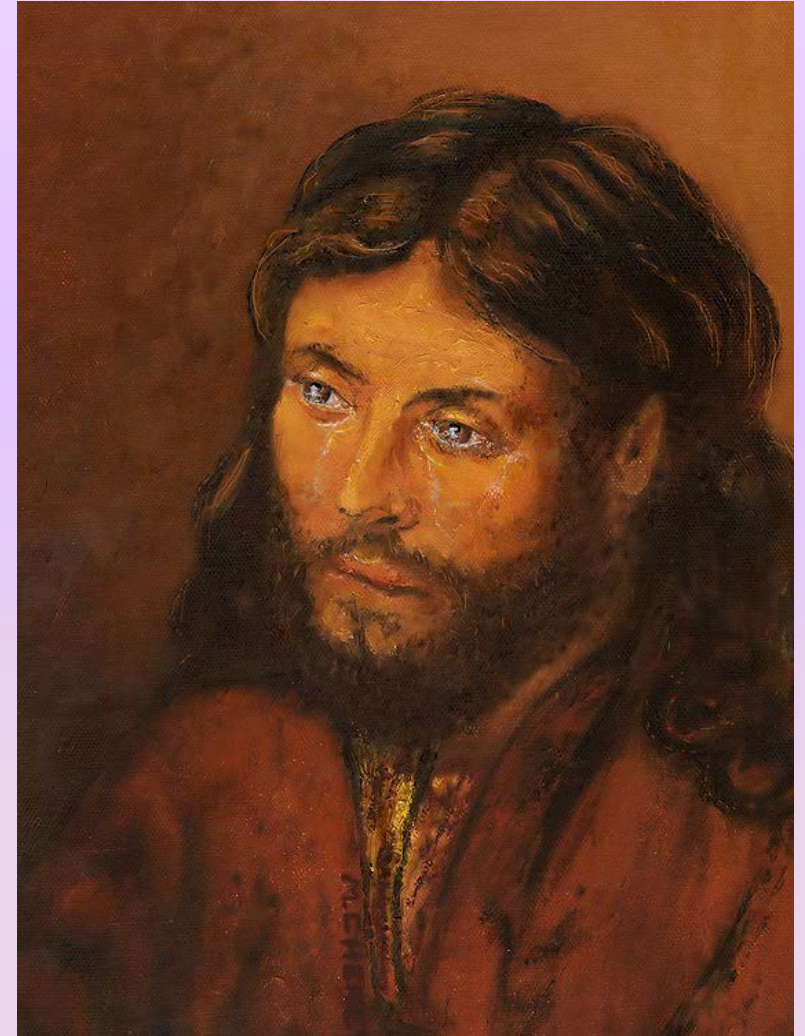


“Now as He drew near,
He saw the city and
wept over it.”
Luke 19:41



I. Introduction

The end of the ministry of Jesus came very close to its end. The most glorious city, Jerusalem, doesn't know the time of God's visitation. And this fact causes Jesus to weep.



“No visitor seeing Jerusalem for the first time could fail to be impressed by its visual splendor. The long, difficult ascent from Jericho to the Holy City ended as the traveler rounded the Mount of Olives, and suddenly caught sight of a vista like few others in the world. Across the Kidron Valley, set among the surrounding hills, was Jerusalem, “the perfection of beauty,” in the words of Lamentations, “the joy of all the world.”
Merrill Tenney



“For three thousand years, Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish hope and longing. No other city has played such a dominant role in the history, culture, religion and consciousness of a people as has Jerusalem in the life of Jewry and Judaism. Throughout centuries of exile, Jerusalem remained alive in the hearts of Jews everywhere as the focal point of Jewish history, the symbol of ancient glory, spiritual fulfillment and modern renewal. This heart and soul of the Jewish people engenders the thought that if you want one simple word to symbolize all of Jewish history, that word would be ‘Jerusalem.’” Teddy Kollek; (Mayor of Jerusalem [1967-1993]), Jerusalem, Washington Institute For Near East Policy, 1990, pp. 19-20.



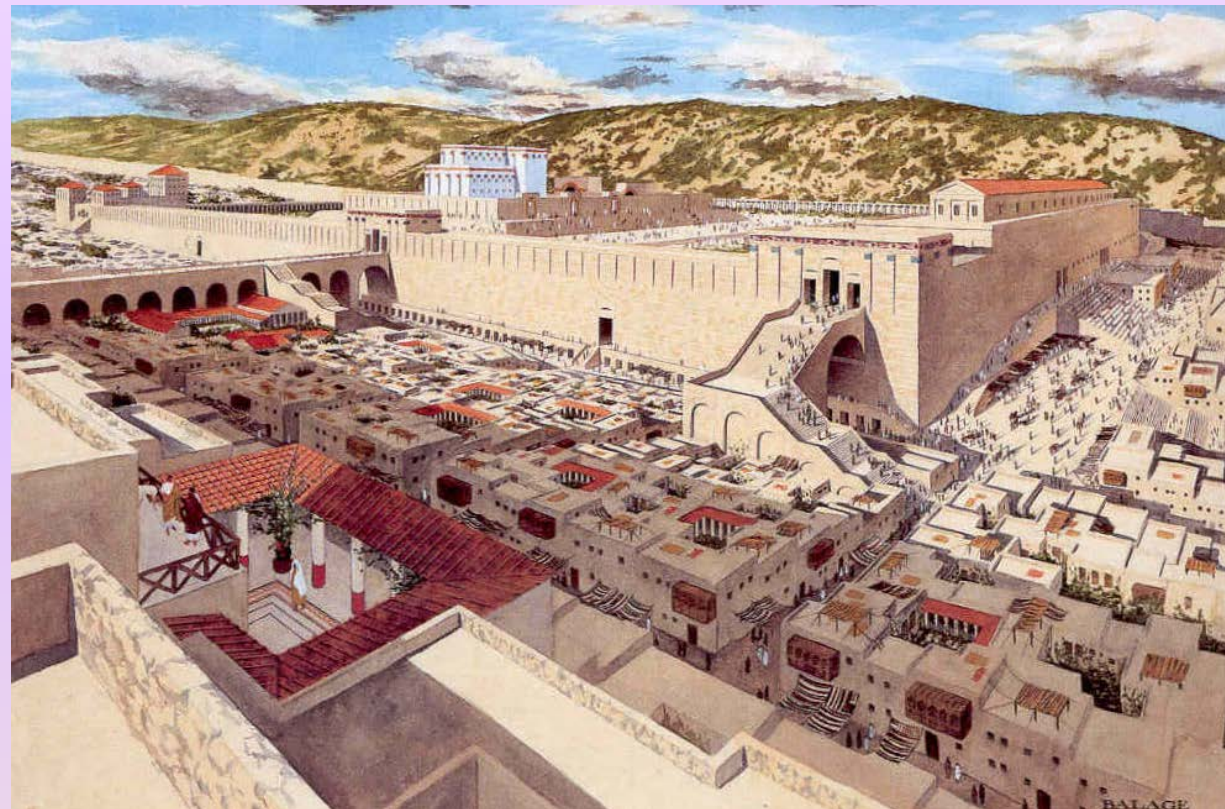
“Eternity means Jerusalem.”
Talmud, Berakhot 58.



“Abraham called it Yireh (See) as it says [in the Scriptures], 'And Avraham called the name of that place Yireh Hashem' (See God). Shem called it Shalem (Complete) as it says 'And Malki Tzedek, King of Shalem.' The Holy One, Blessed be He said 'I will call it Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) like both of them called it - Yireh, Shalem - Yerushalayim.'”
Midrash, Bereshit Raba 56.



“The view of Jerusalem is the history of the world. It is more, it is the history of Earth and of Heaven.”
Benjamin Disraeli



“Everybody has two cities,
their own and Jerusalem.” -
Teddy Kollek, Mayor of
Jerusalem 1965-93



“Christ Himself did not suppress one word of truth, but He spoke it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact, and thoughtful, kind attention in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He fearlessly denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity, but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. He wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved, that refused to receive Him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. They rejected Him, the Saviour, but He regarded them with pitying tenderness, and sorrow so deep that it broke His heart. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He always bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.”
Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 353.

II. Context



The structure of the Gospel of Luke

In	1: 1 – 4	Search for Authentic Narrative about Jesus
1	1: 5 – 2: 50	Incarnation (Prophecies, John the Baptist and Jesus)
2	2: 50 – 4: 30	Nazareth (Baptism, Temptation, and Ministry in Nazareth)
3	4: 31 – 7 : 50	Capernaum (Headquarters of Jesus for his Ministry in Galilee)
4	8: 1 – 9: 50	Every City and Village
5	9: 51 – 19: 27	Trip to Jerusalem (Jesus' Ministry on the road, Samaria and Judea)
6	19: 28 – 21: 38	Jerusalem (Fulfillment of Jesus' Mission)
7	22: 1 – 23: 56	Jesus' Passion, Death, and Burial
8	24: 1 – 24: 53	Jesus' Resurrection, Post-resurrection Teaching, and Ascension

The text describing Jesus' weeping over Jerusalem is part of the section #6 of the Book, right before the Passion of Jesus. The action is within Jerusalem and the message culminates with crucial aspects of the Ministry of Jesus (20: 1 – 44).



The structure of the Gospel of Luke 19: 28 – 21: 38

A	19: 28 - 34	Mount Olivet: Preparation for the Entry to Jerusalem
B	19: 35 – 40	The Coming of the King
C	19: 41 - 44	Weeping over Jerusalem
D	19: 45 - 48	Business in the Temple. Cleansing of Jesus
E	20: 1 - 8	Priests and Scribes Question the Authority of Jesus
Teaching #1	20: 1 - 8	The Chosen People
Teaching #2	20: 1 - 8	The Relationship of the Chosen People with the Political Authority in the Country
Teaching #3	20: 1 - 8	Sons of the Resurrection
ONE QUESTION	20: 41 - 44	The Messiah, the Son of David and his Lord
E'	20: 45 - 47	Jesus Questions the Authority of Scribes
D'	21: 1 – 4	Generosity in the Temple. Blessing of Jesus
C'	21: 5 - 24	Destruction of Jerusalem
B'	21: 25 - 36	The Coming of the Son of Man
A'	21: 37. 38.	Mount Olivet: Preparation for the Teaching in the Temple of Jerusalem

It is interesting to note that Jesus chose not to establish his headquarters in the city of Jerusalem for the last week of his ministry, right before the crucifixion. The part A and A' confirm that the Mount of Olive is the place where he spent several nights while teaching in the temple. It is as if Jesus took a certain distance from a city where the decision of his condemnation will be taken. He is weeping over Jerusalem, He is sleeping outside of Jerusalem, and He will die outside of Jerusalem. At the same time he will prophesy the destruction of the city.



The description of the entry of Jerusalem (Coming of the King, part B of the text) is in parallel with the prophecy of the second coming of the Son of Man, part B'. The events of the last week of the ministry of Jesus are also the opportunity for the audience to measure the difference: in 31 A.D. Jesus is proclaimed King, but he will suffer; the second coming of Jesus will present Him as the King of Kings.



Jesus sees two different things in the temple. First, He is saddened by the way how the system of sacrifices (and of the worship) was detracted from his original purpose. Through the leadership of religious leaders the worship became a business (part D). Fortunately, Jesus was able to see a widow, who incarnated the true worship, the generosity of those who live sacrificially, animated by love (part D').



Priests and Scribes are questioning the authority of Jesus and His ministry (part E of our text). Jesus underlines the fact that the inconsistencies of scribes disqualifies them to be the spiritual leaders of the people of Israel (part E').



III. Jesus' tears for Jerusalem



1. Jerusalem was visited by Jesus

“Now as He drew near”



“Jesus went to Jerusalem to finish His ministry before the crucifixion. Two aspects were essential in order to reaffirm His authority. Through His triumphant entry He gave a glimpse to the scope of his mission as the King of Israel. Through the cleansing of the temple He showed the ultimate authority over the sanctuary and the worship.” (DS)



Jesus visited Jerusalem during the day and prayed during the night

“While Jerusalem was hushed in silence, and the disciples had returned to their homes to obtain refreshment in sleep, Jesus slept not. His divine pleadings were ascending to his Father for his disciples, that they might be kept from the evil influences which they would daily encounter in the world, and that his own soul might be strengthened and braced for the duties and trials of the coming day. All night, while his followers were sleeping, was their divine Teacher praying. The dew and frost of night fell upon his head bowed in prayer. His example is left for his followers.”

Ellen G. White, RH August 17, 1886, par. 6.

“When American astronaut Neil Armstrong, a devout Christian, visited Israel after his trip to the moon, he was taken on a tour of the Old City of Jerusalem by Israeli archaeologist Meir Ben-Dov. When they got to the Hulda Gate, which is at the top of the stairs leading to the Temple Mount, Armstrong asked Ben-Dov whether Jesus had stepped anywhere around there.

“I told him, ‘Look, Jesus was a Jew,’” recalled Ben-Dov.

“These are the steps that lead to the Temple, so he must have walked here many times.”

Armstrong then asked if these were the original steps, and Ben-Dov confirmed that they were.

“So Jesus stepped right here?” asked Armstrong.

“That’s right,” answered Ben-Dov.

“I have to tell you,” Armstrong said to the Israeli archaeologist, “I am more excited stepping on these stones than I was stepping on the moon.”

Thomas Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem

2. The sad reality of Jerusalem

"He saw the city and wept over it."



“Christ saw in Jerusalem a symbol of the world hardened in unbelief and rebellion, and hastening on to meet the retributive judgments of God. The woes of a fallen race, pressing upon His soul, forced from His lips that exceeding bitter cry. He saw the record of sin traced in human misery, tears, and blood; His heart was moved with infinite pity for the afflicted and suffering ones of earth; He yearned to relieve them all. But even His hand might not turn back the tide of human woe; few would seek their only Source of help. He was willing to pour out His soul unto death, to bring salvation within their reach; but few would come to Him that they might have life.”

Ellen G. White, GC p. 22.

“Jesus wept over his enemies. When the Son of God contemplated the impending fate of his beloved Jerusalem, which was about to crucify him, he audibly wept (for so the Greek word KLAIO indicates) in genuine anguish (see Luke 19:41).”
Wayne Jackson



“Jesus cried essentially for people of Jerusalem, and not for buildings. He didn’t cry for the future destruction of material things and years of investments that will be lost forever. His main point was the value of every human being. He had hard time to understand that the members of the Chosen People didn’t understand the time of their visitation.” (DS)



V. Conclusion



“Jerusalem is now no more sacred to me than any other place on the globe. Wherever by his Holy Spirit Jesus makes known His presence, wherever his righteousness shines forth in bright and glorious beams, wherever his divine love illuminates the humble places of the earth, wherever his honor dwells, there I am pleased to be.”

Ellen G. White, Paulson Collection of EGW letters, p. 138.

“Many who were convinced that Jesus was the Son of God were misled by the false reasoning of the priests and rabbis. These teachers had repeated with great effect the prophecies concerning the Messiah, that He would “reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously;” that He would “have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.” Isaiah 24:23; Psalm 72:8. Then they made contemptuous comparisons between the glory here pictured and the humble appearance of Jesus. The very words of prophecy were so perverted as to sanction error. Had the people in sincerity studied the word for themselves, they would not have been misled. The sixty-first chapter of Isaiah testifies that Christ was to do the very work He did. Chapter fifty-three sets forth His rejection and sufferings in the world, and chapter fifty-nine describes the character of the priests and rabbis...

“God does not compel men to give up their unbelief. Before them are light and darkness, truth and error. It is for them to decide which they will accept. The human mind is endowed with power to discriminate between right and wrong. God designs that men shall not decide from impulse, but from weight of evidence, carefully comparing scripture with scripture. Had the Jews laid by their prejudice and compared written prophecy with the facts characterizing the life of Jesus, they would have perceived a beautiful harmony between the prophecies and their fulfillment in the life and ministry of the lowly Galilean...

“... Many are deceived today in the same way as were the Jews. Religious teachers read the Bible in the light of their own understanding and traditions; and the people do not search the Scriptures for themselves, and judge for themselves as to what is truth; but they yield up their judgment, and commit their souls to their leaders. The preaching and teaching of His word is one of the means that God has ordained for diffusing light; but we must bring every man’s teaching to the test of Scripture. Whoever will prayerfully study the Bible, desiring to know the truth, that he may obey it, will receive divine enlightenment. He will understand the Scriptures. “If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching.” John 7:17.
Ellen G. White, DA p. 459.

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