

*Storm Clouds
over
Jerusalem*

TO BE DISPERSED BY CHRIST

JERUSALEM

The destiny of humanity is bound up in the future of Jerusalem. If that is not recognised, the Bible is not understood. Jerusalem is described by Christ as "the city of the great King" (Matthew 5:35), and is destined at his coming to become the metropolis of the world (Zechariah 14:16). Consider the facts of the Bible in regard to its past, present and future.

First mentioned as ruled by a King-Priest, Melchizedek, and then called Salem (Peace) (Genesis 14:18). Its final picture reveals it as again called Salem after Armageddon, and ruled by a King-Priest, even Christ (Psalm 76:1-9; Psalm 110; Hebrews 6:20).

Also called Jebus (sig. *down-trodden* Judges 19:10-11) figurative of its state during Gentile times (Luke 21:24).

Place selected by God in which to place His name (i.e. worship)— Deut. 12:5-7; 1 Kings 8:1,12-20.

God removed His protective care when Israel proved disobedient (Jeremiah 35:13,15,17)

Christ predicted its overthrow but ultimate restoration (Luke 21:24).

The prophets warned that it will prove the trouble-spot of Armageddon (Joel 3:1-2,12-17; Zechariah 14:1-2).

They also predict that Christ will deliver it, and under his rule it will become the centre of world peace and worship (Joel 3:20-21; Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-8).

It will then be known as "the city of Truth" (Zech. 8:3), the "joy of the whole earth" (Psalm 48:2); the Metropolis of Christ's reign (Isaiah 24:23); where he shall sit in glory with his resurrected and glorified Apostles (Psalm 122:3-5; Luke 1:31-33; Matthew 19:28).

It will then be universally acknowledged as "the throne of the Lord" (Jeremiah 3:17).

All nations will submit to the authority emanating therefrom (Zechariah 8:20-23).

The revival of Israel, and the gradual elevation of the city of Jerusalem are certain signs based upon Bible prophecy testifying to the imminence of Christ's personal return to reign on earth. Your personal destiny and salvation are bound up in acknowledging these matters (Mark 16:15-16; Romans 1:16).

HERALD OF THE COMING AGE

(USPS 241-500): A Christadelphian Publication

Edited by G.E.Mansfield,

Logos Publications, Box 220, Findon, Sth Australia 5023

Subscriptions in Australia — \$5 per annum. Published Quarterly

Registered by Australia Post — Publication No. SAR 0336

USA Mailing Address: 350 West Colorado Blvd. Suite 220, Pasadena, CA 91105

Second Class Permit Paid at Pasadena, California, USA

Postmaster: Please address changes to Box 1066, Pasadena, Calif. 91102

VOLUME 32

REPRINT

NUMBER 4

Storm Clouds over Jerusalem



"I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle . . ."
(Zechariah 14:1).

We Are Living On Borrowed Time

The records of history reveal many cities that have played decisive roles in the development and decline of nations. Rome, Constantinople, London, Washington and Moscow are among those that come to mind. But the greatest city of destiny, yet to play a most conspicuous part in the future of mankind, is the city of Jerusalem.

Today, because of the Middle East crisis, its status is becoming increasingly prominent in the counsels of the nations. That crisis not only fulfils Bible prophecy, but is playing its part in developing what the Bible predicts will become "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" (Daniel 12:1). Unfortunately for humanity, that "time of trouble" is going to culminate in the most devastating war of all time: the judgment of Armageddon.

The signs all point to the fact that Armageddon is looming. The modern revival of Israel, political antagonism in the Middle East, the belligerency of the Russian power, the divided state of the nations are all the subject of Bible prophecy; they are all signs indicating the imminence of Christ's return. He will return to establish on earth an epoch of divine glory and peace, when the message of the angels at his birth will be fulfilled: "Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth and goodwill towards men"; and the Lord's prayer will be wonderfully answered: "Thy kingdom come, that Thy will may be done in earth as it is in heaven".

But before that time of world peace and equity comes, the world will be purged of its wickedness by the fires of Armageddon. It is not God's desire that man should suffer; it is what he brings upon himself through his own folly. He rejects the way of truth and sanity, turns his back upon God, and sowing to the wind, will reap the whirlwind. The nations are busily preparing for their self-immolation; they are expending their wealth in the manufacture or purchase of weapons of destruction, capable of wiping out life itself from the earth. Even na-

tions of the Third World, whose populations face starvation, are busily spending money they cannot afford on weapons of destruction. According to the latest estimates, the world is spending \$1.4 million *every minute* on war material; and no less than 60,000,000 people are currently employed in munition making or kindred industries. With such stock-piling of weapons, the frightening possibilities of the future may be assessed by comparison with the tragedies of the past. It is claimed that during World War II, 3,000,000 tons of TNT equivalent were used, including the two atomic bombs exploded over Japan in 1945. Yet today, the US and USSR between them have the equivalent of 16,000 million tons of TNT in nuclear weapons alone. In other words, the two superpowers could fight the equivalent of 5000 World War IIs in an afternoon!

About 50 million people were killed during World War II. But on the ratio of explosives and weaponry on hand, the major powers have the potential in theory to kill everyone on the earth 47 times over!!!

Take a further comparison. The world today is free of smallpox. The total cost of the 30-year UN campaign to eradicate it is the equivalent of one morning's expenditure on the arms' race. Recently the Japanese Government announced a 10-year program to find a cure for cancer. The total cost of that program is the equivalent of one day's expenditure on the arms' race!

And the frightening fact is this, that Bible prophecy, which has proved such a true guide in outlining history to date, warns that in the day of Armageddon "the slain will be from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground" (Jeremiah 25:33). Such Bible predictions as that may have appeared extreme prior to World War II; today they must be viewed as a fearful possibility.

In short, the world is living on borrowed time. In the absence of an effective plan for peace on the part of world rulers, we must make our peace with God. In Him alone is there any hope of a any relief. And, thanks be to Him, He has set forth a plan for personal salvation and world peace in the Bible.

Jerusalem: City of Destiny

Among the nations that are foremost in the stockpiling of sophisticated weapons of destruction are those of the Middle East. The M.E. is not only the greatest trouble-spot of the modern world; it is also the testing ground of the latest weaponry of the major powers. Bible prophecy warned that this would be so. Some 2500 years ago, the Bible declared that the Middle East would be the focal point of World War at the epoch of Christ's coming. Today the cauldron of the Middle East is rapidly reaching boiling point, vindicating the

warning of God's prophetic word.

The centre of the vortex of coming trouble, the spot where the storm clouds are today gathering, and will become thickest is Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a city of crisis and destiny because it occupies a special place in the hearts of so many people throughout the world. For millions it is Jerusalem the Holy! Jews, Moslems and Christians alike revere it as a sacred city: a place of worship. It is considered holy by the Jews because it was once the site of their ancient Temple; and to this day they worship at the Western Wall, the remaining stones of that once sacred area. It is claimed as holy by the Moslems because their legends connect the city with Mahommed from whom they have derived their beliefs. In their worship, Jerusalem is second only to Mecca itself. Christians revere it because the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified in its precincts, and ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives overlooking it on the east.

Hence deep-seated emotions are stirred when the future of Jerusalem comes up for consideration. Bible prophecy shows clearly that one day in the future, and that not far off, Soviet Russia will occupy Jerusalem in an attempt to unite and dominate the whole world under its control. But Russia will find its plans thwarted by the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in power, and his intervention in world events (Daniel 11:45). Predicting this, the Bible declares:

"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle . . . Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle" (Zechariah 14:1-3).

The gathering of nations into the Middle East under the direction of Russia is clearly predicted in Ezekiel 38. It will be the prelude to Armageddon, world conflict, the crisis mankind fears and faces at present. For centuries Jerusalem has been a trouble-spot in international relationships. Its immediate future will involve all nations in the greatest holocaust of war known to man; but its ultimate destiny will witness the most glorious and peaceful reign on earth of all time, under Christ the King.

Middle East Turmoil

Israel is a tiny nation of less than 5,000,000 people occupying a slither of territory along the eastern border of the Mediterranean. Yet the whole world is conscious of its existence. Bible prophecy requires this. God declared:

"Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he" (Jeremiah 31:9-10).

This prophecy shows that God will not only restore Israel in the lat-

ter days, but will do so in spite of the strength of the opposition experienced by the people and nation.

Moreover, prophecy requires that the nation be revived in an environment of war and trouble. Thus:

"For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. These are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and Judah: 'We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace!'" (Jeremiah 30:3-4).

That exactly describes the condition of Israel today. It exists as an island of endeavour in a raging sea of international hate. It is surrounded by nations that are either at war with it, or are preparing for such an eventuality. "Trembling" and "fear" describes its political state. The world's media constantly highlights the Middle East as the danger spot to world peace. Syrian forces are intriguing in Lebanon whilst the nation develops its war potential for a future contest with Israel. Jordan and Saudi-Arabia are expending billions in purchasing arms. Iraq and Iran have engaged in a bitter struggle for survival, resulting in a shocking loss of life and resources.

The Middle East is in a state of flux, whilst the major powers of East and West view this state of things with consternation and fear. They know the consequences of nuclear war if it comes.

In the north, Russian divisions are on the borders of Iran (ancient Persia); Soviet forces occupy Afghanistan and threaten Pakistan; millions of dollars of sophisticated weapons are flooding Syria, Iraq and other M.E. countries, increasing the tension between Israelis and Arabs; a tension that spreads to all nations near and far.

At the centre of this vortex of trouble is Jerusalem. Its political status is exactly as Bible prophecy requires. Proclaimed an international city by UN in 1947, it was annexed by Jordan in 1948, occupied by Israel in 1967, and then made its capital. This has increased the antagonism surrounding its future. The Arab powers will not sign a peace treaty with Israel until it evacuates Jerusalem, and this the Israelis refuse to do. Russia supports the Arabs in that resolve, and increases the tension by demanding that Israel withdraws therefrom. Thus the future of the city remains the subject of debate and antagonism. As Bible prophecy declared it would:

"In that day will I (God) make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it will be cut in pieces, though all the peoples of the earth be gathered together against it" (Zechariah 12:3).

Nevertheless, the destiny of Jerusalem is in higher Hands than those of human manipulation. The revival of Israel is much more than a Jewish foothold in the Middle East; it is a movement pregnant with tremendous issues: one destined to dramatically affect the future of every living person upon the earth. Israel is in the land to stay.

True it is that the Jewish people will be humbled by reverses when Russia invades the land. But this will cause them to turn to God, and they will be helped and educated in truth by the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul wrote:

"I would not that ye should be ignorant of this secret . . . that blindness (concerning the Lord Jesus Christ) in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Romans 11:25-26).

The prophecy of Zechariah 12:10-11 predicts that the Jewish people will look upon him whom their forefathers pierced, and shall mourn their past blindness (see also Ch. 13:6).

It is the Lord Jesus Christ who will decide the issues in regard to Jerusalem and Israel.

Why Jerusalem Is a Trouble-spot

The name Jerusalem is based upon the Hebrew term of greeting: *Shalom!* meaning, *Peace!* Jerusalem is a God-given name signifying *Vision*, or *Foundation of Peace*. However, instead of that being its state today it is the centre of discord.

Why?

To understand why man is afflicted with trouble, and faces Armageddon, we must seek the cause of this. The Bible, alone, reveals the true answer.

It all began at the epoch of Creation, some 6,000 years ago. God created the first human pair upon the earth, provided them with the intellectual ability above all other created beings to reproduce Divine characteristics. He placed them in the Garden of Eden where all the needs of life were provided, and gave them a Law, obedience to which would demonstrate their loyal and loving response to all that He had granted them.

In that Garden were two trees among all the others. One was called the Tree of Life, the other the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God invited man to freely eat of the fruit of all the trees in the Garden, except that of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. If he ate of that, his transgression would bring him under the law of sin and death superimposed by God. In short, to eat, was to disobey God and would result in sin, mortality and death. To obey would lead to life eternal when the fruit of the Tree of Life ripened under God's direction.

Obedience would identify Adam as loyal to God, living in harmony with Him, an heir to life eternal. To eat of the forbidden fruit meant taking to himself the knowledge of good and evil; deciding for himself right from wrong; pleasing himself as to what he would permit or refuse; no longer heeding God's counsel and law; but living in

a state of disharmony and discord. It would be to show himself as a rebel against God, a sinner inheriting the fruit of transgression: discord, mortality and death.

Our first parents chose that way: the way of self-indulgence, rebellion and sin; and brought upon themselves and the race that sprung from them the results of their transgression. All sin and evil, all the wickedness and rebelliousness of man, all the violence and bloodshed of history has stemmed from that action of God-defiance.

Since then man has continued to disobey and the result is greater discord and trouble, leading to antagonism and war. This has increased in intensity until today, with the possibility of nuclear war, humanity faces annihilation.

The Mercy of God

But God did not abandon man to his own devices. When sin and death first made their appearance, He countered the results of man's folly by opening a way of redemption. He promised to provide one of the human race, styled "the seed of the woman" who would conquer all that sin had brought into being (Genesis 3:15). His proclaimed purpose is to fill the earth with His glory (Numbers 14:21; Psalm 72:19; Isaiah 6:3; 11:9). Therefore, to men and women of faith, he has made "great and precious promises" providing a most comforting and glorious hope (2 Peter 1:4; Romans 15:8-9). Indeed the Gospel is summed up in such promises, and is summarised in the promise made to Abraham: "In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed" (Galatians 3:8). The promises made to Abraham not only comprise the basis of the Gospel as proclaimed in the Old and New Testaments, but are also the key to the Middle East crisis of today.

To Abraham, the "father of the Faithful" God promised that He would make of him "a great nation", and that through him "all nations shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:1-2).

The nation of Israel sprung from Abraham. At no time has it really been "a great nation" as promised; but the fact that as a people, Israel has been preserved throughout time in spite of bitter opposition, and as a nation it has revived again in the Holy Land, is witness that God's promise to Abraham will be fulfilled.

How will it become a great nation? Under the rule of Christ, who was born and who died as proclaimed King of the Jews (Matthew 2:2; 27:37). That is why Israel is a nation again in the earth. And in the very territory which God promised Abraham as an everlasting inheritance — the land over which Israel and the Arabs are quarrelling today.

In reward for his great faith and obedience, God brought Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees into the Land of Canaan (modern Israel)

and invited him to "look northward, southward, eastward and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed *for ever*" (Genesis 13:14-15).

At no stage did Abraham ever possess that land, as the Bible clearly states (Acts 7:1-5), yet God promised that he will have it for AN EVERLASTING POSSESSION. How can this be? Only by the physical resurrection of Abraham, and the granting of life eternal unto him.

The promise of an eternal inheritance on earth is likewise promised to "the seed of Abraham". Elsewhere, the Bible teaches that this term comprehends the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:16), and all those who are "baptised into Christ" (Galatians 3:26-28).

In other words, all those, whether Jews or Gentiles, are treated as the "seed of Abraham" if they embrace the promises made to him in faith through baptism into Christ Jesus.

To show Abraham without doubt what Land is involved in the promise made to him, God invited him to "walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; FOR (declared God) I WILL GIVE IT UNTO THEE" (Genesis 13:17).

That land is yet to be possessed by Abraham, Christ, and all who embrace him in faith and live in accordance with His will. They will possess it forever, because they will attain unto eternal life. So Christ taught: "The meek shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5).

God's View of Jerusalem

Later, God brought the Israelites into the land promised to Abraham, and there constituted them His people and nation. He laid claim to Jerusalem as the capital of that nation; choosing it as the city above all others upon the earth to "put His name there" (1 Kings 11:36). Concerning Jerusalem, or Zion as it is also called, the Bible teaches:

"The Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is my rest FOR EVER; here will I dwell for I have desired it" (Psalm 132:13-14).

When Israel was constituted a monarchy, Jerusalem became its capital, and there David, Israel's most faithful and illustrious King established his throne by Divine decree. The city was given a special title: the Throne of the lord. So the record states: "Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him" (1 Chronicles 29:23).

King David is described as a "man after God's own heart", and his throne was established in Jerusalem. Because of his outstanding faith and integrity, another wonderful promise was given him, yet to be fulfilled. Whereas the promise of Genesis 3:15 promised life to the faithful; and that made to Abraham gave them promise of an eternal,

earthly inheritance; the promise made to David added to these benefits by promising everlasting kingly authority and glory. God told the king:

“I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, AND MOVE NO MORE: neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime” (2 Samuel 7:10).

These words have not yet been completely fulfilled. True, Israel is back in the land, but the nation is pressured by enemies. The promise will not be fulfilled until no longer does Israel suffer the political oppression it does today.

But is the Israel referred to in the promise the nation in the Middle East today? Yes, most certainly, for this David himself acknowledged. The Israel of the promise is that nation that was taken out of Egypt, “from the nations and their gods” (v. 23). In view of that fact, David responded to God: “Thou hast confirmed to Thyself Thy people Israel to be a people unto Thee for ever” (v. 24).

That is the reason why all the political and military opposition Israel experiences will never destroy the nation. Hitler slaughtered 6,000,000 Jews in the concentration camps of Germany; time and again the Arabs have attempted to destroy the nation; Russia will yet invade the Middle East. But God’s promises are inviolate. Israel might be challenged threatened, pressured, invaded; it will never be destroyed.

David was promised that after his death a descendant of his would be established over Israel FOREVER (vv. 12-13). This caused him to respond with the words: “Thou hast spoken of thy servant’s house for a great while to come” (v. 19).

That promised descendant is the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:29-36).

The wonderful point about the promises of God is that they enable those who embrace Christ to live in hope of personal redemption in fulfilment of the promise made to fallen men in Eden (Genesis 3:15; Hebrews 2:14-15); of an eternal inheritance on earth with Abraham (Genesis 13:15; Galatians 3:26-29), and sharing a royal glory *for ever* with David (Isaiah 55:3; Revelation 5:9-10). The promise is made to such: “They shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years” (Rev. 20:6). And Isaiah prophesied: “The Lord shall reign in Jerusalem, before his ancients gloriously” (Isaiah 24:23).

Hence Jerusalem is a unique city. Jews, Arabs and Gentiles quarrel over it, but God lays claim to it, and because He has a unique purpose with it in the Age to come, He guides its destiny.

Jerusalem: City of Crucifixion

When Israel proved disobedient, and the kings established on the throne of David disgraced their honourable status by their wicked-

ness, the nation was punished with drought, disaster, and enemy invasion. The last king to sit upon the throne of David was the wicked king Zedekiah. His reign terminated with the disastrous Babylonian attack. Jerusalem was besieged and destroyed, and the king and nation taken into captivity. The king had been warned of this disaster by the prophet Ezekiel who had declared:

“And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end. Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it; and it shall be no more, UNTIL HE COME WHOSE RIGHT IT IS: AND I WILL GIVE IT HIM” (Ezekiel 21:25-27).

1900 years ago, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared among men “preaching peace” through the redemption he offered (Acts 10:36) by the forgiveness of sins. He was the “seed of the woman” sent to destroy the power of the serpent (Genesis 3:15; Hebrews 2:11-15); he was the seed of Abraham to whom was promised an earthly inheritance for ever (Matt. 1:1); he was the seed of David destined to forever reign upon his throne in Jerusalem. These promises were brought into true perspective through his preaching. Before his birth, his mother was told by God:

“Thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:31-33).

Those words are clear and unambiguous. They mean what they say. The throne of David was in Jerusalem, when it was called “the throne of the Lord” (1 Chron. 28:23) and the promise to Mary, the mother of the Lord clearly shows that there is a remarkable future for that city. It is to become as the Lord described it: “The city of the great king” (Matt. 5:35). Speaking of that time, yet in the future, the prophet Jeremiah declared:

“At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart” (Jer. 3:17).

Jerusalem: Centre of Intrigue and Trouble

What an amazing transformation. Jerusalem no longer a city of intrigue, violence and debate, but the unifying centre of real peace established by Jesus Christ “the Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:1-7). The peoples of the world then no longer in blasphemous rebellion against God, but submissive to his teaching and commands, united by a common worship emanating from Jerusalem.

A few heeded the teaching of Christ and embraced the way he set before them. The majority did not. Instead of that, they en-

deavoured to get rid of his troublous presence by removing him from their sight.

They crucified him.

They did so crying, "His blood be on us and on our children!" They demanded his death, and when Pilate protested that in doing so they demanded the death of their king, they exclaimed: "We have no king but Caesar!"

They crucified Christ, but God raised him from the dead, granted him eternal life, and withdrew him into heaven, until the time of his second coming. The Apostles witnessed him ascend into heaven, and they heard the promise of God:

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

As for the people of Israel, and the city of Jerusalem that witnessed his cruel execution, they were banished from their previous state of privilege like Adam had been from Eden, until "the time of their restoration" (Acts 3:21). Concerning the people and city of Jerusalem, the Lord Jesus predicted:

"They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive in all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

Forty years after those words were spoken and the Lord was crucified, they commenced to have their fulfilment. The first of the great national disasters fell upon the Jewish people.

The Romans invaded Judea, and destroyed the Jewish State. In A.D. 70, in one of the most terrible sieges ever endured by a city, a holocaust of horror that has rarely been exceeded in world history, Jerusalem was besieged: its walls were breached, its buildings destroyed; its people reduced to cannibalism, and finally massacred. The Temple of God in which the Lord had worshipped was put to the flames.

In A.D. 136, the Jews again revolted against the Romans, and the legions attacked and destroyed the city at the command of Emperor Hadrian. Its site was ploughed as a field, the Jews banned from its precincts, and its name changed to *Aelia Capitolina* (the capital of Hadrian). The prophecy of Micah, proclaimed over 700 years earlier was fulfilled:

"Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house (the Temple) as the high places of the forest" (Micah 3:12).

But the prophet Micah continued with words of wonderful hope:

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established at the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the

house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nations shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:1-3).

That glorious prophetic promise has not yet been fulfilled. Jerusalem has not yet become the centre of worldwide pilgrimages of peace; instead the nations prepare war in greater measure than ever before; and the so-called City of Peace is a centre of intrigue and violence.

Meanwhile, the prophetic words of Christ continued to be fulfilled. Jerusalem still suffered as the rival policies of nations involved it. The city experienced long centuries of "down treading". The Romans were only the first of a number of fierce conquerors that brought war and devastation to Jerusalem. They were followed by the Persians, Byzantines, Arabs, Crusaders, Turks, Mameluks, British, Jordanians and others who have battered at its walls, and brought war, violence and bloodshed to its inhabitants.

Then, in 1860, a significant event took place. At the instigation of Sir Moses Montefiore, a wealthy philanthropic Jew of Great Britain, the first dwelling outside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem was constructed.

It was the beginning of a new era for Jerusalem. It encouraged Jews to extend their activities beyond the old city. From that time onwards, and particularly since the conclusion of World War 1, Jerusalem has continued to expand. It is divided locally into the Old City and the New City; the former title defining Jerusalem within the walls, and the latter the city beyond those boundaries.

The Modern Miracle of Jerusalem

At the beginning of this century, Jerusalem formed an important city of the Turkish Empire that extended to Egypt in the south. Following World War I it came under the control of the British who had been granted a Mandate over Palestine by the League of Nations. At the conclusion of World War II, the British, tired of the constant squabbling of Jews and Arabs, gave the problem to the League of Nations. By vote of its members, national identity was granted Israel and the country was apportioned between Jews and Arabs. Jerusalem itself was declared an international city under UNO jurisdiction. That was in 1947. On 14th May, 1948, Israel was proclaimed a nation, and given portion of the territory in what was previously known as Palestine.

The UNO, however, made no attempt to defend its right to Jerusalem, and the Old City was annexed by Jordan, and the New

City by Israel. That remained the state of the city until 1967 when the Jordanians declared war on Israel but were defeated, and Israel occupied the whole of Jerusalem both New and Old.

That is its condition today.

Now note the remarkable fulfilment of Bible prophecy during those years.

Before World War I, Turkey dominated Palestine including Jerusalem. But Bible prophecy demanded a change in the *status quo*. This was summed up in 1848, by J. Thomas a Christadelphian commentator on Bible prophecy. From his study of Ezekiel 38, Zechariah 14 and other passages of Scripture, he wrote:

"There is, then, a partial and primary restoration of the Jews before the advent of Christ, which is to serve as the nucleus, or basis, of future operations in the restoration of the rest of the tribes after he has appeared in the kingdom. The pre-adventual colonisation of Palestine will be on purely political principles; and the Jewish colonists will return in unbelief of the Messiahship of Jesus, and of the truth as it is in him. They will emigrate thither as agriculturists and traders, in the hope of ultimately establishing their commonwealth, but more immediately of getting rich in silver and gold by commerce with India, and in cattle and goods by their industry at home under the efficient protection of the British power. And this their expectation will not be deceived; for, before Gogue (Russia) invades their country, it is described by the prophet, as 'a land of unwall'd villages, whose inhabitants are at rest, and dwell safely', . . . Now any person acquainted with the present insecure condition of Palestine under the Ottoman (Turkish) dominion must be satisfied from the testimony, that some other power friendly to Israel must then have become paramount over the land, which is able to guarantee protection to them, and to put the surrounding tribes in fear. This is all that is needed, namely, security for life and property, and Palestine would be as eligible for Jewish emigration as the United States have proved for the Gentiles" (Elpis Israel p. 441-442).

The author of *Elpis Israel* was not a prophet: he received no special vision to write as he did. He was a keen student of Bible prophecy, and wrote as that wonderful Book dictated. In *Elpis Israel* he asked readers to carefully assess for themselves the teaching of the Bible, and set before them the very references upon which his prognostications are based.

Christadelphians have thrilled to the way Bible prophecy and his exposition of it, have been vindicated. Particularly in relation to the city of Jerusalem.

Prior to World War I, all Palestine (including modern Israel) was dominated by the Turkish Empire, and the Turks were opposed to the restoration of the Jewish State such as prophecy required.

The War brought about the fulfilment of the prophecies in a remarkable manner. Britain attacked the Turks at Gallipoli, but on the eve of success (as later history revealed) decided to withdraw, and instead drove at them from Egypt, through Palestine (modern Israel)

as Bible prophecy specifically required (Daniel 11:40-45). General Allenby was entrusted with the task. The Turks bitterly resisted the allied advance, but suffered initial defeat at Beersheba. The advance towards Jerusalem was then begun, and that sacred city, was freed on 9th December, 1917.

Now a similar miracle had occurred.

How was Jerusalem taken? The Turks retired through fear from a city which is almost an impregnable fortress. Instead of resisting they fled. Not a shot was fired. Allenby himself had a great reverence for the city, and abhorred the thought of shedding blood, or damaging its ancient walls in order to take it. Meanwhile a rumour reached the city that a strong army was approaching, led by one whose name Allenby sounded to the Turks as *Allah Bey*, or *Prophet of God*. The terrifying conviction came upon the Turks in possession of the city that God was against them, and they fled, allowing General Allenby to walk into the city without a shot being fired!!

That same year, the British had proclaimed the Balfour Declaration that granted Jews permission to establish a national home in Palestine. This Declaration was later confirmed by the League of Nations, and the return of the Jews to their ancient homeland commenced under the supervision of the British Power, as *Elpis Israel* had predicted as early as 1848 on the basis of Bible prophecy.

In a dramatic manner, Bible prophecy was being fulfilled. Even the time period was significant. For 1917 on our calendar is 1335 on the Moslem Calendar which the Turks then used; and Daniel's prophecy had declared: "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days" (Daniel 12:12). The deliverance of Jerusalem, and proclamation of the Balfour Declaration were blessed events to those who were watching the signs of the times and the fulfilment of Bible prophecy.

In 1947 Britain announced its intention to withdraw from Palestine. The Government had become bitterly frustrated over the continued antagonism and bloodshed between Jews and Arabs; and decided to hand the problem to the UNO. The Jews urged upon the UN Council that they be granted National Status with a land grant of its ancient territory. The proposition was put to the vote. The anti-semitic influence in the UN was so strong that it was feared that the Jewish people would lack the support to receive the grant of nationhood.

But another amazing reversal took place. Unexpectedly, the Communist bloc of nations decided to vote in support of the Jewish request. Not to help the Jews, for the Communist powers have been violently opposed to their national aspirations, but in order to embarrass Britain. Britain was opposed to the establishment of the Jewish

State, and that was sufficient for the Soviet and its satellite powers to vote for it. USA also supported the decision, as did Australia and other nations; and the proposition was carried. This took place exactly fifty years after Theodor Hertzl had announced to the Jewish Congress in Basle Switzerland, his proposition for a Jewish State. He had declared: "Perhaps in five years, certainly in fifty" the vision of the Jewish State will become a fact. Now, fifty years later, contrary to all expectations, the UNO voted in favour of a Jewish State.

Fifty years is a very significant time-sequence in the prophetic timetable. God's Law declared:

"Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to the inhabitants thereof, . . . and ye shall turn every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family" (Leviticus 25:10).

Who Owns Jerusalem?

The land of Palestine was partitioned between Jews and Arabs. However, the UNO decreed that Jerusalem should belong to neither: it was to be an international city, administered by the UNO.

But Jordan annexed the Old City of Jerusalem, whilst the Jews laid claim to the New — the Jewish city outside the walls of the Old City. Whilst Jordan held the Old City, Jews were denied access thereto, and could not visit their sacred sites. That changed in the significant year of 1967.

In 1967 Egypt determined to destroy Israel. Their forces invaded the Jewish State but were decisively beaten. Other Arab powers lent their support. Jordan indicated her intention to do so. The Israeli Government urged restraint upon the Jordanians, and pleaded with their Government to remain neutral. Jordan decided otherwise, and mobilised its troops to invade Israel. Instead, and within the compass of three days, the splendidly equipped Jordanian army was decisively defeated; and after 2000 years of foreign domination, Jerusalem once again was in the hands of Israel.

What God had decreed, what Jesus Christ had predicted, came to pass in a remarkable and dramatic manner.

The Storm-Clouds Gather

Despite protests from other powers, the Israeli government has constituted Jerusalem its capital. This has brought the ancient city under greater threat. The place is sacred to Jews, Christians and Arabs alike, so that any change to its *status quo* has immediate international repercussions. Protests have been made to Israel from many nations, and most have refused to set up their embassies in the city.

The determination of the Israeli Government to establish its capital in Jerusalem has increased the international tension relating to its future.

Bible prophecy anticipates the time when the gathering storm clouds of today will let forth their fury. God declares:

"My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them Mine indignation, even all My fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of My jealousy" (Zephaniah 3:8).

Then will the words of Zechariah 14:1 be fulfilled:

"I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken . . ."

Other prophecies show that Russia at the head of a Eurasian confederacy will invade the Middle East. The action of Russia will be resisted by the West: and the most devastating war in history will then break out. Bible prophecy has predicted it for over 2500 years; whilst statesmen have feared it ever since Israel became a nation.

Today it is on the eve of taking place.

The city that witnessed the humiliation of Christ, his crucifixion and death will become the centre where the modern national representatives of Jew and Gentile will be gathered to witness his power, victory and glory.

For though the nations will be gathered to Jerusalem, and though the city will fall to Russia to the humiliation of the West, Russia, in turn, will suffer defeat.

Not by the hands of man, but by the power of Jesus Christ.

For the greatest miracle is yet to take place.

Christ is to personally return to this earth, to save humanity from the results of its own folly, and to establish upon earth his righteous reign to the glory of God and the wellbeing of man.

Jerusalem: The Holy

The world, therefore, is shortly to witness the presence of Christ in power and glory. He comes, not as "the Lamb of God for the sin of the world", but as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5:5) to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The Bible declares:

"God has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

The world will resist Christ, for:

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Rev. 17:14).

He shall "judge among the nations, and rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4).

Jerusalem shall then become the Holy City in fact. It shall be rebuilt "unto the Lord" (Jer. 31:38), and will become a rallying centre

of for all mankind. All nations that survive the holocaust of Armageddon will be united in a common acceptance of divine Truth, and shall send their representatives to Jerusalem year after year to pay their respects before the King, and worship God in truth (Zechariah 14:16). Thus the present city of war will become the centre of worship, and at long last the world will be brought into submission to God.

That is the wonderful destiny of this significant city. Every facet of its history demonstrates Divine interest in its development. God guides the destiny of nations (Daniel 4:17), and is moulding history to conform to His will. Today the stormclouds gather over Jerusalem; and tomorrow they will break; but they will pass away to reveal a glorious era of peace: a "morning without clouds" (2 Samuel 23:4).

Meanwhile let it be borne in mind that everything that happens to it is under divine cognisance, and its ultimate destiny is already shaped in the purpose of God.

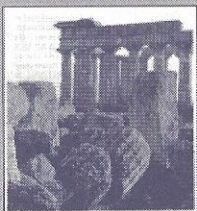
Christ is to reign from Jerusalem over a world at peace. When that glorious consummation takes place, he will require assistants with him in the governance of the nations, and the education of the peoples, He offers to all with hearing ears the opportunity to be with him in that day of glory. "To him that overcometh," he promises, "I will grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcome, and am set down with my Father in His throne" (Revelation 2:21). Again: "To him that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations" (Revelation 2:26).

Christ's coming will witness the resurrection of those responsible to judgment, and the granting of life eternal to those whom he approves (1 Corinthians 15:22-26). Bible prophecy indicates that he returns before the judgment of Armageddon is poured out upon the world; hence his coming could take place at any time. In Luke 21:24-28 he issues a prophetic warning. He speaks of Jerusalem rising from the dust, at a time of increasing national perplexity and trouble, and of men's hearts failing them for fear. In the midst of such conditions, he implies, he will return to reward those who have given themselves to him in the way appointed. The "Son of man" will come with "power and great glory" (Luke 21:28).

Gathering war-clouds over Jerusalem today herald the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It shows that time is short, and the day of opportunity will soon close.

We urge the reader to seriously consider the issues involved, to recognise the significance of the times, and to make his peace with God. This requires that he learn of His purpose, endorse the Gospel message in its truth, and accept Christ by submitting to the sin-covering waters of baptism. Remember: tomorrow may be too late.

**The
Amazing Witness
of
Fulfilling Bible
Prophecy**



The Amazing Witness of Fulfilling Bible Prophecy

The authority of the Bible is questioned by many, and yet it can be proved to be true and accurate in every aspect. Bible prophecy proves the reliability of the Scriptures. In this booklet examples of fulfilled and fulfilling prophecies are examined and found to be true. Apply for this booklet today.

Answer Sheet



Correspondence Course

This course will enlighten you in a step by step method, to the story of the Bible, and outline the fundamental doctrines that are essential for life eternal. It is designed in 20 lessons, and you will receive each lesson in turn, with a helpful question/answer sheet. Lesson 2 includes a handy plastic folder for the series. During the Course a special newsletter is provided, drawing attention to current events in the Light of Bible Prophecy. Enter your name for this correspondence course, and read yourself rich in Bible knowledge.

**Herald of the Coming Age,
P.O. Box 220,
Findon, Sth. Australia 5023**

Please forward to me the booklet:

The Amazing Witness of Fulfilling Bible Prophecy

Please enter my name for the **Correspondence Course**

Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

Address:.....

.....Postcode

THE CHRISTADELPHIANS...

.... Or, as the name implies, the brethren of Christ (Heb. 2:11), are a body of people associated together by a belief in the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 8:12); and by immersion into Christ (Gal. 3:27) for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) and a part in his resurrection (Rom. 6:5).

They do not profess to have received any new revelation, but hold that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are able to make one wise unto Salvation (2Tim. 3:15,17). Believing in the Divine Authorship of the Bible, they think it only reasonable to eschew any interpretation thereof which fails to harmonise all the testimonies of the Holy Scriptures; and finding that the creeds of the various sects around are, in a great variety of ways, opposed to the direct teaching of the Bible, they feel compelled to stand apart, making appeal in all such matters to the statements of Scripture, and testing all creeds thereby.

They believe in the personal, visible return of Christ to the earth, to set up his power and reign thereon, and they seek to share this knowledge with others. They offer their services in expounding the message of the Bible without cost of any kind.

Special Offer

HOW TO SEND THIS COUPON

Just cut out this coupon.
Place it in an envelope.
Address it to:—

No Postage
Stamp Required
if Posted in
Australia

**Reply Paid AAA3
Christadelphian Publications
Box 220
Findon, South Australia. 5023
AUSTRALIA**

GENERAL EDITION

or www.truegospelmessage.com