

How to Interpret the Bible Correctly: Understanding God's Eternal & Biblical Purposes for Jerusalem

Our Amazingly Jewish Heritage

Tonight we are headed to a city made by God called the New JERUSALEM,

It has Twelve Gates named after the 12 JEWISH Apostles,

There are Twelve Foundations named after the 12 Tribes of ISRAEL,

God sits on a hill called ZION,

And we are heading to a Feast with **ABRAHAM, ISAAC and JACOB** already SEATED!

Matthew 8:8-13 (NKJV) The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! 11 **And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.** 12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you." And his servant was healed that same hour.

Jerusalem is BIG in God's Word

The most mentioned place in the Bible is a city called Jerusalem.

The center of the world and the prophetic universe is the same city.

Jerusalem should be your favorite city. After all, it's the city that God has chosen for Himself.

1 Kings 11:13 (NKJV) However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.”

Ancient maps put Jerusalem In the center of the world, and I think they were right.

Jerusalem is also God's timepiece.

The final events of world history will culminate there with the glorious return of Jesus Christ to the Mount of Olives.

Jerusalem is God's Countdown Clock for Humanity's Survival

“Hearing the word Jerusalem evokes many sensations to my mind. Ancient gray stone walls, with crowded and winding streets; and the thick, pungent scent of spices from distant lands. Then I see a heavily laden donkeys clip clopping down the narrow cobble stone streets. And on the way out, passing one of the pock marked gates. Each a silent witnesses to centuries of mortal conflict that swirls around this city.”

When Jesus told His disciples and us about the future he built every word of it around one spot on earth. In theological circles this message (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21) is called the Olivet Discourse. Jesus framed His words about the rest of the history of this planet by the sight of Jerusalem in all its earthly glory spread in front of Him.

Look again at Christ's very first words in Matthew 24:2. All that He says about His second coming is introduced by those words. He said keep your eye on Jerusalem. I am ascending from the Mount of Olives (the center of Jerusalem then and now) and I am returning to the Mount of Olives.

As we turn to the subject again of Christ's coming and those incredibly detailed snap shots He left us in Matthew 24, we are focusing upon Jerusalem. According to the Lord, the end of the world centers around Jerusalem.

Mentioned over 800 times in God's Word¹—Jerusalem is a very important place. It was in Jerusalem that God promised Christ's coming as the Lamb of God to Abraham. It was here that David was promised a future son that would have an endless kingdom. It was here God has worked. In:

¹ Jerusalem: 814 times in 766 verses; Zion: 160 times in 160 verses; City of David 46 times in 46 verses.

Jerusalem! Three thousand years of lifetimes! Abraham and Isaac upon the altar of Moriah, a stone's throw from here! David, the shepherd-king, watching Bathsheba from a distance. Jeremiah, mourning for the exiles. Jesus, teaching in the Temple. Peter's betrayal. Jesus, walking the Way of Sorrows! Dying with forgiveness on his lips. Peter, shouting the good news in the streets on Pentecost! He is risen! Call on His name and live forever with Him!²

But today all that is left from Christ's Jerusalem is called the Western Wall. If you go there one of the first things you notice are several large signs that have been affixed near the entrances to Jerusalem's Western Wall plaza. In addition to the usual guidelines regarding modesty and respect for the sanctity of the holy site, the centrality of the Temple Mount to Judaism and the Jewish people is clearly expressed. The signs, ten feet tall, read:

"Jewish tradition teaches that the Temple Mount is the focal point of Creation. In the center of the mountain lies the 'Foundation Stone' of the world. Here Adam came into being. Here Abraham, Isaac and Jacob served G-d. The First and Second Temples were built upon this mountain. The Ark of the Covenant was set upon the Foundation Stone itself. Jerusalem was chosen by G-d as the dwelling place of the Divine Presence. David longed to build the Temple, and Solomon his son built the First Temple here about 3,000 years ago. It was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The Second Temple was rebuilt on its ruins 70 years later. It was razed by the Roman legions over 1,900 years ago. The present Western Wall before you is a remnant of the western Temple Mount retaining walls. Jews have prayed in its shadow for hundreds of years, an expression of their faith in the rebuilding of the Temple. The Sages said about it: 'The Divine Presence never moves from the Western Wall.' The Temple Mount continues to be the focus of prayers for Jews all over the world."

JERUSALEM IS GOD'S CITY

There are three reasons why Jerusalem is so vital: because Jerusalem is **GOD'S CITY, GOD'S CLOCK AND GOD'S CANVAS.**

GOD'S CITY because He has chosen Jerusalem

1 Kings 11:36 And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there. (KJV)

² Bodie & Brock Thoene, *Jerusalem Vigil*. New York, New York: Penguin Books, 2001, p. 186.

Psalm 48:1-2 Great [is] the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, [in] the mountain of his holiness. 2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, [is] mount Zion, [on] the sides of the north, the city of the great King. 12 Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. 13 Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell [it] to the generation following. (KJV)

Psalm 87:2-3 we read, 'The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the other dwelling places of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, oh city of God.'

JERUSALEM IS GOD'S CLOCK.

The close of world history is tied to this little city. All the world will focus on it as the Wrath of God is poured out in the Tribulation. And fallen human history culminates with Jesus Christ's descent to the Mount of Olives. The Creator returns to restore His fallen Paradise.

ZECHARIAH 12

New King James Version (NKJV)

12 The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: **2** "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. **3** And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. **4** In that day," says the LORD, "I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. **5** And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem *are* my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.' **6** In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem.

7 "The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. **8** In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David *shall be* like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them. **9** It shall be in that day *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only *son*, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. **11** In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning

at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. **12** And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; **13** the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and their wives by themselves; **14** all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves.

Get Chapter 13 about 1/3 survive

Zechariah 14

Behold, the day of the LORD is coming,
And your spoil will be divided in your midst.
²For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem;
The city shall be taken,
The houses rifled,
And the women ravished.
Half of the city shall go into captivity,
But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
³Then the LORD will go forth
And fight against those nations,
As He fights in the day of battle.
⁴And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
From east to west,
Making a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
And half of it toward the south.
⁵Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley,
For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal.
Yes, you shall flee
As you fled from the earthquake
In the days of Uzziah king of Judah.
Thus the LORD my God will come,
And all the saints with You.
⁶It shall come to pass in that day
That there will be no light;
The lights will diminish.
⁷It shall be one day
Which is known to the LORD—
Neither day nor night.
But at evening time it shall happen
That it will be light.

⁸And in that day it shall be
That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem,
Half of them toward the eastern sea
And half of them toward the western sea;
In both summer and winter it shall occur.
⁹And the LORD shall be King over all the earth.
In that day it shall be—
“The LORD *is* one,”
And His name one.

¹⁰All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. *Jerusalem* shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin’s Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, and *from* the Tower of Hananel to the king’s winepresses.

¹¹*The people* shall dwell in it;
And no longer shall there be utter destruction,
But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

¹²And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem:

Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet,
Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets,
And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.

¹³It shall come to pass in that day
That a great panic from the LORD will be among them.

Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor,
And raise his hand against his neighbor’s hand;

¹⁴Judah also will fight at Jerusalem.
And the wealth of all the surrounding nations
Shall be gathered together:

Gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance.

¹⁵Such also shall be the plague
On the horse *and* the mule,
On the camel and the donkey,
And on all the cattle that will be in those camps.
So *shall* this plague *be*.

¹⁶And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷And it shall be *that* whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. ¹⁸If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they *shall have no rain*; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁹This shall be the punishment of

Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

²⁰In that day "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" shall be *engraved* on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. ²¹Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

Another beautiful truth is that Jerusalem is **GOD'S CANVAS**. In the Word of God this city has seven beautiful sides. Each speaks to us if we are to fulfill Christ's last words and reach our world. For in a very vivid way, Jerusalem portrays all that this world needs!

JERUSALEM'S HISTORY HAS SEVEN ELEMENTS OF GOD'S HISTORY

Element-1: Where does the history of Jerusalem begin? The first mention of this city on God's canvas is in Genesis 14:18. To Abraham it becomes a **CITY OF THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST'S INCARNATION**.

“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.” (KJV).

From its gates descends Melchisadek, the Priest King. This may have been Shem son of Noah, or a Christophany (pre-incarnate appearance of Christ) but whoever it was, it was an awesome reminder to Abraham of the mystery of God's plan. Melchisadek was without father or mother. Having neither a birthdate or an appointment with death.

(Hebrews 7:).

He is an awesome picture of Christ. Soon we find God targeting a mountain outside Jerusalem.

Genesis 22:2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. (KJV).

Mystery of mysteries, outside Jerusalem on a hill Abraham acts out the sacrificial death of an only son. We may not always understand what God is doing but we must obey!

Element-2: Then later on God's canvas, the city becomes a **CITY OF SATANIC INIQUITY**. The depraved and debauched Jebusite inhabitants of ancient Canaan live their lives of growing iniquity.

Genesis 15:16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. 21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites. (KJV).

Why does God wait? Why does He allow evil to grow? This reminds us of the New

Testament verse

2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. (NKJV).

Ephesians 2:1-2 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, (NKJV)

Element-3: Jerusalem was a pagan Canaanite Jebusite city when Joshua conquered the Promised Land. Later David as king, made the city his capitol and we find Jerusalem becoming a **CITY OF SACRIFICIAL WORSHIP**. In the only other passage where Moriah appears is:

2 Chronicles 3:1 "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah..."

So, evidently the place Abraham was asked to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah, was the exact spot where the temple was later built in Jerusalem. When you look at the temple area today, remember this is where that dramatic event happened. But even more astounding is that the north-west corner of Mount Moriah is called Golgotha. This is where Christ bled and died for our sins! That is why there is always worship associated with remembering the work of the Cross.

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, (NKJV)

Element-4: Later this city of worship slides into sin. But God makes it a **CITY OF GRACIOUS REVIVAL**. He sends this revival under Hezekiah and Josiah.

2 Kings 23:19-23 And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel. 20 And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem. 21 And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant. 22 Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; 23 But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, wherein this passover was holden to the LORD in Jerusalem. (KJV).

Element-5: But it doesn't last. Revival cools into and God's people slip away. Jerusalem becomes a **CITY OF GRIEVOUS APOSTASY**. The visible sign of the presence of God is His glory. Listen as Ezekiel describes the departure Ezekiel 11:23 And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city. (KJV). Gone. God no longer dwelt above the ark in His temple. The glory left not to return until clothed in a human frame. For Christ is God's glory. Although there will be a yet future day of the glory returned to a Millennial Temple, we today are His temple! 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (NKJV)

Element-6: When Jesus came Jerusalem became a **CITY OF COSTLY REDEMPTION**. Within its walls the good news was preached by Christ. Outside its walls the Creator was crucified by His people. Within its walls the church was born. Outside its walls they went forth to tell every creature of salvation. The city of Christ and His Apostles was one of religious zealots and spiritual hypocrites. It was a city overflowing with sinners, foreigners and common folks just like you and me. That was where it all began. At home. In their city they had to start telling people they didn't know that well, the greatest story the world has ever heard!

Hebrews Outside gate verse, jn 19 verse

Element-7: But finally, the Bible ends with the last picture on the canvas of Jerusalem. For Jerusalem becomes a **CITY OF GLORIOUS HOPE** ! Written on the hearts of every truly born again Christian is New Jerusalem.

Revelation 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. (KJV).

It is new because the old is passing away. The old world of sin, tears and death. The NEW is coming. Hope from God.

JERUSALEM IS ALSO GOD'S HEAVENLY PLACE

True Church of Jesus	False Church of Satan
True Bride	False Bride

One Way	Many Ways
Heavenly Destination	Earthly Destination
City Of Peace	City Of Confusion
Spiritual life	Fleshly life
Internal change	External conformity
Creation triumphs	Evolution fails
Heaven Rules	Hell opens
Spiritual Worship	Idolatrous
Divine	Humanistic ends
Contentment	Covetousness stops
the world	God
live for the moment	eternity
get	give
go for the top	bottom
be in charge	serve

Why is Jerusalem a city of glorious hope? Hebrews 11:10-13 tells us that those who are going to heaven are Citizens of Heaven. And all born again Christians are to LOOK FOR THE CITY. Why?

BECAUSE ITS A SECURE CITY: Hebrews 11:10,13 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker [is] God.

BECAUSE ITS A TRANSFORMING CITY: Hebrews 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced [them] and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. (NKJV)

BECAUSE ITS A AN UNSHAKABLE CITY: Hebrews 12:28-29 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God [is] a consuming fire. (NKJV)

Jerusalem is **GOD'S CITY, GOD'S CLOCK AND GOD'S CANVAS.**

CITY OF THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST'S INCARNATION.

CITY OF SATANIC OF INIQUITY.

CITY OF SACRIFICIAL WORSHIP.

CITY OF GRACIOUS REVIVAL.

CITY OF GRIEVOUS APOSTASY.

**CITY OF COSTLY REDEMPTION.
CITY OF GLORIOUS HOPE**

JERUSALEM'S HISTORY

Here, briefly, are five periods³ In Jerusalem's fascinating history.

FIRST TEMPLE PERIOD (1000 B.C.-586 B.C.)

First, there is the **FIRST TEMPLE PERIOD (1000 B.C.-586 B.C.)**. Solomon, David's son, built a beautiful temple In Jerusalem. We can only imagine what it looked like.

Its glory was greater than anything that had ever been built in the ancient world. And we read, "And it came about when the priests came from the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord' (1 Kings 8: 10, 11).

But after Solomon's death the kingdom was split; Samaria became the capitol of the northern tribes. This city succumbed to the Assyrians in 722 B.C.

In 586 B.C. the Babylonians captured Jerusalem, the southern kingdom. After three sieges, Solomon's beautiful temple was totally destroyed. Many Jews were carried off to Babylon where they lived for seventy years. When the Persians In turn overthrew Babylon, the Jews were allowed to return to their homeland.

THE SECOND TEMPLE FROM 538 B.C. TO A.D. 70

The second period is that of **THE SECOND TEMPLE FROM 538 B.C. TO A.D. 70**. When the Jews returned from Babylon, a small temple was constructed where Solomon's beautiful edifice once stood. Zechariah the prophet encouraged them by saying, 'Do not despise the day of small things." Incredibly, this smaller temple served the Jews for nearly five centuries.

In 19 B.C. the Roman ruler, King Herod, proposed the idea of reconstructing a beautiful temple In Jerusalem. He promised the Jews that he would not tear down Zerubbabel's temple but build a new one over it. In effect the building of the new one and the tearing down of the smaller one would happen simultaneously. Worship would not be interrupted. He also trained one thousand priests as masons

³ Parts of the following adapted from Lutzer, God and the City, p. 27-31.

so that no Gentiles would have to work in the sacred areas.

This beautiful structure was not yet finished when Jesus Christ was on earth. 'After cleansing the temple, the Jews asked that He give them a sign and Jesus answered, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews therefore said, 'it took forty years to build this temple and you will raise it up in three days?' But He was speaking of the temple of His body (John 2:19-21). This temple had been under construction for forty-six years and was not yet completed. Though Herod was long since dead, work on the temple continued.

One day Jesus and the disciples were on the Mount of Olives overlooking the temple area. They noticed 'that it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts. And then He said, 'As for these things which you are looking at, the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down' (Luke 21:5,6). Thus Christ predicted that the second temple would be totally destroyed, and destroyed R was.

In A.D. 70 the Emperor Titus came to put down a revolt in Jerusalem, so he surrounded the city of Jerusalem and captured it. Titus starved the city. And when people would sneak out at night to find food or water, they were crucified until rows and rows of crosses stood around the city. Jerusalem was totally destroyed and the temple taken apart stone by stone. Christ's prophecy was meticulously fulfilled.

GENTILE PERIOD FROM A.D. 70 TO 1948

The third era in Jerusalem's history is the **GENTILE PERIOD FROM A.D. 70 TO 1948**. Recall that Christ said, ... And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive into all of the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, (Luke 21:24). Let's take a tour of this Gentile period noting seven different eras that span nineteen centuries.

- 1.The **ROMAN PERIOD** (AD 70 - 33) The Romans brought their own people to repopulate the city.
- 2.The **BYZANTINE PERIOD** (330 - 638) This is the period after Constantine. By the way, his mother, Helena, made a trip to the holy land and established the various traditional sites regarding the life and ministry of Christ. Even today her identification of places such as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher are considered by some to be authentic. Various churches and fortifications can be seen dating back to the Byzantine Period with its unique architecture.

3. The **FIRST MUSLIM PERIOD** (638 - 1099) Mohammed began the religion of Islam and conquered the city of Jerusalem with the sword. Today, Jerusalem is the third most holy site for this religion after Mecca and Medina. During this era, the Dome of the Rock was built, believed to be the place where Mohammed ascended into heaven. Just think, this beautiful building was constructed 1300 years ago and is still an architectural wonder.
4. The **CRUSADER PERIOD** (1099 - 1187) Pope Urban 11 issued a decree saying that anyone who was willing to go to the holy land to liberate it from the Muslims would be forgiven all sins, and if unable to go, the same benefits would extend to those who contributed financially to send a substitute. Hordes of Europeans went to Jerusalem after the initial liberation. Today, crusader churches and walls still can be found throughout the land, all of them nearly a thousand years old.
5. The **LATER MUSLIM PERIOD** (1187 - 1517) Once again, the Muslims dominated the land of Israel for four long centuries.
6. The **TURKISH PERIOD** (1517 - 1917) The Ottoman Turks defeated the Muslims, and Suleiman ruled from Constantinople over the Eastern wing of the Roman Empire. Under his reign, the present walls of the city of Jerusalem were built nearly four hundred years ago.
7. The **BRITISH PERIOD** (1917 - 1948) The British asked the United Nations to resolve the conflict surrounding the city and the land was given to the Jews in 1948. Jerusalem was divided up into four sectors - Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and Armenian.
 1. But in the war of 1967, the city fell to Israeli hands and the territory all the way to the Jordan River (known as the West Bank) became a part of the Israeli state.
 2. Many people believe that this ended the domination of the Gentiles which Christ spoke about. Recall that He said, 'Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled (Luke 21:24). This explains why some people think that Christ's return may be near.

TRIBULATION PERIOD JERUSALEM.

The fourth period is still future. The battle of Armageddon will spill over to Jerusalem.

Zechariah writes, 'For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city' (Zechariah 14:2). This then marks the great sorrow that will yet come to the city of Jerusalem as all the nations of the earth turn against the Jews. After Armageddon, Jerusalem will experience exaltation. "Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as when He fights on the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem..." (14:3,4). Christ will come and defend His people; the Jews living at that time will look upon their Redeemer and recognize Him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Millennial Kingdom Jerusalem

The fifth major era is when Jerusalem will enter what is known as the **Millennial Kingdom**, 'The law will go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, and will render decisions for many peoples; and they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war (Isaiah 2:2-4). After judgment, comes blessing.

NEW (HEAVENLY) JERUSALEM

The final era is when the earthly Jerusalem gives way to **THE NEW JERUSALEM** that comes from God out of heaven. This heavenly city is not so much an extension of the old, as it is a new substitute for all that has ever been known here on earth. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband .. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal clear jasper .. Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city. "

In light of the momentous events which still must take place before our Lord's return, we can only pray, "Even so come Lord Jesus.

JERUSALEM

"When God created beauty, He created ten parts of it and gave nine to Jerusalem; when He created knowledge, He did the same; and the same when He created beauty."

""He will be a wiser man who breathes the air of Jerusalem."

JERUSALEM --

- The NERVE center of the world GEOGRAPHICALLY (Ezek. 5:5)
- The SALVATION center of the world SPIRITUALLY (Jn. 4:22)
- The STORM center of the world PROPHETICALLY (Zech. 14: 1-8)
- The GLORY center of the world ULTIMATELY (Isaiah 2:1-5)

"No city has been coveted and fought over as much as Jerusalem, the City of Peace. Babylonians, Macedonians, Ptolemies, Selucids, Romans, Byzantines, Persians, Arabs, Seljuks, Crusaders, Mongols, Mamelukes, Turks, British and Jordanians are only some of the conquerors whose names have fluttered across the pages of its bloody and anguished past. Jerusalem is a sacred city - a city that has played a role in history out of all proportion to its economic importance or size!"⁴

Some important facts about Jerusalem

2,155 feet above sea level. Same latitude as Savannah, Georgia. Modern Walls are 4,326 yards or 2 1/2 miles in circumference at an average height of 34 to 38 feet and 10 to 15 feet thick. The present walls were erected by Sultan Suleman the II, Magnificent in 1542 AD.

The New Testament records only seven visits by our Lord Jesus to Jerusalem. At the height of its beauty in Herod's era Jesus wept over this city because He saw the poverty of their devotion to the truth and the horror of the judgment for their back slidings apostasy (Mat. 23:37-39)

Jerusalem is first named in Genesis 14:18 and is mentioned over 600 times in the Old Testament.

This city is sacred to Jews, Christians and Moslems. The Old City stands on a rocky hill

⁴ This is Jerusalem, Bishko.

2,500 feet above sea level, 33 miles east of the Mediterranean Sea and 14 miles west of the Dead Sea. It dates back to 1,500 BC It is also known as Zion and the City of David. There are 8 gates, 34 towers and a wall 2 1/2 miles in circumference. It is the capitol of the modern state of Israel and the new city spreads to the northwest beyond the walls of the Old City.

- David took the city (II Samuel 5:6-9; 1 Chron 11:4-7)
- Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city in 585 BC (I Kings 25:1-21; II Chron 36:15-21; Jeremiah 39:9-14)
- Cyrus permitted the Jews to return from their captivity (II Chron. 22,23)
- Nehemiah rebuilt the walls. (Neh. 2:9-20)
- Jesus predicted the destruction of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44)
- Jerusalem destroyed in 70 AD (Luke 21:20-24)

BETHANY: Bethany has three meanings: House of Dates, of the Poor, of Misery. It is also called the House of Lazarus.

- Home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus (Lk. 10:38-42)
- Lord's prayer probably given near here (Lk. 11:1-4)
- Raising of Lazarus (Jn. 11:1-46)
- Christ anointed by Mary (in. 12:1-8)
- Jesus stayed here when He came to Jerusalem for Passover (Mt. 21:17)

JERUSALEM: OUTSIDE THE CITY

MODEL OF JERUSALEM: The model city is a reconstruction of the city of Jerusalem as it was in the first century. The model was built using some of the original materials such as marble, stone, wood, copper and iron. The scale is 1 to 50.

MOUNT SCOPUS: Mount SCOPUS is a mountain on the Northeast corner of the old city of Jerusalem. The view from Mount Scopus as its name suggests, sweeps over all Jerusalem. In 1925, the Hebrew University opened its oft-closed doors here, followed in 1934 by the Hadassah Hospital. In 1948 when Mount Scopus was cut off from West Jerusalem. Since 1967 the two institutions have been reactivated. The World War I British and Allied Military Cemetery is also located here.

MOUNT of Olives: The Mount of Olives is just east of Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley. It stands 2,641 feet above sea level and is 318 feet higher than the Temple Mount area. Its northern summit is marked by the Ascension of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Old City Orientation Psalm 122

Called the Mount of Offense (1 Ki. 11:4-8; 2 Ki. 23:13)

David fled from Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. 15:20-32)

Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant, gave David provisions on the Mount (2 Sam. 16:1-2)
Jesus' triumphal entry (Mt. 21:1-11)
Jesus abode here for the last week of His ministry (Lk. 21:37)
Jesus wept over Jerusalem here (Lk. 19:41-44)
Jesus cursed the fig tree (Mt. 21:18-22)
The "Olivet Discourse" (Mt. 24-25)
Jesus went to the Mount after eating the last Passover (Mt. 26:30)
Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to His disciples (Lk. 24:49)
The ascension (Acts 1:9-11)
Jesus will return to the Mount at His Second Coming (Zech. 14:4)

GETHSEMANE: (lit. Olive Press) The garden is maintained by Franciscans. It is doubtful that the 8 ancient olive trees existed in Jesus' day because Titus cut down all the trees in 70 AD when he destroyed Jerusalem. The trees you see today are an outgrowth of the trees in Jesus' day. The Church of All Nations is named after the 16 countries, which helped, build it.

Jesus agonized in prayer in Gethsemane (Mt. 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-52)
Jesus was betrayed by Judas and arrested by the soldiers (Mt. 26:47-56)

KIDRON VALLEY: (also called Valley of Jehoshaphat) the valley runs 2-3/4 miles along the east wall of Jerusalem. During the reforms by Israel's kings, idols and other pagan items used in worship were disposed of in the valley.

Asa burned his mother's idols (1 Ki. 15:13)
Josiah destroyed vessels made for Baal worship (2 Ki. 23:4, 6)
Hezekiah cast all unclean items from the Temple (2 Chr. 29:16; 30:14)
People loyal to David fled from Absalom across the valley (2 Sam. 15:23)
Valley associated with God's judgment of the nations (Joel 3:2, 12)

HEZEKIAH'S TUNNEL: Hezekiah (702 BC), realizing that the Gihon Spring was very vulnerable because it was outside of Jerusalem, made a channel so the water would flow into the Pool of Siloam within the city wall. He cut an S-shape tunnel from Gihon to the Pool of Siloam (2 Ki. 20:20; 2 Chr. 32:30).

POOL OF SILOAM: The pool is at the end of Hezekiah's Tunnel and was inside the city wall until Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem in 135 AD
Jesus healed the man who was born blind at this pool (Jn. 9:7-11).
Also Nehemiah 3:15; Isaiah 8:6

GIHON SPRING: These spring goes back 3,000 years when the Jebusites sank an underground waterway to the spring which was outside the city of Jerusalem. David captured Jerusalem by sending his men up the water shaft (2 Sam. 5:7-8). Solomon was

crowned king at this spot.

AKELDAMA: (also called Field of Blood and Potter's Field) it was bought with the thirty pieces of silver given to Judas to betray Jesus. Judas had returned the money after betraying our Lord (Mt. 27:3-10; Acts 1:19).

JERUSALEM: THE OLD CITY

Mount ZION: It was once within the walls of ancient Jerusalem located at the southwest corner of the city. It is very sacred to the Jewish people because it is the traditional spot of David's tomb.

The upper room where Jesus ate the last Passover (Lk. 22:7-13)

The Holy Spirit came upon the 120 Jewish people (Acts 1:12-15; 2:1-4)

JEWISH QUARTER: The Jewish Quarter has changed enormously since the Six-Day war in 1967, and provides a delightful smorgasbord of the unexpected. After its surrender to the Jordanian army by the Israelis in 1948 and subsequent evacuation, the Quarter was damaged substantially, and abandoned for a generation. With the re-unification of the city in 1967, the process of restoration began. With so many buildings no more than rubble, archeologists were provided a unique opportunity to explore and excavate before the construction crews moved in. Architects and builders set about restoring the surviving buildings and today the Jewish Quarter is the most attractive of the Old City's neighborhoods.

JAFFA GATE: It is the western gate of the old city and leads from Jerusalem to Jaffa.

WAILING WALL: Since June 1967 this has been known as the Western Wall, and by many it is called the Joy Wall. This retaining wall of the huge platform where both Solomon and Herod built their Temples stood nearest to the sanctuary. Only a portion of it was preserved by Romans when they destroyed the city in 70 AD to show how formidable they were. It is 50 yards long and 60 feet high. One stone is 161 feet long and 13 inches wide. Jewish people gather at the wall to wail the loss of their Temple and the Holy Ark and to pray for the coming of the Messiah.

TEMPLE MOUNT (Mount Moriah, comprises about 35 acres)

Abraham offered Isaac on Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:1-2)

David bought the Jebusite threshing floor of Araunah (2 Sam. 24:18-25)

Solomon built the First Temple (2 Chr. 3:1-2)

The Second Temple built by Zerubbabel (Ezra 3:8-13; 4:23-24; 5:1-5)

Herod the Great rebuilt and enlarged the Temple in 20 BC

Jesus was presented in the Temple (Lk. 2:22) and returned at the age of 12 (Lk. 2:42)

Our Lord drove out the money changers (Jn. 2:13-15)

Jesus attended the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn. 7:10)

Jesus' judgment on the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mt. 21:23-23:36)

The disciples mentioned Herod's Temple to Jesus (Mt. 24:1-2)

Peter and John went to the Temple to pray (Acts 3:1)

DOME OF THE ROCK: (also called Mosque of Omar) an octagonal-shaped mosque with brilliant blue Persian tiles erected over the site of the Jewish Temple. The mosque was built in the seventh century over the immense rough-hewn rock about 40 feet by 52 feet, which rises 7 feet above the level of the Temple area. The rock formed the base of the Jewish altar where the burnt offerings were offered. The grooves and hole in the middle of the rock were used to carry the blood and refuse out of the Temple into the Kidron Valley.

GOLDEN Gate: (also called Eastern Gate, facing the Mount of Olives)

Jesus' triumphal entry (Mt. 21:1-11) only gate leading to the Temple area, closed by the Turkish government in 1530, hoping to postpone the day of world judgment

Jesus will return through this gate into Jerusalem at His Second Coming (Ezek. 44:1-3)

ST. STEPHEN'S GATE: (also called Sheep Gate and Lion's Gate) The site of Stephen's martyrdom (Acts 7:56-60).

POOL OF BETHESDA: Jesus healed the impotent man here (Jn. 5:1-15).

SOLOMON'S QUARRIES: The stones for the building of Solomon's Temple were taken from here (1 Ki. 6:7).

SOLOMON'S STABLES: This is called the Pinnacle of the Temple (Mt. 4:5). It is located at the southeast corner of the Temple area and extends 170 feet above the Kidron Valley.

PILATE'S JUDGEMENT HALL: Matt. 15:16; John 19:1,3) or the

CONVENT OF THE SISTERS OF ZION: The convent was constructed beside an ancient arch of the Via Dolorosa in the belief that this arch marked the spot where Pilate said, "Ecce Home" (Behold the Man, Jn. 19:5), on presenting Jesus after He had been flogged, dressed in a purple robe and crowned with thorns. The convent contains the remains of the floor, an impressive paved square (Lithostratos in Greek), which was used by Rome's legionnaires for training and parades. Christian tradition placed the Praetorian (Place of Judgment) of the Roman procurator on this square associated with Jesus' trial and condemnation. The Fortress of Antonia was built by Herod the Great in 36 BC on this spot in honor of Mark Antony.

VIA DOLOROSA: (also called the Way of the Cross, lit. Way of Sorrow). The Tower of Hananel in Nehemiah's day. (Nehemiah 3:1; 12:39). Jesus walked out of the judgment hall

at the beginning of the Via Dolorosa. (John 19:13). Paul made his speech to the people of Jerusalem at the site of Herod's fortress or Antonia. (Acts 21:35-40).

Traditional 14 Stations of the Cross.

1. Jesus is condemned to death
2. Jesus receives the cross
3. Jesus falls the first time
4. Jesus meets His mother
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry His cross
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus
7. Jesus falls the second time
8. Jesus speaks to the daughters of Jerusalem
9. Jesus falls the third time
10. Jesus is stripped of His clothes
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross
12. Jesus died on the cross
13. The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross
14. Jesus is laid in the sepulchre

CALVARY: There are two places pointed out to visitors to the Holy Land as the place where our Lord was crucified (Mt. 27:33-50):

Church of the Holy Sepulchre this is the traditional site of the crucifixion and burial of Christ. However, the evidence is not very trustworthy. The question can never be settled until the location of the second wall can be determined. Upon this depends the fact as to whether this site was inside or outside of the city, for Christ was crucified "outside the gate" (Heb. 13:12).

Gordon's Calvary this place was pointed out by General Gordon, the hero of Khartoum, as the probable place of Christ's death and burial. Jeremiah's grotto beneath, the appearance of a skull in the rock formation, the continuation of the mountains of Moriah (where Abraham offered up Isaac), and the neighboring tomb all pointed to this as the true Calvary. Whatever may be said for the Holy Sepulchre, Gordon's Calvary gives one a clearer picture of what these places must have looked in the time of our Lord.

The GARDEN TOMB: Located at the foot of the rock knoll known, as Gordon's Calvary is a rock-cut tomb dating from the Roman period. It is thought to have been the tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea where Jesus was buried (Mt. 27:57-60). The Garden Tomb: Four descriptions make the Garden Tomb a possible site for the crucifixion. First, it is known as "Beit-ha-Sekilah," the place or the house of stoning traditionally recognized as the stoning place of Stephen. It served as an execution site until 1917.

Second, the skull-like appearance in the cliff face would seem to fit the description given in

the Gospels; a place called Golgotha - the place of a skull.

Third, the site is clearly outside the city walls, fitting descriptions in the Gospels and Hebrews 13:12. Today the city walls are visible, about 200 yards away.

Finally, Roman historians record that crucifixions were held by main roads or city gates. Matthew 27:39 refers to people mocking Jesus as they walked past the cross. Two main roads run past this site, the road to Jericho and the road to Damascus.

But we are not really interested in trying to prove this is the place, because the geography does not affect the theology. Whether Jesus died here or 800 yards away does not negate the salvation He won for us. The cross, a symbol of horror, became a symbol of hope. Five clues given in the Gospels depict the tomb that belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. All five can be seen at the Garden Tomb. –

Although the garden we see today is quite modern, the three cisterns and the wine press found within its limits indicate the presence of a vineyard in the time of Christ (John 19:41).

Chisel marks show the tomb was cut from solid rock (Matt. 27:60).

The channel along the outside of the tomb reveals the past presence of a rolling stone, which would have closed the entrance. This matches the description in Matthew 27:60.

Jesus' body was lying on the women's right as they entered the tomb (Mark 16:1-5). This placement, although unusual, appears obvious upon entering the tomb. Furthermore, John reveals that it must be possible to view the lying place from outside the tomb (John 20:5).

With the cross as a symbol of our salvation, surely the empty tomb symbolizes the certainty of our hope. How do we know Jesus can raise us from the dead? Because three days after the crucifixion the tomb was empty. We may never know for certain where Jesus' body was laid, and we don't need to. The important issue is not to find the empty tomb, but to find the person who left it empty.⁵

JERUSALEM: NEW CITY

SHRINE OF THE BOOK: This is the home of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were discovered at Qumran in 1947. It is near the main building of the Israel Museum and houses seven of

⁵ Paul Bridge, Moody Monthly, 1985.

the invaluable scrolls, the Bar Kochba letters and other documents and artifacts dating back to Bar Kochba's revolt against the Romans. The subterranean sanctuary, with only a portion of its double parabolic dome emerging above the ground from a pool of water, symbolizes the emergence of the State of Israel after centuries of dormancy. The black basalt wall arising from the cavern below the upper plaza, in contrast with the white dome, accents the heavy burden, which lay on the people of Israel for more than 2,000 years. The white dome itself is patterned after the top of the jars in which the scrolls were found. Under the 70-foot wide dome, the scroll of Isaiah is on view, around an enormous metal drum, which can be lowered deep into the ground in the event of emergency.

YAD VASHEM: (Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Authority) this memorial was erected in memory of the six million Jews who were slaughtered in World War II. Built in 1967, the name was taken from the prophecy of Isaiah 56:5. Connected with the memorial there is an institute building containing photographic and filmed material. Here is kept the registry of all Jews from all over the world. The purpose of this German registry was to destroy all Jews. A copy of the ovens is also housed here.

KNESSET: (Parliament) The Knesset building, which is the home of Israel's governing body, is located near the Israel Museum and the Shrine of the Book.

THE MENORA: A huge menorah (candlestick) stands opposite the entrance to the Knesset. It has 7 branches which are decorated with 29 panels on which are illustrated highlights of the history and revival of the Jewish people.

There is a definite spiritual lesson in each of these gates.

1. *The sheep gate* (v. 1) reminds us of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross (John 10). This was the first gate repaired, for without the sacrifice, there is no salvation. Note that the sheep gate had no locks or bars, for the door of salvation is ever open to the sinner. This is the only gate that was sanctified, setting it apart as a special gate.
2. *The fish gate* (v. 3) reminds us of soul-winning, being “fishers of men” (Mark 1:17).
3. *The old gate* (v. 6) speaks of the old paths and the old truths of the Word of God (Jer. 6:16 and 18:15). The people of the world are forever looking for “some new thing” (Acts 17:21), and they refuse to go back to the basic truths that really work.
4. *The valley gate* (v. 13) reminds us of humility before the Lord. In Phil. 2 we see Christ descending from the glories of heaven into the valley of human limitation and even death. We do not enjoy the valley, but often God must take us there to bring a blessing to our lives.
5. Verse 14 introduces *the dung gate*. Apparently this is the gate through which the waste and refuse of the city were taken. Imagine how difficult it would be to repair a gate in such a place! Certainly this speaks to us of the cleansing of our lives (2 Cor. 7:1; Isa. 1:16–17). Later some of the Jews were to complain about the rubbish; see 4:10.
6. *The gate of the fountain* (v. 15) illustrates the ministry of the Holy Spirit; see John 7:37–39. It is interesting to note the order of these gates: first, there is humility (the valley gate), then cleansing (the dung gate), and then the filling of the Spirit (the fountain gate).
7. *The water gate* (v. 26) speaks of the Word of God, which cleanses the believer (Eph. 5:26; Ps. 119:9). Note that this is the seventh gate mentioned, and seven is the Bible number for perfection—the perfect Word of God. Note too that this gate needed no repairs! “Forever, O Lord, Your Word is settled in heaven” (Ps. 119:89, NKJV).
8. *The horse gate* (v. 28) introduces the idea of warfare. Certainly there are battles in the Christian life, and we must be ready to fight. See 2 Tim. 2:1–4.
9. *The east gate* (v. 29) makes us think of the second coming of Jesus Christ (Matt. 24:27). In Ezek. 10:16–22, the prophet saw God’s glory depart from the temple by the east gate; see also 11:22–25. But later (43:1–5) he saw God’s glory return “from the way of the east.”
10. *The gate Miphkad* (v. 31) speaks of God’s judgment. The Hebrew word *miphkad* means “appointment, account, census, mustering.” It carries the idea of troops showing up for review. Certainly God is going to call all souls up for judgment one day.

As you review these gates and their order, you can see the suggestion of the full picture of the Christian life, from the sheep gate (salvation) to the final judgment. Praise God the

Christian shall never face judgment because of his sins! See John 5:24, Rom. 8:1-2.6

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Watch Jerusalem
Matthew 24:15-16

When Jesus told His disciples and us about the future he built every word of it around one spot on earth. In theological circles this message (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21) is called the Olivet Discourse. Jesus framed His words about the rest of the history of this planet by the sight of Jerusalem in all its earthly glory spread in front of Him.

Look again at Christ's very first words in Matthew 24:2. All that He says about His second coming is introduced by those words. He said keep your eye on Jerusalem. I am ascending from the Mount of Olives (the center of Jerusalem then and now) and I am returning to the Mount of Olives.

As we turn to the subject again of Christ's coming and those incredibly detailed snap shots He left us in Matthew 24, we are focusing upon Jerusalem. According to the Lord, the end of the world centers around Jerusalem.

The most mentioned place in the Bible is a city called Jerusalem.

The center of the world and the prophetic universe is the same city.

Jerusalem should be your favorite city. After all, it's the city that God has chosen for Himself in 1 Kings 11:13 However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.”

Ancient maps put Jerusalem In the center of the world, and I think they were right.

Jerusalem is also God's timepiece. The final events of world history will culminate there with the glorious return of Jesus Christ to the Mount of Olives.

Mentioned over 800 times in God's Word⁷—Jerusalem is a very important place. It was in Jerusalem that God promised Christ's coming as the Lamb of God to Abraham. It was here that David was promised a future son that would have an endless kingdom. It was here God has worked. In:

⁷ Jerusalem: 814 times in 766 verses; Zion: 160 times in 160 verses; City of David 46 times in 46 verses.

*Jerusalem! Three thousand years of lifetimes! Abraham and Isaac upon the altar of Moriah, a stone's throw from here! David, the shepherd-king, watching Bathsheba from a distance. Jeremiah, mourning for the exiles. Jesus, teaching in the Temple. Peter's betrayal. Jesus, walking the Way of Sorrows! Dying with forgiveness on his lips. Peter, shouting the good news in the streets on Pentecost! He is risen! Call on His name and live forever with Him!*⁸

But today all that is left from Christ's Jerusalem is called the Western Wall. If you go there one of the first things you notice are several large signs that have been affixed near the entrances to Jerusalem's Western Wall plaza. In addition to the usual guidelines regarding modesty and respect for the sanctity of the holy site, the centrality of the Temple Mount to Judaism and the Jewish people is clearly expressed. The signs, ten feet tall, read:

"Jewish tradition teaches that the Temple Mount is the focal point of Creation. In the center of the mountain lies the 'Foundation Stone' of the world. Here Adam came into being. Here Abraham, Isaac and Jacob served G-d. The First and Second Temples were built upon this mountain. The Ark of the Covenant was set upon the Foundation Stone itself. Jerusalem was chosen by G-d as the dwelling place of the Divine Presence. David longed to build the Temple, and Solomon his son built the First Temple here about 3,000 years ago. It was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The Second Temple was rebuilt on its ruins 70 years later. It was razed by the Roman legions over 1,900 years ago. The present Western Wall before you is a remnant of the western Temple Mount retaining walls. Jews have prayed in its shadow for hundreds of years, an expression of their faith in the rebuilding of the Temple. The Sages said about it: 'The Divine Presence never moves from the Western Wall.' The Temple Mount continues to be the focus of prayers for Jews all over the world."

JERUSALEM should be to each of us a LESSON IN GOD'S KINGSHIP. When you are chosen by God there is no limit to what all He can do with you! When God picked Jerusalem it was unknown and would have ended up like any other of the vanished cities whose ruins dot the globe. But no, He said I put My name here forever! And what has happened? JERUSALEM has become:

- 1. The SALVATION center of the world SPIRITUALLY. *John 4:20-24 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.* 21 *Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."***

⁸ Bodie & Brock Thoene, *Jerusalem Vigil*. New York, New York: Penguin Books, 2001, p. 186.

2. **The NERVE center of the world GEOGRAPHICALLY.** *Ezekiel 5:5 "Thus says the Lord God: 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her.*

3. **The GLORY center of the world ULTIMATELY.** *Isaiah 2:1-5 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore. 5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk In the light of the Lord.*

4. **The STORM center of the world PROPHETICALLY.** *Zechariah 14:1-8 Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. 2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the Lord will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. 5 Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the Lord my God will come, And all the saints with You. 6 It shall come to pass in that day That there will be no light; The lights will diminish. 7 It shall be one day Which is known to the Lord Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen That it will be light. 8 And in that day it shall be— That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur.*

Back up with me to Zechariah 12:2-3. God has promised that at the end of the world Jerusalem would become a source of fear, vexation, and stress for the whole world.

Zechariah 12:2-3 "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. 3 And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.

When were these words spoken? Actually it was 2500 years ago, after Babylon has torn down the city and burned it. While Zechariah wrote Jerusalem lay in ruins and was surrounded by wilderness. Jerusalem remained desolate century after century, especially after the Roman destruction two thousand years ago. "Zechariah's prophecy seemed to be utter madness even after Israel's rebirth in 1948. Yet today, exactly as foretold, a world of nearly 6 billion people has its eyes upon Jerusalem, fearful that the next world war, if it breaks out, will be fought over that

tiny city. What an incredible fulfillment of prophecy!”⁹

“Jerusalem is a small city of neither commercial importance nor strategic location. Yet the eyes of the world are upon it as upon no other city. Jerusalem is indeed a “burdensome stone” around the necks of all nations of the world, the most vexing and volatile problem the United Nations faces today.”

“There is no ordinary explanation for this! What the Hebrew prophets declared thousands of years ago and what seemed utterly fantastic in their time is being fulfilled in our day. This is only part of the evidence, as we shall see, that the prophesied “last days” are upon us and that our generation will likely see the remainder of Bible prophecy fulfilled.”¹⁰

Now, with that in mind, open with me again to the greatest sermon on the end of the world ever preached—Matthew 24. Jesus is mapping out the future. He is walking His disciples through a long and complex answer to their simple question in v. 3:

Matthew 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

As Jesus proceeds through this answer He gets to an amazing sight, He sees a future Temple rebuilt in Jerusalem. And He sees a future antichrist defiling that temple. Look at that section with me in Matthew 24:15-16.

Matthew 24:15-16 “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

When Christ Returns there is-- the Return of the Wandering Jews to the Promised Land. God promised over 26 centuries ago that at the end of the world--Jews would begin to regather in Israel. Open with me to Matthew 24 and notice the “orientation” of this text. Matthew 24:15-16 “*Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Before we look at all the promises that god would regather His Jewish people back to His Land—notice that Jesus spoke of them at the end as—already there and with a Temple!*

- **Jeremiah 31:7-10** For thus says the Lord: “Sing with gladness for Jacob, And shout among the chief of the nations; Proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘O Lord, save Your people, The remnant of Israel!’ 8 Behold, I will bring them from the north country, And gather them from the ends of the earth, Among them the blind and the lame, The woman with child And the one who labors with child, together; A great throng shall return there. 9 They shall come with weeping, And with supplications I will lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters, In a straight way in which they shall not stumble; For I am a Father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn. 10 “Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, And declare

⁹ Hunt, Dave, A Woman Rides the Beast. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994, p. 21-26.

¹⁰ Hunt, Dave, A Woman Rides the Beast. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994, p.21-26.

it in the isles afar off, and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, And keep him as a shepherd does his flock.'

- *Ezekiel 37:21-22 "Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; 22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.*
- *Ezekiel 38:8 After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely.*

Since 1948 the world has witnessed the call of God deep within the hearts of 5.4 million Jews who have done everything they could to get to the Promised Land. And more arrive each day!

What is one of the greatest signs of God's Word being true? God predicted over and over again the preservation of His people the Jews. And He especially tells us about their return to their land. We hear that but have you thought about how amazing it really is?

When Christ Returns there is-- the Third Temple built in Jerusalem. What did Jesus, Daniel, Paul, and the Apostle John all have in common? Each of them saw a future Temple of God standing in Jerusalem at the end of earth's days. Plans to rebuild the temple in Israel anticipated in many Scriptures. *Matthew 24:15 "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),*

- *Daniel 9:27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."*
- *2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*
- *Revelation 11:1-2 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. 2 But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.*

Early this year the rise of a Jewish Sanhedrin after 2,000 years of absence has sent tingles up and down the backs of those who know God's Word. Last week I told you that for the first time in 1,600 years, the Israeli Sanhedrin was re-established. It occurred in Tiberius, the site of the Sanhedrin's last meeting in AD 425. On Jan. 20,

2005 IsraelNN.com reported that the religious authorities believe it was necessary to re-establish the Sanhedrin because only this properly ordained body of sages can authenticate a Messiah when he comes. There is a growing expectation of the long-awaited Messiah to appear among devout Jews. The rebirth of the Jewish state and recapture of Jerusalem has increasingly influenced this conviction.

On Feb. 9, just a few weeks after the Sanhedrin's re-establishment, another enormously important development took place. The religious sages began to consider the rebuilding of the Temple and reinstatement of ancient animal sacrifices as prescribed in the Law of Moses.¹¹

When Christ Returns there are--temple sacrifices reinstated in Israel. **Matthew 24:15** *"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), Daniel foresaw the Antichrist ending the daily sacrifices. Therefore, the Jewish sacrificial system must have first been restored in the last days. Currently, the Temple Institute has created all the temple furniture and vessels. There are also several hundred young Jewish men in training for the Levitical priesthood.*

- *Daniel 9:27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."*
- *Daniel 12:11 "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.*

To have sacrifices as prescribed in God's Word there must be a Temple. To have a Temple it must be where God told Abraham, David, and Solomon it was to stand. The only problem is, it seems that something else is standing on that spot—a Dome of the Rock mosque. But that isn't as big a problem as we think of God. The Sanhedrin constituted this year, decided to "determine with certainty exactly where the previous Temple's foundations are. Muslims have not allowed Israeli archeologists to do archeological research on the Temple grounds. As a matter of fact, the Muslim custodians of this area, which they believe is their Third Holiest site, have systematically sought to destroy and remove any archeological evidence of Israel ever having a Temple there."

"The Sanhedrin determined that there are only two viable theories as to where the Temple stood. One teaches that the Temple stood on the same basic site on which the Muslim mosque known as the Dome of the Rock was built.

"The second theory (which appears to be the most accurate) is that the Temple was built north of the Dome of the Rock. Dr. Asher Kaufman developed this theory, using certain archeological evidences that he found before the Muslim's destroyed them. However, the most important archeological sign is the position of the Eastern Gate. According to ancient accounts of the Temple, its east-west centerline passed through the center of the Eastern Gate.

¹¹ Hal Lindsey, Posted: February 17, 2005 By Hal Lindsey © 2005 WorldNetDaily.com

"We have absolute evidence as to where the ancient Eastern Gate stood. The remains of the ancient Eastern Gate are located under the modern Gate that was built on top of its ruins. The east-west centerline from the Eastern Gate. "I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, 'Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshipers there. 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.'" (Revelation 11:1-2 NIV).

"If you measure the distance from the centerline to the point where the wall of the inner court would stand. There was at least 6 meters clearance from the nearest points of the Dome of the Rock and the Temple inner-court wall. The Apostle John clearly predicts that "the outer court was not to be included in the rebuilt Temple, because it was given to the Gentiles."

"So what does all this mean? The Temple can be rebuilt and stand alongside the Dome of the Rock without disturbing it. And since the outer court, also known as the Court of the Gentiles, is given to the Gentiles in this period just before the Messiah comes, it infers that there would be a Gentile building there, i.e., the Dome of the Rock.

"The fact that a re-established Sanhedrin is now considering the rebuilding of the Temple after 2,000 years is extremely important to students of Bible prophecy. I believe that we are very near the final climactic events that end with the Second Coming of Christ.¹²

Keep your eyes on Jerusalem—it is God's reminder of His faithfulness.

God will keep His promises. Jerusalem is a vivid reminder of that.

¹² Hal Lindsey, Posted: February 17, 2005 By Hal Lindsey © 2005 WorldNetDaily.com

Events in Jerusalem During the Millennium

Beginning of the Millennium	Course of the Millennium	End of the Millennium
Resurrection of Old Testament and Tribulation saints (Revelation 20:4)	Descent and Presence of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:10—22:5)	Satan Loosed from Bondage (Revelation 20:7)
Son of Man on Throne of David (Jeremiah 23:5; Zechariah 14:9; Matthew 25:31)	Restoration of Israel's Promised land and of the Natural Order (Ezekiel 37:25; Isaiah 11:6-16; 66:18-23)	Final "Gog and Magog" War (Revelation 20:8-10)
Judgment of Jewish Rebels and Gentile Nations (Ezekiel 20:33-38; Matthew 25:32-46)	Sacrificial Services at Millennial Temple by Jews and Gentiles (Isaiah 56:7; Zechariah 14:16-20; Ezekiel 40-48)	Resurrection of Unbelieving Dead (Revelation 20:5,13)
Messiah Builds Millennial Temple (Zechariah 6:12-15; Ezekiel 37:26-27)	Exaltation of Jerusalem and Instruction of Gentile Nations by Restored Jewish Nations (Isaiah 2:2-4; Zechariah 8:1-23; Habakkuk 2:14)	Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15)

THE FIGHT FOR JERUSALEM

All of us here this morning live in a world inexorably drawn towards a climactic ending. It is not carbon emissions that will get us, it is not the rise of the seas—there is something bigger. The cataclysm that will end this world is focused upon one place, one people, and specifically, God says—one city called Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is the trigger that will set off the grand finale for planet earth.

Twenty-six hundred years ago God foretold that the fate of the entire planet earth would hinge upon one city.

The city God named was not in the fledgling Roman Empire of that day, nor in the great Empires of Greece, Babylon, or Egypt, nor in the great Empire of China or off in the New World...no, it was a city named Jerusalem.

Jerusalem at that moment 2,600 years ago, a backwoods, off-the-beaten-track town that had just suffered complete destruction at the hands of the king of Babylon; and whose charred and blackened ruins were a mute testimony to the impossibility of what God's Word was saying.

- Jerusalem would become the focus of the entire world.
- Jerusalem will be the hinge upon which the whole world will turn.
- Jerusalem will be a cup that intoxicates the world, and for which the whole world will quake.
- In our generation, Jerusalem, mentioned over 800x in the Bible (and never once in the Koran) has become the cup that makes the world tremble.

The Fight for Jerusalem, and all the events leading up to that fight is the spot in the news that you should keep your eyes fastened—if you want to know what God has planned for this world.

Why? Because this topic is one of the greatest reasons that I trust the Bible.

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel has promised that He is the only True God; and that He alone can predict the future and have it come to pass exactly as He said it would. This realm of the Bible is called fulfilled prophecy

This book is unique in that God has mapped out specific events in the future. Only the Living and True God of Heaven and Earth has ever dared to say, “Let me tell you the future”.

In fact, He said that was the way you could know that He was real, and that you and I could place our faith and trust in Him.

For a moment let me read tomorrow's headlines, listen as I read from the book that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel wrote called the Scriptures or the Holy Bible.

Zechariah 12:1-9

Zechariah 14:1-4

Now what I just read will someday be watched around the world on cell phone web TV receivers, homes, businesses and on the ground by everyone in the Middle East. Why did the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel write such things? To prove He is the One True and Living God of the Universe!

The Lord declares the future in His Word because He "watches over His Word to perform it!"

▷ Jeremiah 1:12 Then the Lord said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it." NASB

What is the simplest and yet most profound evidence the Bible offers concerning God's reality?

It is prophecy fulfilled--the irrefutable verification reserved to the Scriptures alone.

Prophecy is the missing element in all other sacred scriptures of the world's religions; it is not to be found in the Koran, the Hindu Vedas, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Book of Mormon, the sayings of Buddha, the writings of Mary Baker Eddy (Christian Science).

By contrast prophecy comprises about one third of the Scriptures!

PROPHECY IS THE TEST TO SHOW WHO IS GOD

God has left His signature, the proof that He is who He claims to be—in the form of prophecies (God explaining future events in clear details that can be verified). So the huge amount of prophetic verses in our Bible is a strong and comforting place to encourage our trusting God. As we begin open with me to Isaiah 41:21:

"Present your case," says the LORD. "Bring forth your strong [reasons,]" says the King of Jacob. (NKJV)

Only the One and Only True God can predict the future with absolute accuracy!

- 1. TRUST THE ONLY GOD WHO ACCURATELY KNOWS THE FUTURE.**

Isaiah 41:23 *Show the things that are to come hereafter, That we may know that you are gods; Yes, do good or do evil, That we may be dismayed and see it together.*

- 2. PROPHECY PROVES GOD IS REAL.**

Isaiah 42:5-9 *Thus says God the Lord, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it: 6 "I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, And*

will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles, 7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house. 8 I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images. 9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them.”

3. PROPHECY PROVES GOD IS RELIABLE.

Isaiah 46:9-10 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,’

4. PROPHECY REVEALS TO US THE GOD WE CAN TRUST.

Isaiah 48:3-5 “I have declared the former things from the beginning; They went forth from My mouth, and I caused them to hear it. Suddenly I did them, and they came to pass. 5 Even from the beginning I have declared it to you; Before it came to pass I proclaimed it to you, Lest you should say, ‘My idol has done them, And my carved image and my molded image Have commanded them.’

5. TRUSTING GOD DETERMINES OUR ETERNAL DESTINY.

Isaiah 48:17-18, 22 Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: “I am the Lord your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go. 18 Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea. 22 “There is no peace,” says the Lord, “for the wicked.”

As a preparation for this Fight for Jerusalem, God described a series of events in detail 2,600 years ago. However, for most of those years these words have been murky, fuzzy and out of focus until recently.

Let me just briefly point out what God says. Turn with me to Ezekiel 36-39. These chapters describe what I like to call—

ONE HUGE EVENT ON THE PROPHETIC HORIZON

Ezekiel Chapter 36-37 describes the scattered Israelites as a pile of bones—dry and dead. Then the Lord sends forth a call, stirring the hearts of scattered Jewish people all over the world; their slow return back to the geographic area now called Israel; their rebirth as a sovereign nation called Israel, and the formation of an exceedingly great army.

This is followed by chapters 38-39 describing a war where a coalition of Islamic Nations led by Iran (all clearly described) join with Russia (also clearly defined) in a huge conflict that Bible scholars call the war of Gog and Magog.

To start with—for all the centuries since Ezekiel penned God's Word there was no regathered nation called Israel as is seeing coming back in Ezekiel 36-37.

And so, there was no Israel to be the target of the coalition of Islamic nations and Russia, from the time Ezekiel wrote (about 600 B.C.) until 1948. So simply stated, for 2,600 years—there was no nation of Israel for any nation to militarily attack!

Century after century of Bible teachers looked at these two chapters as so remote, so vague, so impossible. But then starting in the late 1800's people started talking about making a place for Jews to again live. The Scriptures slumbered along as God watched over His Word to perform it. Slowly it seems that Ezekiel 36-37 began to appear. And point by point, each of the details that Ezekiel saw in the distant past over 2,600 years ago fell into reality.

THE REBIRTH OF ISRAEL

After Ezekiel's bones grew into a living breathing nation, God continued to watch over His Word and because Hitler struck with such savagery and incomprehensible carnage that the world was moved to do something. In 1948 the nations of the world united in the form of the UN, and voted to establish a homeland, a nation that was named Israel.

In a short period of time—there was a nation called Israel that could be attacked militarily.

But then 50-plus years passed and Iran never seemed to join Russia in any way to march against Israel—until last year. Again the God who watches over His Word was waiting and directing the rulers of this world to do His bidding.

God has already described in detail what will happen in the future. Every time what He has declared will happen—happens, it is literally just what He said. But when examined closely, those involved make their own decisions and have no intention or awareness of following God's plan!

We live in the most written about period of time, from God's perspective. Fully 20% of the Bible is consumed with describing the events that God calls the end of days. These end of days events are more described and detailed for us—than even the days when Christ walked the shores of Galilee.

The end times Biblical prophecies that are powerful pictures of God's Rule over the Nations are many, here are just a few:

YOU CAN TRUST THE GOD WHO PROMISED ISRAEL WOULD RETURN AS A NATION IN EZEKIEL 36-37

In Ezekiel 36-37 the God who rules tells us that Israel will one day be reborn as a modern country, that Jews will pour back into the Holy Land after centuries of exile, that Jews will rebuild the "ancient ruins" and make the deserts bloom, that Israel will develop a vast and powerful military, and that Israel will become remarkably wealthy (Ezekiel 38:12-13).

These prophecies have all come true in our lifetime. They began to be fulfilled in the early 1900s,

accelerated in 1948 and 1967, and continue to come true to this day.¹³

Did the British politicians and early Zionists that fought for the establishment of the nation of Israel do all that because they wanted to or because God ruled over them? Both are true, of course. That is how God works. God was watching over His Word to fulfill it!

To benefit from the power of the God who rules, we are asked to see what He has done. Note with me the predictions found in Ezekiel 36-37 that have already come true. These are the famous prophetic chapters that foretell the future of Israel as a nation, that were written almost 600 years before Christ's birth!

1. The return of the Jews to the Holy Land after centuries in exile.

Ezekiel 36:10-11 "I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. 11 "I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bear young; I will make you inhabited as in former times, and do better for you than at your beginnings. Then you shall know that I am the Lord. Ezekiel 37:12, 21 "Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. 21 "Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;

Did the countless thousands of Jews all over the world (100 nations and counting) get up one morning and each decide to obey God's Word that said they would return? No they just had a longing to be safe, to be free, to have a land of their own—and in all that they obeyed the God who rules over the nations by watching over His Word to fulfill it!

2. The rebuilding of the ancient ruins in Israel.

Ezekiel 36:36 "Then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it."

Did God make the early settlers name their cities after the Biblical sites they were building upon? No, they wanted to tie themselves to the past, their heritage and God's Word! God was watching over His Word to fulfill it!

3. The re-blossoming of desolate, desert lands to produce abundant food, fruit and foliage

Ezekiel 36:8-9, 30, 33-35 "But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches and yield your fruit to My people Israel, for they are about to come.9 "For indeed I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. 30 "And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. 33 'Thus says the Lord God: "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt.34 "The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by.35 "So they will say, 'This land that

¹³ Paraphrased from Joel Rosenburg blog 5.5.05 <http://joelrosenberg.blogspot.com/>

was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.'

Did those agricultural engineers, irrigation pioneers, and desert scientists devote their lives to Israel in its wasteland condition just to make Ezekiel come true? No. God was watching over His Word to fulfill it! Israel supplies billions of dollars of fresh fruit and flowers to Europe and the Arab world from land that was once absolutely desolate.

4. The creation of an "exceedingly great army".

Ezekiel 37:10 So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

Did the atomic scientists, the military weapons engineers and the businessmen that listened to them all want to fulfill Ezekiel? No, they were trying to protect themselves, defend themselves and make a living. But in the process became the third or fourth most powerful military in the world when the atomic weaponry is factored in. God was watching over His Word to fulfill it!

YOU CAN TRUST THE GOD WHO DECLARES RUSSIA IS THE LEADER OF THE ANTI-ISRAELI COALITION DESCRIBED IN EZEKIEL 38-39

Twenty six hundred years ago, the prophet Ezekiel predicted clues to identify when this would happen,

"After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them." (Ezek.38:8 NAS)

Note this would happen in "the latter years" after the Israelites were scattered throughout the world and the land of Israel became a desolation for a long time. History is witness to all of this.

WHO IS COMING AGAINST ISRAEL?

Ezekiel 38:1-6 Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying,² "Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him,³ "and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.⁴ "I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords.⁵ "Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet;⁶ "Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops—many people are with you.

In Ezekiel 38:1-6, the Hebrew prophet gives a list of obscure names that will form a united coalition. As I read these six verses listen to the historic records, geographic locations, and modern day countries that reside in those exact places described—and how they are all slowly aligning themselves against Israel.

- Gog is described as being "of the land of Magog" and as the "prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal." Most Bible scholars believe Gog is not a name but a title, like Pharaoh or Czar. He is a dictator who will hatch an "evil plan" (38:10).
- Magog = Leading Bible scholars say this is Russia and republics of the former Soviet Union. The first century Roman historian [Josephus](#) said the "Magogites" were the peoples whom the Greeks called "Scythians." [Scythians](#) were a fierce, blood-thirsty civilization that settled north of the Baltic Sea in [what is now Russia and the European republics of the former USSR](#).

The first century historian Josephus wrote in his classic work, *Antiquities of the Jews*, that the "Magogites" are the people that the Greeks refer to as "Scythians." Study the history of the ancient Scythians and you will quickly discover that these were a brutal and bloodthirsty people that settled north of the Black Sea in the area we now call Russia and the former Soviet republics.

In Moscow the State Historical Museum on Red Square has numerous Scythian artifacts prominently displayed. Russia is proud of its Scythian tradition, and this helps us pinpoint Russia as the modern country to which Ezekiel was referring.

- Rosh = Russia. True, Ezekiel never uses the word Russia. Instead, he says a dictator referred to as "Gog" will arise in the land of "Magog," and will be the "prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal."

Other Bible scholars note that when Ezekiel mentions "Rosh" he is using the root word for Russia. Others believe "Meshech" refers to Moscow and "Tubal" refers to the Tubal River in Siberia and the Siberian city of Tobolsk.

Numerous leading Bible scholars agree that Russia will certainly be the leader of the anti-Israel coalition in what Ezekiel describes as "the last days."

- Meshech = Some Bible scholars say this is Moscow, others believe it refers to Turkey
- Tubal = Some Bible scholars say this refers to the city/region of Tobolsk in Russia along the Tobol River; others say it refers to a section of modern-day Turkey. (Interestingly, in 1964, massive reserves of oil and gas were discovered in the Tobolsk region of Siberia and people now refer to the region as the ["energy center of Russia."](#))
- Persia = This was the [official name of Iran](#) until 1935
- Cush = Sudan and Ethiopia
- Put = Libya, and possibly Algeria and Tunisia
- Gomer = Turkey, but also possibly Germany and Austria

- Beth-togarmah = **Armenia and the Turkic-speaking peoples of Central Asia**
- "Many peoples with you" **who will attack along "the mountains of Israel" = Other countries will be involved in the coalition as well, notably countries that border the mountains of Israel. This includes Lebanon, Syria and possibly Jordan.**

TRUST THE GOD WHO DECLARES THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ENTIRE RUSSIAN, IRANIAN, SYRIA, LEBANESE AND OTHER ISLAMIC MILITARY FORCES WILL COME "LIKE A STORM" AGAINST ISRAEL

Ezekiel 38:5,9, 18-22 "Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; 9 "You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you." 18 "And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," says the Lord God, "that My fury will show in My face. 19 "For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: 'Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel,20 'so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.'21 "I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains," says the Lord God. "Every man's sword will be against his brother.22 "And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

Iran Threatens Israel

Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iranian leaders have uttered a seemingly endless series of curses against Israel, calling the Jewish people evil, insisting that the Holocaust never happened, and threatening to wipe Israel "off the map."

- **Ahmadinejad: Wipe Israel Off Map—Aljazeera.Net (10/26/05)**
- **Wipe Israel "Off The Map" Says Iranian—New York Times (10/27/05)**
- **Israel Should Be Wiped Off Map, Says Iran's President—The (U.K.) Guardian (10/27/05)**

"Referring to comments by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic revolution, [Iranian President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad said, 'As the imam said, Israel must be wiped off the map,'" reported the New York Times. The Iranian leader went on to say that "anybody who recognizes Israel will burn in the fire of the Islamic nation's fury" and any Islamic leader "who recognizes the Zionist regime means he is acknowledging the surrender and defeat of the Islamic world."

When Ezekiel lists Persia in 38:5 (the name of Iran up until 1935) he was recording the words of the God who sees and knows exactly what will happen in the future. Amazingly today's news bears witness to Persia (Iran's) deep hatred of Israel.

Interestingly enough, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad used the same word that God

used in his speech in April 2006:

"Like it or not, the Zionist regime is heading toward annihilation," Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said at the opening of a conference in support of the Palestinians. "The Zionist regime is a rotten, dried tree that will be *eliminated by one storm*."¹⁴

Ezekiel 38:9 specifically says that God's enemies will "come like a storm" to destroy Israel, but are destroyed by a supernatural earthquake and firestorm unleashed by God Himself.

In September [2005], when Ahmadinejad took the podium to address the United Nations in New York City, he felt surrounded by light. It wasn't the stage lighting, he said. It was a light from heaven.

*Ahmadinejad's "vision" at the United Nations could be dismissed as pure political posturing if it weren't for a string of similar statements and actions that clearly suggest he believes he is destined to bring about the return of the Shiite messiah. The mystical 12th imam, who is venerated by many in Iran, disappeared as a child in the year 941. Shiite Muslims believe he will return and rule for seven years in perfect justice.*¹⁵

*"While it may be tempting to some to dismiss such language as overly dramatic, it is worth keeping in mind that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has told colleagues that he believes the end of the world is just two or three years away. He believes that the way to hasten the coming of the Islamic Messiah known as the "Twelfth Imam" or the "Mahdi" is to launch a global jihad to destroy the Jews of Israel and the Christians of the United States. What's more, Ahmadinejad is feverishly trying to build, buy or steal the nuclear weapons to bring his Shiite end times beliefs to fulfillment."*¹⁶

RUSSIA ARMS IRAN

Just a few days after Ahmadinejad's inflammatory remarks about Israel, these headlines appeared around the world:

- **Iran and Russia in \$1 Billion Arms Deal—Aljazeera.Net (12/2/05)**
- **Moscow Inks Arms Deal with Tehran—*Moscow Times* (12/5/05)**
- **Russia Agrees to Sell Missiles to Iran—Associated Press (12/5/05)**

THE LENS OF SCRIPTURE¹⁷

Russia's enormous military sales to Iran, its sales of nuclear technology to Iran, and the training of more than 1,000 Iranian nuclear scientists—looks so much like chapters 38 and 39 of the Book of Ezekiel. God describes a Gog or a dictator "who would one day take over Russia, form an alliance with Iran and the radical Islamic world, and take up arms against a modern State of Israel."

Is Ezekiel 38-39 at the end of the seven year Tribulation just before the Millennium? I don't think so, if you read carefully the text there is quite a long period of time after this attack that doesn't

¹⁴ <http://www.smh.com.au/news/world/ahmadinejad-israel-a-rotten-dried-tree/2006/04/15/1144521534197.html>

¹⁵ <http://www.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2006/1/23/173442.shtml?s=lh>

¹⁶ Joel Rosenburg blog, 7.23.06

¹⁷ These sections drawn from various blogs by Joel Rosenburg blog 5.5.05

square with Armageddon and Christ's 2nd coming immediately following.¹⁸

WHAT IS GOG'S PLAN?

- **38:7 – Gog will build a military coalition and “be prepared” to strike**
- **38:8 – Gog will deploy the coalition against Israel**
- **39:9 – Gog will use overwhelming force against Israel; he and his coalition will “come like a storm....like a cloud covering the land”**

BUT WHAT IS GOD'S PLAN?

- **38:2 – The Lord God will bring judgment upon the enemies of Israel, beginning with Gog, the dictator of Russia;**
- **38:20 – The Lord will trigger a massive earthquake in which “all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence”;**
- **38:21 – The Lord will turn Gog's forces against one another;**
- **38:22 – The Lord will subject Gog's coalition forces to: pestilence, blood, torrential rains, hailstones, fire from heaven;**
- **39:6 – The Lord will “ send fire upon Magog” itself and others;**
- **39:9 – Israel will capture her enemies weapons and burn them for 7 years;**
- **39:12 – It will taken 7 full months to bury all the bodies of Israel's slain enemies;**
- **39:17-20 – Birds and beast will feast on the bodies of Israel's slain enemies.**

WHEN WILL GOD DO THIS?

- **38:8 – When Israel has become a country again and Jews will be regathered to the Holy Land;**
- **38:11, 14 – “My people Israel are living securely” before the “War of Gog and Magog”;**
- **38:12-13 – Israel will have economic prosperity;**
- **38:16 – “It will come about *in the last days*” (before the return of Christ). NOTE: The Scriptures are not clear as to whether this war will happen before or after the Rapture of the Church.**

WHY

- **39:21 – “I shall set My glory among the nations; and *all* the nations will see My judgment”;**
- **39:22 – “the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God”;**39:29 – “I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel”

In Genesis 12:1-3, the Lord is crystal clear that He will bless those who bless Israel, and curse

¹⁸ **God's Plan:** 38:7 – Gog (not the Antichrist of Daniel 11 and Revelation 13-16, and 19 who is at Armageddon) will build a military coalition and “be prepared” to strike; 38:8 – Gog will deploy the coalition against Israel (versus the Battle of Armageddon where the whole world descends upon Jerusalem from North, South, East and West); 39:9 – Gog will use overwhelming force against Israel; he and his coalition will “come like a storm....like a cloud covering the land”. **God's Plan:** 38:2 – The Lord God will bring judgment upon the enemies of Israel, beginning with Gog, the dictator of Russia; 38:20 – The Lord will trigger a massive earthquake in which “*all* the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence”; 38:21 – The Lord will turn Gog's forces against one another; 38:22 – The Lord will subject Gog's coalition forces to: pestilence, blood, torrential rains, hailstones, fire from heaven (not the sword from His mouth in Rev. 19 and disintegration in Zechariah 12-14); 39:6 – The Lord will “ send fire upon Magog” itself and others (no mention of this in Rev. 16, 19); 39:9 – Israel will capture her enemies weapons and burn them for 7 years (vs. Armageddon ends normal life for Earth); 39:12 – It will taken 7 full months to bury all the bodies of Israel's slain enemies (no mention of this in Armageddon passages); 39:17-20 – Birds and beast will feast on the bodies of Israel's slain enemies (yes in both passages).

those who curse Israel.

In Ezekiel 38-39, God specifically vowed to subject the leaders and military forces of Iran (among other enemies of Israel) to a massive earthquake, torrential rains, killer hailstorms, rampant pandemic diseases, and even hellfire and brimstone.

AN ISLAMIC CATAclysm

An event is coming and God has described it in great detail--that will strike the entire Middle East with death, destruction, earthquakes and supernatural events. That event is a Russian-Iranian led military attack on the nation of Israel.

If you read Ezekiel 38-39 you will find that God is describing how Russia and Iran form a military alliance with Lebanon, Syria and a group of other Middle East countries; and then set out to destroy Israel in what Ezekiel described as the last days.

Sit back and think, what fills the news reports these days? This past summer it was how Iran was making the mountains of Lebanon a virtual arsenal of Iranian weapons to be used in attacks against Israel. Now almost every day we hear another detail of how Russia and Iran are working together on everything from advanced missiles to atomic weapon production.

You need to ask yourself as you look into God's Word ...is it just a coincidence? Or are we watching Ezekiel 38-39 unfold before our eyes? Time will tell as God watches over His Word to fulfill it!

What lies ahead on the prophetic landscape as far as evangelism and missionary work in the Middle East? The clear word from God is that what will happen in an attack upon Israel will be a powerful message to the entire world that the Lord Jesus Christ is the true and living Son of God.

39:21 – “I shall set My glory among the nations; and *all* the nations will see My judgment”

39:22 – “the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God”

39:29 – “I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel”

That said, it is worth keeping this intriguing thought in mind. More than two millennia ago, Ezekiel chapters 36 and 37 foretold the dramatic rebirth of modern State of Israel in the last days of history and described how Jews would pour back into the Holy Land after centuries of living in exile. Remarkably, these prophecies have come to pass in our lifetime. Is it really inconceivable, then, that the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38 and 39 could happen soon? Maybe not. Time will tell.

Here is one fascinating possibility: if this Russian-Iranian invasion of Israel happens before Armageddon it could happen any day now. And when God stops the Russians and Iranian armies dead in their tracks, the entire world will be amazed—*but the world of Islam will be stunned, shaken to the core*—and what may be the greatest opening among any people will take place.

Is this event close at hand? Only God knows. But what is being said in the news is chilling if not prophetic!

We don't know when this Iranian-Russian invasion takes place; we just know that God says it will

and that it will end in the catastrophic defeat of the armies of Iran and Russia. The results God says will get the attention of the entire world upon the True and Living God we know and serve.

When Jesus explained the entire scope of end times events, He paused and concluded with two commands in v. 36 for us who listen to Him. We can learn what Jesus said were our responsibilities as believers (Luke 21:29-38)

“Watch therefore, and pray always...” (Luke 21:36) Pray is the word for beg, implore and beseech, it is an intense word!

Jesus revealed that all of the magnificent buildings of Herod would become rubble. . . and that nothing on earth ever lasts; but Jesus came to His disciples with an offer of something they could become a part of that never ends.

What are you intensely asking (begging) God to be doing through your life that will last forever?

Christ said here is something anyone in my family can do! Here is what you do that I love, and I make your investments in these areas last forever. Jesus said:

- I collect all of your prayers - PRAY! **Revelation 5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. (KJV)**
- I multiply sacrificial gifts - GIVE! **Mark 12:42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. (KJV) do rest**
- I count souls you lead to me - WIN! **Daniel 12:3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. Proverbs 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise. 1 Corinthians 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. (KJV) 1st Thessalonians 2:19**
- I remember humble service - SERVE! **Mark 14:3 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. (KJV) do rest**
- I love missionaries that do outreach - GO! **Matthew 19:29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. (KJV)**

To obey Jesus we must “watch and pray”. That is how we can resist the temptations that lure us. Then we will be ready when our Lord returns.

Ahmadinejad has called for Israel to be wiped off the map

"We know most of the younger generation in Iran is against Ahmadenejad. They should be aided. The US and international community is trying now in a light way by using broadcasting, and putting antennas in several places in Iran and also having one or two stations broadcasting real news and appropriate messages," said Amit.

"More money needs to be budgeted to this cause," Amit said.

'We're on the eve of World War III'

While the former Mossad chief did not call for a military strike against Iran, Amit said he foresees a war in the region in the future.

He said global civilization is on the verge of "World War III," a massive conflict in which the Islamic world is attempting to impose its ideology on Western nations.

"I am worried about a regional war, but also we need to look at the bigger picture and see that Islam is fighting western world and not only Israel. Look at the terror in Spain, France, London, the U.S.," said Amit.

"I call it World War III. You must look at it from this angle and treat it wider, not as a problem of terrorism here and there. The war is not being waged just by Iran and in Iraq, it's being launched by Muslims all over the world," said Amit.

Amit referenced recent terror attacks against Israel, Europe and the United States; Iran's alleged nuclear ambitions; the insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan; and recent worldwide Muslim riots.

"It looks to me like it is a kind of coordinated or contemplated problem to somehow impose the Islamic idea all over the world," Amit said.

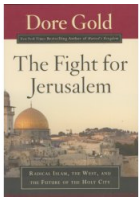
Amit urged Western nations to "unite and work together. Unfortunately, the world is not uniting. Russia is playing its own game, and so is China."

Both China and Russia have been aiding Iran's nuclear program, which Tehran claims is intended for peaceful purposes only. In a bid to soften possible sanctions against Iran, Russia earlier proposed setting up a joint venture to enrich uranium for Iran on Russian soil.

Based on Ezekiel's intelligence, we should expect Russian influence throughout the Islamic world to increase significantly as the time of the War of Gog and Magog approaches. And that is precisely what is happening. Over the past year, he has met with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, delivered Russian missiles to the Iranians, continued building nuclear facilities in Iran, and promised to deliver enriched uranium to Iran next month. What's more, he has moved to strengthen ties with Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas, and even sent Russian military advisors and engineers into Lebanon. Does any of this mean conclusively that the prophecies of Ezekiel 38-39 are imminent or that Putin himself is the "Gog" of the Scriptures? No. But as Putin continues to send valentines to the Islamic world and distance himself from the Western alliance, it should give all of us pause. Just what are his motives? Where is he headed?

- **[Russia intensifies efforts to rebuild its military machine](#)**
 - * USA TODAY: In Cold War flashback, Putin flexes Russia's muscles
 - * Russia: Putin Uses Gulf Trip To Boost Russian Role In Arab World
 - * REUTERS: Putin in Jordan to demonstrate regional ambitions
 - * Putin 1st Russian leader to visit Saudis
 - * Putin offers to help Saudi Arabia go nuclear
 - * Russia negotiating \$1 billion arms deal with the Saudis
 - * ALJAZEERA: Putin backs establishing OPEC-style gas cartel <http://apnews.myway.com/article/20070214/D8N98ALGA.html>
 - * AP: Putin blasts U.S. as undermining world security
 - * FULL TEXT: **[Putin's anti-U.S. speech in Munich](#)**
 - * WASHINGTON POST: Has Putin fired a salvo in a renewed Cold War?
 - * BBC: Putin's speech: Back to cold war?
 - * EUROPEAN PRESS REVIEW: A Hint of the Cold War in Munich
 - * NEW YORK POST: Putin's A Cold Warrior

TOO LATE" TO STOP IRAN'S NUCLEAR WEAPON? THE FIGHT FOR JERUSALEM



Last month in Jerusalem, I spent several hours with a diplomat who does get it, thank God. Dore Gold was a senior advisor to various Israeli Prime Ministers and once served as Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations. I interviewed Dore for the *Epicenter* documentary we're currently producing. It was a great time catching up with an old friend. It was also a sobering time, hearing Dore's latest analysis of the urgent and growing threats in the region, an analysis which forms the basis of his new powerful and provocative book, *The Fight For Jerusalem: Radical Islam, The West, and The Future of the Holy City*.

Dore, an observant Orthodox Jew who was born in the U.S. and emigrated to Israel, knows his stuff. He's negotiated with Middle Eastern and other world leaders at the highest levels. He's had behind-the-scenes relationships with Arab and Islamic officials and scholars for decades. He currently runs the *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, a highly respected think tank. Unlike most senior Western diplomats, he has come to the accurate conclusion that secular Arab nationalism is no longer driving events in the Middle East as it did in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Today, it's Islamic eschatology -- or end times theology -- that is inspiring a deadly new effort to hasten the destruction of both Israel and Judeo-Christian civilization as we know it. What's more, Dore understands that this requires an entirely different Western strategy than past conflicts, beginning with the realization that you can't successfully negotiate with or deter extremists who believe it is their God-given mission to annihilate the world.

One chapter I found particularly detailed and chilling: Chapter 8, "Jerusalem as an Apocalyptic Trigger For Radical Islam." Allow me to quote a few passages:

* "For [Iranian President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad, the destruction of Israel is one of the key global developments that will trigger the appearance of the Mahdi [Islamic Messiah]. It was on Iran's annual 'Jerusalem Day' on October 26, 2005, that Ahmadinejad made his famous reference to the need to 'wipe Israel off the map.'....Ahmadinejad shows all the signs of not only using apocalyptic language, but also believing that he has a personal role in bringing the end of times about." (p. 232)

* "[W]hat was the connection between Jerusalem and Ahmadinejad's planned final battle? Dr. Bilal Na'im served as an assistant to the head of the Executive Council of Hizbullah, the Iranian-controlled Lebanese Shiite terrorist organization. In an essay discussing the details of how the Mahdi is supposed to appear before the world, according to Shiite doctrine, he states that initially the Mahdi reveals himself in Mecca 'and he will lean on the Ka'abah and view the arrival of his supporters from around the world.' From Mecca the Mahdi next moves to Karbala in Iraq. But his most important destination, in Na'im's description, is clearly Jerusalem. It is in Jerusalem from where the launching of the Mahdi's world conquest is declared. He explains, 'The liberation of Jerusalem is the preface for liberating the world and establishing the state of justice and values on earth.' In short, Jerusalem serves as the launching pad for the Mahdi's global jihad at the end of

days." (p. 233)

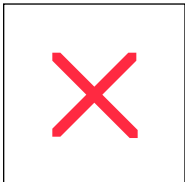
* "[I]t has been clear for more than a decade that Jerusalem has become a focal point for apocalyptic authors whose works have become relatively popular across the Arab world during these years. Their books are not just part of a theoretical discourse, but rather their language is reiterated by some of the most violent terrorist groups operating in the Middle East." (p. 251)

* "*Diplomats and intelligence agencies don't normally pore over obscure religious texts about the end of days. But considering their widespread popularity and their practical impact on the issue of Jerusalem, that could be a colossal error. If one day Israel succumbed to the constant barrage of pressures from EU diplomats -- backed by certain quarters in the U.S. foreign policy establishment as well -- to redivide Jerusalem by relinquishing its holy sites, it might well unleash a new wave of jihadism emboldened by a sense that the traditions of radical Islamists about final battles at the end of history are about to come true. Western diplomats pursuing such a course of action may well believe they are lowering the flames of radical Islamic rage, but in fact they will only be turning up those flames to heights that have not been seen before.*" (p. 254)

Bottom line: Dore Gold's book could not be better written or better timed. I doubt Javier Solana will read it. But I am and you should.¹⁹

DEBKAFile Exclusive: Saudis to purchase nuclear option, advanced missiles and spy satellites off the shelf from Pakistan and Russia

February 15,
2007, 3:27
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(GMT+02:00
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Moscow will assist in Saudi development of a civilian nuclear program and build six "research satellites" for the oil kingdom. **DEBKAFile's** Gulf intelligence sources report this was agreed in the talks held in Riyadh earlier this week by visiting Russian president Vladimir Putin and King Abdullah. Israeli military sources report that Moscow in fact undertook to provide Saudi Arabia with half a dozen military surveillance satellites, launch them and set up ground control centers, thereby making the oil kingdom the first Middle East national with a multiple spy satellite capability for tracking the military movements of its neighbors, including Iran and Israel.

This Saudi-Russian venture has got Israel worried because it will enable Riyadh to pick up highly sensitive intelligence on its military movements and relay it to Egypt and the Palestinians.

This development confirms **DEBKA-Net-Weekly's** previous disclosures that the Saudis do not intend wasting time developing their own military capabilities but are going shopping for finished products.

On Jan. 21, Saudi rulers favored visiting Pakistani president Gen. Pervez Musharraf with exception honors

¹⁹ <http://joelrosenberg.blogspot.com/>

when he arrived at the outset of a tour of five Arab capitals. **DEBKA-Net-Weekly** described King Abdullah as personally welcoming the visitor and driving him in the royal convoy to a palace outside the capital where they were closeted alone for three hours. The king also conferred on the Pakistani ruler the King Abdul Aziz Award.

This ceremonial led up to an epic accord of 7 secret clauses on the terms in which Pakistan would make nuclear weapons available to, and sell, Saudi Arabia nuclear-capable missiles. **DEBKA-Net-Weekly's** sources revealed that Musharraf undertook to make them available in the event of a nuclear emergency facing Saudi Arabia, the Gulf emirates, Egypt or Jordan. A mechanism was thus set up for Saudi Arabia to potentially beat Iran to the draw in acquiring a nuclear bomb, as well as controlling the security of its allies.

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Well, I guess the first time Jerusalem was ever mentioned in the Bible it was mentioned in Genesis 14 and that makes it pretty old. And it says, "From Jerusalem, there was a priest of the most high God." Only it doesn't call the city Jerusalem. It calls the city Salem. Salem. Peace. Most likely an ancient name for a city which became Jerusalem.

The first specific reference to Jerusalem is found in the 10th chapter of Joshua. "As the children of Israel were coming out of the Egyptian captivity and being led into the Promised Land by Joshua, they came to the knowledge of this particular city of Canaan known as Jerusalem. And Jerusalem stood like other cities, such as Ai and Jericho, in the path of the conquering Israelites." That's where we first meet it and from then on it dominates Biblical teaching.

God marvelously sets his affection on that city. God has great plans for it even yet in the future. Jerusalem is an amazing place. Jerusalem is on a plateau. The plateau moves up out of the surrounding area. And on three sides, Jerusalem is surrounded by valleys 3 to 400 feet deep. Only one side is level and that's the north. So the only effective way to attack the city is from the north and thus it becomes easy to defend Jerusalem because there's only one way in which the enemy could be coming. In other words, it was an ideal setting for a city, a natural fortress.

It became the possession of the Israelites who came into the land of Canaan. But not much was said of it after that. It just was kind of there. Well, if you go back far enough, there was a famous mountain in the middle of that city called Mount Moriah. And Abraham actually prepared to sacrifice Isaac on that mountain when God provided a ram. Fitting that before the city had even become what it was to become, God had marked it out as a place of sacrifice.

When David became king, he reigned in Hebron. And Hebron is about 30 miles south and a city of the plain that would be very difficult to defend. And David reigned in Hebron for about seven years. And then he decided to move the capital city to Jerusalem and he did that according to 2 Samuel 5, "And Jerusalem became the royal capital where David reigned for 33 years." And from then on Mount Zion, which is a hill in the middle of Jerusalem, became identified as the royal seat.

From David on, then, Jerusalem is the royal capital, the political center, the economic center, the religious center, the cultural center, the social center of Jewish life. And may I

add, it is the center of God's redemptive plan. It was just down the road from Jerusalem the Messiah was born. It was just outside the wall of Jerusalem that He died. It was equally just outside the wall of Jerusalem that He rose again. It will be outside the wall of Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives where He will descend. And then finally, He will enter the city of Jerusalem and establish His throne. Jerusalem is a focal point of God's plan.

But as we come to the Book of Daniel, this marvelously blessed city, this city which God above all other cities had marked out for a place in redemptive history, this incredible place that lingers still not in the memory but in the plan of God yet to be unfolded, this city had departed from God. And while the people in captivity were great in remembering Jerusalem, they were not so great in remembering what made Jerusalem great. While remembering their love for the city, they had forgotten the place of God. They were loving the city without loving the God whose city it was. And so God took them out of that city.