

“O Jerusalem”

Matthew 23:37-38

INTRODUCTION:

- A. **Proverbs 18:11** – “The wealth of the rich is their fortified city; they imagine it an unscalable wall.” People are compared to a city.
- B. Lesson Text: **Matthew 23:37-38** – “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate.”
- C. What a city it was . . . The city of Jerusalem.
1. It crowned the high hills of Judea like a glorious diadem.
 2. It had an unbroken history reaching back to the days of Abraham and Melchizedek.
 3. It was the ancestral home of David.
 4. It was the home of the Temple, the spot where the eternal God abode among men.
 5. It was intended to be the center of worship of the true God and a symbol of justice for all people.
 6. It was the citadel of faith . . . The sacred depository of the hopes . . . Beliefs . . . and aspirations of the Hebrew people.
 7. It had been besieged and ravaged and rebuilt and stormed and sacked again throughout its history.
 - a. **50** times it has been **besieged**.
 - b. **38** times it has been **conquered**.
 - c. **10** times it has been **destroyed and leveled** to the ground.
- D. Now it had rejected its rightful King and within a generation would be handed over to the conquering legions of Rome under the command of Titus.
- E. Over that city Jesus wept, as perhaps He still weeps over the great, sad cities of this sin-cursed earth wishing that their rejection of Him would end.
- F. **Matthew 23:37-38** (NLT) – “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let me. And now look, your house is left to you, empty and desolate.”
- G. Jerusalem had become blind to God and insensitive to human need.

WHAT WEEPING! . . . “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem”

- A. Brethren:
1. It is one thing to be concerned.
 2. It is another thing to have deep feelings about a matter.

3. It is yet another thing to care so deeply and strongly that you are moved to shed tears over it.

B. One of the three recorded shedding of tears by our Lord in the Bible had to do with His weeping for the lost and wasted opportunities of Jerusalem.

WHAT WICKEDNESS! . . . “The one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!”

A. Look at what they had done and would do:

1. God sent His prophets . . . They had killed them.

2. God sent His Only Begotten Son . . . They rejected Him and would crucify Him.

3. He would send His Kingdom, the Church . . . And they would refuse it and persecute it.

4. He sent them His final written Law . . . And they refused it and divided it.

B. God had tried and tried to redeem them . . . But without their receiving Him. Now He would send the best He had . . . And they would kill Him.

WHAT WARMTH! “How often I have wanted”

A. God had not given up on Jerusalem . . . Jerusalem had given up on Him.

B. Jesus wanted Jerusalem to come to His Father . . . But they would not.

WHAT WILLFULNESS! . . . “As a hen gathers her chicks under her wings.”

A. A lesson from nature . . . A demonstration of God caring and His willingness to bring Jerusalem and all people to Him.

B. A mother hen protects her chicks as they gather under her wing . . . God will protect all who will gather under His Omnipotent (All-powerful) care.

WHAT WISDOM! . . . “But you were not willing.”

A. It takes two to form this eternal relationship . . . God’s part and man’s part.

B. God has long kept His part and willingness to perform it before His creation . . . But man has not been willing to leave that which is against God’s will.

WHAT WOE! . . . “Your house is left to you desolate.”

A. This end result is due to their choice not to obey God . . . Not to turn and return to Him.

B. They were reaping what they had sown . . . And so will we. **Galatians 6:7** – “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”

1. What are you sowing?

2. You can know what you are going to reap by what you are now sowing!

CONCLUSION:

A. What happened to Jerusalem then can happen to cities today.

What happened to Jerusalem then can happen to congregations today.

What happened to Jerusalem then can happen to individuals today.

B. Parallels of Jerusalem and us.

1. Jerusalem was loved of God . . . We are loved of God
2. Jerusalem had walls of fortification . . . We are surrounded by God's care.
3. Jerusalem had opportunities it did not use . . . We have opportunities we do not use.
4. Jerusalem has been attacked on a number of occasions . . . We are attacked on many occasions.
5. Jerusalem's walls of defense have been broken down in the past . . . Our walls of defense have been broken down making us vulnerable to defeat.
6. Jerusalem's walls have been restored . . . We can be restored and rebuilt.
7. Jerusalem avoided its place for worship . . . We often avoid places of worship.
8. Jerusalem avoided God's law for them . . . We often avoid God's will for us.
9. Jerusalem has been used mightily by God . . . God can use us in a mighty way.
10. Jerusalem continues to be a city of lost and wasted opportunities . . . Our lives need do not need to be lives of lost and wasted opportunities.

C. In ages past:

1. In 536 B.C., God sent Zerubbabel to Jerusalem because its place of worship needed to be restored.
2. In 456 B.C., God sent Ezra to Jerusalem because it needed God's law to be restored there.
3. In 444 B.C., God sent Nehemiah to Jerusalem because it needed its wall rebuilt
4. What does God need in your life for it to be made stronger for Him?

D. Historically speaking when the Summer comes and the hot weather bakes us it is always a time to contemplate on the end times and the return of the Messiah! The reason for this phenomena is not only political but also linguistic. In Hebrew Summer is "Kaitz" = קַיִץ and end times (the last days) is "Keitz" = קֵיץ and in fact the fig tree is also called "Kaitz" equal word to Summer. This is the reason why Jesus made the same play on Words in [Matthew 24:32](#); Jesus used the descriptive analogy of a "fig tree", to instruct his disciples about how we could discern the times: *"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh."* The phrase "Summer is nigh" is the same in written Hebrew as "The End is near." So, what should our reaction be when we think of the "end is near" or the "Fig Tree Blossoms." In the Hebrew sense of the word, are you ready for the fig tree to blossom . . . are you ready for the end.

E God's Plan for Man's Salvation