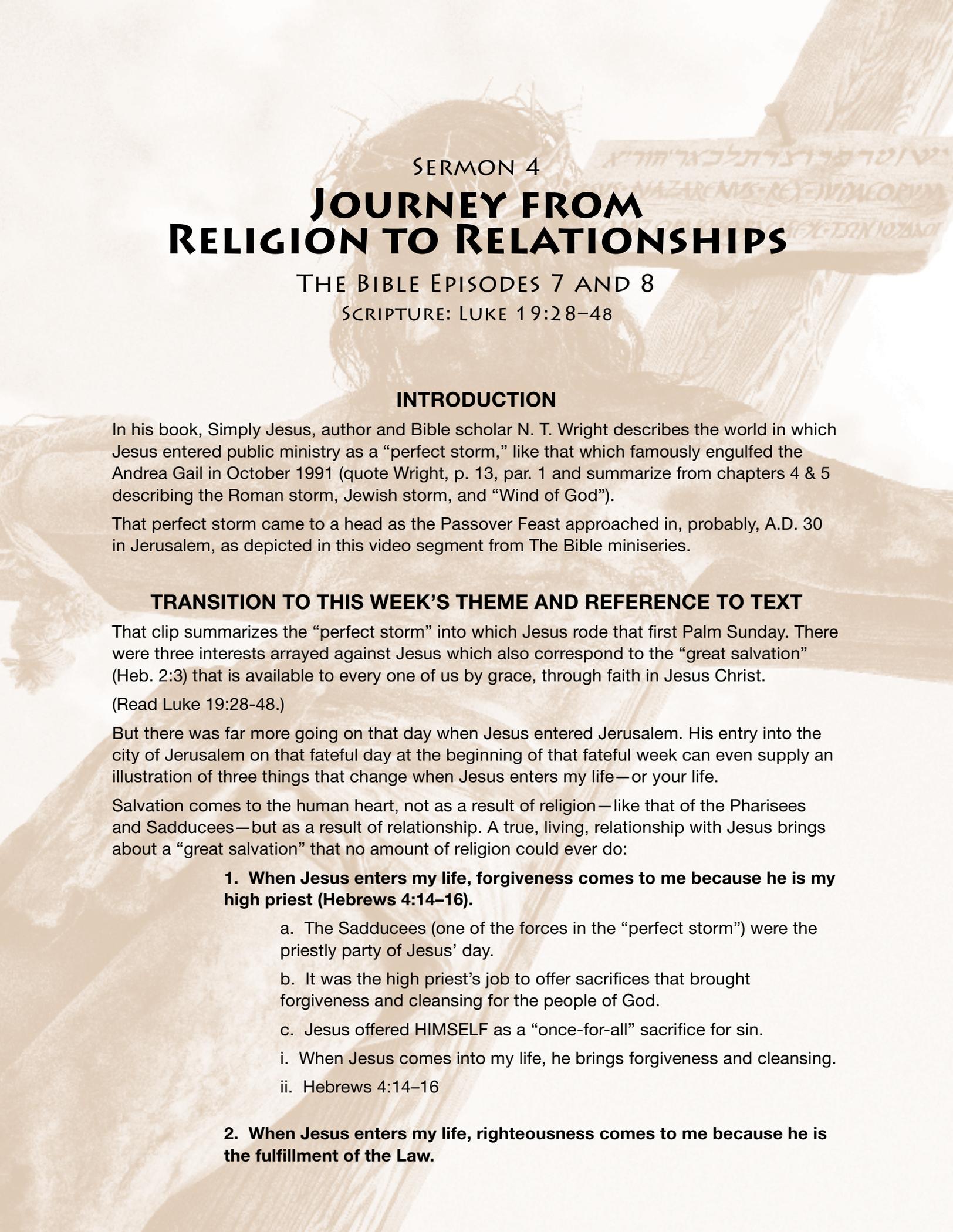


SERMON 4
**JOURNEY FROM
RELIGION TO
RELATIONSHIPS**

THE BIBLE EPISODES 7 AND 8

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 19:28-48





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INTRODUCTION

In his book, *Simply Jesus*, author and Bible scholar N. T. Wright describes the world in which Jesus entered public ministry as a “perfect storm,” like that which famously engulfed the Andrea Gail in October 1991 (quote Wright, p. 13, par. 1 and summarize from chapters 4 & 5 describing the Roman storm, Jewish storm, and “Wind of God”).

That perfect storm came to a head as the Passover Feast approached in, probably, A.D. 30 in Jerusalem, as depicted in this video segment from *The Bible* miniseries.

TRANSITION TO THIS WEEK’S THEME AND REFERENCE TO TEXT

That clip summarizes the “perfect storm” into which Jesus rode that first Palm Sunday. There were three interests arrayed against Jesus which also correspond to the “great salvation” (Heb. 2:3) that is available to every one of us by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

(Read Luke 19:28-48.)

But there was far more going on that day when Jesus entered Jerusalem. His entry into the city of Jerusalem on that fateful day at the beginning of that fateful week can even supply an illustration of three things that change when Jesus enters my life—or your life.

Salvation comes to the human heart, not as a result of religion—like that of the Pharisees and Sadducees—but as a result of relationship. A true, living, relationship with Jesus brings about a “great salvation” that no amount of religion could ever do:

1. When Jesus enters my life, forgiveness comes to me because he is my high priest (Hebrews 4:14–16).

- a. The Sadducees (one of the forces in the “perfect storm”) were the priestly party of Jesus’ day.
- b. It was the high priest’s job to offer sacrifices that brought forgiveness and cleansing for the people of God.
- c. Jesus offered HIMSELF as a “once-for-all” sacrifice for sin.
 - i. When Jesus comes into my life, he brings forgiveness and cleansing.
 - ii. Hebrews 4:14–16

2. When Jesus enters my life, righteousness comes to me because he is the fulfillment of the Law.

- a. The Pharisees (another of the forces in the “perfect storm”) relied religiously, dutifully, on adherence to the Law of Moses in every detail to try to gain favor in God’s sight.
- b. But until Jesus, not one human being had succeeded in that endeavor (Romans 3:10–18, 23) because the Law was not given to make us righteous.
- c. The Law was given to show us our sin: Romans 3:20b
- d. It was put in place to lead us to Christ, to show us our need of a Savior: Galatians 3:24
- e. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law: Matthew 5:17
 - i. So when Jesus comes into my life, he brings righteousness.
 - ii. 2 Corinthians 5:21

3. When Jesus enters my life, a new power comes to me because he is my king.

- a. A few days after entering the city as a king, Jesus would of course be placed on trial and shuttled between King Herod and Pilate, the representative of the Roman emperor. These earthly kings, who had the power to pardon or sentence Jesus, were confounded by him. They seemed powerless to do what was right; Pilate even went through the theatrical exercise of washing his hands, finding “no fault” in Jesus, while handing him over to be crucified.
- b. Ironically, the true king, the true power, stood before him (John 19:11a).
- c. Jesus is the king of kings (Luke 1:32–33).
 - i. This is why, after Jesus had died and rose from the dead, his closest followers asked him, “Lord, are you now going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” In other words, “Are you gonna take your throne and exert all your power...and, of course, share it with us?”
 - 1. Jesus answered, “You will receive power...” But it was not political, temporal power. It was power of a different kind, but no less real.
 - a. Power to heal
 - b. Power to turn weakness to strength
 - c. Power to resist temptation
 - d. Power to conquer evil
 - e. Power to speak boldly
 - f. Power to endure persecution, etc.
 - ii. So when Jesus comes into my life, he brings a new power.

APPLICATION

But remember—forgiveness and cleansing, righteousness and power comes as a result of relationship, not religion. It comes when Jesus enters in.

(Lead in prayer of invitation.)

Complete sermons are available in *The Bible 30-Day Church Experience Kit*. [Learn More.](#)