Moments of Beauty
Week 9 – Cathedrals and Places of Worship

Wednesday, November 4

Notre-Dame, France. Photo Credit: Katya Brodbeck (2018)

Notre-Dame. Photo Credit: newsreel (2019).   Wailing Wall, Jerusalem. Photo Credit: Kathy Perry

By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. There on the poplars we hung our harps, for there our captors asked us for songs, our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!" How can we sing the songs of the LORD while in a foreign land? If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not consider Jerusalem my highest joy. Psalm 137:1-6

These words are from someone in exile… sent away, unwillingly, from everything they know and love…including their place of worship. And then they are mocked and asked to sing the songs of their worship to their God to the very ones who have created this unfathomable situation for them. They are lost and alone. The images are heart-wrenching. The destruction of the Notre Dame cathedral in France and the Wailing Wall (the remainder of the Jerusalem Temple). And yet there is beauty amidst the rubble.

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This picture of Notre-Dame shows the cross shining through the day after the fire. Even in our darkest times of feeling oppressed by outside forces over which we have no control, there is beauty. Observe the faithful people praying at the Wailing Wall and notice the plants that will not be held back growing in and among the rocks of the ruin. Beauty will always overcome. The prayers of the faithful will always transform. The cross will always shine through, inviting us to trust God and notice the beauty that God has placed all around us. Go ahead! Sing a song of praise to God today! It will lift your spirits and connect you to the God of the universe who is always worthy of worship...even when we can't be in our beloved place of worship.