



THE CHURCH AT ELLERSLIE
SUNDAY SERMON NOTES

ERIC LUDY

SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2019

THE STONES OF FIRE

Treading honorably upon the sacred grounds of Holy judgment



Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?

James 4:11-12

Holiness to the Jew

God's world is great and holy. The holiest land in the world is the land of Israel. In the land of Israel the holiest city is Jerusalem. In Jerusalem the holiest place was the Temple, and in the Temple the holiest spot was the Holy of Holies.... There are seventy peoples in the world. The holiest among these is the people of Israel. The holiest of the people of Israel is the tribe of Levi. In the tribe of Levi the holiest are the priests. Among the priests, the holiest was the High Priest.... There are 354 days in the [lunar] year. Among these, the holidays are holy. Higher than these is the holiness of the Sabbath. Among Sabbaths, the holiest is the Day of Atonement, the Sabbath of Sabbaths.... There are seventy languages in the world. The holiest is Hebrew. Holier than all else in this language is the holy Torah, and in the Torah the holiest part is the Ten Commandments. In the Ten Commandments the holiest of all words is the name of God.... And once during the year, at a certain hour, these four supreme sanctities of the world were joined with one another. That was on the Day of Atonement, when the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies and there utter the name of God. And because this hour was beyond measure holy and awesome, it was the time of utmost peril not only for the High Priest but for the whole of Israel. For if in this hour there had, God forbid, entered the mind of the High Priest a false or sinful thought, the entire world would have been destroyed.

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin

Jewish Literacy

The Chariot of the Cherubim

The mobile Holy of Holies

And I looked, and there in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne. Then He spoke to the man clothed with linen, and said, "Go in among the wheels,

under the cherub, fill your hands with coals of fire from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city." And he went in as I watched.

Ezekiel 10:1-2

The Stones of Fire

four interesting facts

1. It's a sacred piece of real estate in the Presence of God

Thou art the anointed cherub that covers; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire . . . thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezekiel 28:14, 16

2. Located in a sacred position at the foot of the Throne of God

God came from Teman, The Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, And the earth was full of His praise. His brightness was like the light; He had rays flashing from His hand, and there His power was hidden. Before Him went pestilence, And burning coals went forth at His feet.

Habakuk 3:3-5

3. Seems to be associated with cleansing and purging of confessed sin

Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth with it, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged."

Isaiah 6:2-7

4. Seems also to be associated with destruction of defiant evil and unrepentant sin

Upon the wicked He will rain coals; fire and brimstone and a burning wind shall be the portion of their cup.

Psalm 11:6

From the brightness before Him, His thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire. The LORD thundered from heaven, And the Most High uttered His voice, hailstones and coals of fire. He sent out His arrows and scattered the foe, lightnings in abundance, and He vanquished them.

Psalm 18:12-14

Other mentions:

Genesis 19:24; Exodus 9:23-24; Joshua 10:11; 2 Samuel 22:13-15; Isaiah 30:33; Ezekiel 38:22; Luke 17:29; Revelation 9:17-18; 16:21; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8

The Stones of Fire

The place of God's burning judgment

Warning: Do Not Draw Near this Holy Place

Remove your Shoes, Moses!

. . . God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."

Exodus 3:4-5

The Mountain of Fire

You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, "Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death . . . Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.

Exodus 19:12, 16-18

The Question of All Those That Behold God as a Consuming Fire

Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place?

Psalm 24:3

The Middle Wall of Partition

Do not draw near!

In the year 1871, while excavations were being made on the site of the temple by the Palestine Exploration Fund, M. Clermont-Ganneau discovered one of the pillars which Josephus describes as having been erected upon the very barrier or middle wall of partition, to which Paul refers. This pillar is now preserved in the Museum at Constantinople and is inscribed with a Greek inscription in capital or uncial letters, which is translated as follows:

*No man of another nation is to enter within the fence
and enclosure round the temple, and whoever is caught will
have himself to blame that his death ensues*

John Rutherford

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

Ephesians 2:13-16

While Paul was writing the Epistle to the Ephesians at Rome, this barrier in the temple at Jerusalem was still standing, yet the chained prisoner of Jesus Christ was not afraid to write that Christ had broken down the middle wall of partition, and had thus admitted Gentiles who were far off, strangers and foreigners, to all the privileges of access to God in ancient times possessed by Israel alone; that separation between Jew and Gentile was done away with forever in Christ.

John Rutherford

Climbing in Jehu's Chariot

Now when he departed from there, he met Jehonadab the son of Rechab, coming to meet him; and he greeted him and said to him, "Is your heart right, as my heart is toward your heart?" And Jehonadab answered, "It is." Jehu said, "If it is, give me your hand." So he gave him his hand, and he took him up to him into the chariot. Then he said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD." So they had him ride in his chariot. And when he

came to Samaria, he killed all who remained to Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed them, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to Elijah.

2 Kings 10:15-17

The Stones of Fire

The place of God's burning mercy

Mercy triumphs over judgment.

James 2:13

The Conqueror's Stone

And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away--for it was very large.

Mark 16:3-4

*The Stones of Fire are either that which purges us
of our sin or crushes us under their great weight of judgment*

And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about one hundred pounds each: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

Revelation 16:21

Come Boldly

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

But, Don't Forget Where You Are

For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

1 Corinthians 11:29-30

There is a Right and a Wrong Way to Walk Amongst These Stones

You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned: therefore I will cast you as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezekiel 28:15-16

Overstepping our Place

blasphēmos krisis (attempting to be God in the Stones of Fire)

Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned.

Luke 6:37

A Sober Reminder about the Man of Sin

... he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4

Examples of “Overstepping One’s Place”

Sceva’s Seven Sons

Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Acts 19:13-16

Brute Beasts Unafraid to Speak Evil of Spiritual Authorities

... those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a *reviling accusation* against them before the Lord. But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption . . .

2 Peter 2:10-12

Dreamers who Dare to Bring a Reviling Accusation

. . . these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a *reviling accusation*, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves.

Jude 1:8-10

Even the angels, though greater in strength and power, will not intrude into a sphere that is not their own. The angels remember the rebellion of Lucifer and know how serious it is to revolt against God's authority.

W. W. Wiersbe

Treading Inappropriately amongst the Sacred Stones

We are going to explore space to find God, and when we find Him we will communize Him.

Nikita Khrushchev

Former Premier of the Soviet Union

Who is Fit to Throw Stones from Heaven?

He (Jesus) raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."

John 8:7

It is mine to *throw stones*, says the Lord

Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath *of God*, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

Romans 12:19

The Christ Pattern for walking in the Stones of Fire

Gentleness

But they held their peace and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, "Do not answer him."

Isaiah 36:21

What is Gentleness?

Simply, it's the opposite spirit; if evil strikes, it's goodness; if judgment pelts, it's mercy; if hate, love; if darkness, light; if death, life; if rudeness, kindness; if mockery, silence; if disdain, forgiveness; if reviling, blessing. Gentleness has many expressions, but they all are "as Christ is" in the midst of the behaviors that "Christ is not".

Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.

Titus 3:1-2

Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; **not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling**, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For He who would love life And see good days, **Let him refrain his tongue from evil**, and his lips from speaking deceit. **Let him turn away from evil and do good**; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.

1 Peter 3:8-12

The Ultimate Picture of Gentleness

During the Greatest Battle of all History

And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "Aha! You who destroy the temple and build it in three days . . .

Mark 15:29

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.

Isaiah 53:7

Honorable Amongst the Stones of Fire

The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

2 Timothy 2:24-26