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FALL 2024

# JERUSALEM THE CITY OF GOD

IN HISTORY

&

IN PROPHECY

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The City of Jerusalem is the center of end-time prophecy, the home of Shrines and Faiths, and was called the place *'Where The Name of the Lord Shall Be'*. Jerusalem is actually the name the Bible uses to describe our final home Heaven which is called "The New Jerusalem." This study focuses on the City of Jerusalem in History and in Prophecy.

*Dr. Thomas Haney*

HOPE LOOKS UP MINISTRIES

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## LESSON # 1: “Jerusalem, the City of God”

Welcome to the Hope Looks Up Bible Study 2024 Fall Series that take a close look at the city that is the center of end-time prophecy, the home of Shrines and Faiths, and was called the place where ‘The Name of The Lord Shall Be’. The City is Jerusalem and is actually the name the Bible uses to describe our final home Heaven which is called “The New Jerusalem.”

Even now, Jerusalem is the center of world attention and the decisions being made between Hamas, the ruling occupants of Gaza, and the Israelites have world-wide repercussions including the focused attention on all of the Middle East. The history of Jerusalem has often been the history of the world which is remarkable for a once small provincial town sitting high in the Judaeen mountains. Jerusalem was once considered the center of the world and today that is truer than ever. The city is the focus of the struggle between the Abrahamic religions, the shrine for increasingly popular Christian, Jewish and Islamic fundamentalism, the strategic battlefield of clashing civilizations, the attention of secular fascination, the object of crazy conspiracism and internet myth-making and the illuminated stage for the cameras of the world in the age of twenty-four-hour news. Religious, political, and media interest feed on each other to make Jerusalem more intensely scrutinized today than ever before.

Never has a city been more identified with God, Yahweh, than the city of Jerusalem. It is called the City of God, the City of the Lord, the place ‘The Name Of The Lord Shall Be’, all names in the Bible. Jerusalem is the Holy City, yet it has always had superstition, charlatanism, and bigotry. It is the prize of empires, yet of little strategic value.

It has been the home of prophets and patriarchs; Abraham, David, Jesus, and Muhammed walked the streets of this city. The Abrahamic religions were born there and the world will also end there. Jerusalem is the city of the Book, the Bible, and is in many ways the chronicle of the events that happened in Jerusalem.

The history of Jerusalem must be a study of the nature of holiness. The phrase “Holy City’ is constantly used to describe the reverence for the special Holy areas there, but what it really means is that Jerusalem has become the essential place on earth for communication between God and man. We might ask another question, why Jerusalem? The site was remote from the trade routes of the Mediterranean coast, it was short on water, baked in the summer sun, chilled by winter winds, its jagged rocks blistered and inhospitable. But the selection of Jerusalem as the site of the Temple, was established as an agreement between David and God and then built by David’s son, Solomon.

Whenever Jerusalem has seemed the most forgotten and irrelevant, it has often been the bibliolatry, the devoted study of biblical truth by people in other countries, who projected their faith and interest back on Jerusalem. There has always been two Jerusalem(s), the temporal and the celestial, both ruled more by faith and emotion than by reason and facts. And Jerusalem remains the center of the world.

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This Lesson will address two questions: 1) How did the city get its name and its distinction and 2) Why did God have it called the City of God in the Bible?

### How Did the City Get Its Name?

First, let's study the source of the name: When David captured the Citadel of Zion, the town was already ancient. But it was scarcely a city, just a small mountain stronghold in a land that would have many names: Canaan, Judah, Judea, Israel, Palestine, and later the Holy Land to Christians and the Promised Land to Hebrews. This tribal territory, just 100 by 150 miles, lies between the south-eastern corner of the Mediterranean and the River Jordan, between Egypt and the empires of the East. Yet the isolated and remote town we know as Jerusalem, 30 miles from the nearest coast, far from any trade routes, stood high amid the golden-rocked desolation of the cliffs, gorges, and the many Judean hills. It would freeze in the winter and even snow and have witheringly hot summers. Nonetheless, there was security atop the hills, and there was a spring in the valley beneath the mountain with just enough water to support a town.

History does not prove that it had a continual life after the start of a town in 5,000 BC, but instead it came and went as a city before David purchased it and made it his capital. By the time King David bought the city from the Jebusites it had a lineage of holiness, security and natural beauty that combined to make this city an ancient fortress that many regarded as impregnable.

People lived in the city as early as 5,000 BC. It started with small square homes inside a walled village on a hill atop a spring. After centuries of no city, the Canaanite inhabitants of the land cut a channel through the rock leading to a pool within the walls of their citadel. A fortified underground passageway protected their access to the water. They guarded the spring with a tower and a massive wall, 23 feet thick and used stones weighing up to three tons. They called their town, 'Ursalim, a version of Salem, a foreign god meaning, '*god of the evening star*'. The city sought help from the Egyptians and became subject to Egypt. We have no record in history of the next 100 years but after that period, the Jerusalemites built steep terraced structures above the Gihon Spring on the Ophel hill that still survive. They built powerful walls, towers, and rebuilt the terraces that were a part of the Canaanite citadel known as Zion that David would capture. Sometime during the thirteenth century BC, a people called the Jebusites occupied Jerusalem. It is here that the Hebrews made their first appearance in the history of the city.

This new obscure time for the city of Jerusalem lasted almost three centuries and it allowed the Hebrews to establish a small nation in the land of Canaan. They had read the story of their patriarch, Abraham, who traveled from Ur in south Iraq to Hebron. While in this area that God had promised to Abraham as the land where he was to live, he came in contact with Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem who was named El Elyon, the Most High God. (The book of Hebrews in the New Testament tells us this was either Jesus Christ or a being sent on His behalf.) This is the city's first mention in the Bible and suggests that Jerusalem or Salem was

already a Canaanite holy place ruled by priest-kings. Later God tested Abraham by ordering him to sacrifice his son Isaac on a Mountain in the land of Mariah, identified as Mount Moriah, the Temple Mount of Jerusalem. After a time, 400 years in Egypt, where the Israelites had gone to escape starvation and found their ancestor Joseph had become a prominent leader, settled there and lived well for a period of time. They later were seen as a threat and a resource and were enslaved by the Egyptian Pharaoh and became the work force of construction of cities and granaries in Egypt. God raised one of His Hebrew children Moses to lead them out and they once again came back to the land of Canaan.

The second in command, Joshua, followed as the leader after Moses and led them back into the land they left 400 years earlier. The Hebrews or Israelites were now very close to the City of Jerusalem for the first time.

Joshua set up his headquarter north of Jerusalem, at Shechem, where he built a shrine to Yahweh. Jerusalem was the home of the Jebusites, ruled by a priest-king named Adonizedek. He resisted Joshua but was defeated, however, the sons of Judah could not drive out the Jebusite's and they all lived in Jerusalem side by side with the sons of Judah.

Israel was not yet a kingdom but instead a confederation of large tribes ruled by elders who were now challenged by a new enemy the Philistines. The Philistines dominated the coast of the land of Canaan, and on the Mediterranean and were a great overmatch against the Israelites, who were hill country shepherds. They began to attack the Israelites in the hills and the first king of Israel, Saul, led a defeat of the Moabites, Edomites, and the Philistines. At that time, the capital of Israel was at Gibeon, just three miles north of Jerusalem. Saul was flawed with 'an evil spirit' and became too unstable for the Lord to trust to lead the people of Israel any longer.

God sent his Prophet, Samuel, to anoint a new king and led him to a young man, David. He would later become the king that followed Saul and was the creator behind the move to make Jerusalem the capital of Israel. He was a poet, musician, conqueror, murderer, adulterer, a man who had a heart after God, and an adventurer. He advanced through the royal army even though Saul was so jealous that David had to flee for his life and live as a fugitive in the hills around the area. After Johnathan, the son of Saul was killed, Saul fell on his sword rather than be executed by his enemies.

The throne was open and the southern tribes of Judah anointed David to be their king to rule from Hebron, and Saul's surviving son Ishbosheth, succeeded Saul to rule the northern tribes of Israel. After a seven-year war, Ishosheth was murdered and the northern tribes selected David as their king. The monarchy was united yet the split between Israel and Judah was a schism healed only by David's charisma.

Jerusalem, known as Jebus after its Jebusite inhabitants, stood just south of Saul's stronghold, Gibeon. David and his army advanced in the citadel of Zion and faced the formidable

fortifications which were considered to be impregnable. The Bible says David captured the city through a 'zinnor' most likely a water tunnel that was part of the water tunnel network of the city for carrying the water from the spring to the mountain top where the city stood. David took the stronghold of Zion, that has since been called the City of David

David did not slaughter the Jebusites, but instead he took them into his cosmopolitan court and army. He repaired the walls, and eventually brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. When they returned the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, God promised David,

*II Samuel 7 "Your house and your kingdom shall be established forever".*

Let's look at that covenant made between God and David and see how encompassing it is: Nathan the prophet has been sent by God to answer the question David has asked, "Can I build a house for the Lord—a Temple?" God instructs Nathan to say,

**II Samuel 7:4-19**

*"The word of the Lord came to Nathan saying, 'Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? ... The Lord declares to you that the Lord Himself will establish a house for you. When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.'" Then King David went in and... said, "Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far! And as if this were not enough in your sight, O Sovereign Lord, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant."*

After centuries of struggle, David was declaring that Yahweh had found a permanent home in a holy city. David had established the Israelite Kingdom and had made a name for himself, but David's Jerusalem was tiny. At the time David established it, Babylon covered 2,500 acres and even the town of Hazor covered 200 acres. Jerusalem was probably no more than 15 acres and housed around 1,200 people, all the people living around the citadel.

### **Why Did God Have It Called the City of God in The Bible?**

David had wanted to build a Temple to his God Yahweh but had not been permitted to build it. That honor fell to his son, Solomon, who succeeded him as King and built the Temple. But notice how many times God promised David that the kingdom of one of his future descendants would last forever. This promise of God to David is called the Davidic covenant, it's one of the key passages in Scripture regarding the coming of the Messiah, one of David's future descendants. This promise is also a clarification and an expansion of God's promises to Abraham. I want you to note that God said "the offspring of David would build God a home and it would be located in Jerusalem." The word "home" can mean a human house, God promised David that he would be able to build a home for David and his family. It can also mean a

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Temple, which is what God calls the building David's offspring would build for Him. It can also mean a dynasty. Example, the current British royal family is called 'the House of Windsor'. God told David that His house and your Kingdom will endure forever before me. Some of God's promise was fulfilled in Solomon, but much still awaits the future and can apply only to Jesus Christ. Why? Because God states that David's throne will endure forever and that David's house and kingdom will be established forever. But David does not have a descendant upon his throne today. And there is no throne in Jerusalem. So, did God not fulfill His promise? No, God clearly states in:

***Psalm 89:34-36***

*"I will not break my covenant or go back on what I promised. Once and for all I have vowed by my own holiness, I will never deceive David. His dynasty will last forever. His throne will endure before me."*

God's promise to David will be fulfilled in the future, when Jesus Christ, one of the descendants of David returns and rules on the throne in Jerusalem over all the earth in the Millennial Kingdom.

It is here that we really take hold of the idea that it was to be a very special holy place that honored God, Yahweh. The Temple was not just a shrine, it was the home of God Himself. It had a complex make-up of three parts, standing about 33 by 115 feet in a walled enclosure. First, there was a gateway with two bronze pillars, Yachin and Boaz, 33 feet height, decorated with pomegranates and lilies, that led into huge, pillared courtyard open to the skies and surrounded on three sides with two-story chambers that may have contained the royal archives or treasury. The portico opened into a sacred hall: ten golden lamps stood along the walls. A golden table for sacrifices, a water pool and wheeled lavers with bowls on top for purification, and a bronze pool known as the Sea. Steps led up towards the "Holy of Holies," A small chamber guarded by two winged cherubim 17 feet high, made of olive wood and covered with gold foil.

There had to be silence in God's house, so there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, the Phoenician craftsmen dressed the stones, carved the cedar and cypress and crafted the silver, bronze and gold decorations in Tyre before shipping them to Jerusalem. King Solomon fortified Mount Moriah by expanding the old walls: so, the name "Zion" described both the original citadel and the new Temple Mount.





This was an exile to many nations, North and South America, Europe, New Zealand, Australia, Africa, China, India, Asia, and many of the islands of the world.

Jesus said at that time, when Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple ruined,

*Luke 21:24 "Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles.*

From the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD to modern times, no sovereign government of Israel has successfully reestablished the nation. Israeli rule happened only after the Jordanians were driven back in the Six-Day War of 1967. Only then did the words of Jesus find fulfillment, *"Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until. . ."* I want to finish this session with a question,

### **What Did Jesus Mean By 'Until'?**

The word until clearly speaks of a reversal of events, looking to a time with the Jewish people would regather in Jerusalem. Israel's conquest of Jerusalem in 1967 was God's exclamation point to a watching world that the prophetic timetable that had begun with the birth of the State of Israel was right on schedule.

God had predicted and promised and it has all began to come true. Jerusalem is the 'City of God', not only because His house was built there, but because His son will set on the throne and rule the world from. . .Yes, Jerusalem. The City of God where the name of the Lord shall be.

## LESSON # 2: “Jerusalem, Destroyed Like a Political Football”

No City in history has been more identified with God than Jerusalem and it is the City that Yahweh said was His City and the place where *“The Name of The Lord Shall Be.”* History tells us that David purchased the City and made it the capital of Israel. When he moved the Ark of the Covenant into the City and gave it a special place of honor, God spoke the Davidic covenant to David. A promise that an offspring of David would build a house for God and that God would dwell there and that an offspring of David would always rule and the throne of David would continue.

A nation is no better than those who lead it and after the death of Solomon, the builder of the Temple and the son of David, Israel plunged into division and finally into the exile of the ten Northern tribes and the subjugation of the two Southern tribes.

### How Would a City Blessed by God Fall into Disarray & Destruction?

How you might ask, would a City so blessed by God and chosen by God fall into such disarray and destruction? Well, first let us look at the historical events that led up to this destruction.

The son of Solomon, Rehoboam faced a rebellion as soon as he was made King. His father, Solomon had taxed the people extensively and they were exhausted and upset by the large taxes, so the ten Northern tribes sent a letter to the new King and asked him to lower their taxes and make life more tolerable. But the new youthful King listened to his young advisors and told them, he would exact more taxes than his father and where his father had whipped them with whips, he would whip them with scorpions. A phrase that meant, he would want more taxes and those who refused would be punished severely. The ten Northern tribes withdrew from the country and founded the nation of Israel and the two Southern tribes took the name of their largest tribe, Judah. The new king, Jeroboam of the breakoff country of Israel realized the power of Jerusalem and the Temple of God that set in the City and feared that if his people would go to worship in Jerusalem, they would return to King Rehoboam and dispose of him. He erected two Canaanite shrines in Bethel and Dan and the ten Northern tribes no longer worshiped Yahweh or went to the City of Jerusalem to worship and serve God, rather, they worshipped golden calves and gave offerings to pagan gods.

The two Israelite kingdoms were sometimes allies and other times were at war with each other. Judah was a very small nation that had Jerusalem as its core and the Temple as its treasure. Israel was a much wealthier country with a much stronger military. The first attack on the two countries came from the Egyptians and their Pharaoh, Sheshan, when he threatened to come and destroy Jerusalem was satisfied with a bounty of gold, perhaps as much as 383 tons that Solomon had collected. He returned to Egypt with most of the gold reserves of Judah and with widespread destruction to Israel.

The two nations, Israel and Judah, made peace after 50 years of fighting and King Ahab of Israel married a Phoenician princess, Jezebel and they had a daughter, Athaliah whom they married

to King Jehorah of Judah. She arrived when the town and nation of Judah were thriving, but she was a disaster. The nations of Israel and Judah only thrived when the great powers were not present. But Assyria rose to power once again and came to conquer the Syrian Empire. Syria, Judah, and Israel formed a coalition and this new army, led by King Ahab halted the Assyrians. But the coalition soon fell apart; Ahab was killed in battle; the Israelite royal family was slaughtered and Queen Jezebel was tossed out of the palace window and died in the streets.

Meanwhile, their daughter Queen Athaliah seized power in Jerusalem and set out to kill all the Davidic princes, her own grandchildren, that she could find. Only one baby prince, Jehoash was saved. The **Book of II Kings** and recent archaeological finds, give us a glimpse of life in Jerusalem at that time. The prince was hidden in the Temple complex while Queen Athaliah attracted trade and brought Baal worship into the Temple of Jerusalem. She became as hated as Jezebel and the Temple priests called the leading citizens of Jerusalem together to reveal the prince when he was eight years old and to anoint him King of Judah. They immediately swore allegiance to this boy King and rid the Temple and the City of the priests of Baal and Athaliah herself. He ruled for 40 years until a Syrian King marched on Jerusalem and demanded all the ‘gold left in the treasury.’ The wealth of the Temple was a tempting prize for all the tyrants in the area. The final loose gold was sent to Assyria to seek their help while Syria and Israel attempted to destroy and loot Jerusalem and the Temple.

### The Prophet Isaiah Explains the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants

At that time God raised a prophet, Isaiah, who was a prince, priest and political figure, and he began by prophecy to explain the Abrahamic Covenant and more precisely the Davidic Covenant. Isaiah under the influence of the Holy Spirit told of a time when God would use Jerusalem to be the preaching point of Immanuel. His prophesy said,

#### **Isaiah 7:14**

*“Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign. The virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son, and you will call his name Immanuel.”*

He began to show that the Abrahamic Covenant would have more gaps in Israel controlling the country than just the 400 years the nation lived in Egypt. He forecast this great day as a time when, David’s offspring would come to save the world.

#### **Isaiah 9:6-7**

*“For to us a child is born and a son is given and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace, there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over the kingdom. This Prince of Peace will bring peace without end.”*

Isaiah prophesied how this would happen. There would be a special Jerusalem,

*Isaiah 6:1* “I saw the Lord high and lifted up, sitting on a throne and his train filled the Temple.”

Even if Jerusalem lie in ruins, the teaching of God through Jerusalem would be for all the people of the world. It will teach the people: “to do well and seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge for the fatherless, plead for the widow.” **Psalm 32**

Isaiah saw a time that would be extraordinary.

**Isaiah 2:2-3**

*“The mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains. . .and all nations shall flow to it. The laws, values, and Hand of God would rise again and with it this vanquished City would rise again. And many people shall go and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of God of Jacob;”*

**Micah 4:2**

*“Come you and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of His ways. . .Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations,”*

Isaiah, prophesied about a Day of Judgement when an anointed King, the Messiah would come. He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in his paths.

**Isaiah 2:3-5**

*“The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks. . .and neither shall they learn war anymore.”*

As David writes in **Psalm 49:15** “The dead will rise again”

All nature will be restored to a Garden of Eden lifestyle,

**Isaiah 65:25**

*“The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw as the ox and dust shall be the serpent’s food,”.*

These strong words of prophecy defined what would happen in the minds of the Jews and later some Christians. Jerusalem and the Temple could be destroyed but the universal teaching of Yahweh would continue and it would come through His Messiah, a descendant of David, who would in time put the world back together again, rule successfully in it, and present a new heaven and a new earth to all who follow Yahweh. The Jews felt that would be a conquest of all invaders and create a powerful City in the political arena of the earth while many Christians believed that would happen when Jesus, the Messiah, returned to the earth to shape it for the

final 1,000 years. We will study those prophecies in depth when we look at Jerusalem and Jesus Christ in a future lesson.

King Ahaz did travel to Damascus, Syria to make peace and accept the leadership of Assyria. Israel, the ten Northern tribes. They waited for the strong Assyrian King to die and in 727 BC they rebelled against the new Assyrian king, Sargon II. He besieged Samaria, the capital of Israel for three years, defeated them, and eliminated the nation of Israel. He deported 270,000 people or Ten of the Twelve tribes of Israel. They nearly vanished for centuries and primarily resurfaced only as Israel began to be a place for the Israelites to return, starting in the 1800's and still going on today. The modern Jews are descended from the last two tribes who survived as the Kingdom of Judah.

During this time, God gave a great miracle to Judah that preserved them as a nation. The Assyrian King, Sennacherib decided that he also wanted to conquer Judah and Jerusalem. Hezekiah was the King of Judah and he had a new water tunnel constructed that allowed The Gihon Spring to flow 1,700 feet through the mountain and end at the Pool of Siloam, just below the City of David. He fortified the City walls and set aside great provisions for his people and troops as they expected this great siege. The prophet Isaiah told them to be patient and God would provide. He did.

The Bible tells us this is how it happened,

***Isaiah 37:36***

*“The angel of the Lord went out and smote the camp of the Assyrians. . .and when they rose in the morning, the dead corpses were everywhere”.*

Yahweh told Sennacherib that *“the daughter of Jerusalem had shaken her head at you.”* Assyria, who had defeated and dispersed the ten tribes of Israel, would never again attack Judah.

But something worse happened. Hezekiah, who had done so much to right the ship in Judah and restore the true worship of Yahweh was followed by his evil son, Manasseh to the throne. He filled the nation with idols and idolatrous practices including the sacrifice of children in the Valley of Hinnom, a valley that ran parallel to the City wall of Jerusalem. It became not just a valley of death but Gehenna and in both Hebrew and English Gehenna means, 'Hell'.

Meanwhile the world power structure was changing again and a Babylonian general seized control of Babylon and began to dismantle the Assyrian Empire. This took all the world-wide attention off of Judah and God raised up a good king, Josiah, the son of Manasseh. He was as good as his dad was bad.

His chief priest found a forgotten scroll in the chambers of the Temple, something from the first five books of the Bible and King Josiah had his priests and scholars read it publicly to tell the ancient history of the Israelites. He boldly stepped into the Temple and made a public covenant with God to keep the Law of Moses and then had his scholars begin to gather and process the

books that we know as the Old Testament. The Jews called them ‘The Law or the Torah’ and ‘The Writings.’

Josiah was afraid of the Egyptian Pharaoh, Necho, who was marching up the Mediterranean and capturing former Assyrian countries. Josiah took his army and went out to defeat the Egyptians. He was soundly defeated and killed at a battle at Megiddo, a place we usually call Armageddon.

The Egyptians made his brother, Jehoiakim the king of Judah. He thought he had a chance to liberate Judah and called for a national fast to win God’s protection. The leading prophet at the time was Jeremiah and he warned the king that God would destroy Jerusalem. King Jehoiakim publicly burned Jeremiah’s writings, and aligned himself with Egypt, Egypt sent no help and the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar moved in and conquered Judah on March 16, 597 BC. He captured and deported the King, took 10,000 nobles, artisans, and young men to Babylon.

### Babylonians Conquer Judah and Exile the Jewish People

When the Jews rebelled one more time, Nebuchadnezzar returned, destroyed Judah, besieged the City of Jerusalem, finally broke through and burnt the City. One month later he ordered the City to be obliterated. He burned the House of the Lord, the king’s palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem and broke down the walls. He took all the silver and gold vessels, gold furniture, plundered the Ark of the Covenant (never found), and **Psalm 74** says they cast fire into the Sanctuary.

The destruction of the Temple seemed to be the death of the City and the country. The Judeans would surely vanish like other peoples who seemed deserted by their gods. But the Jews somehow transformed this catastrophe into the formation experience that only increased the sanctity of Jerusalem and created a sign or symbol of the end times. All three Abrahamic religions drew conclusions out of this:

1. The Jews would see this as a wrong that needed to be overturned.
2. The Christians through the teaching of Jesus would see this as a sign of the Apocalypse. It would happen again in the same area with a vastly different ending.
3. Muhammad would see this destruction as the withdrawal of divine favor for the Jews, making way for his Islamic revelation.

The Jewish captives began to repent and return to the Lord. They sang their songs,

#### **Psalm 137**

*“By the Rivers of Babylon, here we sat down, yes, we wept when we remembered Zion.”*

They restored all the laws of the Books of Law, Genesis-Deuteronomy: observed the Sabbath, circumcised their sons, adhered to the dietary laws, adopted Jewish names because the fall of Jerusalem had demonstrated what happened when they did not respect and keep God’s laws. Away from Judah, the Judeans were becoming faithful Jews. When the 70 years of their

captivity were over, a prophesy by Jeremiah, *Jeremiah 25:11* had been fulfilled exactly. They had a great miracle come into their life.

Persia soon overthrew the kingdom of Babylon and the exiles were under the rule of another kingdom but not on their way home. This was the new hand of God and Cyrus offered religious tolerance in exchange for political loyalty. He gave an official decree, *"The Lord God has given me all the kingdoms of the world and he has charged me to build to him a house in Jerusalem. Who is there among you of all his people? Let him go up to Jerusalem and build the house of the Lord of Israel."* 42,360 exiles returned to Jerusalem to build the house of the Lord. Cyrus, the protector of Jerusalem died in a battle nine years later and the work on rebuilding the City of Jerusalem and the house of God stopped. Darius, the new ruler of the Persian Empire sent Zerubbabel back to complete the project in Jerusalem. In March 515 the Second Temple was dedicated in Jerusalem. The wall of the City had not been repaired and 50 years later the cupbearer of the King Artaxerxes I of the Medes and Persians, Nehemiah was allowed to go to Jerusalem to complete that task. In 52 days, they did, following the orders from Nehemiah to have one-half work on the walls while one-half served as the guard and soldiers to fight off the enemy.

Yet another world power was rising. It was the kingdom of Philip II of Macedon and after his assassination, his son Alexander would launch an attack on Persia that would bring Greece to Jerusalem. Alexander wanted a tribute from Jerusalem to help finance his army to get to Egypt. He got it and never returned to Jerusalem. His four generals divided his Kingdom and Ptolemy became their leader. He was a very poor leader and ravished the City and took many exiles to Alexandria to work in his capitol. His son Ptolemy II gathered the Jewish scholars to Alexandria and had them translate the Septuagint Bible that paved the way for Christianity to spread so quickly, because all the known world could speak Greek and now the entire Old Testament had been translated into Greek

Israel was dispersed, Judah was in semi-captivity, Jerusalem was a shell of what it had been; but God was putting the pieces in place for the greatest miracles Judah would see until the end-times. It was the age of Rome in Jerusalem but the main Biblical attention was on Jesus Christ, Immanuel—who would come as the Prince of our Salvation.



## LESSON # 3: “Jerusalem, From The Second Temple to the Romans”

The City of Jerusalem became the capital of Israel when David purchased it from the Jebusites and brought the Ark of the Covenant into the City to have as a point of respect and worship. God responded to the worship of David with the Davidic Covenant that said one of his offspring would reign on the throne of David and his kingdom would always continue.

### Rebuilding of the Second Temple

From that glorious start and then the building of the Temple by his son Solomon, the City of Jerusalem and the glorious Temple were one of the great wonders of the world. But by the time of the division of the kingdom, the Nation of Israel; Ten Northern Tribes and Judah, the two Southern tribes, the demise of David’s kingdom and Solomon’s Temple were eminent. The Assyrians took care of the first and banished the ten Northern tribes all over the globe and dissolved the Nation of Israel. Then about two hundred years later, the Babylonians came and destroyed Jerusalem, tore down and burnt the Temple, tore down the walls and ruined the City of Jerusalem. It sat in ruins for over 70 years until God told the most powerful man on the planet, King Cyrus of Persia in a dream that he was to lead a recruitment of people to go back and restore the Temple of God in Jerusalem. He called this God the true God. A group of exiles went back and began to rebuild the Temple but soon stopped building and when Cyrus died. They stopped trying to rebuild the wall that would protect the City.

It took a Jewish leader who had become the cupbearer of the new king of the Persians, King Artaxerxes I, named Nehemiah who approached his king and boss and asked if he could go back and rebuild the wall to protect Jerusalem and the Temple. Nehemiah was an organizer and he gave portions of the wall to all the men of Jerusalem to build and enacted a plan where half would build while the other half would serve as guards and protectors and the work could get done. In just 52 days, the wall was built and the City could grow again.

But Nehemiah had promised to return to serve Artaxerxes after he had finished the wall and he did. Word soon reached him that the enemies had begun to lucratively run the Temple, the people were intermarrying all the pagans and adopting paganism. Nehemiah returned and kicked out those who were not Jews but who had put themselves in control of the Temple. He forbade any intermarriage to unbelievers and forbade marriage to any who did not follow the teachings God had given to the children of Abraham. This new lifestyle and consistent giving of tithes from all the inhabitants of Jerusalem soon led to full coffers. The Persian governor soon found a reason to right a wrong, an excuse to bring his troops to Jerusalem, and he took all the money/gold collected in the Temple.

The Medes and Persians were turning to internal squabbling, fighting over leadership of their empire and becoming a weaker empire. The Macedonians were becoming very powerful under King Phillip II and he formed a large army and prepared to launch a sacred war against Persia to avenge the invasions of Darius and his son Xerxes against Greece. He was assassinated but his

son Alexander seized control at age 20 and launched an attack on Persia that would bring Greece to Jerusalem.

### Daniel Prophecy of the Four Kingdoms

Daniel had prophesied, in the Book of Daniel, clearly and exactly about this series of world kingdoms. He had been asked to interpret the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon about a giant warrior who had four different layers of metal materials from his head down to his feet. The first was gold, his head; the second was silver, his chest and arms; the third was bronze, his loins and thighs; and the fourth was iron mixed with clay for his legs and feet. Daniel told the King the interpretation:

#### ***Daniel 2:37-40***

*"37 Your Majesty, you are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; 38 in your hands he has placed all mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds in the sky. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. You are that head of gold. 39 "After you, another kingdom will arise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth. 40 Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron--for iron breaks and smashes everything--and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others."*

#### **Four Kingdoms of Daniel 8 & 9**

1. Babylonian Empire
2. Medes and Persian Empire
3. Greek Empire
4. Roman Empire.

Each time Daniel refers to this dream, he reminds the readers that God also showed him there would be a fifth kingdom that would not be like these first four. Daniel wrote,

#### ***Daniel 2:37-45***

*"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of the mountain, but not by human hand, a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold to pieces. The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."*

The interaction between the Greeks and the residents of Jerusalem was a repeat of history. Alexander wanted to finance his attacks on the Medes and Persians, so he first went to Jerusalem and took their gold and money and continued onto Egypt before he went East and conquered as far as Pakistan. He never returned to Jerusalem.

## The Greek Kingdom

But after the death of Alexander at age 33, his kingdom was divided among his four generals and Ptolemy got the area that included Judah and Jerusalem. Ptolemy was a terrible leader for the Jews. He took their scholars, their gold, and their lives. He took the scholars back to his capital City of Alexandria in Egypt. His heir, son Ptolemy II, was just the opposite. His son freed over 200,000 Jews and let them return to Judah. He compiled a group of 70 Jewish scholars who not only helped him write and organize his memoirs and a history of the City of Alexandria. But also, the greatest thing these Jewish scholars did for him and for the spread of Christianity and Jewish unity is that he commissioned a group of 70 Jewish scholars and asked them to translate the Torah and the Writings, what we call the Old Testament, from Hebrew to Greek. Hebrew was more of a religious language and Greek was the language of the common person in all the known world. They called this finished translation “The Septuagint” or “The Seventy”. History tells us the 70 scholars all returned their translations in 70 days and all the translations matched exactly.

His loose control of the City of Jerusalem allowed one family in Judah, the Oniad family, to go to Alexandria and bid for the right to rule Jerusalem and appoint the High Priest. These were neither great days nor bad days for the people of Jerusalem. They were allowed to worship as they chose but they were under constant control and direction of the Greek governors.

This was about to change. A group of Seleucid kings from the Middle East rose in power and challenged the Greeks for control of the area. They temporarily won and their leader Antiochus the Great ruled with grace and peace over Jerusalem, which at this time there was a great change in how Jerusalem was led. They had become a “theocracy” and this allowed the high priest and his council, ‘the Sanhedrin,’ to lead the country to follow all the laws of the Bible and to implement them into their lives. The Temple treasury grew as the pilgrims came to offer worship and sacrifice at the feast days. It was a time of spiritual peace and bounty.

But that was to change because the new leader of the Seleucids took control, Antiochus Epiphanes, and even his own people called him ‘the mad god.’ The full coffers of the City of Jerusalem were too much for him to resist and he came and raided the money of Jerusalem. He also combined the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires, but during that successful venture, the Jews rebelled against the leader he had appointed to control Jerusalem. He rushed back to Jerusalem and committed some of the most disgusting of all deeds ever for believing Jews. He deported 10,000 Jews; he entered the Holy of Holies and took all the golden furniture there and commanded the Jews to worship him with sacrifices.

His plan was not successful. The Jews refused to sacrifice to Antiochus Epiphanes, as a god, so the madman decided to eradicate the Jewish religion itself. This was such a terrible time that many who have read the New Testament Prophecies about the Abomination of Desolation desecrating the temple have referenced these acts by Antiochus. That does not seem plausible

to me, because this happened in 167 BC and Christ spoke the prophecy about the Abomination of Desolation in his time and said,

***Matthew 24:15-16***

*“So, when you are standing in the holy place the abomination that causes desolation, spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains “*

It had to be a future event that Christ referred to if we are to make sense of the prophecy.

Antiochus Epiphanes forbade any sacrifices or services in the Temple, banned the Sabbath, the Law and circumcision and if any were observed doing any of these things, they were to be killed by those who saw them doing it. He ordered the Temple to be covered with the broth of swine and used pigs' flesh as the sacrifice on the altar. He consecrated the Temple on December 6, 167 BC to the state god, Olympian Zeus. A sacrifice was made to Antiochus Epiphanes, the god-king, probably in his presence at the altar outside the Holy of Holies. He filled the Temple with reveling and orgies the rest of the day and led a parade of Jews to the gym that evening to watch sporting events played by nude athletes. He destroyed everyone who tried to keep the Sabbath, or observed circumcision, he burned the Torah and all found possessing any part of Holy Scripture were killed.

But the opposite thing happened from what he desired. These martyred deaths caused the opposite effect. They saw the hand of God bringing these people back to life and vindicating their mistreatment. This was the prophecy, for Daniel had written,

***Daniel 12:2***

*“Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake and come to everlasting life.”*

One of the greatest examples of bravery in the face of this cruel and childish king was that of an old priest Mattathias, who was commanded to offer a sacrifice to Antiochus Epiphanes or be killed. He refused and when another Jew stepped forward to offer the sacrifice, Mattathias had 'his zeal kindled and his veins trembled.' He drew his sword and killed the traitor and then the general and tore down the altar. *“Whoever maintains the Covenant, let him come forth with me,”* he exclaimed. He and his five sons and many conservative Jews retreated to the mountains and the age of the Maccabees started.

The Maccabee family had several men rise to leadership and they fought battles with the Syrians, the Greeks and at one time freed Judah and Jerusalem. It was at that time that Simon Maccabee reestablished temple worship and at a time when the oil was low, he wanted to continue the Temple lamps as God had commanded and a miracle, the oil lasted and the lights did not go out. This birthed the Jewish celebration of “Hanukkah” or derived from the word 'Hallelujah', a feast still celebrated today.

The three-way battle for the control of Judah between Syria, Greece, and nationalists from Judah created a very uneven time for the nation. But that was not to last for long, because the Romans had successfully begun to move down the East side of the Mediterranean and were conquering all the nations as they went. The Judahites began to muster their defenses and it allowed an advisor, Antipater to arise in importance. His son would be King Herod I and the connection between the Herod's and the Romans is a major theme in the New Testament.

### The Roman Kingdom

In 64 BC the Romans arrived. They had defeated the Seleucid kingdom, annexed Syria and were invited to arbitrate the dispute about who should rule Judah. Pompey was happy to oblige and after one of the warring parties double-crossed Pompey, the Roman general began a siege of the Temple and when he broke through the walls of the Temple, he ended up putting Hyrcanus as high priest and the sole authority in Judah. His minister and advisor were the father of King Herod, Antipater. Pompey could not resist the opportunity of looking inside the Holy of Holies. The Romans were intrigued by Eastern worship yet proud of their many gods and disdainful of the primitive superstition of Jewish monotheism, as they branded it. He admired the Holy of Holies, examined the golden table and the holy candelabra and realized that there was nothing else there, no godhead, just an intense sanctity and he took nothing.

Pompey left his hand-picked man in charge and went back to battle Crassus and Caesar for the leadership of Rome. In the meantime, the Parthians moved into Jerusalem to control it and Herod fled with his entourage to Egypt under the protection of Cleopatra. When he found out that Mark Anthony had gone back to Rome, Herod immediately boarded a boat and went to Rome. Anthony and Octavian were the rulers of Rome and they escorted Herod into the Roman Senate where he was declared the king of Judah and a Roman ally.

Herod began a long process to rule over Judah and it meant he had to change his allegiance from Mark Anthony and Cleopatra to Octavian. Octavian had dealt a crushing blow both on sea and land to the forces of Mark Anthony and Cleopatra. Octavian emerged as the first Roman emperor and changed his name to Augustus. He increased the kingdom of Herod to include part of modern Israel, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Herod and his wife resided in the Antonia Fortress while in Jerusalem and he appointed the High Priest and every seven years read the entire book of Deuteronomy aloud in the Temple. But he was only Jewish when in Jerusalem, the rest of the time he was a Greek monarch who seemed to forget everything about what Judaism taught.

One last thing about Herod that truly effected Jerusalem and the New Testament time. He rebuilt the Temple. He dug down to the foundation rock and built from there. He expanded the length of the Temple Mount by building a sub-structure of 88 pillars and 12 vaulted arches, now called Solomon's Stables and this created a three acre platform on which to build. The Courts of the Temple decreased in size from the Court of the Gentiles, through the Court of the Women, then the Court of the Men, and finally the Court of the Priests. He had signs posted that allowed

people who entered the wrong courts to be killed inside the Temple for violating the Temple. He covered the Temple with plates of gold, and when the sun rose in the morning the Temple reflected such light that observers had to look away. This was the Temple that Jesus knew and later another Roman General, Titus would destroy

When Herod died, he had left a will that declared his son Herod Antipas was to follow him as leader of all the kingdom. But Augustus listened to all the claims and offenses against the Herod’s and only gave Galilee to Herod Antipas to rule. Judah became a Roman province, and Jerusalem was ruled from Caesarea on the coast by a series of low-ranking prefects. (The most famous in the Bible was Pilate, before whom Jesus was tried.)

It was at this time of restructure that the Romans held a census to register taxpayers. This submission to Roman power was humiliating enough that the Jews had a minor revolution. This census, recorded in the Gospel of Luke brought the family of Jesus to Bethlehem where he would be born. For thirty years, Herod Antipas ruled Galilee, and dreamed of his father’s kingdom, which he had almost inherited until John the Baptist, a charismatic new prophet, burst out of the desert to mock and challenge him.

Before we look at the life of Jesus in Jerusalem next week, two question that we need to examine are:

1. If Jesus is literally going to rule on this earth, then why did He not talk about it?
2. If this was the plan of God that would allow the throne of David to continue and last through eternity, why was this not something that Jesus spoke about?

The first thing we need to realize is that Jesus spoke often about it. Jesus often used the expressions of “Kingdom of Heaven” and “Kingdom of God”; The audiences that listened to Jesus were familiar through the prophets with these terms and they heard, “Kingdom of God upon the Earth.” The Jews looked all the time for someone to set up that Kingdom.

Zechariah declares not only that the Lord will be king over all the earth (see **Zechariah 14:9**), but also that the Lord will “*return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem,*” **Zechariah 8:3** He goes ahead to write, “*he will build the Temple, where He will sit and rule on His throne,*” **Zechariah 6:13**. He also wrote, “*survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty.*” **Zechariah 14:15**. Ezekiel agrees with this prophesy that God will rule on his throne, saying, “*This is where I will live among the Israelites forever,*” **Ezekial 43:7**. Much of the last part of the Book of Ezekiel describes the new Temple area and the Temple, **Ezekial 40-47**. Since these passages describe the Temple very specifically, in a far different formation than any previous Temple, it must talk about a Temple that Jesus will lead.

The next lesson will focus on what Jesus said about the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenant and how that relates to Jerusalem. God has woven the Bible together to prove that all prophecies will be fulfilled and are true.

## Lesson # 4: “Jerusalem and Jesus Christ”

Of all the lessons on Jerusalem, this will be the one that feels most familiar to those who are Christians and have studied your Bible for a long time. In fact, many of us base most of our ideas on Jerusalem from what we have read and learned in the New Testament during the time of Jesus and later the start of the Church.

Before we start the study of John the Baptist and then Jesus in Jerusalem, let's address another question that is very important to our study. Does the land of Abraham and the City of Jerusalem still belong to Israel? Perhaps a second question we need to answer is: What does that mean? The land has not always been occupied from the time of Abraham until now by the nation of Israel, so how does it belong to them?

### Does the Land of Abraham & the City of Jerusalem Belong to Israel?

The promise God made to Abraham is repeated many times in the Bible. I Chronicles states it very clearly:

#### **Chronicles 16:14-16**

*“He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. He remembers the covenant forever, the word he commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, **‘To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit.’**”*

No other country in the world can boast of the deed-signed by the Almighty Himself. When God gave Abraham's descendants the Land, the Land was inhabited by Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Repharites, Amonites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites, and it would not become the inheritance of Israel for another 400 years. Genesis explains,

#### **Genesis 15:13-21**

*13 Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. 14 But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. 15 You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. 16 In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure." 17 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. 18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates-- 19 the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, 20 Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, 21 Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites."*

*“The sin of the Amorites (had) not yet reached its full measure”* (vs. 16) at the time God spoke the promises to Abraham, therefore God, in His justice, could not yet give Abraham the Promised Land. When the 400 years had ended, God called Moses, and later Joshua, to lead Israel’s descendants to conquer the Land by driving out its inhabitants and destroying every vestige of idolatry, **Numbers 13**

At the time of Jesus, all of modern Israel was controlled by Rome and the town Jesus grew up in, Nazareth, was under total occupation and not under the control of Judah at all. Jerusalem was not even the capital city for Nazareth at the time of Christ, only the capitol of Judah and ‘The former Israel.’

God’s promise to Israel was this, *“To your descendants, I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates”* **Genesis 15:18** and see also **Deuteronomy 1:7, 11-24** and **Joshua 1:4**. God’s promise was unconditional. The Land belongs to the people of Israel today and has belonged to them through all the years of their exile. When the people of Israel began to return, they were returning to the Land given to them by God through the patriarchs. Much like Hosea had to buy his wife Gomer back from the slavery into which she had sold herself, (see Hosea 3:1-3), as early as the late nineteenth century, Jewish benefactors and foundations began to buy land so that early Jewish settlers could establish themselves in the Land all in anticipation of their ultimate return.

Yet to Moses, God clarified the issue of possession. Although the Land belonged to the people of Israel in perpetuity, they would only continue to live there if they remained faithful to Him, Moses said:

**Deuteronomy 28:15, 25**

*15 However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees, I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you: ... 25 The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You will come at them from one direction but flee from them in seven, and you will become a thing of horror to all the kingdoms on earth.*

**Deuteronomy 28: 36-43**

*36 The LORD will drive you and the king you set over you to a nation unknown to you or your ancestors. There you will worship other gods, gods of wood and stone. 37 You will become a thing of horror, a byword and an object of ridicule among all the peoples where the LORD will drive you. 38 You will sow much seed in the field but you will harvest little, because locusts will devour it. 39 You will plant vineyards and cultivate them but you will not drink the wine or gather the grapes, because worms will eat them. 40 You will have olive trees throughout your country but you will not use the oil, because the olives will drop off. 41 You will have sons and daughters but you will not keep them, because they will go into captivity. 42 Swarms of locusts will take over all your trees and the crops of*



*your land. 43 The foreigners who reside among you will rise above you higher and higher, but you will sink lower and lower.*

**Deuteronomy 28:63-64**

*63 Just as it pleased the LORD to make you prosper and increase in number, so it will please him to ruin and destroy you. You will be uprooted from the land you are entering to possess. 64 Then the LORD will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship other gods--gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your ancestors have known.*

The history of Israel is written in those words of Moses.

Biblically the land belongs to Israel, but her total possession of the Land, depends on her faithfulness to God. Ezekiel makes it clear that the return from the nations would happen not because the worldwide descendants of Israel had at last become a righteous people but because God chose to prove His faithfulness to them as a nation. Full possession of the Land awaits their return to the Lord.

**Ezekiel 36:22-23**

*"It is not for your sake, O house of Israel that I am going to do these things (bring you back) but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone, I will show the holiness of my great name.*

Yes, the Land still belongs to Israel by decree of God. But no, Israel will not possess all of the Land until the nation returns to the Lord, at which time the kingdom will be returned to Israel and David's Son will return to rule anticipating a yet future time when:

**Revelation 11:15**

*"Kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."*

**Jerusalem at the Time of Jesus Christ**

Jesus came to that occupied Jerusalem and a non-existent Israel. The Romans intended to keep the rebellious Jews under control whatever that took; Herod and his family with very pagan lifestyles even though they were one-half Jews intended to keep the people under control and Rome supporting them, the Jews intended to find "The Messiah" who would throw the Romans out, restore the throne of David, and lead a reunited Israel into their greatest days, and Jesus came intending to bring eternal life through grace to all the world including the Gentiles. Something had to give and it did.

John the Baptist in the late 20's BC started to win a following, first in the deserts not far from Jerusalem, and the Bible says, *"all men mused in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not."* John had grown up around the Temple as a boy where his dad served as a priest. He had chosen to follow an urging of Isaiah that said, *"Prepare the way of the 'Yahweh' in the desert."* He was living a very aesthetic life with a strong message of repentance, when his

*Author: Dr. Thomas Haney*

cousin Jesus came to visit him while he was preaching. Jesus had John baptize him in the Jordan River, and for a short time they preached as a team and focused on a change of life that was sealed by baptism.

The disciples of the two men became competitive and a distraction to the ministry so John stayed in the area and Jesus and His disciples moved on into Galilee to preach. John began to speak very boldly about the lifestyle of Herod Antipas, the ruler over Galilee and the fact he had imprisoned his wife, the daughter of a Nabataean Arab King and had moved his niece, Herodias in as though she was his wife. John called this relationship adultery, because Herodias was still married to the brother of Herod Antipas and in retaliation, Herod had John arrested. John stayed in prison until the daughter of Herodias danced for Herod and his friends at his birthday party and he allowed her to choose any thing she wanted as a reward for the dance. She chose the head of John the Baptist and it was given to her.

The attention of the Gospel preaching shifts to the ministry of Jesus and it had a lot to do with Jerusalem. Jesus frequently was in Jerusalem and included the city in many of his teachings. He was the only founder of an Abrahamic religion to have extensively walked the streets of the city, frequented the Temple, and taught about Jerusalem. Jesus called the City of Jerusalem the City of the Great King, and through His life He fulfilled not only the prophecies of the Messiah but also the prophecies that would happen in Jerusalem.

From the time Jesus was twelve and was separated from his family after the Passover Feast, He connected with the Temple and Jerusalem. He told His family, *“He must be about His Father’s business.”* As He unveiled the end of His life and the mission for the Apostles, he stressed that His destiny was tied to Jerusalem and the Scripture says, *“At that time Jesus began to show His disciples how he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things. . . and be killed and be raised again on the third day.”* He also told them that Jerusalem would suffer for their not receiving Him and instead killing Him.

#### **Luke 21:20-24**

*20 "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. 22 For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. 23 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. 24 They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."*

Jesus gave many of the strongest and most descriptive prophecies about all that would happen in the great city of Jerusalem. Jesus called Himself, “The Son of Man”, a prophetic title from Isaiah and Daniel that stood for a time when the Apocalypse would happen and Christ would deliver the world to His Father. What Jesus taught was not the social or nationalistic revolution

the Jews were anticipating and expecting their Messiah to preach; but instead, Jesus was a teacher that seemed the most concerned about the life to come, eternal life. So, He often taught that what you do here will affect the next life, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"* **Matthew 5:3** is one of many teachings of Jesus that relate to a future life in eternity.

Jesus visited Jerusalem at least three times for Passover, with His Disciples and attended other religious festivals with them. Before his final visit when Jesus was crucified at the end of the Week of Unleavened Bread at the time of Passover, He often spoke warnings to the people. It was during one of those feast times when Jesus was being welcomed by the crowds but harassed and insulted by the religious leaders, that He poured out His heart and His feelings about Jerusalem. He said,

**Luke 13:34**

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killed the prophets, and stoned them, that are sent to them; how often would I have gathered your children together, as a hen does gather her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."*

At the final Passover for Jesus, spelled out in the four Gospels, Jesus entered the city as prophesied that the *"Messiah"* would enter the city sitting on a foal of a donkey not like our little donkeys, these were bred to be a sturdy mount for kings of peace. His followers and others laid down palm branches before him and hailed him as *"Son of David"* and *"King of Israel"*. Jesus spoke about the impending doom of the Temple, even as His disciples considered the Temple too invincible to destroy. Jesus said, *"This Temple would be torn down and he would rebuild it in three days"*, speaking about his own body dying and being resurrected but this phrase was used against Him in His trials.

Jesus spent those three days preaching and healing in the day and the evenings with his friends, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus just a few miles away in the city of Bethany. It was at this time, Jesus joined in the crowds, Josephus estimates over 2 and ½ million Jews were present for this Passover; and made His way into the Temple to Solomon's Portico, the most significant part of the Court of the Gentiles where he accused the priests of making *"His Father's House of Prayer into a den of thieves"*. He overturned the money changing tables and dispersed the animals that were being sold inside this Court and spoke the prophecies of Jeremiah, Zechariah, and Isaiah against what was happening. The leaders of the Temple set out to eliminate Jesus and their rational was, *"It would be better that one man should die for the people than that the whole nation perish."* They made their plans.

Jesus lived out His plans. He had a Passover meal with His Disciples in an Upper Room, a spacious banquet area rented out by wealthy home owners for groups to hold their Passover meal. He sent Judas from the group knowing of his betrayal and still took His disciples out of the city to the olive grove of Gethsemane, partly up the hill to the Mount of Olives, and there he asked them to pray with him. He was arrested there when Judas led a large group of priests and

the Roman guard for the priests out to the spot where Jesus was praying. Jesus was popular, even among some of the authorities, so his enemies rushed on in an all-night series of trials to have Jesus tried and convicted before the city could all assemble the next day in protest.

### Prophecies that Involved Jerusalem

The number of prophecies that were fulfilled during the next few hours will be our study next Spring as we approach the Resurrection Season. But we will focus here on prophecies that involved Jerusalem. The authorities stayed true to their character, Pilate harsh, vindictive and clueless; Herod, childish and taunting Jesus to show him some special miracle; and the Jewish leaders stubborn and set on having Jesus' die.

When Pilate put on a show by washing his hands, after all he had had hundreds of Jews killed during his time as a Prelate, and by that hand washing show allowed Jesus to be sentenced to death; the rest was predetermined. Jesus was scourged, the typical treatment of a pre-crucifixion victim with something new, Pilate had prepared a placard, "King of the Jews" that he had put around the neck of Jesus. This was not a sign of worship but one more way that he was mocking and belittling the Jews. They had a king but he would soon have killed. A similar sign was put on the cross where Jesus was killed. When Jesus stumbled and a man, Simon of Cyrene was forced out of the crowd to help carry the crossbar, Jesus tried to console His follower and said, *"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me but weep for yourselves and your children."* He saw the imminent Apocalypse when Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed and the Jews would undergo unbelievable carnage.

Jesus left Jerusalem for the last time and made his way to the hilly gardens outside the Gennath (Gardens) Gate where the rock-hewn tombs were all around the execution hill of Jerusalem. It was applied named the Place of the Skull, Golgotha.

After the death of Jesus, the sole source of verification as to what happened are the Gospel records, and they show a series of prophecies being fulfilled in Jerusalem by Jesus. He would be buried in the tomb "Of a rich man." The search for the body of Jesus led to the angels telling the searchers, *"He is not here. He has risen as He said."*

The story made up by the High Priests to hold down any worship of a resurrected Jesus, *"They paid off the soldiers guarding the tomb and ordered them to tell everyone that 'his disciples came by night and stole the body away while we slept.'"* Even the burial spot of the destroyed body of Judas, predicted in the Old Testament prophecy, remained a burial spot for foreigners to Jerusalem into the Middle Ages.

The Church soon started in Jerusalem during another Jewish Feast, the Feast of Pentecost which followed the Feast of Passover and the Week of Unleavened Bread by 50 days. It was also marked by a series of fulfilled prophecies from Joel, Isaiah, and the Psalms. It started in the Upper Room, the Cenacle on Mount Zion, and suddenly *"There came from heaven a rushing mighty wind. . ."* They not only preached in the native tongues of all that were present that day,

they also began to perform the same miracles that Jesus had performed and they did them in the name of Jesus. But those who had been enemies of Jesus in Jerusalem did not prosper. Pilate had attacked a Samaritan prophet and stirred both Judah and Samaria into revolt. The Governor of Syria came to restore order in Jerusalem. He fired both Caiaphas and Pilate. Caiaphas disappeared from the history of Jerusalem and Pilate went to Rome where he also disappeared from all history.

Jerusalem would see the birth of the Church, where in Jerusalem the Christians still observed all the prayer times of the Temple, the Sabbath, and even the Feast days of their heritage. We would probably call them Messianic Jews today. The Herod's had worn everyone out with their childishness and duplicity, but one last prince Herod Agrippa would still be involved as Jerusalem nears a second total destruction. He will be intertwined in the continual quarrel between the Jews and the Romans and his death will open the flood-gates of Roman retaliation on Jerusalem. A destruction that seems fatal and complete, except we still have a vibrant Jerusalem today.

## Lesson # 5: “Jerusalem God Rebuked”

This lesson looks at the City of Jerusalem after the death of Christ. This is the darkest time for Jerusalem in the history of the City and we will see that God foresaw this time and still did not change any of the titles for Jerusalem. God did not change any of the prophecies for the City nor their great involvement in the last days of the earth when Christ returns to the earth and especially in the Millennial Kingdom of Christ and His 1,000-year reign upon the earth.

### Apostles Persecuted by Roman Kings

The strange relationship between the family of the Herod’s and the Roman Emperors continued and for a while it saved Jerusalem from destruction. Herod Agrippa grew up in Rome and became best friends with one of the sons of the Emperor, Caligula. When Caligula became the Emperor of Rome through treachery and murder, he released Herod from prison and made him, King of Judea. Herod Agrippa celebrated Jerusalem as the Mother-City of all Jews, even those in Europe and Asia. He beautified, fortified and expanded the City of Jerusalem and added a Third Wall to enclose the new Bezetha suburb, the northern section that has since been excavated. Yet even Agrippa struggled to manage Jerusalem’s tensions: he appointed three successive high priests in two years and acted against Jewish Christians. This probably coincided with Claudius’s crackdown on the Jewish-Christians in Rome, he had Christians expelled from Rome because of the ‘disorders, at the instigation of Christus—Christ.’

Dr. Luke records this time in the life of the Church and wrote in Acts.

#### **Acts 12:1-3**

*“Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church, and had James beheaded, a disciple of Jesus and the brother of John. He also arrested Peter, whom he planned to execute after Passover”.*

Peter survived this attempted execution and Luke spells out how this miracle was accomplished by the Lord. The Jewish leaders suggested that the king simply released him, possibly as a gift to the crowds. This became the chief way that the Jewish leaders dealt with the growth and influence of the Christian Church. They merely made up an alternative story and passed it off as the truth. But the power that Agrippa had accumulated went to his head and he called a conference of local kings to come to his palace in Tiberias. When the Romans heard about this unapproved meeting, they dispersed all the kings and stopped the building of any more fortifications for Jerusalem. After this incident with the kings, Herod later was playing the role of a Greek god in gold threaded clothes at the Temple, when God struck him with an attack on his digestive system and he fell from the platform he had erected and was consumed by intestinal worms. **Acts 12:19-23** Agrippa, had the charisma and sensitivity to conciliate Jewish moderates, Jewish fanatics, and Romans: so, his death seemed to eliminate the only one who might have saved Jerusalem at this point. We know that Jesus had already said that the City and

the Temple would be destroyed while He was still here on earth. The last barrier to that destruction had been removed

When Herod died, the Roman Emperor Claudius wanted to appoint his son, Agrippa II to the throne, but because he was only 17 and Jerusalem was such a tinderbox, his advisors talked him out of this move. He put Agrippa's brother, Charles over Judea and allowed Charles to appoint a high priest and manage the Temple. For the next twenty-five years, Jerusalem was run by this partnership between Roman procurators and the Herodian family of kings. But they could not stop the turbulence caused by a series of prophetic charlatans, the ethnic conflicts between Jews, Greeks and the Samaritans, and the ever-widening gap between the rich, pro-Roman businesspeople, often called Sadducees, and the poorer, but very religious Jews.

### Rome Continues Power Over Jews & Christians in Jerusalem

This affected the new young Church in Jerusalem as well. The Jewish Christians, now led by James the brother of Jesus along with the Apostles survived in Jerusalem, but no longer met in the Temple where the original Church had worshipped. The Romans kept their power by using force and taxation to affirm their power over all of Judea and Jerusalem. The scene unfolding in Rome would have a great effect on Jerusalem. Young King Herod Agrippa II had become a friend of not only Claudius but also his wife Agrippina and she took the side of the Jews in ethnic skirmishes between the Samaritans and the Jews. He became an even closer friend with their son, Nero. After his dad was poisoned, Nero assumed the Roman throne and immediately gave Agrippa II a larger kingdom in the Middle East. It included enlarged parts of Syria, Lebanon and Galilee. In appreciation, Agrippa renamed the coastal City of Caesarea, Philippi, the capital and diminished the power and influence of Jerusalem. Because of this great change in power and relationships, the Jews could no longer appeal to Rome for help and intercession. Agrippa II had sisters who provoked scandal in many sections of the country, diminishing his credibility, and the Jews were considered rich and easy targets. The City of Jerusalem became a seedbed of corruption when Jewish targets were murdered and robbed in the streets on their way to give offerings during the Feast Days.

Amid all the chaos in Jerusalem, other followers of Jesus under the leadership of the Apostle Paul began to bring large numbers of Gentiles into the Church. This raised questions and concerns between the Jewish-Christians in Jerusalem and the Gentile followers in the Roman world. The Apostles and James, the brother of Jesus, called a large conference in Jerusalem **Acts 15** and this would be a key time in launching Christianity into a wider and stronger world faith. The group agreed to the principles of how the Christian faith was to spread throughout the Gentile world and decided they would not require that a person become a Jew first, but conversion would be based on everyone accepting Jesus as their Savior and Lord and being added to the body of Christ. This allowed the Church to be less tied to Jerusalem and the Temple and to spread wherever people would believe in Jesus and accept Him as their Savior.

Things continued to deteriorate in Jerusalem between the Christian Church and the Jewish leaders. Paul was seized in the Temple when he went there to purify himself and make an offering and only the intervention of the Roman soldiers kept him from being killed. The Romans allowed him to be tried before the religious governing body of the Jews, the Sanhedrin and once again the Romans had to intercede to keep them from killing Paul. The centurion finally calmed the rioting Jews in Jerusalem by sending Paul to Caesarea, the Roman capital, to be tried there. **Acts 21-26**

But the Jewish leaders felt empowered to attack the Church and in AD 62, the high priest Ananus, son of Annas who had tried Jesus, arrested James, the brother of Jesus, the leader of the Jerusalem Christian Church, tried him before the Sanhedrin, and had him tossed off the wall of the Temple, where afterward he was stoned and killed. Because most of the Jerusalem Jews were respectful of James, they did not join in the purge of the Christians and the Church continued. Ananus was immediately fired by Agrippa II. Tradition tells us that Simon, another half-brother of Jesus, became the leader of the Jerusalem Church. Paul languished in the prison in Caesarea awaiting his trial.

Many things in the City of Jerusalem contributed to the deteriorating relationship with Rome. Some conditions seemed fine, a Jewish King, Agrippa II was making decisions for Jerusalem and the people seemed at peace with one another. But the City was filled with high taxation, a very bad economy mostly caused by the ineptness of Nero's leadership, and robbery and stealing had become commonplace on the streets of Jerusalem with almost no prosecution. One final factor that affected everything that would soon happen, is many of the Jerusalem Jews felt they could overthrow the Roman government, and this constant threat of rebellion was obvious.

In 64 AD, Rome caught on fire and when the blame had been passed around, the Emperor Nero chose the fast-growing group called 'the Christians' to blame. He had already been persecuting the Christians but now with a vengeance he buried them alive, had them torn to pieces by wild animals, had them burnt alive, and crucified them in various ways on crosses. History tells us that these killings included Paul being beheaded by Nero and Peter being crucified upside down. Nero was in a serious downslide and it only got worse in Rome and the territories of Rome.

It also meant that he did not have a handle on what was happening in the areas controlled by Rome. The procurator of Judea, Gessius Florus, defending a group of Syrians who had sacrificed a roster outside a synagogue, and he demanded a tax of 17 talents from the Temple. A group of young Jewish boys collected pennies and threw them at him and his troops as he entered the City to collect the 17 talents. He attacked the people and demanded that they bring the boys forward for him to discipline (kill), but they refused. His response was to send his troops door to door killing everyone they could.

Agrippa II arrived back in town from Egypt at this time and tried to reconcile the groups. He had the Jewish leaders march to the fort above the Temple to see Florus and offer peace. When



they got to the area where Florus was, Agrippa told them they had to follow Florus until a new prelate was appointed. They rebelled and rioted. When the scuffle ended, the priests did have some control but the start of the end was obvious.

It finalized when civil war erupted in Jerusalem and Jew fought Jew for years. That ended when a strong group of Jewish fighters overtook the Roman garrison of just 600 men and declared the country free and independent. This led to an attack by the Syrian Governor and the result was a battle that the Jews won where they killed 5,000 Roman soldiers as they retreated. The dye was cast, Roman pride had to be avenged. Nero was in Greece to perform his original songs and to compete in the Olympic Games in chariot racing, which he won.

So, Nero chose Vespasian to lead the punishment of Jerusalem and Vespasian asked his son Titus of Alexandria to gather more forces. They approached Jerusalem to seek revenge for the glory of Rome. While they were approaching the City of Jerusalem, it had become a three-way civil war among those who sought to control the City. This was happening as the Romans had already advanced to Jericho and conquered it. Nero died and Vespasian went to Rome to try and empower his way into being the next Roman Emperor. He left behind his son Titus who was leading an army of 60,000 soldiers against Jerusalem knowing that his future career would be shaped by his war against Jerusalem.

Titus destroyed the City in a few weeks, made bloody spectacles of the defeated City and took the captured Jewish leaders to Rome for one of the most lavish parades every in Rome. It was to honor him and his father Vespasian. The parade was considered the defeat of Jerusalem, the floats were stacked high with booty and riches from the City that included the contents of the Holy of Holies: the golden table, the candelabra and the Law of the Jews. Josephus, the Jewish historian wrote of the day: “There died Jerusalem, neither its antiquity, nor its deep wealth, nor the people spread over the whole habitable world, nor the great glory of its religious rites, were sufficient to prevent its ruin.” This victory was celebrated by the erection of the Arch of Titus which still stands in Rome between the colosseum and the Forum. The reliefs on the Arch show the looting and bounty taken from Jerusalem and from the Temple.

Things did not get better for the Jews or for Jerusalem. The Jews continued to be a rebellious thorn to the Romans and caused their great ire to be raised again and again. Finally, Hadrian in 130 AD decided to abolish the City, even down to its very name. He ordered a new City to be built on the site of the old one, to be named Aelia Capitolina, after his own family and Jupiter, Capitolinus, the god most associated with the Roman Empire. He banned circumcision as a crime punishable by death, and then Hadrian went on to Rome to consolidate his power.

One last rebellion was in the works. It was led by Simon bar Kochba. He claimed to be the Messiah and took a passage from **Numbers** which really spoke about one of the Judges and claimed it was about him,

**Numbers 24:17-19**

*“There shall come forth a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel and shall smite Moab.”*

Hadrian returned and literally destroyed the cities of Judah, re-plowed the furrow around Jerusalem sown with salt, and was one of several Roman leaders that put their statue on the Temple Mount to, in their thoughts, never allow the Temple to be rebuilt. He wiped Judah off the map and renamed the area, Palestina, after the Jew's ancient enemies, the Philistines. The City of Aelia Capitolina was about 10,000 people, unwallled and not Jewish.

By 200 AD, the Romans allowed the Jews to pray opposite of the ruined Temple on the Mount of Olives and in the Kidron Valley, already filled with large Jewish graves and markers. The Jews believed that the *“shekinah glory”* of God resided in this area. History tells us that the Romans allowed one small pious Jewish community to live in Jerusalem and pray in the one synagogue left in the town, located on Mt. Zion. But they would not lift the law of Hadrian that said the City could not be inhabited by Jews ever again. Yet the Jews longed for Jerusalem to be rebuilt as the City of God. Three times every day they would pray. *“May it be your will that the Temple be rebuilt soon in our days.”* Even Jews who lived far away wanted to be buried close to the Temple, so that they would be the first to rise again on Judgement Day. This was the birth of the huge Jewish cemetery on the side of the Mount of Olives facing the City, that is still growing larger every year.

**Prophecies of Jesus About the City of Jerusalem**

The City of Jerusalem was no more and as long as the Romans ruled the world, it would not be permitted to be a home for Jews, the Temple could not be rebuilt, and the towns of Judah would be filled with other ethnic groups than the Jews. Jesus had prophesied many things about the City of Jerusalem and many had come true:

**Matthew 24:2**

*“Do you see all these things,” he asked, “Truly I tell you, that not one single stone will be left on another, everyone will be thrown down.”*

**Matthew 26:31-32**

*“This very night, you will all fall away on account of me, as it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”*

Jesus had prophesied about his death, the Passover, the events of Passion Week, his arrest, his false trials, his scouring, his death, and his rising from the dead.

Two great prophecies of Jesus seem to spell out what would happen to Jerusalem for the next two millennia.

*Author: Dr. Thomas Haney*

***Luke 21:20-24***

*“When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the City get out, and let those in the country not enter the City. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers. There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”*

This great prophecy of Jesus has come true and will continue to come true until the time of the Gentiles has been fulfilled in the City and God again directs the City of Jerusalem to center around the Jews. We are living at this time, and are very close to the end of the Gentile trampling on the City.

The second prophecy of Jesus that looked at the immediate and long-distance fortune of Jerusalem and Judea was:

***Matthew 24:22, 29-31***

*22 "If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. ... 29 "Immediately after the distress of those days " 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.' 30 "Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. 31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.*

Jesus was aware of what would happen to Jerusalem and Judea after He left this earth the first time. He taught, He warned, He prophesied, and He explained so that all who would listen could be a part of the elect and be with Him on the victorious side.

## Lesson # 6: “Jerusalem - In Flux”

This Lesson continues to look historically at Jerusalem, even though at the start of our study historically, it is no longer a City. Emperor Hadrian has renamed it Aelia Capitolina and made it a Greek City that combines the Roman, Greek and Egyptian cultures in architecture and structure. There is no Judea or Israel anymore. Israel has been dispersed for centuries and Judea has been renamed Palestina and it is forbidden for Jews to live in Palestina. The Old Testament glory seems totally gone and the New Testament prophecies about Jerusalem in the end times, in the Apocalypse, and becoming the eternal City that contains heaven, seem like a pipedream. But God is not finished with Jerusalem yet.

Hadrian had destroyed over 75 Jewish settlements or towns and was so hated that in Jewish literature his name was never written without this addition: *‘May his bones rot in hell.’* His successor, Antoninus Pius, relaxed the persecution of the Jews a little and again permitted circumcision. But he also placed his statue beside the one of Hadrian on the Temple Mount, to emphasize that the Temple would not be rebuilt. Civil War broke out in Rome and the result was the Jews sided with the Roman Emperor who won the war, Septimus Severus. He gave two plots of land back to the Jews in 193 AD, an area in Golan and a second area in Lydda, near Jerusalem. He also allowed them to reuse their calendar and to judge in religious cases in their new areas. Archeologists have shown in their diggings that Christians were going to Aelia Capitolina and secretly praying beneath the Temple of Jupiter, because it was built on the stone where Jesus was crucified. The Christians focused on a heavenly Jerusalem and considered the town of Aelia just an obscure place where Jesus had been Crucified and Resurrected. Diocletian took over Roman leadership of the area and decided the Christians were the ones who were causing trouble for the Romans and eased even more of the restrictions on the Jews.

But, the history of Jerusalem was all about to change. The Roman Empire was divided between two rulers and the ruler over the East and Jerusalem was Galerius and he continued to persecute Christians and was more lenient on the Jews. The West leader was Constantius Chlorus, who soon died but was loved enough that the West made his son Constantine, their leader. Constantine, like King David would change the history of the world and the fate of Jerusalem with a single decision.

### Constantine Presses to Have Christianity as The Religion of The Empire

Constantine was fighting to capture Rome. The night before the big battle, he had a vision. He saw *‘in the sky the sign of a cross of light’* superimposed on the sun with the slogan: *‘By this sign you will conquer!’* So, he emblazoned the shields of his soldiers with the Chi-Rho symbol, the first two letters of ‘Christ’ in the Greek. He won the battle and believed he owed his power to the Christians ‘Supreme God’. Constantine pressed to have Christianity as the religion of the empire and as he conquered more territory he embraced more Christian ideas. He loved the Church structure of elders and deacons and saw that as parallel to the organization of the

Roman government and really wanted to merge the two: a united Roman Empire with a united faith Christianity.

In 323 Constantine, called for a conference to solve the argument: Was Jesus more human than divine, or more divine than human? While at this conference, the Bishop of Aelia Capitolina (once Jerusalem) brought the fate of his small and neglected town to Constantine's attention. Constantine decided to restore the City and create what Eusebius called "*The New Jerusalem built over the one so famous of old.*" Constantine commissioned a church that befitted Jerusalem as the cradle of the Good News. With some family skull doggerly, the mother of Constantine, Helena won the opportunity to go to Jerusalem and carte blanche embellish Christ's City.

She was very successful as an archeologist. She tore down the Roman Temple, tore up the floor and found three crosses, the actual nails and a sign that read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of Jews.'" As she saved some and shared some with others, this started the desire of Christianity to collect holy relics, that usually originated in Jerusalem. She took the material from the levelled pagan shrines and 'ordered the filth thrown in its place,' the Temple Mount area to show the failure of the 'Jewish God.' She did not connect in any way the worship of the Jews with the worship of Jesus Christ, Son of God and a Jew. Aelia had become a bustling Christian Temple City but the statues of the Roman Emperors was still on the Temple Mount and the Jewish heritage was held in contempt.

### **Julian Restores Jerusalem to the Jews**

On July 19, 362, the new Emperor, Constantine's nephew Julian, who was in Antioch on his way to invade Persia, asked a Jewish delegation, "Why do you not sacrifice?" "We aren't allowed," replied the Jews. 'Restore us to the City, rebuild the Temple and the Altar.' 'I shall endeavor with the utmost zeal, replied Julian, 'to set up the Temple of the Most High God.' The emperor's astonishing reply was greeted with such Jewish enthusiasm that it was as if the days of their kingdom had already arrived.'

He reversed the Hadrianic and Constantinian persecution of the Jews, restored Jerusalem to them, returned their property, revoked the anti-Jewish taxes and granted power of taxation and the title praetorian prefect to their patriarch Hillel. Jews poured into Jerusalem from all over the Roman and Persian worlds to celebrate this miracle. His boast to rebuild the Jewish Temple was a nullification of the Christian claim to have inherited the true Israel, a reversal in their minds of the fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel and Jesus Christ that the Temple would be destroyed and fall. The people began to collect materials for the Temple, dirt was carried in and donations paid for the wood and stones stored to build it. While Julian was fighting in Persia, his appointee to build the Temple put a halt to construction and in May of 363 AD an earthquake hit Jerusalem and the Temple materials were ignited and all burnt. Meanwhile, Julian was killed in a battle in Persia and his successor, the commander of his guard, restored Christianity as the state religion, reversed Julian's acts and again banned the

Jews from Jerusalem. This was finalized when Theodosius I made Christianity the empire's official religion and started to enforce it.

It was a strange time in Jerusalem. Many wealthy women came and began to take over the shrine areas to beautify and sanctify them. This promoted the action in town, the collection of spiritual relics, and the continuation of feasts and special days to celebrate the different parts of the life of Jesus. This contrasted with the one Jewish observance for the year, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Ab, the Jews collected on the Temple Mount to commemorate the destruction of the Temple. The tragedy of Jew's plight often redoubled their love for Jerusalem. The town was now much more Christian than Jewish in every way except history and heritage.

Theodosius II sent his wife Eudocia; to be the empress of Jerusalem and she protected the Jews against the attacks by the Christians. The Jews begged for access to the Temple Mount and Eudocia gave them permission to visit the Temple Mount for their chief festivals. The Jews took this as a sign from God they would rebuild the City and sent messages to all Jews that they should 'hasten to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles for our kingdom will be established.' This provoked turbulence and war between the monastic monks who felt all Jewish shrines should not be replaced and those who were championing the Jews.

The fate of Jerusalem after Eudocia was more persecution of the Jews and more Churches built in Jerusalem. In the short period of 25 five years, Jerusalem was ruled by Christians, then Zoroastrians, then Jews and finally Moslems. The result was the chasing out of the Christians by death and deportation and 600 years after the Temple had been destroyed, the Royal Boar, the leader of Persia, gave Jerusalem back to the Jews and restored the name to Jerusalem. When the Jewish army did not take the City of Tyre as asked by the Royal Boar, he took the City back and gave it to the Christians.

Three times in this period of 600 years the Jews had grasped moments of free prayer among the rock heaps of the Temple—under Kochba, Julian, and Khustau—but Jews would not control the Temple Mount again for 1,300 years. One last Christian leader, Heraclius from Byzantine captured the area and took a sacred shrine to the restored Church of the Holy Sepulcher and then returned to his throne in Byzantine.

### **Jerusalem Revolves Around the Arab Conquest**

The next millennium in the life of Jerusalem mostly revolves around the Arab conquest of the City and the wars to liberate it from the Arabs. The life of Muhammad had one strong connection to Jerusalem. One night, his followers believe that, as he slept beside his wife Kaaba, Muhammad had a vision. The Archangel Gabriel awoke him and together they embarked on a Night Journey mounted on Buraq, a winged steed with a human face, to the unnamed 'Furthest Sanctuary.' There Muhammed met his fathers, Adam and Abraham, and his brothers, Moses, Joseph, and Jesus, before ascending by a ladder to heaven. Unlike Jesus, he just called himself the Messenger or Apostle of God, claiming no miraculous powers. Indeed, this journey, the Isra—Night Journey—and the Miraj—Ascension—were his only miraculous

exploits. Jerusalem and the Temple are never actually mentioned in the Koran, but Muslims came to believe that the Furthest Sanctuary was the Temple Mount.

The Muslim leaders wanted to have Jerusalem under their control. They knew from the writings of the Jewish-Christian prophets that the last judgment would take place in Jerusalem. They believed the time for the Last Judgement was now and they needed to have Jerusalem to have control of what was to happen. They focused on a phrase from the Koran, "The Hour has drawn nigh." Giving them the City was sealed with a covenant between Omar the Just and the Monophysite Christians and after signing the agreement, Omar set out for Jerusalem to claim it.

The City was still overwhelming Christian, when the Muslims took control and the Muslims shared the shrines of the Churches and the Temple Mount with the Jews and Christians for many years. Omar moved in many Arab families that enjoyed Jerusalem and/or were interested to be by the Gate Beautiful to be the first to witness the Day of Judgement. He also encouraged Jews to return to the City.

During the next fifty years of Muslim rule, the kingdom of the Arabs was very precarious with Mecca, Iraq, and Persia controlled by rebels, but it was during this time that an Arab Sultan, Abd al-Malik built the Islamic jewel as the crown of Jerusalem. He built the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. He took 7 years-worth of Egyptian revenues to build the Dome of the Rock. The plan was simple: a dome, 65 feet in diameter supported by a drum, all resting on octagonal walls. The beauty, power and simplicity are equaled by its mystery. We do not know exactly why Abd al Malik built it, he never said. It is not actually a mosque but a shrine. The Rock is considered as the site of Adam's paradise, Abraham's altar, and the place where David and Solomon planned their Temple later visited by Muhammad on his Night Journey. It was finished in 691-692 AD. It used the area the Christians had avoided building on because they considered it inappropriate and not any special memories of Jesus, only mistreatment of Him.

Jerusalem now had a Muslim shrine in the dome but not an imperial mosque, so Abd al-Malik and his son Walid, who followed him, built the Further Mosque, al-Aqsa. It was the Jerusalem Mosque for ordinary Friday prayers, at the southern boundary of the Temple Mount. The Muslims like the Jews and Herod felt the Temple Mount was the centerpiece of Jerusalem just like Herod had. For the first time since 70 AD they built a new Great Bridge across the valley for pilgrims to enter the Temple Mount from the west, over what is today called the Gate of the Chain. They also built the domed Double Gates for entry into the South but like the Golden Gate, they are blocked in today. The Muslims have an elaborate end of times doctrine and all of it takes place in or around Jerusalem. There became a clear break between any Christian and Muslim sharing, but Jerusalem remained overwhelmingly Christian. Within 50 years, the Muslim leaders banned the Jews from praying on the Temple Mount and the Jews began to pray around the four walls of the Temple Mount and in a small cave at Warren's Gate that went almost directly under the Temple Mount near the Holy of Holies.

Islam then took a turn towards a much more conservative and radical faith. This affected Jerusalem greatly. A new leader, Hakim, felt all Muslim controlled lands should reflect only the most conservative of all Muslim teaching. This meant that no cooperative work occurred anymore between Christians and Muslims or between Jews and Muslims. This led to the expulsion of Christians and Jews and the town became a Muslim destination. This was true because Mecca, Persian, and Babylon were all controlled by rival groups. Muslim leaders begin to flock to Jerusalem and it was considered one of the three great Muslim destinations as a shrine. This changed over the next 200 years when Mecca became the center of the Muslim faith and Jerusalem slipped into a great state of decline and mediocrity.

The Crusades would change this. In Europe, the idea of reclaiming the City of Jerusalem and making it a Christian City once again became extremely popular. It was led by kings and knights, given papal blessings, and funded by the wealthy and poor Christian all over the continent. This period from 1100 to 1500 BC saw the City controlled by Romans, also called Byzantines, with a series of Kings and Queens ruling over Jerusalem; Turks both those who followed Constantinople and Muslim Turks, Egyptian Muslims, and others. It would change complexion after each change of control but primarily though this time it remained under Arab Muslim or Turk Muslim control. It always had a Jewish remnant but during the greater times of Muslim persecution it had very few Christians who stayed in the City. The Christians would come for the pilgrimages on Holy Days often provoking fighting and killing in the City. But Jerusalem was primarily a Muslim controlled City and would stay that way until The Turkish Ottoman Empire and the Orthodox Church would battle the Muslims for control of Jerusalem.

### **What About the Arabs?**

This leads to one of the burning issues today as the world debates and seeks to decide who does Jerusalem really belong to. It shapes so much of the diplomatic activity in the Middle East. The question is: "What about the Arabs?" Appropriate love for Israel and the Jewish people does not negate love for the Arab people, many of whom are also the descendants of Abraham through his other sons and grandsons. Jacob received the covenant blessings, as did his son Israel (Jacob) but Ishmael, Esau, and the sons of Keturah were also Abrahams heirs. They too must be considered when we hear the promises that God made to Abraham.

#### **Genesis 12:2-3**

*I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse, and all peoples on the earth will be blessed through you."*

Isaiah understood prophetically that at a future time in history the Arab nations would be a blessing, to the whole earth, See **Isaiah 19:19-25**

Why such hostility today? Abraham's wife Sarah had the idea that she should be able to 'build a family' by giving her hand maid Hagar to Abraham **Genesis 16:2**. As soon as Hagar found that she was pregnant, however, Hagar began to 'despise her mistress' **Genesis 16:4**. Then, when



Sarah mistreated her, she fled and the angel of the Lord found Hagar and gave her this prophetic word about her future descendants. Through her son Ishmael.

**Genesis 16:10-12**

*10 The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count." 11 The angel of the LORD also said to her: "You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery. 12 He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers." "*

There could hardly be a more accurate description of the history of the Middle East.

Yet Ishmael too, was to receive a blessing for he along with Abraham, received in his flesh the mark of the covenant. Abraham was circumcised at the age of 99 and Ishmael, at 13. God promised Abraham that He would establish an everlasting covenant though his yet to be born son Isaac, Sarah's firstborn; but He assured Abraham that Ishmael and his descendants would also be blessed.

**Genesis 17:20**

*"As for Ishmael, I have heard you. I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers and I will make him into a great nation."*

Yes, in the midst of all the turmoil in the Middle East there is a chosen destiny for the Arab nations and a brotherhood between Arabs and Jews to be reclaimed. Ishmael and Isaac were together at the death of their father and Ishmaelites married off-spring of David and served in the court of King David.

Are their specific prophetic promises made to the Arabs, the Sons of Ishmael? Yes, the sons of Ishmael and Israel's neighbors figure significantly into God's end time plans. Isaiah describes a time yet in the future when Egypt and Assyria, along with Israel, will be a blessing on the earth. What was Assyria in Isaiah's day, an area that includes parts of Turkey, Iraq and Syria today. By substituting the names of these present-day countries, we come up with a remarkable Scripture as it relates to today's Arab world.

**Isaiah 19:19-25**

*19 In that day (an expression often used to denote the time of the end) there will be an altar to the LORD in the heart of Egypt, and a monument to the LORD at its border. 20 It will be a sign and witness to the LORD Almighty in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to the LORD because of their oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and he will rescue them. 21 So the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and in that day, they will acknowledge the LORD. They will worship with sacrifices and grain offerings; they will make vows to the LORD and keep them. 22 The LORD will strike Egypt with a plague; he will strike them and heal them. They will turn to the LORD, and he will respond to their pleas and heal them. 23 In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and*

*Assyrians will worship together. 24 In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria (Turkey, Iraq, and Syria), a blessing on the earth. 25 The LORD Almighty will bless them, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance."*

## Lesson # 7: “Jerusalem, Back to Life”

After a glorious start, the City of Jerusalem continued a steady decline until it disappeared in history and the Romans renamed it. The end of a 1,000-year control of Jerusalem by the Muslims is about over and the City will soon be under a 400-year control by the Ottoman Empire, 1500-1900 AD. This time will take Jerusalem from a tool of various empires and emperors who wanted to shape the City with their design and move it towards the City that we would recognize today.

### Ottoman Empire Takes Control of Jerusalem

This transformation was led by Suleiman, a man called “The Second Solomon” and his wife Roxelana. He arrived on August 24, 1516, to take control of Jerusalem. He was given the keys of al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock at which he prostrated himself and exclaimed, “I am the possessor of the first qibla.” (The term for the furthest mosque.) He focused on the traditional tolerance for the Christians and Jews and prayed on the Temple Mount. Then he left to conquer new worlds. It was said that Suleiman dreamed he was visited by the Prophet Muhammed who told him that ‘to repulse the Infidels’ he must ‘embellish the Sanctuary (Temple Mount) and rebuild Jerusalem’. He did not need any prompting. He was only too aware of himself as the Islamic emperor and as his Slavic wife Roxelana would repeatedly hail him, ‘the Solomon of his age.’ Suleiman having inherited Jerusalem and Mecca believed that Islamic prestige demanded that he beautify the sanctuaries of Islam: with everything about him done on a grand scale. His achievements in Jerusalem were so successful that the Old City of Jerusalem today belongs more to him than anyone else: the walls look ancient and to many people they define the City as much as the Dome. He beautified both the walls and the Dome and had his contemporary design and build most of the gates of the City, both to secure the City and to add to his own prestige. He built a mosque, an entrance and a tower to the Citadel area defined by Herod, an aqueduct to bring water into the City and nine fountains from which to drink the water, including three on the Temple Mount. He also replaced the worn mosaics on the Dome of the Rock, with glazed tiles decorated with lilies and lotus in turquoise, cobalt, white and yellow, just like they are today. The population almost tripled to 15,000 and the number of Jews doubled to 2,000, almost all returning exiles from the West. This was the first of many Jewish movements back to Judea and Jerusalem from this time until now.

At the same time, something was happening in Europe that would affect Jerusalem as well. King Ferdinand of Aragon of Sicily and his wife Queen Isabella of Castile had conquered Granada, the last Islamic principality of mainland Europe and made two decisions that would have world-historical consequences. First, they summoned a white-haired sailor and dreamer named Cristobal Colon. Who wanted to take a voyage over the Atlantic to reach India and China and then liberate Jerusalem coming back from the east: and from the start he intended to link the two. All the goods and gold that he found, he promised would go to the conquest of Jerusalem. They backed the expedition of this young sailor, commonly known as Christopher Columbus,

Admiral of the Ocean Sea. He discovered the West Indies and on his third voyage discovered South America but probably never realized he had discovered the new world.

Ferdinand and Isabella were hard at work on another concern. Many of the Jews in Spain had been coerced into conversion or they would have been killed in the Spanish Inquisition. Ferdinand decided the best plan was to allow the Jews to express genuine conversion to the Roman Catholic Church, but between 75,000 and 150,000 choose expulsion over conversion and they were banished from Spain, Naples, Sicily and other areas under the control of Spain. For seven-centuries Spain had been the home of a blossoming Arab-Jewish culture, and the center of the Jewish Diaspora (Dispersion). The Jews fled East to more receptive areas: Holland, Poland, Lithuania, and especially the Ottoman empire where they were welcomed by Suleiman and the streets of Istanbul, Salonica, and Jerusalem would ring with the lyrical tones of these new immigrants speaking Ladino. Suleiman gave his doctor's friend, Joseph Nasi, called the Great Jew, the control of Tiberias in Galilee to build a special City for Yahweh. He rebuilt the town, settled it with expelled Italian Jews, planted mulberry trees to start a silk industry and became the first Jew to settle Jews in the Holy Land. He chose Tiberias and not Jerusalem because Suleiman still intended to beautify Jerusalem.

As much as Suleiman wanted to beautify Jerusalem; he wanted to do so by enforcing his concept of Muslim teaching being superior to Christian or Jewish teaching. He banned the Jews from any religious journey on the Temple Mount and created a nine-foot space at the ha-Kotel or Wall, that outsiders called the Western or Wailing Wall with its golden ashlar stones. This became the symbol of Jerusalem and the focus of holiness. He reduced the Christian influence in Jerusalem by expelling the Franciscans from caring for David's Tomb and replaced the building there with an Islamic shrine of Nabi Daoud to guard the Prophet David, and he appointed the family of Sufi Sheikhs called the Dajanis as guardians of the tomb, a position they held until 1948. This shrine was considered holy to all three faiths. One other thing that Suleiman did was make concessions to the power of the Europeans and he allowed the Franciscans the right to oversee all Christian shrines in Jerusalem. This only intensified the disagreements between the Orthodox and Catholic faiths. But something else was happening and that was a reformation all over Europe and the one thing that all reformers had in common was their great devotion to the Bible and their high view of the Bible which intensified the significance of Jerusalem.

The Jews were now more numerous in Jerusalem than any time since the first exile, 400 BC; but they did not have much of a voice. They built three synagogues to take care of the area Suleiman had designated the "Jewish Quarter" of the City.

It was Easter of 1610 that the first Anglo-American came to Jerusalem to worship, a young Anglican named George Sandys. He studied all the rituals that had developed around the Easter season in Jerusalem and called for a return to the Bible. His influence elevated the import of Jerusalem to the Christian world, especially the British Isles. However, the greatest adherents of exalting Judaism and tying the end-times with Israel and Jerusalem were the Puritans. They

were truly the purist Zionists of that age. They desired to help the Jews reach a point of independence that would allow the Messiah to come and finalize His plans here on the earth through the nation of Israel.

In the East the Ottoman Empire was disintegrating and they were no longer able to hold power over the City of Jerusalem. It lapsed into a period of chaos and self-rule in the 1700's and out of that chaos emerged one family, the Ghudayyas who were unknown and therefore changed their name to the better known, Husseini's and they were one of the ruling families right up to the twenty-first century. The City did not have adequate defenses so it was very vulnerable to raids, rioting citizens of the City, and venal governors who marched into town yearly with a band of soldiers to take heavy taxation of the population. The City regressed to 8,000 people and the Jews without any European backing, suffered bitterly. They were unable to get good enough jobs to pay the exorbitant taxes and were forbidden to repair their homes, many fled.

The Christians were very competitive and mostly lived at the shrines. They were locked in at night because of the problems in the City and food was given to them through pass-holes in the doors. Most had been assigned there by their religious group and were not allowed to leave. It was a very negative time for Jerusalem. Two adventurers: Sir Sidney Smith and Napoleon had shown that adventure could be sold in books and stories of what they had done in the Holy City of Jerusalem and the Holy Land of Judea; but neither one changed much of anything in Jerusalem and both fled the country after disastrous campaigns. Their books told of valiant and noble deeds they had done, not true. It was 1804 and Palestine was in a mess and Jerusalem was a troubled City.

As the real Jerusalem decayed, the imaginary Jerusalem ignited Western ideas, encouraged by Napoleon's nasty little war in the area, the decline of the Ottomans and the book that Chateaubriand wrote when he got home. His "Itinerary from Paris to Jerusalem", set the tone of the European attitude to the Oriental life that they felt needed to change: the cruel but inept Turks, the wailing Jews, and primitive but ferocious Arabs, who tended to congregate in picturesque biblical poses. It ignited a fire of interest in Europe to rescue Jerusalem.

The interest moved two prominent women of England to come to Jerusalem: Hester Stanhope, who stayed to do benevolent work and Caroline of Brunswick, dubbed the Queen of Jerusalem, who only stayed until Wellington defeated Napoleon, then she returned to Europe. Jerusalem continued to sink into nothingness when a wealthy Jewish couple, Moses and Judith Montefiore came to assist in the remaking of Jerusalem. They helped the City some but withdrew when the living conditions became very contentious and they wanted to raise money to help renew the City.

It was a time of transition, the Albanian ruler, Ibrahim tried to get Christian help to prop up an Orthodox government for the City; the Ottomans were losing power but still in control; and Great Britain was getting internal pressure to become more involved with the City of Jerusalem so they sent the first British vice-counsel, William Turner Young to represent London's new

power and to convert the Jews to accelerate the Second Coming of Jesus. He was joined by an evangelist, Shaftesbury and Moses Montefiore and his wife returned with the money they had raised to help Jerusalem. They all three believed in the divine providence that God had placed on Britain and the Bible teaching that the Jews would return to Zion.

They were joined by an American, Warder Cresson, who was the US consul-general to Syria and Jerusalem. All four of these people expected the Second Coming of Jesus at any time and the American, Warder Cresson had set 1847 as the date. They were further joined by a growing number of American evangelists who came to prepare for the End Days. The City of Jerusalem, Herman Melville said, was overrun by the 'contagion' of American Christian millenarianism. Jerusalem was essential for the American and English evangelical vision of the Second Coming; but the Russian emperor's aggressive ambitions were about to place Jerusalem at the center of the world's past and future history." It would ignite another war and this a European War.

It started with a Good Friday Service in April 1846. The Orthodox and Catholic Good Friday fell on the same day, with both sides rushing to start their service first. In the melee that broke out as the two groups argued over who would go first, 40 workers from the two groups inside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher were killed. The news sounded around the world and especially in Paris and St. Petersburg. The majority of pilgrims that came to Easter and Christmas services in the Holy Land were Russian Orthodox and that was significant.

As the events developed, Nicolaus the Russian leader invaded the Ottoman territories on the Danube--today's Romania and advanced toward Istanbul. This Crimean War was fought because Nicolaus felt Britain and even France would support him to free Istanbul and later Jerusalem. The British and French saw the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of Russia as a great problem, and they declared war on Russia while the fighting was all going on in Crimea. Jerusalem was once again in the middle of the world of what was happening and what both sides of the war wanted was to control Jerusalem.

Russia was soundly defeated in this war; the Ottoman Empire was victorious but the Ottoman's had needed the Christian soldiers to win the battle and they had made many concessions to them; the greatest that involved Jerusalem was that all ethnic minorities would have equal access and equal treatment in all the areas controlled by the Ottoman Empire. Moses Montefiore, the Jewish man of means returned and began to make Jerusalem better. He even devised a plan where Palestine and Judea would be purchased by the wealthier Jews and at one time the Rothchild's thought about buying a large part of the land to set aside for the Jewish Empire. Montefiore ran out of money and youth and said he would leave the building of the Jewish Empire to the Almighty one.

### **God Begins to Rebuild Jerusalem and Return the Jews**

Build the City is exactly what God did. First and foremost, the Russians began to implement programs to remove the Jews from Russia. They felt they needed to remove the six million Jews of Russia for the safety of the Russians and the exodus started. By 1890 there were 40,000

people in Jerusalem and 25,000 were Russian Jews. In 1892 the Sultan banned Jewish immigration and in 1889 decreed that Jews were not allowed to stay in Palestine more than three months, measures scarcely enforced. The Arab Families, led by Yusuf Khalidi, petitioned Istanbul against Jewish immigration, but the Jews kept coming

Ever since the writers of the Bible wrote their prophecy about Jerusalem, and ever since that biography of the City had become the universal story, her fate had been decided in faraway places, in Babylon, Susa, Rome, Mecca, Istanbul, London, and St. Petersburg. In 1896, an Austrian journalist published the book that would define twentieth-century Jerusalem: "The Jewish State." It became the predictor of all that was happening and all that would happen. Zionism was alive and well and it would grow into a large international movement that would speed up the return of Jews to the lands of Israel and Judea. Jerusalem would be reshaped every year just by the ever-increasing number of immigrants.

### **Did God Replace Israel with the Church?**

As we come to the part of the history of Jerusalem where the Jews and Israelites return, we are left with a great question about the prophecies about Jerusalem. Many denominations in the Christian Church felt that God had replaced Israel with the Church. They felt this was true, because the Jews did not accept Jesus the first time He came. They have taught that any time any reference is made to the Jews or Jerusalem in the New Testament or prophecy it is speaking about the heavenly Jerusalem and the Jews or chosen people are speaking about the Church. So, it is very possible that you were taught that Jesus would not return to earth and reign here for a set period of time. You were probably taught that Christ would return to earth, destroy his foes, and take the church back to heaven with Him. This difference becomes essential when you begin to look at the times of the rebuilding the nation of Israel and the Apocalypse. In this series, we will take the literal words of the Bible and allow them to be what guides our interpretation of the End Times and the Millennial Kingdom on earth.

When the disciples asked Jesus a pointed question after His resurrection.

#### **Acts 1:6-7**

*"Lord, are you at this time going to restore the Kingdom to Israel?" Jesus replied, "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority."*

You may have been taught that that means that Jesus would never set foot on earth again, but several Scriptures say that he will.

#### **Zechariah 14:3-4** says,

*"Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south."*

It is obvious that Jesus will return to earth and set foot on the earth, because the Mount of Olives has not split in half and the Bible does not lie.

I also think that it is much easier to see what the Bible means if we always assume that Scripture is to be taken literally unless there is clear reason for a more figurative, or spiritualized understanding. Some Scripture takes some interpretation, calling Jesus a Lamb for instance is not to be taken literally, Jesus was never a sheep, He only represented one. **Micah 5:2-5** tells us that the Messiah Jesus will be born in Bethlehem only makes sense if it taken literally.

Zechariah's prophecy continues.

***Zechariah 14:8-9***

*“On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea and half to the western sea, in summer and winter. The Lord will be King over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and His name the only name. “*

The problem with saying that this has already happened and that Jesus is spiritually ruling over all the earth now is that all the nations of the earth have not come against Israel and made war with her. Half of the City has not gone into exile, forced exile because of a war. The geological fault has never given away on the Mount of Olives although Jerusalem has had hundreds of earthquakes. Finally, Jesus is not considered King of the Earth in very many places if at all, right now.

Zechariah is not the only one that says Jesus will return and walk on the earth. The passage in **Acts** we just looked at tells us that two angels assure the apostles.

***Acts 1:11***

*“This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw him go into heaven.”*

***Ezekiel 43:6-7***

*Ezekiel, at another time, hears very clearly that the Temple Mount is the exact location where the throne will be located and the place that will receive the soles of the Lord's feet.*

Where in the Bible can you find the best description of the future reign of the Messiah? The most fascinating descriptions of the millennial reign are found in **Isaiah** and **Zechariah** and in parts of John's **Revelation**.

John saw in ***Revelation 20:1-3***

*“An angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. . .to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years (are) ended.*



This binding of the devil will happen when the skies open and a Man on a white horse, accompanied by all the armies of heaven makes His descent to the earth.

***Revelation 19:11-14***

*11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. 13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.*

This time His entrance into the atmosphere will not come through the angel Gabriel's visit to an unknown teenager in Nazareth; He will come through the clouds as Conquering King to reign.

***Revelation 1:7***

*"Every eye will see him," says John, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him."*

The nations have raged against Him and will be united to strike a final blow to the "people of the covenant" in Jerusalem, ***Psalms 2; Zechariah 12:3, 14:2***, but it will not happen. According to Zechariah, this whole era will be ushered in just at a time when it looks as if Jerusalem is doomed and Israel will finally be annihilated. All nations will be gathered to fight against Jerusalem. When Israel appears to be trapped is the very time that the clouds will open and the King will return to "fight against those nations," accompanied by "all the holy ones" ***Zechariah 14:3-5***. John calls these holy ones "the armies of heaven" ***Revelation 19:14***, and Paul describes this same scene as the Revelation of the Lord Jesus.

***Revelation 21:1-5***

*1 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."*

In the next lesson, we will see how God continued to draw all the Jews together and make Israel a new country.

## Lesson: # 8 “Jerusalem, Dry Bones Live Again”

This lesson looks closely at Jerusalem over the formation period and sees that dozens of prophecies were fulfilled. We continue to study why God said, *“Dry Bones will Live Again”* and how He caused it to happen.

### Jerusalem History 1880 - 1920

The religious movements in the United States and England put the restoration of Israel at the forefront of many people's minds in both nations. They basically believed that when the Jews converted to Christ, Jesus would return. They interpreted the prophecies of the end times to mean: the Jews would convert, then Christ would return, and then the Judgment and all who belong to Jesus would go to heaven with Jesus. But there were also many people desiring the restoration of Israel that lived in other parts of the world. Many of these were Jews and the terrible persecution of Jews in the Russian pogroms had forced many Russian Jews into exile and pointed out the plight of the Jews and how susceptible they were to the policies of the nations they lived in.

One Jewish man who reacted was Theodor Herzl, a literary critic and lawyer in Vienna. When in 1895, Vienna elected the anti-Semitic rabble-rouser Karl Lueger as mayor, Herzl wrote, 'The mood among the Jews is one of despair.' That same year, he was in Paris covering the Dreyfus Affair, in which an innocent Jewish army officer was framed as a German spy, and he watched Parisian mobs shrieking 'Mort anus Juifs' (Death to the Jews) in the country that had emancipated Jews. This reinforced his conviction that assimilation had not only failed but was provoking more anti-Semitism. He even predicted that anti-Semitism would one day be legalized in Germany.

He concluded that Jews could never be safe without their own homeland. He also appealed to the Rothchild's for help. He mentally organized what the Jewish country would be and how it would be governed. At first the Rothchild's dismissed these far-fetched ideas, but they later bought land for Jewish immigrants to settle. Herzl wrote in 'The Jewish State' an article about the need for a homeland for the Jews and stated, "The Maccabees will rise again. We shall live at last as free men on our own soil and die peacefully in our own homes."

There was nothing new about Zionism, the word coined in 1890, but Herzl gave political expression and organization to a very ancient sentiment. Jews had envisaged their existence in terms of their relationship to Jerusalem since King David and particularly since the Babylonian Exile. Jews prayed towards Jerusalem, wished each other 'Next Year in Jerusalem' each year at Passover, and commemorated the fallen Temple by smashing a glass at their weddings and keeping a corner of their houses undecorated. They went on pilgrimages there, wished to be buried there and prayed whenever possible around the Temple walls. Even when they were grievously persecuted, Jews continued to live in Jerusalem and were absent only when they were banned on pain of death.

The new European nationalism inevitably provoked racial hostility towards this supranational and cosmopolitan people, but simultaneously the same nationalism, along with the liberty won by the French Revolution, was bound to inspire the Jews too. Prince Potemkin (Spain), Emperor Napoleon (France) and US President John Adams all believed in the return of the Jews to Jerusalem as had Polish and Italian nationalists before this time, and of course the Christian Zionists in America and Britain. Yet the most fervent of Zionist pioneers were Orthodox rabbis who saw the Return in light of messianic expectation. In 1836, an Ashkenazi rabbi in Prussia, Zvi Hirsch Kalisches, approached the Rothschilds and Montefiore's to fund a Jewish nation, and later wrote his book 'Seeking Zion'. The bloodletting of Jews in Damascus prompted a Sephardic rabbi, Yehuda Hai Alchelai, to suggest Jews in the Islamic should elect leaders and buy land in Palestine. In 1862, Moses Hess, a comrade of Karl Marx, predicted that nationalism would lead to racial anti-Semitism, in Rome and Jerusalem; and in the Last National Question a group proposed a socialist Jewish society in Palestine, it became obvious that many of the followers of Jesus Christ wanted a Jewish state; But it was the Russian pogroms that were decisive and they started the flood of Jewish immigrants to Israel.

"We must re-establish ourselves as a living nation", wrote Leo Pinsker, an Odessan physician, in his book, 'Auto-Emancipation', writing at the same time as Herzl. He inspired a new movement of Russian Jews. 'The Lovers of Zion', to establish agricultural settlements in Palestine. Even though many of them were secular, 'our Jewishness and our Zionism,' explained a young believer, Chaim Weizmann, 'were interchangeable,' In 1878, Palestinian Jews had founded the Gateway of Hope on the coast and now even the Rothschilds, in the person of the French Baron Edmond, started to fund agricultural villages such as Rishon Zion (First in Zion) for Russian immigrants and altogether he would also donate the princely sum of 6.6 million for Jewish settlements. Like Montefiore, he tried to buy the Wall in Jerusalem in 1887 for all Jews, and later the mufti, Mustafa al-Husseini, agreed to a deal, but it fell through. When Rothschild tried again in 1897, the Husseini Sheikh al-Haram blocked it.

In 1883, long before Herzl's book, 25,000 Jews started to arrive in Palestine in the first wave—Aliyah—of immigration. Most but not all were from Russia. But Jerusalem also attracted Persians in the 1870's, and Yemenites in the 1880's. They tended to live together in their own communities: Jews from Bokhara, including the Moussaieff family of jewelers who had cut diamonds for Genghis Khan, settled their own Bokhara Quarter that was carefully laid out in a grid, its grand architecture often non-Gothic, non-renaissance, sometimes very Moorish mansions designed to resemble those of Central Asian cities.

In August 1897, Herzl presided over the first Zionist Congress in Basle and afterwards he wrote to his diary: "At Basle, I founded the Jewish state. If I said this out loud today, I would be greeted by universal laughter. Perhaps in five years and certainly in fifty, everyone will know it." They did and he was only a year off the amount of time it took. He decided that he would seek the German Kaiser to be the one who would argue with the Sultan over letting the Jews settle

in Palestine. He concluded those remarks by saying, "Through Zionism, it will again become possible for Jews to love this Germany.

The Kaiser was an unlikely Jewish champion. When he heard that Jews were settling in Argentina, he said, "Oh, if only we could send ours there too." And hearing about Herzl's Zionism, he wrote, "I'm very much in favor of the Moussaieff's going to Palestine. The sooner they clear out the better." He remained at heart an anti-Semite who rattled against the poisonous hydra of Jewish capitalism. But Herzl was able to penetrate the German court through the uncle of the Kaiser, The Grand Duke Friedrich of Baden, who was interested in a scheme to find the Ark of the Covenant. Herzl had convinced him that Zionism was a way to increase the influence of Germany and their power. On October 11, 1898, the Kaiser and his entourage started off on the Orient Express to meet with the Sultan who had power over Jerusalem and Judea. By the time the Kaiser got to Jerusalem he had been dazzled by the vigor of Islam and lost interest in helping Herzl and the Jews. On October 29, 1898, the Kaiser rode through a breach, specially opened in the wall next to the Jaffa Gate and entered Jerusalem mounted on a white charger.

After a showy tour of the City given by the Sultan, the Kaiser left Herzl and the Zionists in Jerusalem, went on to Damascus and there declared himself the protector of Islam and endowed Saladin with a new tomb. But it made little difference what the Kaiser or Herzl did, the city of Jerusalem was fast becoming a Jewish Center in Palestine. It had 43,000 inhabitants now and 28,000 were Jewish. The concern of a clash between the Jews arriving in Palestine and the Arabs who were there became even more obvious. Herzl needed another international backer who would help his cause to put a Jewish nation in Palestine and he suggested that the Island of Cyprus or El Arish (Controlled by Britian), an area in the Sinai Peninsula, could be the area settled by the Jews since both were close to Palestine. Britain ruled out Cyprus immediately and later ruled out El Arish but came up with another territory. They offered Uganda that was really a part of Kenya as a Jewish homeland. Herzl, who was short of alternatives, provisionally accepted. His career as the one who would shape the new independent country of Israel was finished but he had inspired the persecuted Jews of Russia to come to Palestine and particularly, a boy from a well-to-do lawyer's family. Eleven-year-old David Bruin who thought Herzl was the Messiah who would lead the Jews back to Israel.

When Russia started one more pogrom to extinguish all Jews from their land, David Bruin fled to Palestine. He and a group of Russian Jewish immigrants started a new city Tel Aviv on the sand dunes next to the ancient port of Jaffa, and in 1911 they created a new collective farm, the first kibbutz in the north. He adopted the name David Ben-Gurion when he moved to Jerusalem to write for the Zionist newspaper at the age of 24. His desire like that of many of the second wave of Jewish immigrants to Palestine was to set up a socialistic society in Palestine that would be Jewish and would live in harmony with the Arabs. After all, there were only 600,000 Arabs in the Ottoman empire that stretched from Syrian-Lebanon to the great Arabian desert of modern-day Iran. There seemed to be plenty of room for both.

The next twenty years were highlighted by an Englishman, Captain Monty Parker, who devised a scheme to get financing to recover the Ark of the Covenant. He purchased the work of an archeologist who said the Ark was hidden in a passage very accessible and not under the Temple Mount. Parker assembled a crew, bribed all the Ottoman leaders and began his exploration. After futile searching for two years, he decided that he had to dig on the Temple Mount to find what he wanted and again bribed Ottoman officials and at night, disguised as a group of Arabs, he and his team went up on the Temple Mount and began to dig. This was discovered and reported by a Muslim security officer who had stayed on the Temple Mount for the night. Parker and his accomplices fled by boat from Tel Aviv and the rumor went out that he had taken: The Ark of the Covenant, the Crown of Solomon, and the Sword of Muhammad. This came close to provoking anti-Christian riots and Parker was banned from the City of Jerusalem after the incidents.

The area of Palestine or old Israel was now awash in schemes. The Arabs were forming secret groups to teach Arabic and to set-up clubs to push for independence. The Zionist leaders were pushing the immigrants to create Jewish towns, and they especially wanted small towns within the large town of Jerusalem because it was the head of the nation. They purchased the land for the future Hebrew University on Mt. Scopus. Meanwhile, the landowners, The Ottomans, talked about how shocked they were that all the Jews were moving to Palestine, but still sold land to the Zionists.

By 1913 the Turks who controlled the area of Palestine issued a decree that forbid the selling of land to the Jewish immigrants. They set out to enforce a Turkization of the empire in their words, "To save it." In June of 1914, Serbian terrorists assassinated the Austrian heir Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the Great Powers staggered and then stampeded into the First World War. The young Turks, the leaders now called the Pasha's, called for a German alliance to provide the necessary military and financial backing they needed; and Kaiser Wilhelm, remembering his trip to the East, backed the Ottoman alliance. Enver Pasha appointed himself vice-generalissimo under the puppet sultan and entered the war by bombarding Russian ports from his newly supplied German battleships. The Ottoman Empire, including Israel/Palestine declared war on Britain, France, and Russia. His impact on Jerusalem was terrible. He would line up patriarchs, princes and sheikhs in rows, and hang Notables and deputies. He took over the Christian sites and started to expel the Christians hierarchy while he prepared to attack Egypt, which was under control of Britain. He attacked the Arabs and the Zionists and the result was disastrous. David Ben-Gurion was deported and switched to the side of the Allies and the nation was hit with disease, insects and starvation. "The locusts were thick as clouds," remembered one writer, "and the attempts to solve the problem were laughable." Jerusalem was hit by typhus, malaria, and many people died. By the end of the war, 1918, Jerusalem had lost 20,000 residents.

During this incompetence, the Germans were requested to come to Jerusalem and help save it. They came, but the British led by Sir. Edmund Allenby attacked the city by air, bombing the

Mount of Olives and followed with a land attack. In the meantime, Arthur Balfour, the British foreign secretary was negotiating a new policy with a Russian-born scientist named Dr. Chaim Weizmann. They met several times over the years from 1906-1916. But it was only in the last few years of this period that they began to seriously talk about the need for the Jews to be in the Holy Land. Once again, the Bible, Jerusalem's book, influenced the city over two millennia after it was first started. Britain was a Biblical nation, wrote Weizmann. 'These British statesmen of the old school were genuinely religious. They understood as a reality the concept of the Return. It appealed to their tradition and their faith. Along with America, 'Bible-reading and Bible-thinking England,' noted one of Lloyd George's aides, was the only countries where the desire of the Jews to return to their ancient homeland was regarded 'as a natural aspiration not to be denied.' In 1916, Lloyd George became the prime minister of Britain and he appointed Balfour as foreign secretary. The two leaders decided that Zionism was essential to help Britain achieve victory in World War I.

The result of this leadership from Britain culminated on November 9, when Balfour issued his Declaration, addressed to Lord Rothschild, which proclaimed: "His Majesty's Government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people. . .it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities." The Declaration was designed to detach Russian Jews from Bolshevism but the very night before it was published, Lenin seized power in St. Petersburg. Ironically Zionism was being propelled by the energy of Russian Jews, from Weizmann to Whitehall to Ben-Gurion in Jerusalem, but Christian sympathy for their plight, was now cut off from Russian Jewry until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Allenby received the surrender of the city and he was accompanied by Lawrence of Arabia, the Syrian soldier, who fought with the British and who had just escaped the Ottoman's arrest. In the days that followed, the British would be given full authority over the city and the division of the city as proposed by the French, that was refused and was dismissed when President Woodrow Wilson made sure of that at Versailles, where the French received Syria and the British received Palestine.

### **Events that Brought the Fulfilment of Biblical Promises**

Our session has brought us to the threshold of two historical events that have brought together the fulfilment of Biblical promises and have changed the course of the nations.

#### **1. Birth of the State of Israel**

The birth of the State of Israel in May 1948, resulting from the United Nations vote in November 1947, was God's announcement to a watching world that major world shifts were about to take place and the time of the Messiah's return is near. Israel is back. Promise and God's timing have intersected in our day.

## **2. Recapture of Jerusalem**

The recapture of Jerusalem by the nation of Israel during the Six-Day War in June 1967 was God's exclamation point that His plans were on schedule. King David's capital city is back in Israel's possession, just as Jesus Himself foretold us:

### ***Luke 21:24***

*"They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."*

These two events have triggered three other results that are having an impact on our world with exponential force.

### **1. Jewish People Believe Jesus is the Messiah**

Hundreds of thousands of Jewish people have opened their hearts to believe that Yeshua (Jesus) is indeed the Messiah of Israel just as Isaiah, Hosea, Ezekiel and others predicted. Not since the first century, when the original Church was totally Jewish, have so many Jewish people begun to believe that Jesus is the long-awaited, prophecy-foretold Messiah of Israel.

### **2. Nations Around the World Believe**

An expression of faith in the Jewish Messiah is reaching around the world to shake nations that have long known nothing of the world's Redeemer, exactly as Paul foresaw when writing to the Romans. Just as the prophet Ezekiel had predicted and just as prophecy students have come to believe in the past and especially the last 400 years. The prophecy of Ezekiel was coming to fruition.

### ***Ezekiel 37:1-13***

*1 The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. 2 He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. 3 He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "Sovereign LORD, you alone know." 4 Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! 5 This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. 6 I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.' " 7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. 8 I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. 9 Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to*

*it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.' " 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet--a vast army. 11 Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the people of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.' 12 Therefore prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. 13 Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them.*

### **3. The Church is Becoming Aware of Her Jewish Heritage**

The Church throughout the world is becoming aware of her own Jewish heritage and her 'grafted-in-ness to the family of Israel and is becoming united as the' one new man' of which Paul spoke in **Ephesians 2:15**. Sadly, the Church has not been kind to the Jewish people through the centuries. All that is changing in our day, as fresh revelation about the Jewish roots of our faith reaches the ends of the earth and as the Church grows in her desire to affirm and bless the people of the Land.

#### ***Galatians 3:14***

*"He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit."*

#### ***Romans 11:17-18***

*"If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing up from the olive root, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you."*

Next Lesson we will trace the history of Jerusalem to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and look closely at the Scripture prophesy of Jerusalem in the Apocalypse and the End Times.



## Lesson # 9: “Jerusalem and the Apocalypse”

As we continue our in-depth historical and prophetic look at Jerusalem, called the City of God, we come to the time in history where it seemed the idea of a restored Israel and a Jewish controlled City of Jerusalem were going to happen.

### Israel to have a Free Country, Including Control of Jerusalem

The Balfour Declaration had been issued and that allowed Israel to have a free country that would include control of Jerusalem. Woodrow Wilson, the president of the United States had endorsed the Declaration and said about this time in history, “To think that I, the son of the manse should be able to help restore the Holy Land to His people.” He was influenced by both Protestant Hebraism and his advisor Louis Brandeis, a Jew from Kentucky who had been nominated by Wilson to the Supreme Court. Brandeis, known as the ‘People’s Lawyer’, was an incorruptible paragon of American scholarship and public service but in 1914, only 15,000 of 3 million American Jews were members of his US Zionist Federation. By 1917, hundreds of thousands of American Jews had become involved, evangelical Christians were lobbying for Zionism; and ex-President Teddy Roosevelt, who had visited the Holy City with his parents as a boy was backing a Zionist State that would surround the city of Jerusalem.

But it was not a quick or easy decision because the Arabs had gained support for them keeping the land of Palestine and although France was in charge of Syria and Britain in charge of Palestine, on March 8, 1920, King Faisal was crowned and proclaimed king of Syria, including Lebanon and Palestine. He appointed Said al-Husseini as his foreign minister, and the Arabs felt secure that Faisal and the Syrians would rule over Palestine. This was the feeling, even though Britain had placed their own man in place to govern Jerusalem.

The city exploded in April 1920 as large Arab crowds amassed and declared, “Palestine is our land, and the Jews are our dogs.” This attack by the Arabs lasted until a Jewish immigrant named, Rabin organized a resistance and saved the City from a take-over by the Arabs. He met his wife that day defending Jerusalem and their son, Yitzhak Rabin was the Israeli chief of staff many years later, 1967 when Israel captured Jerusalem.

The first riots settled somewhat and the new British appointed leader of Jerusalem was Sir Herbert Samuel and he sought to rule with tolerance and keep the Jews and Arabs happy and at bay from each other. But he did not stop the flow of Jewish immigrants and he allowed 18,000 Jews his first year and over the next eight years, Samuel allowed in another 70,000. France had chased King Faisal out of Syria and so Palestine and Jerusalem were left with a growing feud between the Arab settlers and the immigrant Jews and no over-all leader.

One last piece of the Mid-East had to be put together to ensure stability. Amir Abdullah was given a nation. It was Winston Churchill who came to meet with Amir in Jerusalem and if Amir would recognize French Syria and English Palestine, Churchill would give him the nation of Transjordanian, which later became shortened to Jordan. Churchill stood firm in his discussions

with the Jerusalem Arabs that the Jews deserved a land for them and he saw Zionism as the outcome from two millennia of suffering by the Jews. Churchill had also been offended by how Lenin had made them the villains in Russia. For Stalin had called the Red Scare just a Jewish movement led by a diabolical bogeyman called the "International Jew". Churchill thought this was just foul baboonery of Bolshevism, simply transferring all the upset of the Russian people to hatred for the Jews.

The British leaders of Jerusalem, Samuel and Storrs both congratulated themselves on what a great job they had done to bring peace to Jerusalem and Palestine and carried that same message to England. The battle turned to the old walls of Jerusalem. The teaching of Islam was that Muhammad tied up his horse with the human face to the Temple Wall before they went to heaven and therefore the wall was a holy Islamic shrine. They also thought if the Jews had access to the Temple Mount, they would build the third Temple on the site. The British police attacked the Jewish worshippers at the wall during the Yom Kippur service and beat the people praying and pulled the chairs out from under elderly worshippers. The Muslim mufti approved but warned that the Jews aim was to take possession of the Mosque of al-Aqsa gradually. He then declared a campaign against the worship of the Jews and they were constantly harassed even as they worshipped at the wall. By 1929 a campaign by the Arabs "the wall is ours" allowed the Arabs to make a large opening of the doorway to the Wall to make it a throughfare for donkeys and people and harass those who worshipped by giving loud muezzin calls to prayer.

The British were fast losing control of Palestine and the Balfour Declaration was coming undone. The mufti of Jerusalem became the leader of the Muslim part of Jerusalem and called for more and more extreme measures until he went to the German counsel in Jerusalem and said two months after Hitler was appointed chancellor of Germany, "Muslims inside Palestine welcome the new regime, hope for the spread of Fascist antidemocratic leadership," he added, "Muslims hoped for a boycott of the Jews in Germany."

This fear of what Hitler might do frightened the European Jews and the immigrants went from 37,000 in 1933, to 45,000 in 1934 and then to 84,000 in 1935. By 1936, there were 100,000 Jews in Jerusalem and only 60,000 Christians and Arab Muslims combined. By the time of the start of World War II, the thought of many echoed the words of General Montgomery who said, "The Jew murders the Arab and the Arabs murder the Jews and it will go on for the next 50 years in all probability." Then the politics of Jerusalem went up a notch or two. Adolf Hitler seemed to be the person that the mufti of Jerusalem wanted to model and felt since they had common enemies in the British and Jews, they should have a similar plan. France had collapsed, and German troops were advancing on Moscow and Hitler had started the killing of 6 million Jews in his Final Solution. The mufti escaped from Iraq, where he had gone for hiding and being pursued by British agents, took an adventurous boat trip to Italy where he met with Benito Mussolini who backed Palestine as its own state with no Jews in it. He said, "If the Jews want

their own country they should establish Tel Aviv in America. We have in Italy 45,000 Jews and there will be no place for them in Europe. The mufti flew on to Berlin.

Jerusalem had stayed rather peaceful during the War and the British were more involved in suppression of the Jews in Palestine. Perhaps because they did not want any other fronts in the war. So, they arrested the Hagenah comrades and their leader Moshe Dayan and had them all imprisoned. But the Axis forces in Africa and the Vichy French in Syria, also on the side of the Axis powers, seemed too ominous to avoid, so Britain formed a small Jewish army called the Palmach, freed Moshe Dylan and his forces from jail and asked them to lead this group. They were prepared to go underground if the Germans took the city of Jerusalem.

By 1942. The news reached Jerusalem of the slaughter of Jews in Europe; it was their first news of the Holocaust. "Mass Butchery of Polish Jews!", reported the Jerusalem Post. Jewish Jerusalem mourned for three days, culminating in a service at the Wall. Britain would not revoke the White Paper that eliminated Jewish immigration where the British controlled and the British troops were turning back shiploads of desperate refugees each day in Palestine. The Zionist decided they had to use violence to convince Britain to grant Jewish immigration to the Jewish homeland. The Jewish Agency controlled the largest militia, the Hagenah, with its 2,000-strong special forces and they merged with the Palmach, and its 25,000 militiamen trained by the British. Ben-Gurion was now the unrivalled Zionist leader, 'a short tubby man with a prophetic shock of silvery hair, around his bald patch," in Amos Oz's words.

He was joined by Menachem Begin who had been arrested by Russia as a British spy, but by the time of the resistance of the Zionist Jews against Britain, he had on his head the largest reward offered by the British police. The British after the defeat of Winston Churchill as Prime Minister and the election of Clement Attlee became even more convinced that they had to stop Jewish immigration to Palestine and they intercepted the refugee boats and even sent people back to camps in Germany.

### **Post World War II, Israel Becomes a Country**

The threesome of Ben Gurion, Begin and Lehi formed a United Resistance Command to smuggle in Jewish immigrants from Europe and coordinate the struggle against the British, attacking trains, airfields, army bases and police stations across the country of Palestine. The British turned to America for help and even though most American Jews were Zionists, Franklin Roosevelt was not one who thought the Jews should have their own country or that Holocaust survivors should automatically be allowed to immigrate to Palestine. When Roosevelt died and Harry Truman became president, that all changed. One of the first things President Truman did was announce that he wanted 100,000 of the Holocaust survivors allowed to settle in Palestine. The British did not agree so, over the objections of his own Secretary of State, Clark Clifford, Truman made sure the Anglo-American commission of inquiry was formed to study the issue.

This happened at just the same time that Viscount Montgomery of England and his commander, General Evelyn Barker launched Operation Agatha, an attack on the Zionist

organizations. This war escalated until Menachem Begen and his forces blew up a third of the King David Hotel and then it really escalated. The British were extremely pro-Arab at this time and determined to eradicate all the Jews and it seemed this war would continue until the Jews were gone. But Winston Churchill was reelected Prime Minister of England and he pressured Attlee who was serving the end of his lame-duck term to turn the matter over to the newly formed United Nations. He did and the UN created a Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) and they proposed the partition of Palestine into two states with Jerusalem as an international trusteeship under a UN governor. Ben-Gurion accepted the plan but The Arab Highest Committee, backed by Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Syria, rejected the plan and demanded a unified Palestine. The United Nations voted on the plan in November 1947. Thirty-three countries voted in favor of Resolution 181, led by the United States and the Soviet Union, thirteen voted against and ten, including Britain, abstained.

The Arabs did not accept that the UN had authority to carve up the country and they poured into the city center, lynching Jews, firing into their suburbs, looting their shops, and yelling epithets at the Jews. Within two weeks, 74 Jews, 71 Arabs, and 9 British soldiers were killed. This type of fighting continued until the day of independence. President Truman had added his vote to that of Joseph Stalin and the partition of Palestine held, but the large Arab armies of several countries waited for the first day of independence so they could attack Israel and destroy the one-day old nation.

The Arab opposition was the Arab League states, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. They intended to invade Israel with the idea of exterminating all the Jews in Palestine and Israel. On paper it looked like an uneven match, with 165,000 Arab troops against 28,000 Jewish troops; but when the armies were formed the Arabs only had an army of about 28,000 and the two forces were evenly matched in number. The result of this first war was an armistice. The city of Jerusalem would be divided: Israel received the west with an island of territory on Mount Scopus; Abdullah, the Arab king of Palestine received the Old City, eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank. The agreement promised the Jews access to the Wall, the Mount of Olive's cemetery and the Kidron Valley tombs but this was never honored. Jews were not allowed to pray at the Wall for the next nineteen years, and the tombstones in their cemeteries were vandalized.

Israel lost its first supporter when they aligned with the Western nations because Stalin withdrew his support, denounced Israel as an American capitalistic nation, and sided totally with the Arabs. Both sides, Israel and the Royal Family of Jordan represented by King Abdullah, were afraid of losing their half of Jerusalem so they never allowed the internationalization of Jerusalem that had been a part of the armistice. The city remained divided for the next nineteen years with a fortified strip of barbed wire and minefields between the two and a concrete wall around the Arab part of the city.

In 1951, the Coptic bishop crowned Abdullah the King of Jerusalem, the first king to control the city in centuries. On December 1, 1951, he had himself crowned the King of Palestine in Jericho

and renamed his realm the United Kingdom of Jordan. The title did not stay but the grandson of King Abdullah did, He was King Hussein of Jordan who never bothered calling the area Palestine, but just referred to all the territory he controlled as Jordan and that included his part of Jerusalem. It continued for a time with this uneasy truce but another leader would appear that would have a great influence on Jerusalem. The rise of Nassar, President of Egypt, changed everything, threatening King Hussein and risked his possession of Jerusalem. Nassar rose to a dictator-like power in Egypt and his desire was to avenge the defeats of the Arabs in the Middle East and especially the 1948 war with Israel. Nassar established the United Arab Command to prepare for a coming war with Israel. He joined Syria and Egypt as the United Arab Republic to surround Israel and Palestine and coerce them into doing what he wanted. About the same time, Syria lost their entire air force in a fight with Israeli planes over Damascus and they began to pour money into Palestinian terrorist activities.

Everything escalated again. Jordan was brought into the conflict and agreed to place their army under the control of Egypt. Israel was in tatters, its chief of the military living in the start of a mental breakdown and the country thinking it would be annulated. The Israeli's had lost confidence in any of their leadership and so the Jewish leader, Levi Eshkol called in Moshe Dayan on June 1, 1967, to be the defense minister and Menachem Begin to be on the National Government as a minister without portfolio.

Daylan had the Israeli air force attack the Egyptian air force and destroyed almost every plane while they were still on the ground. They wanted to not provoke Jordan into the war. When the Jordanians did attack, Daylan ordered the Jordain air force to be destroyed and they were. Israel offered a ceasefire in Jerusalem but Jordan refused and called the people to recover the land that the Jews had stolen from them. The battle continued that day and after intense Israeli shelling overnight, the Israeli army attacked the Old City on several fronts and broke through and captured the Temple Mount. They did not know how to access the Mount, so an old Arab showed them the Mughrabi Gate and all three companies of the Jewish army converted simultaneously on the holy place. Holding his shofar and a Torah, the bearded Rabbi Shlomo Goren, chief chaplain of the Israeli Army, strode to the Wall and began to recite the Kaddish mourning prayer as the soldiers prayed, wept, applauded, danced and some sang the city's new anthem 'Jerusalem of Gold.'

When Dayan and others came to the Mount, they saw an Israeli flag flying atop the Dome of the Rock and Dayan ordered it to be taken down. Rabbi Goren wanted to accelerate the messianic era by dynamiting the mosques on the Temple Mount, but General Narkiss replied, "Stop it!" "You' will enter the history books," said Rabbi Goren. "I've already recorded my name in the history of Jerusalem," answered Narkiss.

"The capture of Jerusalem elated even the most secular Jews. The craving for Zion was so deep, so ancient, so ingrained in song, prayer and teaching, the exclusion from the Wall so longstanding and so painful, and the aura of holiness so powerful that even the most irreligious Jews across the world, experienced a sensation of exhilaration that approached

a religious experience and in the modern world was as close as they would ever come to one." *Simon Sebag Montefiore*, author of 'Jerusalem, the Biography'.

### Jesus, Jerusalem Prophecies

Jesus had prophesied Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentile's until "*the time of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*" **Luke 21:24** Prior to 1967 many prophecy teachers within the church had assumed that Jesus' expression "*the times of the Gentiles*" implied that the Gentile part of the Church would be taken away in the rapture, before God turned His attention to the nations of Israel. This was the prevailing thought in much of the Church before the events of 1967. It was so unexpected that in the Hebrew Christian Alliance meetings in late 1967, there was no mention of the return of Jerusalem to Israel, because the prophecy teachers had not had sufficient time to rearrange their belief system and redraw their charts. Paul did not understand Jesus words to imply that no more Gentiles would be saved after God began to deal with Israel, or else he would not have spoken of, "*greater riches,*" for the nations.

**Romans 11:12** says,

*"But their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring!"*

Then to what does "*the Times of the Gentiles*" refer? Try to imagine what Jesus' disciples would have thought. It was no doubt inconceivable to them that faith in their long-awaited Messiah would be so completely embraced by Gentile believers that much of the Church in our time, would all but have forgotten that the earliest believers were Jewish.

The return of Jerusalem is hard for anyone not Jewish to realize what a great thing this was for all Jewish people. Secularists are surprised to learn that the Bible is still the historical guidebook for anyone who visits the land of Israel. Archeology has shown that the Jewish people described in the Bible lived in this very city of Jerusalem. The geographical places mentioned in the Bible can be seen and visited here. Artifacts bearing inscriptions of each of the time periods and many of the names of the people in the bible have been found here. Some of the oldest and most important writings in the world have been discovered near here. "*The Dead Sea Scrolls*" have proven how accurately the Bible was written and preserved and have provided further evidence of the events that happened here.

It had been captured by David after the nation of Israel had asked him to be their king. David had moved the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and built a shelter for it. Later his son, Solomon had built a Temple for God and moved the Tabernacle into the Temple. David had been allowed to build himself a house that was lower on the mountain than the Temple Mount and it was at this house that God promised David that one of his descendants would sit on the throne and it would last forever.

### ***II Samuel 7:4-19***

*4 But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying: 5 "Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? 6 I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. 7 Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ' 8 "Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. 9 I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. 10 And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning 11 and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. " 'The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: 12 When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. **13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.** 14 I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. ... 16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.' " 17 Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.*

Three times in this passage, God made that promise to David and it speaks of the coming of the Messiah, one of David's future descendants. This promise is also a clarification and an expansion on God's promise to Abraham. God tells David and us, *"He is the one who will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever."* It speaks not only of a human house but of a temple or a house for God. There is no throne today in Jerusalem and David does not have a descendent on a throne, so did God make a mistake?

No, God clearly stated what would happen in the prophesy.

### ***Psalms 89:34-37***

*"I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered. Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness—and I will not lie to David—that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun. It will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky."*

Jerusalem is so vital to prophetic history. The Temple Mount is the most sacred piece of property in the world. Jews consider it a sacred location, as do Muslims. Christians believe it is where Jesus will come back to earth to rule and reign. The Bible teaches Jesus will come back by

way of the Mount of Olives across the Kidron Valley, enter the Eastern Gate, and walk into the Holy of Holies.

*Ezekiel 43:7* says,

*"I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever. And the house of Israel will not again defile My holy name."*

#### **Summary of the Prophetic Events that will Occur in Jerusalem**

- Jesus will come back to Earth bringing those who knew Him with Him.
- Jesus will arrive on the Mount of Olives and it will open up.
- The armies of the world gather in the Jezreel Valley, 97 miles to the North, and Jesus will destroy these armies with a sword that comes from His mouth—a spoken Word of the Lord.
- Jesus will bring the crowd of saved back to Jerusalem where He comes through the Kidron Valley, through the Gate Beautiful, and come to a completed Temple, walk into the Holy of Hollies and sit down to rule as King of Kings and Lord Lords.



## Lesson # 10: "Jerusalem, Home!"

This Lesson will conclude our series on the City of Jerusalem. We have looked at Jerusalem in every Century of its history and many of the Biblical prophecies fulfilled in the life of Jerusalem. This session will bring us up to today in history but will included prophecies about Jerusalem that have not been fulfilled yet, but they will be. The Bible is very accurate in the fulfillment of prophecies.

The conquest of Jerusalem transformed, elevated and complicated Jerusalem in a flash of revelation that was both messianic and apocalyptic. This new vision altered Israel, the Palestinians, and the Middle East. A decision that had been taken in panic, a conquest that was never planned, a military victory stolen from the edge of catastrophe, enchanted those who believed, those who believed nothing, and those who craved to believe in something. This did not seem to alter Israel at the time but as the future unfolded the City changed from a traditionally secular, socialistic, modern nation that had more of a religion of historical science of Judean belief as an archeological relic.

### Israel Set Out to Build a Great Nation

The capture of Jerusalem elated the most secular Jews and changed life a lot. The religious Jews, the heirs of those who for thousands of years, from Babylon to Vienna, had, as we have seen, expected imminent messianic delivery. This was a sign, a deliverance, a redemption and the fulfillment of the biblical prophecies, the end of the Exile and return to the gates and courts of the Temple in David's restored city. For the many Israelites who embraced nationalistic Zionism, the heirs of the movement, this military victory was both political and strategic. One move of God that gave them a Greater Israel with safe borders. The Nation of Israel set out to build a great Nation on the back of this great victory and the unification of their Holy City after millennia of occupation.

But it was not only the Jews who were affected, it was the Christian evangelicals, especially those of America who immediately saw the Apocalypse unfolding before them denoted by these two great prophetic signs:

- 1. Israel was Restored**
- 2. Jewish Jerusalem was Restored.**

They looked now for the rebuilding of the Third Temple that would usher in the Last Days.

This was compounded by the fact that a small Jewish democracy had won a great battle against the Soviet armed legions of Arabs and that convinced many in the United States that Israel was a special friend in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the world. It was an ally against Russian Communism, Nasserite radicalism, and Islamicist fundamentalism.

Israelis from west Jerusalem, from all Israel and the breadth of the Dispersion throughout the world crowded into the Old City to touch the Wall and pray there. The joy of having the City,

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made the idea of giving up Jerusalem unbearable and unthinkable to the Nation of Israel. Israel took down the barriers and combined the two parts of the City and it now contained 267,800 citizens and was the largest it had ever been in history. The Israeli government built new homes and moved the inhabitants of the Maghrebi Quarter to them and their houses were demolished to open the space before the Wall for the first time. After centuries of cramped, confined, harassed worship in a 9-foot alleyway, the airy, light space of the new plaza at the front of the Jewish shrine was a great liberation.

Then entered the decades long wars and skirmishes with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) led by Yasser Arafat. The PLO was chased from Lebanon to Tunis but always with the intent to return to Palestine and take it from the Jews. By 1987 they founded the Islamic Resistance Movement and the connections between Arabs and Jews working together was ended. The Oslo accords were set to divide the City of Jerusalem and again have an Arab section and a Jewish Section and the nation would be divided into two countries with the new state of Palestine being the West Bank and all the area around it. But the Oslo accord did not spell out the details in a way that pleased either side and riots and fighting broke out among the Arabs and the Jews. It also produced a new component in the crises, Hamas entered the picture with a large amount of suicide bombings which terrorized the city of Jerusalem. But the new Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu was elected because of the ineffectiveness of Prime Minister Peres to stop the Palestinian violence; and he immediately opened the Temple Tunnel which the archeologists had discovered went from an entrance near the Temple Mount beside the Wall and ended on the Via Dolorosa in the Muslim quarter of the city. This was a statement that the Jews were still in control of Jerusalem and that was not about to change.

Two more strong attempts at peace were made. The first was in 2000, but Yasser Arafat ruined the first one when at the end of agreements by all parties, he reiterated an old Muslim claim that the Jews had never had a Temple, one or two in Jerusalem but instead the Temple was in a city in Samaria. The second was in 2006 when Prime Minister Olmert who had followed Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister offered Abbas, the son of Arafat the most generous deal yet. They would divide Jerusalem, which would be the Capital of Israel and the Palestinian State, with the Holy City shared, and the holy sites administered with International participation. We do not know the thinking of Abbas but we know the result, he would not compromise, his words, but insisted that Jerusalem should return to the control of the not-yet-formed New Palestine.

The seeds of peace had not only fallen on stony ground, they had poisoned it too. Peace had discredited its makers. Israelis no longer trusted the corrupt and geriatric PLO leadership in Ramallah to deliver peace. In Gaza, Hamas, which sent suicide bombers into cars and showers of missiles over the border into Southern Israel, was defiantly, viciously antisemitic and devoted to Israeli annihilation. In Israel, the last of the founding fathers had passed and Benjamin Netanyahu, was back as leader of the Likud.

Netanyahu made it clear that he would not accept a divided Israel or a divided Jerusalem. The pressure from the United States had been strong to do just that. But the war against Iraq by President George Bush and the follow-up battles that followed caused the United States to not want to invest as much time and energy into the Middle East. That relationship took a further strain, when Bush's successor, Barack Obama, was elected. He was the most skeptical about Israel of all the Presidents since Franklin Roosevelt. The new leader of Iraq, Ayatollah Khomeini, was dedicated to Shiite mission of the Twelve Sect. They believe that the return of the righteous, perfect, human Al-Mahdi, called 'the Chosen,' the vanished 'occulted' Twelfth Imam who would liberate Jerusalem, the setting for what the Koran calls 'The Hour.' This including calling the Holocaust an invention, which served to unite a very ununited Arab world. This included getting arms to Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza, and the Houthis in Yemen. They vowed to defeat "Little Satan," their name for Israel. The United States is the "Big Satan." They also fostered 'The Arab Spring' in 2011, a revolution against the traditional Arab dictators and several fell, Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and one, Syria is still involved in a civil war. The goal was to place more radically anti-Israeli governments in each of these countries

New rules changed the game. Israel was not the only regional power to feel anxious and abandoned by America, the Gulf monarchies were alarmed too. Iran coveted Saudi Arabia's role as guardian of the Holy Cities and planned to bring down the Kingdom. Egypt saw the combination of Iran and its offshoot, the Hamas as a threat to them and North Africa. That turbulence meant that there was little pressure within Israel, or the region outside, to take a risk with a peace plan or try to tackle the problem of control of Jerusalem.

### **The Holy City of Jerusalem Recognized as Israel's Capital**

The next major event for Jerusalem was the visit of President Elect Trump in 2016. He followed through on one of his promises to the evangelicals that supported him in his presidential bid; he would move the United States Embassy to Jerusalem and recognize the Holy City as the Israeli Capital.

Trump's decision recognized the reality that Jerusalem had been the Israeli capital for several decades and that it was an overwhelmingly Jewish city. Once again, the Bible, which records the sacred biography of Jerusalem and is fundamentally revered by Christian evangelicals, proved more decisive than all the political conferences, summits, or presidential accords.

There were only minor Palestinian protests to this move of accepting Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem. The Abraham Accords where Israel agreed to normalize relations with several Arab countries and vice versa, United Arab Republic, Bahrain, Sudan, and others outside the influence of Iran have followed.

Jerusalem was once again having the greatest influence on their nation though the United States; and the win by President Joe Biden also shifted the situation for Jerusalem. He had always been pro-Israel and he accepted many of the decisions that President Trump had made including Jerusalem being the recognized capital of Israel. But he also was against Jewish

settlements in the West Bank and favored a two-nation solution to the Israel/Palestine situation. He strongly wanted to restart the Iran nuclear deal and that would have had a great effect on Israel and Jerusalem.

Jerusalem today lives in a state of anxiety. Jews and Arabs dare not venture into each other's neighborhoods, secular Jews avoid ultra-Orthodox who stone them for not resting on the Sabbath or for wearing disrespectful clothing, Jews fulfil their religious dreams and stir Muslim anxiety by praying on the Temple Mount; and the Christian sects keep showing animosity towards each other. The faces of Jerusalem inhabitants are tense, their voices are angry and one feels that everyone, even those of all three faiths, are convinced that they are fulfilling a divine plan, but still unsure of what tomorrow will bring.

Jerusalem's history is a chronicle of settlers, colonists and pilgrims, and have included Arabs, Jews and many others, in a place that has grown and contracted many times. For 1,000 years Israel was exclusively Jewish, then about 400 years, ruled by Christians, and for 1,300 years Islam, and not one of those faiths ever gained Jerusalem without a sword or a war.

### **Bible Prophecies About Jerusalem**

Jerusalem awaits her great destiny of peace, that God has promised she shall have.

#### ***Revelation 21:1***

*"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea."*

This is the description that John was given by God to show that all would be new, Heaven and Earth. This remade Earth and Heaven will be perfect and not be able to decay in any way. The center of this New Heaven and New Earth will be a city called 'the New Jerusalem.

#### ***Revelation 21:2***

*"And I saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband."*

It is key to see that we will not live up there someplace, the Third Heaven that Paul was caught up to was a temporary place. When we die, we go wherever God is, so we will be with Him. We're aware, we're awake, and we're conscious, but that is still a temporary place.

We will live eternally in the Fourth Heaven, the New Heaven and New Earth that have yet to be presented to us. The Earth has not been cleansed and perfected yet and the Heaven can only be presented when we are ready for eternal life. John called this city Heaven; the New Jerusalem and it will come down from Heaven to Earth. The City of Jerusalem will be the centerpiece of the New Heaven and the New Earth that God will create. That is exactly what John told us in **John 14:4**, where he tells us the architect of that City.

#### ***Revelation 21:5-6 NASB***

*5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." 6 Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the*

*Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.*

The alpha and omega are the very terms that Jesus uses of Himself in **Revelation 1:8**, so we know the builder and designer of New Jerusalem.

### **Prophecy of the Two Witnesses**

A long prophecy that takes place in Jerusalem is the two witnesses who appear in **Revelation 11:1-12**.

#### **Revelation 11:1-3**

*1 I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshipers. 2 But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months. 3 And I will appoint my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."*

They appear there in the Time of Tribulation (the last 7 years of life on this Earth) as it now is. They will prophesy successfully for a period of time and then will be slain by the Antichrist in the streets of Jerusalem. They will be left for three days, after which God will take them up to heaven with Him.

### **Temple Rebuilt Prophecy**

Another prophesy of Revelation is that the Temple will be rebuilt for a third time in Jerusalem, **Revelation 11:1-3** and it will be used for God for a period of time and then the Antichrist will misuse it.

#### **Revelation 13:14**

*"Because of the signs, it was given power to perform on behalf of the first beast. It deceived the inhabitants of the earth. It ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived."*

### **Jerusalem in the Millennial Kingdom:**

1. Jerusalem will become the center of the millennial earth. Because the World is under the dominion of Israel's King, the center of the world becomes the Capital.

#### **Isaiah 2:2-4**

*2 In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. 3 Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning*

*hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.*

***Jeremiah 31:6; Micah 4:1; Zechariah 2:10-11.***

2. Jerusalem will be the center of the Kingdom. The City that was the center of David's government will become the center of the government of David's Greater Son, Jesus.

***Jeremiah 3:17***

*At that time, they will call Jerusalem the Throne of the LORD, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the LORD. No longer will they follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts.*

***Jeremiah 30:16-17; 31:6; 23, Ezekiel 43:5-6***

3. The City will become a glorious city, bringing honor to Yahweh:  
***Isaiah 52:1-12, 60:14-21; Jeremiah 30:18; Joel 3:17; Zechariah 2:1-13.***
4. The City will be protected by the power of the King:  
***Isaiah 14:23-24, 23:4, 33:20-24.***

5. The City will be greatly enlarged over its former area:  
***Jeremiah 31:28-40, Ezekiel 48:30-35;***

6. The City will be accessible to all in that day:  
***Isaiah 35:5-9***

7. The City will be the center of worship in that day.  
***Joel 3:17***

*"Then you will know that I, the LORD your God, dwell in Zion, my holy hill. Jerusalem will be holy; never again will foreigners invade her.*

***Jeremiah 30:16-21, Zechariah 8:8***

8. The City will endure forever  
***Isaiah 9:7***

*Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

***Isaiah 60:15; Joel 3:19-21; Zechariah 8:4***

## Israel and Jerusalem Prophecies Fulfilled

1. **Israel Will Be a People Regathered:**

***Jeremiah 31:8*** "I will . . . gather them from the ends of the earth.

***Jeremiah 31:12*** "They shall come and sing in the height of Zion."

***Ezekiel 37: and 38***

**Ezekiel 36:8-11**

*8 " 'But you, mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for they will soon come home. 9 I am concerned for you and will look on you with favor; you will be plowed and sown, 10 and I will cause many people to live on you--yes, all of Israel. The towns will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. 11 I will increase the number of people and animals living on you, and they will be fruitful and become numerous. I will settle people on you as in the past and will make you prosper more than before. Then you will know that I am the LORD.*

**Ezekiel 36:22**

*"It is not for your sake, O house of Israel that I am going to do these things. It is for the sake of my holy name."*

**Ezekiel 36:24**

*"I will take you out of the nations, I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land."*

**Ezekiel 37:6**

*"I will. . .make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin: I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.*

**2. Israel Will Be a Nation Reborn:**

God promised through the prophets that He would gather the Jewish people from all over the world, Second, that He would gather them to a specific place, the Land of Israel. Third, God promised the Jewish people that He would make them a nation once they arrived in the land.

**Ezekiel 37:21-22** wrote in 570 BC,

*"God will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone. God will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land. God will make them one nation in the land."*

That was 2600 years ago and it has all happened.

**Jeremiah 31:8** says, *"I will gather them from the ends of the earth."*

**Jeremiah 32:36-37**, God promised to give them back the City of Jerusalem,

*"I will bring them back to this place, (Meaning Jerusalem) and let them live in safety."*

**Psalms 132:33,34,**

*"The Lord has chosen Zion (Jerusalem), he has desired for his dwelling. . forever and ever."*

**Psalm 89:34-36.**

*"I will not break my covenant or go back on what I promised. Once and for all I have vowed by my own holiness, I will never deceive David. His dynasty will last forever, His throne will endure before me."*

**Ezekiel 43:7 says,**

*"I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever. And the house of Israel will not again defile My holy name."*

**3. Nations Will Align Against Israel**

The Bible clearly tells us what Nations will align against Israel in this time of return and during the wars which will follow.

**Genesis 15:13-14** God gave a promise:

*"Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions "*

**4. Israel Returns to the Promised Land**

**Jeremiah 31:10**

*"Proclaim to the distant coastlands, he who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd."*

**Jeremiah 23:7-8**

*"The days are coming ..when people will no longer say, 'As surely as the Lord lives, who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt, But they will say, 'As surely as the Lord lives, who brought the descendants of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.' Then they will live in their own land."*

**Isaiah 60:8** says,

*" Who are those that fly along the clouds, like doves to their nests?"*

This was the Scriptural basis for renting a Boeing 747 to fly Russian Jews from Moscow to Tel Aviv. The same group of Jewish pioneers used this verse.

**Isaiah 60:9**

*"Surely the islands look to me, in the lead are the ships of Tarshish, bringing your sons from afar, with their silver and gold to the house of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel."*



They decided God wanted them to take ships so those returning can bring their belongings. The first one was purchased in 1993 for that task but many were used in all the years since.

**Isaiah 66:8**, tells of a nation being born in one day—only one was, Israel in 1947.

**Isaiah 66:8**

*“Who has ever heard of such things? Who has ever seen things like this? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children.*

The unity of reuniting Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom and Judah, the Southern kingdom was as smooth as the Bible had prophesied.

**Isaiah 11:13; Jeremiah 3:18; Ezekiel 37:1, 17,21, 22; Hosea 1:11.**

Jeremiah had prophesied that this group of returnees would be bigger than the group that came from Egypt, **Jeremiah 16:14-15**. It was, there were 2 million that came out of Egypt and 5 million that returned to Israel.

## 5. Israel Turns to God

Isaiah detailed how the nation would begin to turn to God after they had returned.

**Isaiah 6:11**

*“Hearts will soften again—when the land is no longer ‘utterly forsaken’.*

Israel’s response to God will occur when ‘the holy seed,’ returns to the Lord and when she, ‘the stump,’ begins to grown again. **Isaiah 6:12-13**. That is now.

**Hosea 3:5,**

*“Afterwards the Israelites. . will come trembling to the Lord and to his blessings in the last days”*

**Ezekiel 36:10-11, “**

*I will multiply the number of people upon you. . .The towns will be in habited and the ruins rebuilt. . .I will settle people on you as in the past and will make you prosper more than before. Then you will know that I am the Lord.”*

That has to be when they return.

This concludes our Study “Jerusalem, The City God Loves In History & In Prophecy.