

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

You told Jerusalem, “When I passed by you and saw you wallowing in your blood, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’” (Ezek 16:6). I praise you today as the God of love. You looked past the filth and grime and stain of my sin, and you saw a child who could be redeemed through the precious blood of Christ! “Amazing grace will always be my song of praise. For it was grace, that brought me liberty, I do not know, just why He came to love me so. He looked beyond my faults and saw my need.”<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah!

### *Today in Your Word*

Today you shared with me a moving allegory, a beautiful and tragic story about an unwanted orphan (Jerusalem) who abandoned her loving husband (the King of kings) to become an insatiable prostitute. This story is a record of your love for Jerusalem, beginning with its birth, continuing with its wickedness and debauchery, and ending with its coming judgment. Yet the story doesn’t end in despair! In a burst of hope, you revealed that in the distant future, you would restore the city and establish an everlasting covenant with your people. This allegory teaches me so much. First, it teaches me that your love is unconditional. When you found Jerusalem, it was unwanted and unloved, cast into a field to die. Yet you loved them! Why? Was it because of their size or wealth or goodness? No! (see Deut 7:7–9). You loved them because that’s who you are—you are love! (1 John 4:8). Second, it teaches me that your love is vulnerable. You loved Jerusalem, not from a distance, but in the most intimate way possible—you married her. You did this knowing that you would suffer the pain of betrayal! Jesus demonstrated this kind of vulnerable love. He loved Peter, and Peter denied Him. He loved Judas, and Judas betrayed Him. He loved Jerusalem, and its leaders crucified Him. Such love, such wondrous love! Third, it teaches me that your love is sacrificial. You promised that one day you would establish an everlasting covenant with your people, but the only way this could happen was for you to sacrifice your Son on the cross to pay the penalty for their sin. You manifested the depth of your sacrificial love in the person of Jesus Christ: “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8). More than anything else, *giving* is the action most closely associated with your great love.

### *Reflection*

As I meditate on this story, I realize that I need to ask myself some tough questions. Do I love others the way you love me? Is my love unconditional? Is my love vulnerable? Is it sacrificial? John summed it up well when he said, “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers” (1 John 3:16). Will I answer the call to love others the same way you love me?

### *Request*

Father, your unconditional, vulnerable, sacrificial love is not something that I can generate on my own. I have to have your help! Give me a heart that will love others the same way you love me.

### *Thanksgiving*

I can never thank you enough for your marvelous, amazing, wonderful love! “Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing My great Redeemer’s praise, The glories of my God and king, The triumphs of His grace!”

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn: “[Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing](#)” – Charles Wesley.*

*Meditation Verse: Ezekiel 16:6.*

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<sup>1</sup> Dottie Rambo, Lyrics from “He Looked Beyond My Faults.”