

PLACES *of* *the* PASSION



SESSION 1

The City of
Jerusalem



SESSION 2

Bethany and
the Mount
of Olives



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The Garden of
Gethsemane



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Priest's
Courtyard



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Pilate's
Judgment
Hall



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Golgotha



A 6-SESSION **BIBLE STUDY**
FOR LENT

leader's guide

Leader's Guide for Session 1

BEFORE CLASS: Read through this session yourself. Examine the Bible readings listed and become acquainted with them.

READ: Have a member of the group read the Introduction on page 4 aloud.

READ: Have someone read the Opening Prayer or read the prayer in unison.

SESSION 1



The City of Jerusalem

*As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people,
from this time forth and forevermore. PSALM 125:2*

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help us to see ever more clearly that true peace is found only in the forgiveness of sins that is ours through faith in your name. Guide our study of the Word as we follow your path to the cross, from your betrayal in the garden of Gethsemane, through the city of Jerusalem to Golgotha outside of the walls and, finally, to a garden tomb. Dear Savior, hear our prayer and accept our praise. Amen.

DISCUSS: Discuss peaceful places that you have visited, and the reasons that you found peace in these locations.

READ: Read aloud or have someone read aloud the Introduction.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

1 *Luke 2:25-35 and Luke 2:41-52.* Simeon reveals that the child Jesus is appointed “for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed” (Luke 2:35). Many people would reject and oppose Jesus and his work. Simeon also says that a sword will pierce Mary’s soul. When Jesus remains behind in the temple at the age of twelve, his parents are distressed when they cannot find him. They do not understand his saying that he must be in his Father’s house.

2 *Read Matthew 10:34-39.* Jesus said that he did not come to bring peace to earth, but a sword. Family members may be set against each other when some believe in Jesus but others do not. In some cultures, those who convert from another religion to Christianity are denounced by members of their own family, and may even be disowned, threatened or killed. Jesus says that those who place the love of family above their love for Jesus are not worthy of him. In following Jesus, we walk in the paths of his commands, and honor and love our parents and others in our fam-

ilies. Answers will vary, but Jesus does not take “second place” in our lives to anyone, not even to members of our families. Answers will vary. *Read John 14:27.* The peace that Jesus gives does not depend on outward circumstances such as the absence of war, a time free of fear or disaster, or health and wellness. The peace that Jesus gives depends only on Jesus and his

presence in the lives of those who believe in him. Answers will vary, but those who take up the cross and follow Jesus may be subject to ridicule and the disdain of the surrounding culture, or they may be persecuted, imprisoned, lose homes or employment and even suffer martyrdom.

3 *Read Luke 9:51-56.* Jesus was determined to go to Jerusalem, be-

DISCUSSION

Describe a peaceful place that you have visited. Why did the place seem peaceful?

INTRODUCTION

Jerusalem—its name means “city of peace”—but it is a city that throughout history has known very little rest. King David captured the city, taking its “stronghold of Zion” from the Jebusites and renaming the fortress of Zion “the city of David” (2 Samuel 5:6-10). David’s son Solomon built the Lord’s temple in Jerusalem, but the city of peace and its great temple were destroyed and many of its people sent into exile by the Babylonians in 587 B.C. (2 Chronicles 36:17-21). Seventy years later, the returning exiles rebuilt the city and the temple. The city of peace, knowing no peace, would be destroyed again, but before that terrible day, Jerusalem would welcome—and then reject—the Prince of Peace.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

1. The Prince of Peace, Jesus, the Son of God and Mary’s son, first visited Jerusalem as an infant. His parents brought the infant Redeemer to the temple to be redeemed according to God’s command (Exodus 13:13). Jesus came again to Jerusalem when he was 12 years old, sitting among the teachers in the temple. *Read Luke 2:25-35 and Luke 2:41-52.* In what ways are distress and even violence present in these early years of Jesus’ life?
2. *Read Matthew 10:34-39.* When Jesus was born, the angels sang about peace on earth. What does Jesus say about his coming and peace? Why might family members be set against each other for Jesus’ sake? We are commanded in Scripture to honor our parents and love and care for our children. What does Jesus say about such love among family members? What does Jesus mean by saying this? How would this be expressed in the relationships within your family? *Read John 14:27.* How is Jesus’ peace different from the world’s peace? How might a sword come into the cross-bearing to which Jesus calls us (Matthew 16:24-25)?
3. *Read Luke 9:51-56.* What was Jesus determined to do and why? Why did the Samaritan villagers refuse to receive Jesus simply because he was going to Jerusalem? (See John 4:9 and 19-21.)

cause that is where he would fulfill the Scriptures through his death and resurrection. The Samaritans and Jews lived in opposition to each other. Jews did not usually travel through Samaria, but went around that region of central Palestine. The Samaritans did not worship at the temple in Jerusalem, but worshiped at Mount Gerizim in Samaria. They would very likely have rejected Jesus' claims that he must go to Jerusalem; they did not regard Jerusalem as a holy city.

4 Read **Luke 13:31-35**. Jesus refers to Herod as a "fox." The Savior has his course to follow and on the "third day" he would finish his work. He says that a prophet must perish in Jerusalem. Even as he speaks of the fact that Jerusalem rejects him and murders prophets, he longs to gather the people into his sheltering care. Jerusalem will see him when they call out, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" on Palm Sunday.

5 Read **Matthew 21:1-11**. As Jesus foretold, the people welcome Jesus with cries of "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" They wave palm branches and cover the road with palm branches and coats, like a red carpet laid out before the Savior. The people cry out to be saved, but they may want Jesus to be a king who will deliver them from the occupying Roman forces.

4. Read **Luke 13:31-35**. Jesus is sometimes portrayed as "meek and mild," and he often reacted to people with gentle compassion. How does Jesus' response to Herod remind us more of a sword than of peace? Why is Jesus so determined to be in Jerusalem? How do Jesus' words to Jerusalem—even knowing what would happen to him there—express his compassion? When will Jerusalem see him?
5. Read **Matthew 21:1-11**. The "daughter of Zion" is a reference to the Jewish people and to Jerusalem. How do the people of Jerusalem respond to Jesus' arrival? The word *hosanna* means "Save us now!" How might they expect to be saved? Are the people hoping for peace? Why or why not? Read **Zechariah 9:9-10**. How might the prophet's words fuel the expectations of the people? Read **John 12:13 and 19**. Jesus is hailed as the Son of David, the Messiah. In John's gospel account of Palm Sunday, what is Jesus called? What does this reveal about the expectations of the people?
6. Jesus had said to Jerusalem, "Your house is left to you desolate" (Matthew 23:38). Read **Matthew 24:1-2**. The disciples, like a group of visiting tourists, point out the beautiful temple buildings to Jesus. What will happen to Jerusalem's beautiful temple? Jesus' prophecy was fulfilled in 70 A.D. when Roman legions under the command of Titus responded to a Jewish rebellion by destroying the temple and the city of Jerusalem. The walls were torn down and the city and the temple burned.
7. Before the temple was burned in 70 A.D., another temple would be destroyed—and raised again. Read **John 2:13-22**. What did the Jews demand after Jesus chased the money-changers from the temple courts? What proof of his authority would Jesus provide for them? What had to happen before the disciples would understand Jesus' words?
8. Read **John 19:16-19**. The Prince of Peace is led outside of the city, to an execution site called the Place of the Skull, and nailed to a cross. Read **Colossians 1:19-20**. What are some of the wrong ways in which people today seek peace? How are they like the people of Jerusalem who welcomed Jesus on the first Palm Sunday? What was accomplished by the blood of Jesus' cross?

7

They desire an earthly peace that would be found with the defeat of the hated Roman armies. Read **Zechariah 9:9-10**. The prophet foretold the day when Israel's king would come to Zion riding on a donkey. This king would bring salvation and peace as chariots, war horses and "the battle bow" would be destroyed. The king would rule "from sea to sea." Read **John 12:13**

and 19. Jesus is called the King of Israel, and the Pharisees complain that "the world" is following him. The people likely hoped that Jesus would reign as King in Israel and restore the nation to the greatness it knew under David and Solomon.

6 Read **Matthew 24:1-2**. Jesus said there would not be one stone left on another.

7 **Read John 2:13-22.** The Jews wanted to see a sign of Jesus' authority to cleanse the temple. The sign would be the destruction of a temple and the raising of it in three days. After Jesus rose from the dead, the disciples realized that Jesus was speaking of the temple of his body.

8 **Read John 19:16-19 and Colossians 1:19-20.** Answers will vary, but people may seek peace through false religions or their own invented spiritual beliefs. They may seek peace in wealth or power or popularity. Like the people of Jerusalem, who wanted Jesus to be an earthly king and drive away the Romans (and so give them peace and freedom), people today seek earthly solutions to questions of peace. The only way to have true peace is through faith in Jesus, because through Jesus, God reconciled the world to himself. We have peace because we are put into a right relationship with God and our sins are washed away in Jesus' blood.

READ: Read the Bible reading responsively.

SING: Sing (or speak) the hymn in unison.

PRAY: Pray a prayer incorporating participants' prayer requests and ask participants for opportunities to share the good news of Jesus.

RESPONSIVE READING—PSALM 137:1-6

By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept,
when we remembered Zion.
On the willows there we hung up our lyres.

For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth,
Saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

How shall we sing the LORD's song in a foreign land?
If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill!

Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you,
If I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy!

HYMN

(Tune: Jesu, Meines Lebens Leben 87 87 88 77)

Christ, the life of all the living,
Christ, the death of death, our foe,
Who, thyself for me once giving
To the darkest depths of woe:
Through thy suff'rings, death, and merit
I eternal life inherit.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto thee.

CLOSING PRAYER

Ask participants for prayer requests. Ask for opportunities to share the good news of Jesus, who is the only true source of lasting peace.

Leader's Guide for Session 2

BEFORE CLASS: Read through this session yourself. Examine the Bible readings listed and become acquainted with them.

READ: Have someone read the Opening Prayer or read the prayer in unison.

SESSION 2



Bethany and the Mount of Olives

*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. PSALM 23:5*

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, during your earthly ministry you enjoyed the company of friends and the close fellowship of your disciples. Help us by the power of your Spirit to preserve the unity that we have with our brothers and sisters in faith. We offer humble thanks and praise to you because you have named us as your friends. Amen.