

The **Christadelphian Advocate**

SPECIAL ISSUE

Jerusalem

That Great City, the Holy Jerusalem



JUNE 2017

A monthly magazine in defense of the “Things Concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ” as embraced in The Hope of Israel with a view to “Taking Out A People For Yahweh’s Name”

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He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully.

Jeremiah 23:28

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Introduction

Jerusalem as Revealed Through Latter-Day Jubilees

The City of the LORD (Isaiah 60:14)

Israel's War of Independence ended on March 11, 1949, leaving Jerusalem as a divided city – Arab East Jerusalem, the Jordan valley, and the hill country of Judaea and Samaria (West Bank) occupied by Jordan. **Fifty years ago this month, on June 7, 1967**, Israeli troops stormed and occupied East Jerusalem and the whole of the West Bank. After more than 2000 years of Gentile control, all the city of Jerusalem had been liberated! On June 10th, the war ended with Israel occupying the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Desert up to the eastern bank of the Suez Canal, and the Golan Heights. In the course of a single week, Israel had gone from the intended victim of total destruction by the surrounding Arab nations (Egypt, Jordan and Syria, together with expeditionary forces from Iraq), to the victorious occupying power. Since June 1967, Israel has fought eleven wars / uprisings, all the while maintaining the territory liberated in the Six-Day War (ceding only security and civil control of major cities in the West Bank to the Palestinian Authority through the Oslo Accords). In 1980, Israel passed a law declaring, "Jerusalem, complete and united, is the capital of Israel" (the UN Security council immediately rejecting Israel's claim per Resolution 478).



Almost 100 years ago, on November 2, 1917, the Balfour Declaration was issued, and that same year marked the liberation of Jerusalem from the Ottoman Turkish empire. We, who earnestly put our faith and trust in the Hope of Israel, wonder what this year, as the anniversary of two momentous events in Jewish history, will bring. Can it be just coincidence that these two events regarding Jerusalem in the last century happened 50 years from each other? And here we are exactly 50 years after 1967.

Jerusalem is foremost in the news as a conundrum for the nations, while it is watched and in the thoughts of all God's servants, for it is *the city of the LORD*; aka, Mount Zion, *the hill which God desireth to dwell in*; yea,

the Lord will dwell in it for ever (Isaiah 10:32; Psalm 68:16). The name Jerusalem is most significant. Before the days of Abraham, the city was called Salem. In Josephus' Antiquities of the Jews we read regarding the change in name, "Melchisedec...the righteous king of the city Salem...the priest of God: however, they afterward called Salem Jerusalem" (Book 1, Chapter 10, sec. 2); and, "I suppose it to have been so called [Jerusalem] after Abraham had received that oracle Jehovah Jireh" (Book VII, chapter 3, sec. 2). Abraham named that site "Jehovah-jireh," interpreted "God will provide," when God brought him and Isaac to the place identified as *the apple of his eye* (Zechariah 2:8). *And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen* (Genesis 22:14). The word *jireh*, prefixed to the old name, "Salem" – meaning peace, is "Jerusalem," or, the City of Peace.

We watch Jerusalem not only because it is the city God has chosen (2 Chronicles 6:20) – soon to be the capital of the world, but also due to the prophetic milestones involving the city that were given to inform and encourage Christ's brethren to watch for the return of their Lord. In our generation, 2017 is believed by many to represent the seventieth Jubilee year. (Note: We cannot say with certainty what specific year represents the true seventieth Jubilee year as the Jubilee has not been kept since the Babylonian captivity in the 580s BC. Still, 50-year cycles have been tracked and associations made with events in Jewish history). Christadelphian expositors have generally postulated the seventieth Jubilee to fall somewhere within the period 2015 through 2018, based upon their computations regarding the starting dates for prophecies such as the "*time, times, and an half*" of Daniel 12:7, and the "*seven times*" of Leviticus 26:27-28.

Israel's calendar was arranged in segments of seven: every seventh day was a Sabbath – a day of rest for the people; every seventh year was a Sabbath "of rest unto the land" (*shemitah*) and every seven sabbatical cycles was a Jubilee. *And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you* (Leviticus 25:8-11).

Events associated with the past two Jubilee periods have been of particular significance, as both the 1917 Balfour Declaration and the 1967 Six-Day War were critical to the return of the nation of Israel and the liberation of Jerusalem. Britain issued the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917, supporting a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. In part it read, "His Majesty's Government view with favor the

establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object..." **The following month**, General Edmund Allenby, commander of the British "Egyptian Expeditionary Force," defeated Ottoman and German defenders and captured the city of Jerusalem. Brethren in Christ rejoiced at the news that Jerusalem had been liberated from the domination of Ottoman Turkish rule. Using the captivity of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in 604 BC as the starting point, the 2,520 years was expected to conclude in 1917, and students of prophecy had been looking forward to that year for momentous events:

"The year 1917 is consequently doubly indicated as a final crisis date, in which the 'seven times' run out...there can be no question that those who live to see this year 1917 will have reached one of the most important, perhaps the most momentous, of these terminal years of crisis." (H. Grattan Guinness. *Light for the Last Days*, 1888)

The establishment of the State of Israel was declared on May 14, 1948, and the Jewish state was immediately recognized by the United States. Fifty years following the liberation of Jerusalem from Ottoman domination, East Jerusalem was liberated from Jordanian rule by Israeli troops, signaling an end to Gentile rule of the city. (Picture on the right shows Israeli paratroopers visiting the Western Wall after the liberation of Jerusalem in 1967.) **In that 2017 is considered by many to be the**



current Jubilee year (perhaps the seventieth and last Jubilee year), should we not be watching with anticipation for notable events leading to the return of Jerusalem and the entirety of the Promised Land to its rightful king? **After all, the scriptural significance of the Jubilees was "release and liberty," returning the land to its rightful heirs.**

We know that Jerusalem has been anything but a city of peace throughout its history, for the name is prophetic of its future when it shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord (Isaiah 62:3), and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there (Ezekiel 48:35). Though the world through the United Nations is pushing for Jerusalem to again be a divided city, the signs indicate that the time is fast approaching when the rightful heir to David's throne will return. In ours and our parents' lifetimes, have we not witnessed end-time prophecy becoming history? **In this Special Issue, readers will find a review of the turbulent history of the city of Jerusalem** laid out in succession, from the time that David wrested it from the Jebusites circa 1000 BC (2 Samuel 5:7-9) to the present day.

This is a critical time for the household of faith. We dare not slumber, but rather be “up and doing,” trimming our lamps, preparing for the Bridegroom’s return. This is not the time to concentrate on laying up temporal comforts for ourselves or our families; rather let us watch after that *needful good part* (Luke 10:42), that we might be counted among the *faithful and wise servants, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing* (Matthew 24:45-46).

The Christadelphian Advocate Publishing Committee



The Early History of Jerusalem

“The long history of Jerusalem began well before it was captured by King David and made into the capital of the people of Israel 3,000 years ago. Archaeological findings indicate the existence of a settlement in Jerusalem in the 3rd millennium BC. The first mention of the city in historic sources begins in the middle of the 2nd millennium BC: the King of Egypt and his advisors carried on voluminous correspondence with the governors of the cities in the Land of Israel that were under Egyptian suzerainty. Six of the letters found were written by the governor of Jerusalem (‘Ershalem’).

The location of the ancient Canaanite city was chosen specifically for its natural protective qualities. The hill on which early Jerusalem was built has natural fortifications from three directions: the deep Kidron valley from the east, the ‘HaGai’ (Tyropoeon) valley from the west, and the lowland where they meet in the south. The only side that isn’t naturally protected is the north. This has been a problem that has accompanied ancient Jerusalem throughout its history.

In a land as dry as Israel, the main consideration in determining the location of a city or village is its proximity to the nearest water source. The only permanent water source of ancient Jerusalem was the Gihon Spring. Its name is derived from the fact that it doesn’t flow steadily, but rather in random eruptions with lapses in between them (Giha in Hebrew means eruption).” (jewishvirtuallibrary.org)

However, Yahweh had much loftier intentions for Jerusalem than to be inhabited by the Canaanites and controlled by the Egyptians. The city of Jerusalem was intended to hold a special position in His plan and purpose for mankind, particularly in regard to the nation of Israel. Though the city’s past and present is riddled with ongoing contention and violence, the city’s name, meaning “City of Peace,” projects the Divine promise of future peace, glory and blessing. For example, the apostle Paul describes the city in Galatians 4:26 in this manner: *But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all*, associating the city with

Abraham and Isaac and using it as an *allegory* throughout the chapter to describe the promise of freedom from sin and death through Christ.

The first Biblical mention of the ancient city of Salem is found in Genesis 14, establishing the city's preeminence in the plan and purpose of God.

This account takes place following the miraculous victory of Abram, his servants and his confederates, over Chedorlaomer, king of Elam and his confederacy that had defeated the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, taking captive Lot and his family. As the Scripture states, *And the*



King of Sodom went out to meet him (Abram) after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale. And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth (vss. 17-19). Immediately we recognize that this city Salem is one of high importance to Yahweh, as the reference describes the presence of the righteous King-Priest Melchizedek, who is held in such high regard that Abram – through whom the “promises” were given – *gave a tenth part of all* that he recovered, and was blessed by Melchizedek as described in Hebrews 7:1-2. The presence of Melchizedek in Salem, who the book of Hebrews describes as *King of Peace...made like unto the Son of God...a priest abiding continually*, who brought bread and wine to Abram after his victory, is meant to foreshadow Christ in his Kingdom Age glory, the eternal King-Priest who will reign in peace and righteousness from Jerusalem.

Jerusalem's importance in the plan of God is apparent throughout the early passages of Scripture in such places as Genesis 15:17-21, which describes Abram entering into a covenant with the Lord (vs. 17). The covenant included the promise that he would be given the land of Canaan as an inheritance, including that of the Jebusites, who occupied Jerusalem at that time (vs. 21). Continuing in Genesis 22:1-2 we read, *It came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. 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.* It is surely not simply coincidence that this Divinely selected place where Abraham was told to offer Isaac – to serve as a type of the coming obedience and sacrifice of the Messiah – occurred at or near the

place where Solomon would eventually build his glorious temple to the Lord. As 2 Chronicles 3:1 later states, *Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite.*

In Exodus chapter 3, when revealing to Moses on Mount Horeb His Holy Name that describes His divine purpose for this creation, the Lord reaffirms that the fulfillment of His plan included giving the land of Canaan to the nation of Israel, specifically mentioning the land of the Jebusites – the occupiers of Jerusalem at that time (vs. 17). He later proclaims in Exodus 23:23, *For mine angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off.* (This would not be fulfilled until Joshua's conquest of the land of Canaan after Israel's forty years of wilderness wanderings.)

It is in Joshua 10:1-2 that we first see the name Jerusalem specifically identified in the Bible. *Now it came to pass, when Adonizedec king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them; that they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty.* The account then reveals how this king of Jerusalem recruited an additional four kings of the Amorites with the intention of collectively waging war against Gibeon, which had made a league with Joshua and the children of Israel, albeit by deceit. Verses 10-11 then relate how, *The Lord discomfited (routed) them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died; they were more who died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.* Recall it was at this time that the Lord commanded the sun to stand still until *the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies...* And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel (vss. 13-14).

Unfortunately, the children of Israel, specifically the tribe of Judah, failed to fulfill their charge and expectation to uproot the Jebusites from the city of Jerusalem at that appointed time. As Joshua 15:63 records, *As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.* Later, in Judges 1:8 it is recorded, *Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire.* Nevertheless,

though having a measure of success at this time against the Jebusites, *the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites, who inhabited Jerusalem* (vs. 21).

Israel's failure to secure Jerusalem would not last forever; it was necessary that one who was faithfully worthy to conquer it would arise to do so. In 1 Samuel 17:54 it is recorded, *David took the head of the Philistine (Goliath), and brought it to Jerusalem.* The significance of this account cannot be overstated in regard to Yahweh's plan concerning the City of Peace: that there would come a Savior who would reign in Jerusalem; one who is the seed of David that will strike a death blow to the head of sin (Genesis 3:15) and finally provide peace to a fallen creation in need of salvation. In 2 Samuel 5:5-10 and 1 Chronicles 11:6-7, we find the account of David establishing Jerusalem as the royal capital of Israel after finally conquering the Jebusites, who boasted that their defenses were impenetrable behind the city's massive fortifications. However, Joab climbed up the "gutter" and breached the city wall, enabling David to conquer it. Recognizing the Divine significance of Jerusalem, David then built his house within it, so that it became known as "the city of David" (1 Chronicles 11:7), where he reigned for thirty-three years. In doing so, he established the precedent that his heir, Jesus Christ, will in like manner establish his throne in Jerusalem, when his foes are made his footstool and his Kingdom is established.

Finally, we recognize further evidence of the promised future glory of Jerusalem in the building of Solomon's temple that was dedicated to the worship and glory of Yahweh. References such as 1 Kings 10:27 describe how influential and prosperous the city was during Solomon's reign, it being but a shadow of its future prosperity and influence in the Kingdom age, when all nations and people will be drawn to the righteous King of Israel who will reign from Jerusalem. Only then will Jerusalem finally become what has always been Yahweh's intention: the great *city of the LORD*; the "city of Peace."

Art Sankey, Morrison, CO



"By the mid 19th century, overcrowded conditions within the walled city of Jerusalem motivated the Jews to build the first neighborhood outside the walls (1860) and, in the next quarter century, to add seven more, forming the nucleus of the New City. By 1880, Jerusalem had an overall Jewish majority. Land for farming was purchased throughout the country; new rural settlements were set up; and the Hebrew language, long restricted to liturgy and literature, was revived. The stage was being set for the founding of the Zionist movement."

[Pre-State Israel: Under Ottoman Rule (1517-1917), *Jewish Virtual Library*]

Jerusalem at the Time of Christ

Around the year 2 BC, a couple travelled from Bethlehem to Jerusalem with a newborn son. The mother had completed her purification according to the Law, and their purpose was to come to the Temple to present the child unto the Lord. As they made their way to the Temple, those that bore rule over the city – the Roman occupation – would be evident, as centurions and soldiers would be seen in the streets. Just north of the Temple in Jerusalem was the Fortress Antonio, called in the book of Acts “the castle” (Acts 21:34), where the Roman army could survey the city and intervene in any disturbance at a moment’s notice.

The Temple itself was a grand structure adorned with goodly stones (Luke 21:5), built on the foundations of the temples built by Solomon and Zerubbabel. It was enlarged and constructed at the direction of Herod the Tetrarch of Galilee (Luke 3:1), whose jurisdiction extended over Jerusalem. Herod was an Idumean (an Edomite), whose interest in architecture and construction had led him to build many great structures in the Holy Land. As a ruler, he was cruel and savage, suffering no one to live who would threaten his rule. Despite Herod’s disposition, the Jews came to worship in this magnificent Temple, which served as a national focal point for their service to the God of their fathers. There were many courts within the Temple in which the people could be instructed in the Law given Moses.



Presiding over the Temple were those Jews who established their preeminence through teaching. The chief priests, Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, and lawyers presented themselves as guides to the people, and by doing so proclaimed their own righteousness and increased their personal wealth. They enforced adherence to the Law of Moses and the tradition of the elders with rigor: they *lade men with burdens grievous to be borne*, yet themselves not touching the burdens with one of their fingers (Luke 11:46).

The Roman guards and the rulers of the Temple would have taken little notice of the poor couple which entered the Temple to offer a lowly sacrifice of two *turtledoves or two young pigeons* according to the Law (Luke 2:24), yet before their eyes was the handmaid of the Lord who carried in her arms the Son of God. Even Herod was unaware of the presence of this child of promise. There were a few in the Temple who understood the significance of the child being presented to the Lord, as the Spirit conveyed to Simeon and Anna the redemption which would be wrought through this child (Luke 2:25-38). While the Jews had abided many days without a king, the future ruler of Israel was now made manifest among them. (It was necessary that

Christ would come when David's throne was, for a time, removed from power. He was required to fulfill his role as prophet and priest through his first coming, prior to his kingship which will begin at his second coming.)

During his first coming, Jerusalem was made witness to the "Word of God made flesh" (John 1:14). As Christ would testify to his disciples, *Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them* (Luke 10:23-24). The ministry of Christ was spent traversing the Holy Land preaching the Kingdom of God to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Among his travels, his frequent trips to Jerusalem are highlighted in the Gospel record. It is evident that Mary and Joseph were both devout servants of Yahweh and travelled to Jerusalem each year for the great feasts of the Law. Jesus' first recorded declaration of his Heavenly Father was in Jerusalem at age twelve. While we are not given any details from that time until the start of his ministry, we can surely believe that Jesus made many trips to Jerusalem during which he observed not only the desperate need of the people for salvation, but also the woeful conduct of the rulers of the Temple, which constituted his Father's house *a den of thieves* (Matthew 21:13).

The Temple itself followed the pattern of the tabernacle and Solomon's Temple with one notable exception: the Most Holy Place was empty, as the ark of the covenant was no longer in the Jews' possession. In the time of the tabernacle, Yahweh would "speak" to Moses from the mercy seat (Numbers 7:89; Exodus 33:9-11). The ark was no longer necessary as Christ taught the people the commandments and doctrine of his Father (John 12:49), thus manifesting himself as *Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us* (Matthew 1:23).

Jesus, being of the tribe of Judah, had no formal role in the service of the Temple (Hebrews 7:13-14), and yet he was very aware that all of the offerings, the altar, and the priests were typical of his own sacrifice which would be accomplished. The Mosaic system was to be fulfilled in him, and he would be established as *a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek* (Psalm 110:4).

As Christ's ministry continued, Jerusalem's role as the location of his suffering would always be on his mind. At the transfiguration we are told, *And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem* (Luke 9:30-31). Later, in teaching his apostles, we read, *Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished* (Luke 18:31). *And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem* (Luke 9:51).

Along with the certainty of his own sacrificial death, Jesus knew the fate of the city of Jerusalem. As the city had been overturned by the Babylonians, it would again be destroyed at the hands of the Romans. After Jesus made a triumphant ascent into the city on a colt with the people proclaiming, *Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest* (Luke 19:38), he beheld the city and wept. *If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes* (vs. 42).

The Romans would lay Jerusalem even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation (Luke 19:44). The Jewish leaders were *blind leaders of the blind* (Matthew 15:14) who were no better than the wicked shepherds spoken of by Ezekiel, which *fed themselves, and fed not the flock* (34:8). Worse yet, they rejected the Son of God, and through envy sought his crucifixion, guiding the people to proclaim, *His blood be on us, and on our children* (Matthew 27:25). As Jesus was led away to be crucified after being beaten, mocked and scourged, he turned to those mourning for him to say, *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children* (Luke 23:28). Jerusalem would be destroyed in 70 AD, forty years after his death and resurrection.

Jesus prophesied of the duration of this judgment, *And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled* (Luke 21:24). The Temple would be destroyed, the people led away captive, and Jerusalem was to be trodden down by the Gentiles for centuries. Christ confirms why this would befall Jerusalem, *Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate* (Matthew 23:36-38). They had rejected their Messiah, and by extension their God. As such, their house (the Temple) and city was laid waste with its treasures carried away to Rome.

Still, Christ's prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction ends in a message of hope: *For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord* (Matthew 23:39). May that day soon come when Christ will again triumphantly enter Jerusalem to reestablish the throne of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will rejoice in their Saviour and call him blessed.

Rodney Dodl, Midland, TX

The People and the Holy Land During the Diaspora

The Jews revolted against Rome in AD 66, and after four years of fighting, the Romans put down the rebellion in AD 70, destroying the Second Temple and the city of Jerusalem. The Romans massacred much of the population, and though some Jews remained in the land, most fled, thus beginning a two-thousand year odyssey known as the Diaspora (Greek, “to scatter, spread about”).

The People

When God brought Israel out of Egypt and gave them the Law at Sinai, through the Spirit, Moses explained that their future would be determined by their conduct. Their prospective futures were prophetically spelled out in detail in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. For instance, Deuteronomy 28:3-13 foretold a litany of blessings for obedience, such as, *the fruit of thy body, of thy ground, of thy cattle, all that thou settest thine hand unto, and plenteous in goods.* However, verses 16-68 describe in detail the curses that would befall them for disobedience, *The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me. The Lord shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it* (vss. 20-21). The latter verses in this chapter (vss. 58-68) would seem to describe the things the people suffered during the Diaspora, such as, *scattered from the one end of the earth even unto the other, a trembling heart and sorrow of mind, thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, left few in number, etc.* In Moses’ final words to the nation, he told them, *evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands* (Deuteronomy 31:29).

As foretold, the people became “wandering Jews,” despised and persecuted wherever they went. They were massacred during the Crusades, and blamed for the “Black Death” that struck Europe in the mid-1300s, resulting in their being tortured, killed, and expelled. It is reported that whole Jewish villages were burnt to the ground in Germany, Switzerland, Spain, and France – where “the whole Jewish congregation, men, women, and children, together with their holy writings, were cast into the flames;” and that more than two hundred communities of Jews were exterminated in 1348



and 1349. (Space prevents us from reviewing the atrocities carried out against the Jewish people in the Inquisition in the late 1400s, the persecutions by the Christians in the 1500s, their murder and banishment by the Russian Tsardom in the 1600s, followed by pogroms in the 1700s and 1800s.) Truly, historical accounts addressing the persecution of the Jewish people during the Diaspora testify to the accuracy and severity of the prophecies.

The Land

In AD 70, the Roman troops commanded by General Titus broke down Jerusalem's walls and torched the city and the temple, reducing Jerusalem to piles of debris and charred corpses. Josephus recorded, "The multitude of those therein that perished exceeded all the destruction that either men or God ever brought upon the world" (Book VI, Ch. 9, Sec. 4). The Bar Kochba Revolt in AD 135 so infuriated the Romans that they determined to rid the land of all Jews. They sold into slavery all who were not massacred, and the Emperor Hadrian issued his edict banning Jews from the city and the land on pain of death.

Again we turn to the sure word of prophecy to learn what was determined for the land of Israel during the Diaspora. When Moses warned the people of the curses that would come upon the nation for disobedience, we find in Leviticus 26 that the land too would be touched, I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it (vss. 32, 34-35).

Among the Gentiles to occupy the land during this period of exile were the followers of Muhammad. The Rashidun Caliphate followed Muhammad's death in AD 632, embarking on campaigns to propagate Islam (first subduing the Arabian tribes which had pledged allegiance to Muhammad). This "Arab" period consisted of successive dynasties, lasting until late in the 11th century, at one point expanding their domain to encircle the entire Mediterranean Sea. That period was followed by the Crusades, which ended with the fall of Jerusalem to Saladin – a Sunni Muslim of Kurdish origin. At the height of his power, his sultanate included Egypt, Syria, Upper Mesopotamia, and parts of North Africa. By the end of the Middle Ages, the country's urban centers were in ruins, most of Jerusalem was abandoned, and the few Jews there were poverty-stricken. This period of decline was characterized by political and economic upheavals, plagues, locust invasions, and devastating earthquakes.

The Ottoman-Mamluk War of 1516-1517 led to the fall of the Mamluk Sultanate and the incorporation of the Levant, Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula as provinces of the Ottoman Empire. **The war transformed the**

Ottoman Empire from a realm at the margins of the Islamic world to a huge empire encompassing the traditional lands of Islam, including the cities of Mecca, Cairo, Damascus and Aleppo. The land was divided into four districts ruled from Istanbul. At the outset of the Ottoman era, an estimated 1,000 Jewish families lived in the country, mainly in Jerusalem, Nablus (*Shechem*), Hebron, Gaza, Safad (*Tzfat*) and the villages of Galilee. The community was comprised of descendants of Jews reported to have never left the area, as well as immigrants from North Africa and Europe (the Hadrian Edict was apparently not strictly enforced). Throughout all this long period since AD 70, the land of Israel was in decline.

With the gradual decline in the viability of Ottoman rule, Palestine was brought into a state of widespread desolation. By the end of the 18th century, much of the land was owned by absentee landlords while some small parcels were leased to impoverished tenant farmers. The great forests of Galilee and the Carmel mountain range were denuded of trees, while swamp and desert encroached on agricultural



land. It was during this period in particular, that the land became so desolate that even Israel's "enemies" would "be astonished at it." *(The picture on the right is the Negev in Israel, depicting the desert-like conditions to which Palestine had succumbed. Source: brewbooks)*

For His Holy Name's Sake

God had declared that the land should be barren and remain so until it would be brought back from the sword and from the desolations of many generations (Ezekiel 38:8; Isaiah 61:4). Here again, we are blessed to have understanding through the revealed Word of God, given to inform His servants things that would come to pass. To Ezekiel, God commanded, *thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord... ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come.* For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: **and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded:** and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am the Lord... Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but **for mine holy name's sake** (Ezekiel 36:1, 8-11, 22).

It was this desolation, this worthless land that had been long determined uninhabitable, that constituted the setting in which Israel would be reborn! A long line of 19th-century writers such as Benjamin Disraeli, Herman Melville, and Mark Twain visited Palestine and wrote of their disappointment and disdain for Jerusalem and the land. Unanimously, they expressed disappointment in the gulf between their mental vision of the “heavenly Jerusalem,” and the reality of the city and the land:

The Innocents Abroad, a book of travel letters written by Mark Twain and published in 1869, chronicled his six-month journey through Europe and the Middle East. He wrote: “The word Palestine always brought to my mind a vague suggestion of a country as large as the United States. I do not know why, but such was the case. I suppose it was because I could not conceive of a small country having so large a history.” Regarding Jerusalem, “Why, it was no larger than an American village of 4,000 inhabitants...a fast walker could circle its walls in an hour,” and the city itself, “is as knobby with countless little domes as a prison door is with bolt-heads.” Twain was harsh in his account of local Arabs and omitted comment about the Jews, except for stereotyped images, even though they were the majority in Jerusalem at the time. As he left by ship from the port of Jaffa, he described the land as of “dismal scenery,” sitting “in sackcloth and ashes,” a “desolate dreamland” with no future. (The International Jerusalem Post, 12-19-03)

What was the significance of the land being desolate when it came time for the Jews to begin returning to the land in preparation for the nation to be established? The very thing thought improbable or impossible reflects the ways of God, declaring that the work is God’s and not man’s. The Ottoman Sultan had annulled the Hadrian Edict in 1856 with the hopes of attracting settlers and farmers to populate Palestine, fearing that this unpopulated area left the empire vulnerable to attack. But the land was so desolate that early attempts at organized Jewish immigration, beginning in 1882, floundered, with approximately half of those who immigrated returning to their home countries due to the difficulty of life there. **Given those circumstances, who would care if Jews were purchasing land from absentee landlords ... by all means ... take their money! Truly, who would take serious notice or be concerned, until later when the population grew and began to prosper?**

It has been reported that in 1827 when Sir Moses Montefiore visited the land “from Dan to Beersheba,” there were but an estimated 500 Jews in all of Palestine (“the poorest of the poor, nomads, wanderers”). But with the Hadrian edict annulled (1856), the Suez Canal opened (1869), and organized immigration underway, the population increased exponentially: 1882 to 1903 = 35,000 Jewish immigrants; 1904 to 1914 = 40,000 immigrants. WW1 interrupted immigration, but in 1917 Britain occupied Palestine and issued their intent to provide a homeland for the Jews through the Balfour Declaration. In July 1922, Britain was given the British Mandate for

Palestine by the League of Nations, setting the stage for the rebirth of the nation of Israel in 1948.

Jim Washeck, St. Peters, MO

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Jewish Virtual Library



2017: A Year Marking Four Zionist Miracles

August 31, 2017 marks the 120th anniversary of the First Zionist Congress in 1897. It's hard to imagine today what a brave and inspired event it was, which turned overnight the yearnings of a nation into a solid, pragmatic political agenda. Then, **November 2, 2017** marks the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. Again, who would have believed that the most prominent imperialist power, the successor of the Roman Empire if you will, would give its enthusiastic support to a political, territorial response to the millennia of Jewish yearnings for Zion. Then, if that's not enough, **November 29, 2017** marks the 70th anniversary of the United Nations' decision to establish a Jewish state in the Land of Israel. An idea that was galvanized 120 years ago, and received a strong boost 100 years ago, became a wide confirmation by the nations of the world 70 years ago! But that's not all. After all the above had been said and done, Israel received a gift that could only be described as coming from God Himself. On **June 5th, 2017**, Jews everywhere will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the liberation of biblical Jerusalem, along with the last areas of the Land of Israel which had remained under foreign occupation: eastern Jerusalem, including the old city and the Temple Mount; Judea, birthplace of King David; Samaria, where the Kingdom of Israel ruled for several centuries; Gaza, where Jews have lived for millennia; and the Sinai, the wilderness where the nation received its founding document, the Torah...

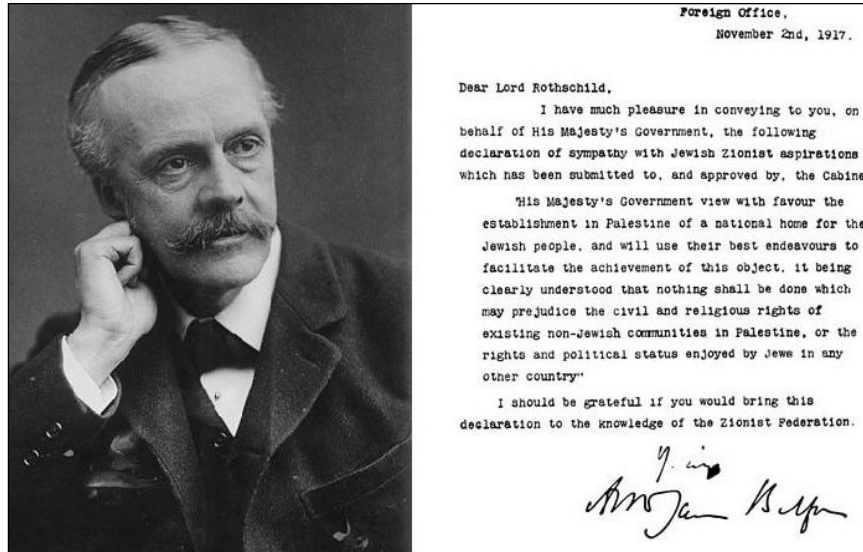
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The Jewish Press.com, April 7, 2016

<http://www.jewishpress.com>

The Balfour Declaration

Its Inception, Role, and Impact



The WW1 years leading up to the issuance of the Balfour Declaration were exciting and encouraging times for Christadelphians. Believers around the world watched with anticipation as events unfolded, leading to this important step toward the re-establishment of the nation of Israel: the homeland of the Jewish people. Clearly the hand of God was involved in every “chance” meeting of the principal characters and events as they played out one hundred years ago.

Most of us are familiar with the name Arthur Balfour, the author of the Declaration. He was prime minister of Britain just after the turn of the Twentieth Century, and Foreign Secretary during the last years of WW1. He had a long history of interest in the Jewish people dating back to his childhood and his early years as a Bible student. He has been described as more of an intellectual than a politician, having written several books on religion and philosophy before becoming a statesman. His intellectual and religious background prepared him for the important role he would play in the Jews returning to their homeland.

Interview with Chaim Weizmann – The Seed Planted

The story of the Declaration begins with an interview Arthur Balfour had with a member of the Zionist movement when he was running for reelection as British Prime Minister in 1906. The Zionist that he met with was Chaim Weizmann, who would become his close friend and partner in their quest to re-establish the Jewish homeland in Palestine. Weizmann had emigrated from Russia where persecution of the Jews had become more

prominent than in other parts of Europe, his studies taking him to Germany and Switzerland where he met other Zionists. He studied to be a chemist, and at age thirty settled in England where he lectured in the University of Manchester's chemistry department (Manchester was well-known for its university and the fact that it was the center of a large chemical industry).

As the story unfolds, we see the hand of providence at work. During the early years of the twentieth century, British Jews played a significant role in political life and in WW1 activities. A Jew named Charles Dreyfus was the local chairman of the Zionist group in Manchester as well as director of a local chemical company (it was Dreyfus who gave Weizmann his first job as an industrial chemist). Weizmann also was involved in politics and became the campaign manager for a local Member of Parliament who was running for prime minister. That MP was none other than Arthur Balfour.

When Balfour wanted to talk to someone to learn more about Zionism, who better for Dreyfus to recommend than his friend Chaim Weizmann? Who would have thought that this meeting between the young Zionist and the candidate for British Prime Minister would become a turning point in the history of the Jews? Balfour began the interview by asking why the Zionists had rejected Britain's offer for the Jews to settle in Uganda. Weizmann responded that "nothing but a deep religious conviction expressed in modern political terms could keep the movement alive, and that movement had to be based on Palestine alone." Balfour asked if there were many Zionists like Weizmann and he responded, "I believe I speak the mind of millions of Jews whom you will never see and who cannot speak for themselves." Balfour responded, "If that is so, you will one day be a force." Nothing was to come of this interview for several years, but a seed had been planted in Balfour's mind.

WW1 and the Acetone Connection

Moving forward to 1916 – the middle of WW1 – a submarine blockade had resulted in shortages of critical raw materials that Britain needed for the war effort. One of these materials was acetone, the solvent that was used for making propellant for large munitions. It became known that a chemist in Manchester by the name of Dr. Weizmann had invented a new process for making acetone. Like many inventions, it was discovered accidentally when he was attempting to accomplish something entirely different.

At that time, the First Lord of the Admiralty was none other than Winston Churchill. Dr. Weizmann was called to meet with Churchill to discuss his invention. He was told that the British military needed 30,000 tons of acetone. Churchill asked, "Can you make it"? Weizmann responded that thus far he had only made it in the laboratory. Weizmann was given the resources he needed to scale up the process. This providential meeting gave the relatively unknown chemist from Manchester a tremendous opportunity to further the cause of Zionism as he was thrust into the war effort in Great Britain.

During the early war years support for the persecuted Jews was growing in Britain. For instance, one of Weizmann's acquaintances was Herbert Samuel, a fellow Jew serving in the government as Home Secretary. Though he was a liberal who had renounced all religious beliefs and had not previously shown support for the Jewish cause, he made it known that he supported the establishment of a British Protectorate and a Jewish state in Palestine. Bolstered, Weizmann renewed his acquaintance with Arthur Balfour, who had not forgotten that first interview he had with Weizmann years before (Balfour had told him that after the war ends, "you may get your Jerusalem," not realizing just how prophetic that statement would be).

The Taking of Jerusalem from the Turks

As WW1 drew on, both Germany and Britain tried to win the allegiance of the Jewish people in Palestine, both offering support for some form of "homeland" in Palestine. However, the Germans could offer little hope for a Turkish victory, while Britain had already moved inside the border of southern Palestine with a large army.

The Ottoman Empire occupied a very strategic position in the Middle East, even though it had become known as "the Sick Man of Europe."

In the spring of 1917, General Edmund Allenby, commander of the British forces, had been given orders to capture Jerusalem. Among the soldiers under Allenby's charge was an infantry regiment comprised of Jews called the Jewish Legion. Though few in number, they were to play a significant role in the Jordan Valley and in the final allied offensive at Megiddo. Allenby's forces invaded and broke through Turkish lines in Gaza on November 4, the anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in AD 70. It was not an easy victory, but General Allenby prevailed and marched into Jerusalem on December 11, 1917. The capture of Jerusalem by the British army brought an end to centuries of Turkish rule in fulfillment of Biblical prophecy (e.g. Revelation 16:12). As such, it was a very significant day for believers and Jews world-wide. With Turkey defeated, it was in Britain's power to give the Jews the right to immigrate to Palestine in large numbers, and to build Jewish national and self-governing institutions.

The Balfour Declaration is Published

The Balfour Declaration was enacted two days before General Allenby invaded Palestine. It was on November 2, 1917, nearly 100 years ago, that the letter was sent from Foreign Secretary Balfour to Lord Walter Rothschild – banker, politician, Zionist, and close friend of Chaim Weizmann. It declared that Britain would "view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object."

Lord Rothschild was considered the leader of the Jewish community in Britain, and between he and Balfour, they had gained the support of the majority of their cabinet colleagues. There was still opposition by the

“assimilationists,” who were proponents of the Jews being “absorbed” into the existing communities in Palestine as opposed to achieving independence as a separate state. Therefore, the final Declaration was not as strong as it had been originally drafted. Weizmann was particularly disappointed with the final document. It is recorded that when Mark Sykes, the British War Cabinet secretariat’s expert on Palestine, first showed the text of the Balfour Declaration to Chaim Weizmann, he did so with the words, “It’s a boy”! But after reviewing it, “Weizmann said it was not the boy he had expected, and he did not like it. He had been hoping for the promise of a ‘Jewish State,’ not a ‘national home.’”

There are interesting parallels between the Balfour Declaration and the Decree of Cyrus as we find in Ezra. Both were providential, resulting in the Jews returning to their native land. Also, just as in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah, the WW1-era Arab people and their leaders – modern equivalents of *Sanballat and Tobiah* (Nehemiah chapters 2, 4, 6) – opposed and obstructed the Jewish settlers and builders in their midst.

Winston Churchill enters our story again, when in 1921 he was put in charge of the Middle East Colonial Office. His support for Jewish settlement and prosperity was crucial, as one of his initial acts was to lift the ban on Jewish immigrants into Palestine. He also prepared the terms of the Mandate for Palestine, which was awarded to Britain by the League of Nations. The Balfour Declaration was later incorporated into the Mandate for Palestine (July 24, 1922), as well as into the Sevres Peace Treaty with the Ottoman Empire (August 10, 1920). Due to exaggerated interpretations of the meaning of the Balfour Declaration favoring the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine, a series of violent riots broke out in Palestine in May 1921. Churchill, in his role as Colonial Secretary, was given the task of clarifying how the British viewed the Balfour Declaration in such a way that it might pacify the Arabs. The **“Churchill White Paper of June 3, 1922”** was issued as official correspondence to the Palestine Arab Delegation and the Zionist Organization. It stated that the Jewish national home was to be only a community within Palestine, that it tied the rate of Jewish immigration to the economic absorptive capacity of the country, but most importantly, it affirmed that **the Jewish people were “in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance.”**

Anti-Semitism on the Rise

The story continues to unfold into the 1930s when Jewish emigration increased across Europe due to Hitler’s expanding persecution of the Jews in Germany and elsewhere. By 1938/39, tens of thousands of Jewish refugees were trying to enter Palestine. Due to the growing violence, British Consuls were instructed by London to not allow Jews without valid immigration documents to enter Palestine. Additionally, there was fierce opposition from the Palestinian Arab leaders and neighboring Arab governments who were

demanding that Jewish immigration be curbed if not stopped. Meanwhile, anti-government and inter-communal violence in Palestine reached new heights, forcing Britain to declare martial law. With the failure of the February 1939 Arab-Zionist London Conference, Britain issued the **“Palestine White Paper of 1939”** that set a limit of 100,000 Jewish immigrants over the next five years. As a result, illegal immigration intensified as did the British government’s efforts to halt it, leading to armed Jewish resistance against the British.

Britain’s then Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, reflecting his country’s changed position toward the Jews, was reported to have stated, “If we must offend one side, let us offend the Jews rather than the Arabs.” **Winston Churchill once again took up the Jewish cause when he spoke with force and bitterness against what he regarded as both a betrayal of the Balfour Declaration and a shameful act of appeasement by his own government.** Yet he could not prevail against the then general sentiment of Parliament and the British leadership.

1948 to Our Day

With no support from its allies, and agreement between Arab and Zionist leaders proving to be impossible, Britain began planning its withdrawal from Palestine. By the end of 1947, the battle between the Arabs and the Jews over Palestine was being fought in earnest, with no end in sight. On May 14, 1948, General Alan Cunningham, the last High Commissioner in Palestine, pulled out of Haifa, ending the British Mandate. At midnight on that fateful day, the Jewish leaders declared the establishment of the State of Israel.

But the impact of the Balfour Declaration does not end there. Just this last year, at an Arab League summit, the Palestinian Authority threatened to sue Britain over the document it had issued almost one hundred years ago, which they argued allowed for the founding of the State of Israel. They blame the Balfour Declaration for the Palestinian “Nakba” (catastrophe), when Palestinians fled their homes during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. This threat can be viewed as a symptom of desperation over the Palestinian cause at a time when the peace process is for all practical purposes a nonstarter, and the prospects for a two-state solution are nil. (The controversy has awakened interest in how Britain’s Foreign Office will handle the legacy of this still politically sensitive WW1 agreement on its centenary in November 2017.)

Christ’s brethren look favorably on the upcoming 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, recognizing that it was brought about to further the plan and purpose of Yahweh, through the instrumentality of His angels. Let us watch and pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

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Jerusalem's Reunification in 1967

Fifty years ago, on Wednesday, June 7, 1967, the city of Jerusalem was reunited. The Israeli Defense Forces captured the eastern sector of Jerusalem on the third day of the Six Day War (and by the end of the war, the eastern Arab sector of Jerusalem and all the West Bank up to the Jordan River – territory previously controlled by Jordan).

At the cessation of hostilities in 1948 due to the implementation of the second UN-proclaimed ceasefire, the city of Jerusalem was divided right down the middle. The mayor of Jewish Jerusalem before the 1967 Six Day War, Teddy Kollek, described the feeling of living in the western, Jewish sector of Jerusalem:

“This half-city was the only place in Israel, except for the border kibbutzim, where you constantly sensed an atmosphere of war and the enemy close by. The divided city was a blemish and a danger.” As Kollek recalled, “Half the time you drove down a road or a side street, you ran into a sign reading, ‘STOP! DANGER! FRONTIER AHEAD!’” Kollek added: “There was hardly a month in which somebody was not killed or wounded on the frontier, or at least struck by a stone thrown from the wall. When we complained to the Jordanians, they said, apologetically, ‘A soldier went mad.’ The city was divided by walls fifteen to twenty feet high where a through street had previously existed, and by stretches of No-Man’s Land, barbed wire fences, and mines.”¹

The Jordanians, in contravention of their undertakings, refused to allow any Jews access to the Wailing Wall to pray between 1948 and 1967. Therefore, when Israeli soldiers reached the Wailing Wall on June 7th, it was an intensely emotional day in the history of Israel. For the first time in over 2,500 years, the Jewish people had sovereignty over this retaining wall, the only remnant from the Temple era.

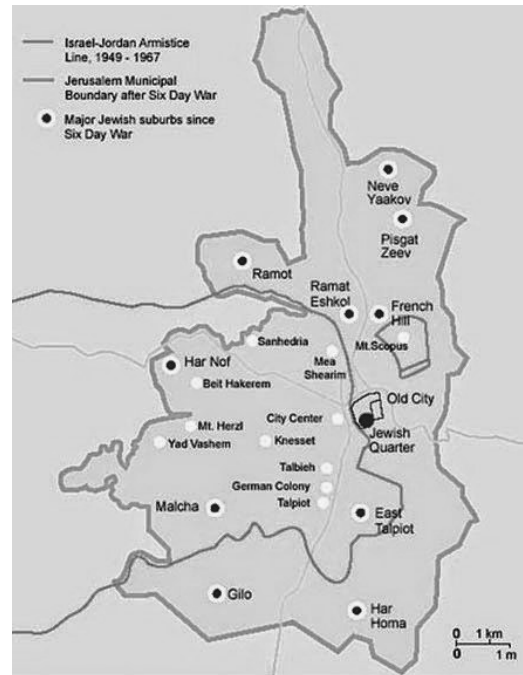
Israel did not enter the War in June 1967 with a plan to capture the eastern half of Jerusalem. On the contrary, on the day in which the war

broke out – June 5, 1967 – the Israeli government used diplomatic channels to inform King Hussein of Jordan that if he stayed out of the war, Israel would leave his Kingdom unscathed. Even after war broke out, Israel had no plans to conquer any part of Jerusalem. As late as the evening of June 6th, at an emergency session of the Israeli Cabinet, there was not unanimity over whether to attack the Old City. The Minister of Defense, General Moshe Dayan, was one of those who opposed such an attack; other Ministers opposed it also, fearing that an Islamic Holy War might break out throughout the region if Israeli troops entered the Temple Mount. However, the balance of Cabinet opinion, strongly supported by Ministers representing the religious parties, was in favour of efforts to try to capture the Old City, and with it the former Jewish Quarter, which the Jordanians had conquered in 1948. Accordingly, the command was given that night to the Israeli general in charge of that sector, and by early afternoon the following day, Israeli soldiers had reached the Western (Wailing) Wall.²

King Hussein had little choice politically but to commit his forces to the war then raging between Israel and Egypt in the south and Israel and Syria in the north. Had he

had accurate real-time intelligence of the extent of the destruction of the Egyptian Air Force by Israel's surprise strike at dawn on June 5th, he might have had second thoughts about the wisdom of opening a third front with Israel. But he felt it was his duty as an Arab ruler to join the war, however futile his Kingdom's contribution might be in checking Israel's success. When he gave the order on Monday, June 5th for his forces in the eastern sector of Jerusalem to begin shelling the Israeli (western) sector of Jerusalem, the battle was joined by Israeli forces and the fate of the

Jordanian section of the city was sealed. The eastern sector of Jerusalem was conquered two days later by Israel. By June 29, just over three weeks after taking the eastern sector of Jerusalem, the official reunification of Jerusalem was implemented. During those three intervening weeks, the separation wall was torn down and the minefields cleared so that there was no longer any impediment to the free flow of people throughout the integrated City.



For the past fifty years, the city of Jerusalem has been under Israeli sovereignty. Israel's claim to the united, undivided city is not recognized by any other nation on the earth – each year the General Assembly of the United Nations overwhelmingly passes a resolution condemning Israel's “occupation” of the Arab sector of the city including the Temple Mount. In December 2016, for the first time in its history, the **UN Security Council** passed a similar resolution when the US declined to exercise its veto.³

One hundred years before its reunification, a Bible student named Robert Milligan, President of the College of the Bible at Kentucky University, anticipated that something remarkable would occur in the spring or middle of 1967 with respect to the cleansing of the sanctuary. His expectation was based on Daniel 8:13-14, *Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one who spoke, For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot? And he said to me, For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state* (ESV). On the basis of the day-for-a-year principle, the expectation was that 2,300 years after the he-goat attacked the ram in the spring of 334 BC, an event would occur that would lead to the sanctuary – the site of the Temple – being restored to its rightful state. Mr. Milligan understood the “transgression that makes desolate” as having reference to the Mahometan power and therefore expected a setback to its control over the sanctuary.⁴ The question was, when to fix the starting point for the 2,300-year period described in the prophecy? Mr. Milligan believed that the male goat's coming from the west against the ram, an event described earlier in Daniel 8, was the key clue for the starting point. That event occurred in 334 BC, the year in which Alexander the Great and his army crossed the Hellespont into Asia for the first time and began their conquest of the Persians.

Spring 334 BC ←———— 2300 years —————→ June AD 1967

Because there is no year zero, in crossing over from BC years to AD years, it is necessary to add one to arrive at the corresponding AD date. This prophecy of Daniel had a remarkable fulfilment on June 7, 1967 when the site of the sanctuary was restored to Jewish sovereignty for the first time since the fall of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, over 2,500 years earlier.

The account from Robert Milligan's book, Reason and Revelation, where he wrote about this matter, has a footnote at the end of chapter III entitled, *The Mahometan Dominion*, or, *The Little Horn of the Goat, Daniel viii* ⁵ that reads as follows:

“The reader should be extremely cautious in adopting any theory of unfulfilled prophecy. It was never God's purpose to gratify our curiosity in this respect by giving us anything more than a mere *outline* of future events, and hence there is a great danger of falling into error in our attempts to fill up the details. It is just here that

most writers on prophecy forget their proper office as interpreters of the Word of Life, and become prophets themselves.

We all, however, feel that there is a great pleasure in looking into the chapter of unfulfilled prophecy, as to a light that shines in a dark place. And there is certainly no harm in endeavoring to understand it, *provided*, only, that we do not become dogmatists, nor wrest the Scriptures by our own theories and speculations.

With this caution to the reader, I will add a few words here touching the *probable* time when the Sanctuary will be cleansed. The principal difficulty consists in fixing the terminus *a quo*, or the epoch from which the two thousand three hundred years are to be reckoned. It seems most probable, however, that this period is to be reckoned, not from the rise or birth of the Ram, as some writers have alleged, (for he was in his full strength and vigor when Daniel saw him), but *from the time when he was first attacked by the He-goat*. If this assumption is warranted by the context, it fixes the beginning of this period to the spring of the year 334 BC, and consequently it will terminate in the spring or about the middle of AD 1967.”⁶

Daniel’s prophecy of the restoration of the sanctuary to its rightful state is an incremental process that is not accomplished by a single event. The Six Day War brought the most significant change in the status of Jerusalem

in many, many centuries insofar as Jewish sovereignty over the City is concerned. It was a step toward the restoration of the sanctuary to its rightful state, but not the completion of the process. On June 17, 1967, Moshe Dayan unilaterally relinquished Israeli military control over the Temple Mount and restored administrative control to the Muslims.

The Muslim shrine, the Dome of the Rock, and the adjacent Al-Aqsa Mosque, remain prominent reminders of the work of the “abomination that makes desolate” in the heart of Jerusalem. The inscriptions inside the Dome declare that God has no Son.

The Muslim shrine, the Dome of the Rock, and the adjacent Al-Aqsa Mosque, remain prominent reminders of the work of the “abomination that makes desolate” in the heart of Jerusalem. The inscriptions inside the Dome declare that God has no Son.⁷ As long as these edifices stand, the sanctuary has not been fully restored to its rightful state and the treading down of Jerusalem has not fully ceased. Another action taken by the Muslim power many centuries earlier was to seal up the “Golden Gate” on the eastern approach to the sanctuary in Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, in order, as the Muslims vainly supposed, to bar Messiah’s entry to the City from the east.

As a twelve-year-old in 1967, the author found the events of late May and early June vivid and momentous. This writer remembers running home from school to listen to the speeches of Israel's eloquent Foreign Minister, Abba Eban, at the United Nations Security Council, which were broadcast live over the radio. Never before or since in his life-time have events in the world so electrified the Christadelphian body and awakened zeal and interest in the Bible. **There may not be another 1967 War to serve as a "wake up" call. The teaching of the Lord is that his coming breaks upon the world stealthily as a thief,** and as unsuspecting prey is snared in a trap. On a certain day known to the Most High, another momentous step will be taken towards restoring Jerusalem to its rightful state: it will be the City of the Great King where the Lord reigns. May that day soon break upon the world.

James Farrar, Grimsby, ON

¹ Martin Gilbert, Jerusalem in the Twentieth Century, p. 168. Mayor Kollek's reference to the half-city brings to mind the reference to "half the city" in Zechariah 14:2. His reference also confirms that Jerusalem, as a divided City, was in a quasi-state of war throughout the nineteen years the division of the City lasted.

² *Ibid*, p. 282 – information in this paragraph has been taken directly from this source

³ UN General Assembly Resolutions 71-97 http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/97, 71-98 http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/98 and Security Council Resolution 2334 [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2334\(2016\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2334(2016)) are accessible at the links provided.

⁴ Robert Milligan did not believe that "the sanctuary" necessarily had reference to the site of the Temple, viewing it instead as having reference to the Christian church as the antitypical temple, but he connected the prophecy with the literal return of the Jews to Palestine as one of the essential phases.

⁵ Robert Milligan identified the little horn of the goat in Daniel 8 as Mahometan. Most Christadelphian expositors identify this little horn with the eastern Roman Empire. Brother Islip Collyer, in his book, Daniel and Christ, expressed his conclusion that Daniel 8:12 represented a change from the Roman to the Mahometan (i.e. Muslim) power, and that both powers were included within the scope of the 2,300-year sanctuary cycle.

⁶ Robert Milligan, Reason and Revelation, p. 93-94 – (Third Edition, 1868). The entire book is accessible on line at Google Books.

⁷ The English translation of the Arabic inscription is, "Far be it removed from His transcendent majesty that He should have a son. It becometh not (the Majesty of) God that He should take unto Himself a son."

The Deliverance of Jerusalem

The Christadelphian Advocate and Fellow-Labourer, March 1918, pp. 89-90

[On December 9, 1917, the mayor of Jerusalem surrendered the city to the British army. Two days later, British General Edmund Allenby entered the city and took possession. This 1918 Advocate article reflects the impact and response of that development on the household of faith.]

One of the most memorable events in history has been the surrender of Jerusalem to the British army operating in southern Palestine.

It touches the emotions of millions of human hearts all the world over. To the Moslem world, it means the loss of a cherished possession which they have held for nearly thirteen centuries, whilst by the “Christian” community it is regarded as a sacred spot hallowed by the memory of great events in Biblical history. To the Jew it opens up the possibility of Zionism, which has recently received the blessing of British support, and has stirred the whole of Jewry to its foundations and called forth the sincerest gratitude to the allies.



The Turkish empire has been dealt a blow which is as its death knell, a potent sign that it is doomed and that an age of freedom is about to dawn for many oppressed peoples. Not only so, but it dashes to the ground all the fond hopes of Germany of development in Mesopotamia, and the “peaceful penetration” of that quarter by the great project of the Bagdad railway is rendered futile and altogether illusory. Although Russia seems to be in the melting pot for the time being, the incident will undoubtedly evoke a profound response from the people of that vast country. They are full of religious impulses and have always had a great veneration for the holy places. It would not be surprising if the news of the capitulation of Jerusalem to the forces of Britain became a powerful stimulus to a Russian revival.

But what effect has the incident upon the household of faith? The greatness of the event can only be fully appreciated by a student of the prophetic word. When, in AD 637, the Patriarch Sophronius handed over Jerusalem to the Caliph Omar, he is reported by Gibbon, the historian, to have muttered to himself, in the words of the prophet Daniel, “The abomination of desolation is in the holy place.” We are privileged 1,280 years later to witness a further stage in the “consummation, and that determined being poured out upon the desolator.” It surely excites the deepest enthusiasm when we see such signal evidences of Divine encouragement, and we are thereby strengthened in our most holy faith. The

“drying up of the river Euphrates” proceeds apace, and the preparation of the way for the kings out of a sun’s rising is, we may almost say, visibly taking place. Although for many years we have been looking for the clearance of the Turk out of Palestine, the methods adopted to effect this have not been what most of us probably had expected, though in the events that have happened it now seems the natural outcome of the political situation.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem has had a mighty past, and is destined to have a still mightier future. As the City of the Great King it will yet become the metropolis of the world when “the law shall go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,” bidding the nations to cease the savageries of human conflict and “beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks,” so that “they shall practice war no more.” The release of Jerusalem from the unhallowed domination of the Turk marks another stage in the divine plan of redemption. It indicates the closing days of the times of the Gentiles, which had their commencement when Nebuchadnezzar reduced the city to ruins, burned its Temple, and pillaged its streets.

That we are in an era of world-startling events closely associated with the “sign of the Son of Man in heaven coming with power and great glory,” is vividly impressed upon our minds as the panorama moves along. It should stir us up to a realization of our privileges and responsibilities; it should provoke us to ask ourselves, “What lack I yet?”; it should impel us to a determination to “hold fast the profession of our confidence firm unto the end”; in fact, it should animate us profoundly in the things of the Spirit and awaken the keenest interest in watching for the dawn of Zion’s glad morning.



Official Logo Marking 50 Years Since the Liberation of Jerusalem

Ynetnews, March 5, 2017

Minister Miri Regev presents the symbol that will adorn the official stationery of the various government ministries in the upcoming year; “The liberation of Jerusalem must be above political disputes.”

Culture Minister Miri Regev (Likud) presented the new official logo to mark the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Jerusalem on Sunday at a cabinet meeting. “If we are unable to say to ourselves that we liberated Jerusalem from generations of foreign occupation, how can we complain about the world,” said Regev, insisting on the use of the word “liberation.”



Miri Regev with the new logo – “a united, unifying Jerusalem”

The new logo will now adorn the official letterhead of the various ministries and accompany the Jubilee events throughout the year. “This logo tells the true story of Jerusalem,” Regev said.

“The basis of the number 5 is the harp that reminds us of David, King of Israel, who determined Jerusalem as our eternal capital over 3,000 years ago. The top is a lion’s head – Jerusalem’s symbol to this day. The number 5 symbolically represents the timeline of the history of Jerusalem – from King David to the IDF’s 55th Paratroopers Brigade that entered through the Lion’s gate and liberated Jerusalem during the Six Day War.

Inside the ‘zero,’ the Israeli flag appears above the Old City, the Western Wall and the Temple Mount. The logo’s chosen color is gold,” which, according to Regev, represents the “near-prophetic Naomi Shemer lyrics depicting a ‘Jerusalem of Gold.’”

Regev also commented on the slogan – “50 years since the liberation of Jerusalem. A united and unifying Jerusalem” – chosen to accompany the logo, “The liberation of Jerusalem must be above political disputes.”



Present Day Jerusalem

The city of Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Israel, although not so recognized by the UN or Israel’s Arab neighbors. Jerusalem was proclaimed the eternal capital of Israel soon after the War of Independence in 1948, and began to be developed westward, while Jordan held the Old (walled) City and East Jerusalem. In 1967, the Old City and East Jerusalem

were captured by Israel and annexed to the city. Jerusalem is now governed by the Jerusalem City Council (thirty-one elected members and Mayor Nir Birkat – elected in 2008).

The original UN resolution of 1947 that created the Jewish and Arab portions of the British Mandate, designated Jerusalem and Bethlehem as *corpus separatum* – an enclave which was essentially

“international” in character. The UN still maintains this stance although it is rejected by Israeli law. No countries’ embassies are now located there; instead the embassies are located in Tel Aviv due to political controversy over the status of the City. The official Catholic Church opinion is also that Jerusalem is an international enclave, and does not belong to Israel. It owns numerous properties in Jerusalem, most of them “holy sites” in the city.

Jerusalem is located on the southern extension of a plateau of the Judean Hills at 2,490 feet elevation, about twenty miles west of the Jordan River. At Israel’s 68th anniversary (May 2016), Jerusalem’s population stood at just over 865,000. The topography of the city is sharply hilly and contains three prominent valleys: the Kidron Valley on the east, the Tyropoean Valley just west of the Temple Mount, and the Valley of Hinnom further southwest. Prominent mountains are Mount Olivet, Mount Moriah (Temple Mount), and Mount Scopus.

The main approaches to the city are from the east (Jericho) and from the west (Tel Aviv). We can imagine ourselves on a tour bus approaching the city via the Jericho Road that passes south of the Mount of Olives unaware that, in moments, the Eternal City will abruptly appear – close up – in all its glory. The golden dome of the Dome of the Rock, a Muslim shrine atop the Temple Mount, is likely the first object upon which one’s eye fixes. The beautiful forested city spreads into the western hills dotted by city structures. Immediately one realizes that he is beholding the most famous city in the world – the Old City itself with its towering, crenellated walls, rebuilt in the sixteenth century by Suleiman the Magnificent. The city was founded prior to 3000 BC, becoming the possession of Israel when King David conquered its Jebusite inhabitants circa 1000 BC.

For lovers of Zion, visiting Israel for the first time, this abrupt, initial view of the city *the LORD hath chosen*, the future home of the saints, is an emotionally overwhelming sight. Before them lies the verdant Kidron Valley with its Garden of Gethsemane just ahead. The Mount of Olives rises to the right, its treeless western slopes nearly entirely covered by Jewish gravestones. In view are the unique landmarks – the Russian Orthodox Church; the Dominus Flevit (“Jesus wept”) Church; the ancient Tomb of Zechariah, and the Garden of Gethsemane with its gnarled, ancient olive

For lovers of Zion, visiting Israel for the first time, this abrupt, initial view of the city *the LORD hath chosen*, the future home of the saints, is an emotionally overwhelming sight.



Zechariah's Tomb

trees. (They may be surprised to observe that the Brook Kidron is a mere trickle.)

Further north, the prominent architecture of Hebrew University faces southward from Mount Scopus – the first view of the city as seen by the Roman conquerors that arrived circa AD 67, surveying the city, preparing to destroy it for the second time in history. To one's left lies the City of David on a low ridge extending south from the Temple Mount, where the Tomb of David is located, and Caiaphas' house where Jesus was imprisoned and interrogated overnight prior to his

crucifixion.

But at this point one is still in East Jerusalem – an area claimed by the “Palestinians” as their hoped-for future capital. This portion of the city is more dilapidated than others: many of its houses still unfinished, properties unkept, graffiti sprayed on exposed surfaces, disappointingly dirty and shoddy in appearance. Its populous is almost entirely Arabic. Minarets stab the sky every few streets. Goats and sheep wander in the streets along with a few stray dogs and chickens. A frail donkey pulls a rickety kerosene cart, its vendor selling fuel for lamps and stoves to the residents. As our tour bus proceeds across the Brook Kidron, it swings southward and begins a southern circuit of the Temple Mount. The magnificent Eastern Gate of the city dominates the Eastern Wall.

The road circles past the southeastern pinnacle of the wall and the extensive archaeological “dig” of the southern precincts at the Hulda Steps, climbing sharply upward past the Dung Gate toward the Jaffa Gate and the Tower of David, which is not that at all, but is rather a picturesque old minaret. The landscaping outside the wall is magnificent – clean, well-trimmed, and well-lighted. Only this gate allows limited automobile traffic inside the walls (the narrow streets typically cannot accommodate cars and trucks). To our left is the Valley of Hinnom – or *Tophet* – and we are surprised to see it populated with sumptuous condominiums set in lovely landscaping. Imagine having your home address as “10 Valley of Hinnom Place, Jerusalem!”



Tower of David

Further exploration of the city reveals places of which everyone will have heard. Some of these are visitor attractions and include the Knesset (parliament), Yad Veshem (the Holocaust Memorial), the Israel Museum – home of the Dead Sea Scrolls housed in the uniquely designed Shrine of the Book, and the Rockefeller Museum located just north of the Old City walls.

The Israel Supreme Court House is nearby, as are the residences of the president and prime minister.

A rail service has recently started serving Tel Aviv. The city's airport handles commercial traffic, but is second to Ben Gurion International near Tel Aviv. The Garden Tomb is nearby at Golgotha, a cave-tomb which is surely similar to the one in which Jesus was buried for three days. A huge round stone, which has been appropriately rolled aside, admits entry. Its verdant gardens are tended by volunteers. The Jerusalem Central Bus Station – a transport hub – is not far away. The grotesque façade of the Hill of the Skull overlooks the entire area. Also nearby is the Damascus Gate of the Old City – a bustling commercial center of shops, street vendors, and pickpockets! (one must always exercise diligence when circulating in the crowds of even the Holy City!) If one desires, just inside this Gate there is a stairway giving access to the walkway atop the Old City wall. Except in the Temple Mount area, one may freely walk nearly the entire perimeter of Jerusalem atop the wall, viewing the bustling city below and the entire environs of the city outside the walls.

Entering the Old City via the Lion's Gate (aka St. Stephen's Gate, for it was here that Stephen is reported to have been stoned to death), one has immediate access to the Temple Mount and the two Muslim structures located there – the Dome of the Rock, and the Mosque al-Aqsa located atop the southern wall. Entry to the first is now prohibited to non-Muslims, but visitors may enter the Mosque after removing their shoes. Security checkpoints are encountered serially as one moves about the Old City – armed Israeli soldiers asking questions and searching bags, examining cameras and other gear. Leaving the Temple Mount one enters the Via Dolorosa – *the Way of Sorrows* – that some Christians say was traveled by Jesus on his way to be crucified; however, we doubt the veracity of the claim.

The colorful shops of the Muslim quarter feature nearly every trinket ever conceived by mankind made of mother of pearl or olive wood.

Freshly butchered sheep and goats hang in the open air; bakery stalls offer many varieties of bread and baked goods, including the delicious sweet *baklava* on open trays, and addicting *halvah* [Turkish confection]. Specialty shops feature succulent *falafels*; garments of many kinds hang on wires above the crowded street,



accessible only by long poles. Scores of colorful, open spice bins give the crowded market a pungent, exotic odor. A few sheep and goats scamper by, chased by the urchins of the Muslim Quarter. Shops offer every conceivable

shape of beaten copperware. Bolts of cloth spill into the narrow streets on frail display tables. The beckoning of the hawkers adds to the bustle, each one hoping to rope the visitor into their endless attempts to barter their wares.

About 30 percent of the population is Israeli Arab – full citizens of Israel. In Jerusalem, they appear to be generally prosperous. They add a colorful aspect to the city dressed in their ancient garb – the entire bodies and faces of many of the women completely covered. Some delicately balance huge pastry trays on their heads as they make their way adroitly through the crowded streets. They seem to face few real challenges of existence, and generally have a good life in Israel. Nevertheless, there is hostility for Israel among some of its Arab citizens. Visitors now find it dangerous to visit the Pool of Siloam because Arab children often pelt visitors with stones.

Doubling back toward the east, one enters Western Wall Plaza – the holiest site in Judaism, at which Jews pray earnestly, but where even today they also openly weep and wail for the Temple’s destruction. Opening toward the north is an underground passageway that leads into a synagogue, then along the base of the Wall to Via Dolorosa.

The first line of Jerusalem Light Rail (the “Red Line”) is operational and runs from the southwest to the northeast of the city. In the vicinity of Mount Herzl it spans a busy thoroughfare by means of a spectacular bridge suspended by thick steel cables descending from a graceful central tower – an incongruous structure for the venerable old city, yet reflecting its attempt to move into the future with purpose and modernity. Verdant parks dot the cityscape and accommodate the crowds of people who always seem to be “taking in the air,” especially in the evenings (these parks also provide recreational space for the multitudes of children). Auto traffic is intense in West Jerusalem.

During several visits to Jerusalem, we have observed its growth and development with great interest. In 1978, we noted an unusual number of homes in all parts of the city which were almost completed, except for steel bars (rebar) protruding from concrete sections of their roofs or walls, giving a decidedly unfinished appearance. We wondered about this unfinished state for so many homes. We were told that such houses were considered by the municipality to be “unfinished” – that there was still work to be done to make them permanently habitable, and thus the owners were not taxed on these properties (taxes are not levied on homes in Jerusalem until they are completed).

As to personal security within the city, this observer feels entirely at home in Jerusalem. He has never felt threatened (except in one unique circumstance) and has been impressed by the friendliness and openness of Jerusalem’s people. However, the *Shalom Yerushaliyim* (the peace of Jerusalem), which every Bible believer prays for, has not yet arrived.

Harold Lafferty, Hagerstown MD

That Great City, the Holy Jerusalem



Mount Zion and Jerusalem form one of the many golden threads woven through the Scriptures. This particular, very beautiful thread, points to a uniquely special place in the plan and purpose of Yahweh. From its first mention in Genesis as the dwelling-place of Melchizedek, “king of Salem,” to the writings of the prophets including that of John in the Apocalypse, there is frequent and telling reference to Zion’s future glory.

This mountain in the land of Moriah was the scene of a most significant Divine blessing upon Abraham. The worship of the one true God was clearly linked to this place from the earliest days of the patriarchs. Moses recorded hundreds of years after Abraham that there would be a *place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there* (Deuteronomy 12:5). And then, **during the time of King David, it was made clear that Jerusalem was to be the location where His Name was to be permanently worshiped and where His kingdom was to be centered.**

As the inspired Psalmist, David understood that there would come a time when God’s own Son would sit as King upon His *holy hill of Zion* (Psalm 2:6). He knew that at some point in the future the “kings of the earth” would be brought into complete subjection by the LORD’s “anointed,” who would rule the earth from Jerusalem. However, in the intervening time, Jerusalem would suffer destruction multiple times at the hands of its enemies due to the judgment of Yahweh for Israel’s wickedness and disobedience.

Prophetic Promises of Restoration for Jerusalem’s Future Role

Many years after David, Micah foretold of the ultimate restoration of Israel and the glorious future of the nation’s capital. In the fourth chapter of his prophecy, there is found the reassuring promise of Zion’s long-term elevation to the head of the nations and the place to which all people would flow, the place from which the law and Word of the LORD would go forth

and where He would judge and *rebuke strong nations afar off* (vss. 1-3). This picture of a future time of peace and wholehearted Divine worship, centered in Jerusalem, stood in sharp contrast to the contemporary background of the wicked kings of Micah's day.

The messages of the other prophets, and particularly of Isaiah, help us to complete the vision of the future role of Jerusalem as “the city of the great King.” Isaiah 33 describes in detail what is to happen when the Lord has *filled Zion with judgment and righteousness* (vs. 5), and *he that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly, will dwell on high and see the king in his beauty* (vss. 15-17). At that time, Zion will become *the city of our solemnities* [appointed feasts] *...a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down* (vs. 20). Much of the last eighteen chapters of Isaiah are Messianic in nature and make frequent mention of **Zion as the future seat of Divine government and the center of worship in God's Kingdom on earth.** *Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem* is the prophet's message in Isaiah 52:1. And we are promised in Isaiah 59 that *the Redeemer shall come to Zion* (vs. 20), and in chapter 60 that *the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising...and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel* (vss. 3, 14).

Divine Glory Resting in Zion

Zion, as the dwelling-place of the physical glory of the Lord, is depicted in the closing chapters of Isaiah and elsewhere in the prophets (notably in Ezekiel chapters 44-48). **Ultimately, Zion will be a place of holiness and purity with its inhabitants partaking of these same Divine qualities, including immortality.**

And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD (Isaiah 62:2-3). The

To be numbered among the inhabitants of Jerusalem in her days of eternal glory is the highest achievement to which any son or daughter of God can aspire; for in that exalted status they will share the Divine nature and so be a part of that Divine glory.

Apostle Peter picks up on this same phrase when he reminds the faithful of their promised reward, *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away* (1 Peter 5:4).

To be numbered among the inhabitants of Jerusalem in her days of eternal glory is the highest achievement to which any son or daughter of God can aspire; for in that exalted status they will share the Divine nature and so be a part of that Divine glory. *And of Zion it shall be said,*

This and that man was born in her...Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God (Psalm 87:3, 5).

Tremendous Physical Changes

Along with the elevation of the saints to their glorified status in the Kingdom Age, tremendous physical changes will occur throughout the earth and particularly in Jerusalem as it is elevated in its topography and its status. *Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion... the city of the great King (Psalm 48:1-2).*

We are told in Ezekiel 38, in the context of the overthrow of the Gogian host, that *the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall* (vs. 20). Zechariah prophesied that when Messiah's feet stand upon the Mount of Olives, there will be a great earthquake that will split the mountain in two and produce "a very great valley" (14:4). Fresh, "living" waters will flow out from Jerusalem toward the "former" and the "hinder" sea (vs. 8). And so, Jerusalem and its environs will be purified by a purging of all that is abominable to the Lord (including the Mosque of Omar and other Muslim as well as the Christian "sacred" sites).

Ezekiel expands on this vision of the future Zion and the great river flowing out from it in the context of his prophecy of the temple that will be constructed on that elevated mountain in Jerusalem. *Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward...toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the [Dead] sea...the waters shall be healed (47:1,8).* The full description of the future temple and its magnificent structures is found in Ezekiel chapters 40-48. This glorious temple will be viewed by those who are so very blessed to *Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces* (Psalm 48:12-13). Blessed indeed will they be who will say in praise to their Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, *For this God is our God for ever and ever* (vs. 14).

Heavenly Jerusalem

In Hebrews 11, we are told that faithful Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God (vs. 10). In verse 16, it says of all those who die in faith, *But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.* **The faithful of old waited for the heavenly city which is prepared for them. It is a city still to come, for which we also look in great anticipation.** The exhortation at the end of Hebrews chapter 12 speaks of this same "heavenly city" that will replace the "Jerusalem which now is." *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels* (vs. 22).

There is a parallel to this spiritual city with the still future literal city to be ruled over by Christ that will be established after the “heavens and earth” of the Gentile nations are shaken. *The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more* (Joel 3:16-17). **Yahweh, through His Son, will manifest His power there, and that power will never be shaken, for the city will be established on firm foundations.**

The New Jerusalem

This brings us to Revelation and the holy city, new Jerusalem. What is described in chapters 21 and 22 is no longer a city in preparation, but **fully built as a city in a spiritual sense.** *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God* (Revelation 21:2, 10).

What was revealed to John in chapter 21 is a spiritual city that represents the glorified body of the saints. The bride of Christ is now adorned for her husband. The vision continues as it describes in more detail the ornaments of the “bride” in terms of its structure as a city. It has walls, gates, a street: and foundation that consists of the twelve apostles (vss. 12-14). The city’s length, breadth and height were all equal, indicating the perfection and unity of the whole spiritual structure (vs. 16). This holy Jerusalem that represents the saints is then “built” after the pattern of the bridegroom, united as one body in him – the multitudinous Christ.

This heavenly city, the New Jerusalem when it descends to earth, will become associated with the architectural and geographical city and the temple on Mount Zion. It will be a time of great joy and gladness as beautifully proclaimed by the prophet Isaiah. *But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying* (65:18-19). The description that follows is one of a peaceful and tranquil city, where fruitful activities are happily pursued and all that is evil is done away with, for, *They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD...The wolf and the lamb shall feed together...They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain* (vs. 25). Let us pray that we are so very blessed to be among the inhabitants thereof.

Preach the word; be instant in season...

In May 1967, a series of escalating actions, accompanied by the boast of the President of Egypt that the time had come for “the destruction of Israel,” made war between Israel and her Arab enemies round about inevitable. Christadelphians were intensely watching. The Hamilton ON ecclesia published the full-page advertisement below in the local newspaper on June 3, 1967 – two days before the Six-Day War broke out – to inform the public of the connection between unfolding events and Bible prophecy. Indeed, our duty as watchmen is to *preach the word; be instant in season* (2 Timothy 4:2), that our light may shine to the glory of our Heavenly Father.

THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS AND BIBLE PROPHECY

NEAR RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST TO JERUSALEM ONLY SOLUTION TO WORLD'S PERPLEXITY

THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS has reached a point where the only solution is the return of Jesus Christ to Jerusalem. This is the only way to bring about world peace and the fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

ARAB-ISRAELI WAR FORETOLD 3,000 YEARS AGO

The Bible foretold the Arab-Israeli war 3,000 years ago. This is a clear sign that the end times are near.

Return Of Jews To Promised Land A Central Theme Of Bible Prophecy

The return of the Jews to the Promised Land is a central theme of Bible prophecy. This is a key event in the end times.

OIL OF MIDDLE EAST SEEN AS STRATEGIC PRIZE

The oil of the Middle East is seen as a strategic prize. This is a key factor in the end times.

UNITED NATIONS FAILS TO BRING WORLD PEACE

The United Nations has failed to bring world peace. This is a clear sign that the end times are near.

BLACK SEA RUSSIA TURKEY ARMENIA GEORGIA ARMENIA GEORGIA

A map showing the Black Sea region, including Russia, Turkey, Armenia, and Georgia.

WORLD PROVEN 100% RELIABLE PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

The world has been proven 100% reliable in the past, present, and future. This is a key factor in the end times.

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CHRISTADELPHIANS

THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS AND BIBLE PROPHECY

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History of Jerusalem Timeline: 37 BC to AD 1967

Herodian Period (37 BC - AD 70)

- 37 BC - King Herod Restructures Second Temple
- AD 30 - Jesus Crucified by Romans in Jerusalem

Roman Period (AD 70 - AD 324)

- AD 70 - Roman Forces Destroy Jerusalem / Demolish Second Temple
- AD 135 - Jerusalem Rebuilt as a Roman City

Byzantine Period (324-638)

- 335 - Church of the Holy Sepulchre Built
- 614 - Persians Capture Jerusalem
- 629 - Byzantine Christians Recapture Jerusalem from Persians

First Muslim Period (638-1099)

- 638 - Caliph Omar Enters Jerusalem
- 661-750 - Jerusalem Ruled Under Umayyad Dynasty
- 691 - Dome of the Rock Built on Site of Destroyed Jewish Temples
- 750-974 - Jerusalem Ruled Under Abassid Dynasty

Crusader Period (1099-1187)

- 1099 - First Crusaders Capture Jerusalem

Ayyubid Period (1187-1259)

- 1187 - Saladin Captures Jerusalem from Crusaders
- 1229-1244 - Crusaders Briefly Recapture Jerusalem (Two Times)

Mamluk Period (1250-1516)

- 1250 - Muslim Caliph Dismantles Jerusalem Walls;
Population Declines

Ottoman Period (1516-1917)

- 1517 - Ottoman Empire Captures Jerusalem
- 1538-1541 - Suleiman the Magnificent Rebuilds Walls of Jerusalem

British Mandate (1917-1948)

- 1917 - British Capture Jerusalem in World War I

Divided City (1948-1967)

- 1948 - State of Israel Established; Jerusalem Divided by Armistice
Between Israel & Jordan

Reunification (1967-Present)

- 1967 - Israel Captures Jerusalem's Old City and Eastern Half;
Reunites City