

Jerusalem

by Welcome Detweiler

The city of Jerusalem is a city of great historical significance and importance, mentioned over 700 times in the Bible.

Duration: 35:30

Scripture: Matthew 21:2-3, Matthew 21:5, Matthew 21:12-13, Matthew 21:22, Matthew 24:2, Matthew 24:30, Matthew 24:44

Topics: "Jesus Savior", "Spiritual Protection"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares about his recent trip to the land of Israel and the significance of the geographical locations mentioned in the Bible. He mentions that there is no spot on earth that has been seen more often on television screens than this narrow strip of land. The speaker also talks about his experience with chicks and how their mother protects them from danger, drawing a parallel to Jesus wanting to protect the people of Jerusalem from their sins. The sermon concludes with the message that Jesus wants to save people from danger and a lost eternity.

Transcript

Make them to realize their need, and we pray that I will put them in a hurry to trust thy Son as Lord and Savior, and then to enjoy the riches that those of us who have trusted Him have found in Him, the peace, the joy, the satisfaction that can only come to those who are resting in Jesus Christ and His wonderful salvation. We ask thy blessing on thy Word, and the moments that are before us, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

You turn, please, to Matthew, chapter 21, Matthew's Gospel, chapter 21. And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an asside, and a colt with her. Loose them, and bring them unto me.

And if any man say, Off unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them, and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, saying, Tell ye the daughters of thy, and behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the full of an ass. And the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them, and brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereof.

And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way. Others cut down branches from the trees, and strod them in the way. And the multitude that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. When he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

Chapter Twenty-Three of the same book, and reading from verse thirty-seven, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate, for I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple, and his disciples came unto him, for to show him the buildings of the temple.

And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. Chapter Twenty-Seven, and verse twenty-seven, Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers, and they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. When they had planted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand, and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, they gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall.

And when he had tasted the wrath, he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet. They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

And sitting down, they watched him there. May God bless to us the reading of these wonderful portions of his precious words. There are undoubtedly quite a number of folks in the congregation who have not heard that my wife and I had the privilege of touring five different countries, and especially the land of Israel.

Many of you said, how did you enjoy the trip? Well, how would I answer that except in an emphatic, wonderful? A few of you said that you were praying for us on the trip, and we appreciated that, and we appreciated it more after we were home for seven days, because we remembered that on the Saturday before, the Saturday when the buses were burned, we were traveling on that same road, and perhaps on the very same buses. If you can give me the license plate for those buses that were burned, I will be able to identify whether it was the same buses. But we were traveling along this coastal highway, right down, stayed at King Solomon's Hotel in Netanya, and as near as I can tell from the picture in the newspaper, just about five or ten miles below that hotel is where the invaders entered, and we were traveling on that road on Saturday morning, soon after eight o'clock, right where the buses were burned.

I have some mixed emotions, because I can't help but be thankful that I'm still living, but then I'm sad, on the other hand, that I'm not able to obey the Ten Commandments. One of the commandments says, Love thy neighbor as thyself, and if I were able to obey that commandment, I would say, I'm sorry that they didn't land the week before, and that we weren't killed instead of those poor tourists who were innocent. This proves to us that each time we are thankful, it proves to us that we are not able to keep the commandments, and in case there's someone here who is trying to get to heaven by keeping the Ten Commandments, I have a right to say, Stop it right now.

You'll never make it. It'll condemn you. There is only one way to be saved, and that is through the Lord Jesus Christ.

I think you will be interested in some of the things that we learned on the trip that will be a profit to me the rest of my days. I have always loved geography, and that's the reason I put the map before you. There is no spot on the face of the earth that you have seen on your television screen more often than this narrow strip of land.

Just about every day, this is in the news, the most important part of the world so far as news is concerned. In this rather small country, there are 20 Arab nations around it, on all sides except the western side, and that happens to be the Mediterranean Sea, but on all the other three sides there are enemy nations, Arab nations. Some more avid in their response fighting the nation, but at least all of these are somehow alive, and in that six-day war a few years ago, we are amazed that a tiny little nation could survive after all those nations tried to get in and to destroy it.

The result of that war was that a good deal of property that did not belong originally to the Golan Heights right along here, they are now in the possession of the Israelis, and while it's not productive land, it's all mountains, and I mean real high mountains, they must have these places to have their gun emplacements, and I suppose that every quarter of a mile there are placements along here, and guarded all the way across on all of these sides there is protection by the Israelis because they are expecting trouble any time. Evidently, they do not have the same protection on the coastline. This is a very long coastline, and to guard every spot along this coastline would be very, very difficult.

One of the things that surprised me when I got over there was the fact that the country is so very mountainous. These brown areas right through here, the center of the country, is not just hill country. It's the kind that you have in the western part of our state.

No trees upon it, bare mountains, but hairpin curves, and if you want to cross those mountains, you've got some hills to climb. I didn't realize that. This section is also mountains, but not quite as mountainous as this intersection.

I shall understand my Bible much better when I think of the terrain of the land. We entered on this side, came in from Amman in Jordan over the Allenby Bridge, and I had a disappointment there. I heard so much about General Allenby's Bridge, and I don't know if you'll find a bridge as small as that one anywhere in North Carolina.

An iron bridge not only about half the length of this building out in the country, and I expected to see something big, but that's where the troops came in and General Allenby took the nation without firing a shot. We entered in here and took this mountain's road, and we went to the top. This is the Sea of Galilee, and of all the things that we saw that we were sure were the same as in the days of our Lord Jesus Christ,

it was the Sea of Galilee, because they would have an awful time moving that.

Many of the other things that they told us, here, so-and-so happened, we said, maybe, and usually the guide said, this is the traditional spot, and he emphasized that. The Mediterranean Sea is still there, the Sea of Galilee is there, and the Dead Sea is still there. This was interesting to us.

Up here is Mount Hermon. That's the most northerly part of the land of Israel. We saw it snow-capped.

It is snow-capped all but about three months of the year. The altitude is 9,100 feet above sea level. The water from those snows that are melting up there will run down this upper Jordan, and all of this valley here, and practically all the water running into the Sea of Galilee is from those melting snows of Mount Hermon.

At the bottom of the Sea of Galilee, you have the Jordan River continuing and going right down into the Dead Sea. This green area that you see here along the Jordan is very productive land, although a great deal of it is over in Jordan. On this side is Israel, but this section over here, from the sea in toward the mountains, this is the most productive land, and you have heard so much about the new production of Israel.

Here are some waste areas that would be considered desert areas, and they are moving back into these areas and producing things on the mountain. Somewhere down here, there's an agricultural college that is experimenting all kinds of things, hoping to use all of this terrain, which now appears to be wasteland, and to use it for producing fruit. The enemy, the PLO, came in right about here and destroyed those buses, and you know all about that.

As a result, here is the line between Lebanon and Israel, right through here. This is Lebanon, and here's where Israel entered and has gone up there, and most of the PLO groups were in this southern area of Lebanon, and that's where your news has been the last few days. Their ambition is to stop those fanatics from coming down, and their tactics so far have been just to do some damage to innocent people.

These must be suicide troops that would ever enter in, because no one would ever get by. We did have some difficulty getting in. We came through customs every time we changed from one country to the other, but the strictest of those customs was getting into Israel.

They went through every suitcase, every inch of every suitcase, and when you have 96 in your party, and they'll take you into a room, take everything out of all your pockets, put it on the table, and then with an instrument going over your body to see if there's any possibility of any bomb. They are searching, and up here on these hills you will find little improvised tents or shelters, and there are gun emplacements there, and these fellows have binoculars, and they can see everything that you are doing when you are entering in. They are very, very strict in trying to keep out anyone who would cause damage to their land.

One of the things that I learned will be never be forgotten, and that is the different cities where they are located. I think you could draw a line about the middle of that land and say that below this land, here is where Jesus Christ was born. This is Bethany, or Bethlehem rather.

Bethany, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem are right in this area. This is where Jesus Christ died and was buried, rose again from the dead, and from Bethany he ascended. But up here is the area where he lived in nearly all of his childhood days.

Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, and the miracles that he performed were practically all performed in this upper area. One of the things that I appreciate now is the fact that when Mary and Joseph traveled from Nazareth down to Bethlehem where Christ was born, if you had asked me before I made this trip, how long would that take? I would say, well, maybe probably the greater part of a day. Who knows? I discovered that from Nazareth to Bethlehem is 70 miles as the bird flies, and of course a donkey can't fly the same as a bird.

So that in order to come from Nazareth to Bethlehem, that young couple had to either come down and needle their way through these mountains, which probably would have made 100 miles, and difficult track, or they could have come over this way and come down more or less the coast, and in this way, and that would have been probably over 100 miles. They could have come over and somewhere along the Jordan come down, and that would have been 100 miles. The next time you ride a donkey, you ride him for the whole day and figure out how many miles you can make in a day.

I'm going to suppose that it was impossible for them to make that trip without at least four or five days' journey, and there were no motels along the way, and there were no restaurants along the way. So, I appreciate more than ever the fact that that young couple took that long trip, and that Jesus Christ was born down here in Bethlehem. It's so important for us.

I think from now on, every Bible has a map in it, and up until now, I didn't pay much attention to it, but it is very interesting to me now. The things that happened in the Old Testament and the things that happened in the New Testament, you can identify them, and you'll find all of these places are important so far as our Bible is concerned. I thought I was obligated to tell you just a little bit about the trip, because you've been so nosy in asking, when are you going to tell us about the trip? I can assure you that eventually you will be tired of it, because nearly everybody that comes back from this trip talks too much, and bores people eventually.

I have probably about 200 slides, and someday I would like to show you some of those slides. The only way you'll know when that is is to attend every service, because I may slip them in at odds and ends, so that you will have to come to every service in order to get that information. To me, it was wonderful to be able to say, I have seen the place where our Lord Jesus Christ traveled, where his miracles were performed, but I'm not interested in becoming a lecturer on Israel.

I still want to preach the gospel. If I can use this as a tool towards preaching the gospel, I want to do it, and I don't know if you noticed, but the three portions of the word that I read this morning have to do with a certain point on this map, and it is the city of Jerusalem right here. There is no city in the whole wide world that has received the fame and the importance of this one city.

You will read about it in your Bible first, in Joshua chapter 18. It was there where the land was divided, and the tribe of Benjamin, the youngest son, was told this is the area which is called Jerusalem that he would inhabit. Before that, there is a possibility that it is mentioned without mentioning the name, because in the city of Jerusalem there is the Dome of the Rock, which is supposed to be the rock where Abraham attempted to offer his son Isaac to the Lord.

Whether that can be proved, it is quite possible that it was right here on Mount Moriah where Jerusalem is now built that Abraham offered up his son, or attempted to offer up, was willing to his son, Isaac. Coming back again, why should Jerusalem be such an important city? When you read your Bible, I want you to mark down every time you run across the word Jerusalem. See how many times it is, and then you can

take all the other cities that are mentioned and see if you can find one that will outnumber it, and I doubt if you can.

Usually cities are important because of being port cities in our country. The four largest cities are New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles, and all four of them are port cities, and that's why they became great. There is no sea, there is no river, this is an isolated area so far as waterfront is concerned, and yet it was a very important city in the Old Testament as well as in the New.

You will read in the Old Testament the fact that it was besieged, I think if you were to count up all the times that this city was besieged by enemies, it would number 27 times. It was completely destroyed four times, and there may have been some other very destructive times when sections of the city were destroyed, and all of this gives publicity to this city. In the book of Nehemiah, you will hear of the restoration or the rebuilding of the city.

At that particular time, there were nine gates, at least, around this city in various parts of the wall. The walls were repaired, and the gates were built up. Right now, there are only seven gates to the present walled city, and two of them are closed.

That is, they are stone so that no one could get through the east gate, and I forget the name of the other one, but the five are open. We went in at the down gate, and came out of Stephen's gate, and also the Damascus gate. There are two others that are open.

The gates were built and rebuilt. The history of this nation is one of a very bloody history. The name means peace, the city of peace, and yet there is probably no city that has ever had as much bloodshed.

There were times when they closed all the gates, and the enemy said, all right, let them close the gates. We're not going to go in, but there's not going to be any food going in, and nearly every case when the city was overthrown, it was because they starved to death inside. They tell stories, and whether these are true, but at least history tells us that mothers actually ate their own babies because they were starving to death because the city was besieged, and nearly every time the enemy came in and eventually destroyed the city.

When the city was destroyed, the bulldozers came in, if they had them or whatever it was, leveled the ground, and built another city right on top of it. They are going down at least 40 feet from the present level, and they find foundations there, so it would be almost impossible to tell where the original base was, but much below. Each time it had come up again.

When we were in Capernaum, we found some of the destruction of Capernaum that has never been built up. Just one Capernaum. It was destroyed, and it was never built up.

And, of course, you ought to know the reason. Jesus Christ said that it would never be built up. Chorazin, Bethesda, three cities right in this area have never been built up.

Jerusalem is being built up every time it is destroyed. This is known by the religious world as Palm Sunday, the day when our Lord Jesus Christ entered into this city. He is coming up from Bethphage, Bethany, in the southeastern direction.

He is approaching the city, and as he approaches it, the population of that day are looking for someone who can deliver them from the Roman yoke. At this time, the Romans are in charge, and they have been

very cruel to the nation of Israel. If we can find anyone who can deliver us from the Roman yoke, we want him.

And, I think, whilst he entered the city, they thought this may be the man that will be able to do it. We read about the details in Matthew chapter 21. At the entrance, they are saying Hosanna, which means, save we pray.

I suppose that some of these people may have known who the Lord Jesus was, but this was a mob, people who weren't sure, and someone said, Hosanna to the King of David, or the offspring of David, and others said, well, let's say the same thing. The fact that they were not sincere is proved because, just five or six days later, he was taken out of that city, and the same crowd is crying, crucify him, crucify him. I was amazed again to learn that just outside the city gate, the Damascus gate, hardly a city block away, is that hill, not a mountain, but a hillside, that has two big eyes dug out, a broken nose, and then a mouth below.

It's impossible to look on that hill without seeing a skull, without anyone telling you that is the place of the skull. Now, I'm not positive that Jesus Christ was crucified on that hill, but I'm hard to convince, and I'm reasonably sure that it was on that hill. Hardly a block from the city wall where he was crucified, and the garden tomb, I have no idea how close that was, the garden tomb would have been less than a block, a half a block away from Calvary, and that's where Jesus Christ made the most important contributions to the world when he died for me, a lost guilty sinner, and for you, a lost guilty sinner.

Whenever you think of Jerusalem, whatever you read about it, keep in mind that of all the things you have learned about that city, there is nothing quite so important as that's the place, right outside the city gate, where Jesus Christ went to the cross, died for your sins and mine. And I must remind you that every person in this building would have to be in hell forever if Jesus Christ had not gone to the cross. I want you to get that.

You and I would all be hell-bound sinners, the very best of us, if Jesus Christ had not volunteered to die as our substitute. God was so well pleased with his death and his burial that he raised him from the dead. That tomb is empty.

We have the privilege of stepping inside the tomb. Whether this is the actual tomb, I'm not sure, but at least it is the traditional tomb where Jesus Christ would lay. It is empty, and we sang around that tomb about our Savior's wonderful resurrection.

The 23rd chapter of Matthew that I read is something very touching regarding our Lord Jesus Christ. He was on the other side, evidently, and there's a big ravine from one mountain to the other, and if you want to get an overall bird's-eye view, almost an airplane view of the city, all you have to do is go over the brook Cedron, up the area of Gethsemane, and on the other hill you'll be able to look over the city, and it was probably there where our Lord Jesus Christ got an overall look at the city and said, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often I would have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and ye would not. He is talking to a city.

Did Jerusalem ever kill anyone? No, no, it was the people of Jerusalem. The people of Jerusalem killed the prophets and stoned them, and he is concerned about the people, and he is saying, how often? I would have spared you from danger unless you were raised on a farm. You don't know what this means, have gathered thee as a chicken gather her little ones under her wings.

You have to be raised on a farm, and I was raised in that era when the hen voluntarily was sitting on eggs for 21 days, and then the shell was cracked, and the little junior came out and the whole nest and a proud mother walking around, and they have a language of their own. They don't have to go to school, and a certain language means run right to my beak. There's something right here, and they all run, but she has another way of speaking, and once she says, whoo, that means scat, and you should see them just like that.

I also lived in the next era where we bought maybe 500 little baby chicks, put them in a brooder house with a big stove in the center, and a hood over the stove. The first night it was really pitiful. You put them out, and when darkness comes, they are all screaming 500 at one time, walking around as if they were drunk, looking for someplace to go, and finally after an hour or so of wandering around, exhausted, they come near that stove, and they form a complete circle, and if the stove should cool off a bit, they just, through the night, move in.

If it should get too hot, they move out, even in their sleep, I suppose, or they wake up and do it, but of course we used to like to see what will they do if you give that warning sound. 500 chicks, they're all busy eating, drinking, you should see them under everything they could get. In fact, you could kill every one of them.

They would go right in the corner, on top of each other, and stay flat, just stay there, petrified, just by that sound. Of course, the mother knew just when to make that call. There's a hawk flying over town, and immediately that sound, they all gathered under her wings, she closed them, no danger.

Our Lord Jesus said to the people of Jerusalem, I wanted to protect you from danger, but you wouldn't. You killed the prophets, you proved that you're sinners, and you're lost, you're living in danger. What is that to you today? You are not living in Jerusalem, but I want to apply it to you because you are in that same condition.

There may be someone in this building today, and our Lord Jesus could say to you, I would like to save you from danger. I would like to save you from going to a lost eternity. I shed my blood on Calvary's cross in order to make that possible.

The only reason you are not saved is the same reason, and ye would not. God never crosses a man's will. There will be no one in heaven who didn't will to be there.

Everyone, at some moment, opened their heart and trusted the Lord Jesus Christ their Savior, and it is possible that you have overlooked that. You've never done it, and if so, you are living in extreme danger. You are living in greater danger than the people who are living in this area, the possibility of the PLO coming in at some other at any moment.

You are living in danger, losing not only your life, but your soul, and that is extremely dangerous, but you need not if you are to hear the voice of our blessed Savior who says to you, Why won't you come? Let me protect you from danger, the danger of a lost eternity. I hope that will be riveted upon your heart and conscience so that you won't sleep. You will lose your appetite until your number one greatest concern is settled, that you will open your heart and trust the Savior, and it could happen before you leave this building.

There is no reason why you should spend the afternoon living in danger. Jesus Christ loves you. He is ready to save you.

He will save you right where you are. If you can say, I am a lost sinner, I have never trusted him as my substitute, as my Savior, but I want to, and I will right now. If you will, God will save you on the spot.

In case you have some questions or difficulties or things that have to be cleared away before you can do it, I am available just as long as you need me after this meeting is dismissed, and I would like to help you to come to a saving knowledge of this wonderful Savior who gives peace and joy and satisfaction, and I think you need it. You have no peace, no joy, no happiness until you receive this wonderful Savior. I am sincere when I say, when the rest leave the building, you walk to the front, and all you need to say is, I want to be sure that I am saved and on the way to heaven.

Let us pray. Our Father, we thank Thee for Thy Word. We thank Thee for Thy love to the people in this world.

We thank Thee for the day when Thou didst ride into Jerusalem. We thank Thee for the day that they carried Thee out of Jerusalem to go to the cross. We thank Thee Thou didst express Thy concern of the people of that city by saying, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem.

Lord, we pray that this lament may be heard in the ears of those who are yet outside of Christ, and we pray there may be someone who will be willing to trust this wonderful Savior. We commit Thy Word to Thee. We ask Thy blessing upon it in His name.

Amen.

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