

# STORM CLOUDS

**OVER JERUSALEM  
TO BE DISPERSED BY CHRIST**





## **DO YOU KNOW**

that the Bible clearly teaches that God's purpose revolves around the return of Jesus Christ to the earth to reign as king?

## **DO YOU REALISE**

that the place where Jesus Christ will rule from, will be the city of Jerusalem, which today is the greatest centre of trouble and conflict.

The Bible states that all nations will be gathered there to battle, but that when the Lord Jesus Christ appears he will establish God's Kingdom from Jerusalem, as the City of Peace.

## **IF YOU ARE INTERESTED**

to learn what the future will reveal; if you care about your personal destiny and how to change the course of your own life, providing you with hope for the future, read this booklet carefully and thoughtfully.

It has a message for you.

### **HERALD OF THE COMING AGE**

A Christadelphian Publication

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# Storm Clouds over Jerusalem to be Dispersed by Christ

## **We Are Living On Borrowed Time**

The record of history reveals 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 important part in the future of mankind, is the city of Jerusalem.

Today, because of Middle East crises, its status is becoming increasingly prominent in the attention of the world. These crises not only fulfill Bible prophecy, but play their part in developing what the Bible predicts will become *“a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation”* (Daniel 12v1). Unfortunately for humanity, that *“time of trouble”* is going to culminate in the most devastating war of all time: the judgment of Armageddon, the great battle of the nations mentioned in the Bible.

The signs of the times 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 signs indicating the imminence of Jesus Christ's return. He will return to establish on earth an epoch of peace, when the message of the angels at his birth will be fulfilled: *“Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth and goodwill toward 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 cleansed of its wickedness through the battle of Armageddon. It is not God's desire that man should suffer; however, it is what mankind has brought upon themselves through their own folly. They continue to reject the way of truth and sanity, and have turned their backs upon God, and, sowing to the wind, they will reap the whirlwind. The nations are busily preparing for their self-destruction; they are expending their wealth in the manufacture or purchase of weapons of destruction, capable of wiping out life itself from the earth. Even nations of the Third World, whose populations face starvation, are busily spending money they cannot afford on weapons of destruction. According to recent estimates, the world is spending \$1.9 million (SIPRI) every minute on war material; and more than 60,000,000 people are employed in munition making or kindred industries. With such stock-piling of weapons, the possibilities of the imminent future are frightening.



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 probability.

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 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 Middle East is not only the greatest trouble-spot of the world; it is also the testing ground of the latest weaponry of the major powers. Some 2,500 years ago, the Bible declared that the Middle East would be the focal point of World War III, at the epoch of Jesus 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, Muslims, 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 Muslims because their legends connect the city with Mahomet 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.

Consequently deep-seated emotions are stirred when the future of Jerusalem comes up for consideration. Bible prophecy shows clearly that one day in the imminent future, Russia will occupy Jerusalem in an attempt to unite and dominate the whole world under its control. But Russia will find its plans cut short by the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in power, and his intervention in world events (Daniel 11v45). 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 14v1-3).*

The gathering of nations into the Middle East under the direction of Russia is clearly predicted in Ezekiel chapter 38. It will be the prelude to Armageddon, international 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 the control of the Lord Jesus Christ as King.***

## **Middle East Turmoil**

Israel is a tiny nation of less than 9,000,000 people occupying a slither of territory along the eastern border of the Mediterranean. Yet the whole world is conscious of its existence; it constantly occupies the news media. 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 31v9-10).*

This prophecy shows that God will not only restore Israel in the latter days, but will do so in spite of the strength of the opposition experienced.

Moreover, prophecy requires that the nation be revived in an environment of war and trouble. *“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 30v3-4).*

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 threatening 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. The Palestinian conflict exerts itself against peace in the Middle East. In recent times Syrian forces intruded in Lebanon whilst the nation develops its war potential for a future contest with Israel. Jordan and Saudi-Arabia have expended billions in purchasing arms. Iraq and Iran have been 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 far north, Russia is developing its power and influence, both politically and militarily. Whilst other nations in Europe have experienced financial crises in recent times, the mighty power of Russia continues to secure its position in world affairs. Its leaders remain devoted to developing their dominance in many areas.

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 "indivisible" capital. This has increased the antagonism surrounding its future. The Arab powers, promoted by the Palestinians, 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. And Bible prophecy declared it would. *"In that day will I [God] make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all peoples: all that burden themselves with it will be cut in pieces, though all the peoples of the earth be gathered together against it"* (Zechariah 12v3).

Nevertheless, the destiny of Jerusalem is in higher hands than those of human manipulation. The recent revival of Israel is much more than simply a foothold in the Middle East; it is a divinely organised occurrence with tremendous intent: one destined to dramatically affect the future of every living person upon the earth. The Jews are in the land and determined to stay. True it is that they will yet be humbled by the intentions of Russia when they invade the land. But this will cause the Jews to turn to God, and they will be helped and educated in truth by the Lord Jesus Christ, who the Bible states is soon to return to the earth. The apostle 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 all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob"* (Romans 11v25-26).

The prophecy of Zechariah 12v10-11 predicts that the Jewish people will look upon him whom their forefathers pierced, and shall mourn because of their past blindness and ignorance (see also ch.13v6).

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 the ominous threat of Armageddon, we must seek its cause. 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 godly characteristics, 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 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, he would disobey the commandment of God and his transgression would bring him under the law of sin and death imposed by God. To eat of the fruit of that tree, was to disobey God and would result in sin, mortality and death. To obey, would lead to life eternal.

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 mankind 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 3v15). God's proclaimed purpose is to fill the earth with His glory (Numbers 14v21; Psalm 72v19; Isaiah 6v3; 11v9). Therefore, to men and women of faith,



He has made "*great and precious promises*" providing a comforting and glorious hope (2Peter 1v4; Romans 15v8-9). In fact the Gospel is summed up in these promises, and is summarised in the promise made to Abraham: "*In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed*" (Galatians 3v8). The promises made to Abraham not only comprise the basis of the Gospel as proclaimed in both 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 12v1-3).

The nation of Israel sprung from Abraham. At no time has it really been "*a great nation*" as promised; although as a people, Israel has been preserved throughout history in spite of bitter opposition, and as a nation has revived again in the Holy Land in 1948, and is witness that God's promise to Abraham will be fulfilled. It is miraculous, if not great in the opinion of many!

How will it become "*a great nation*" for all mankind? This will only happen under the rule of Jesus Christ, who was born and who died as proclaimed King of the Jews (Matthew 2v2; 27v37). That is why Israel is a nation again in the earth. That is why they exist in the very territory which God promised Abraham as an everlasting inheritance — the land over which Israel and the Arabs continue to quarrel today.

In reward for his great faith and obedience following his call, 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 13v14-15).

The promise of an eternal inheritance on earth is likewise promised to "*the seed of Abraham.*" The Bible teaches that this term involves the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 3v16), and all those who are "*baptised into Christ*" (Galatians 3v26-28).

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

To show Abraham 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 13v17).

That land is yet to be possessed by Abraham, Jesus 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 the Lord Jesus Christ taught: "*The meek shall inherit the earth*" (Matthew 5v5).

## 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 of Jerusalem as the capital of that nation; choosing it as the city above all others upon the earth to *"put His name there"* (1Kings 11v36). 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 13v13-14).

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"* (1Chronicles 29v23).

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, which is yet to be fulfilled. Whereas the promise of Genesis 3v15 promised life to the faithful; the promise made to Abraham promised an eternal, earthly inheritance; while 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"* (2Samuel 7v10).

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

But is the Israel referred to in the Bible, 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"* (2Samuel 7v23). 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 attempted to do that, slaughtering six million 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 to dominate Jerusalem. But God's promises are unchallengeable and absolute. Israel might be challenged, threatened, pressured, invaded; but it will never be destroyed, for that is what God has clearly stated in His word (Jeremiah 30v11).



David was promised that after his death a descendant of his would be established as king over Israel forever (2Samuel 7v12-13). This caused him to respond to God 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 2v29-36). The wonderful point about the promises of God is that they enable those who identify with Jesus Christ to live in hope of personal redemption in fulfilment of the promise made to fallen man in Eden (Genesis 3v15; Hebrews 2v14-15); of an eternal inheritance on earth with Abraham (Genesis 13v15; Galatians 3v26-29), and sharing in the royal glory for ever with David (Isaiah 55v3; Revelation 5v9-10). Concerning which the Bible promises that: *"They shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years"* (Revelation 20v6). And Isaiah prophesied: *"The Lord shall reign in Jerusalem, before His ancients gloriously"* (Isaiah 24v23).

***That's the reason why 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**

In the past when Israel proved disobedient, and the kings established on the throne of David disgraced their honourable status by their wickedness, the nation was punished with drought, disaster, and enemy invasion. The last king to sit upon the throne of the Davidic monarchy was the wicked king Zedekiah. His reign terminated with the disastrous Babylonian attack. Jerusalem was besieged and destroyed about 600 years before Jesus Christ, and the king and nation taken into captivity. The king had been warned of this disaster by the prophet Ezekiel who had declared: *"Thou, profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end. Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, 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 21v25-27).

Over 2,000 years ago, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared among men as Son of God "preaching peace" through the redemption he offered (Acts 10v36) by the forgiveness of sins. He was the *"seed of the woman"* sent to destroy the power of the serpent (the power of sin; Genesis 3v15; Hebrews 2v11-15); he was the *"seed of Abraham"* to whom was promised an earthly inheritance for ever (Matthew 1v1); he was the *"seed of David"* destined to reign forever upon his royal 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 1v31-33).*

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” (1Chronicles. 28v23) and the promise to Mary, the mother of Jesus clearly shows that there is a remarkable future for that city. It is to become as Jesus Christ described it: *“The city of the great King”* (Matthew 5v35). 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”* (Jeremiah 3v17).

### **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 9v1-7). 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 Jesus Christ and embraced the way he set before them. The majority did not. Instead of that, they endeavoured 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, they demanded the death of their king, they exclaimed: *“We have no king but Caesar!”*

Jews and Gentiles joined together to crucify Jesus 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 1v11).

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 3v21). Concerning the people and city of Jerusalem, the Lord Jesus Christ predicted: *“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 21v24).*

Forty years after those words were spoken and the Lord Jesus Christ 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 AD70, 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 Jesus Christ had worshipped, was put to the flames.

In AD136, a Jewish remnant again revolted against the Romans, and the legions attacked and destroyed the city at the command of Emperor Hadrian. Its site was ploughed with salt; the Jews banned from its precincts; and its name changed to Aelia Capitolina (the capital of Hadrian). The prophecy of Micah, proclaimed over seven hundred 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 3v12).*

But the prophet Micah continued with words of wonderful hope: *“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 ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Micah 4v1-3).*

**That 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.**

## **From War to Hope**

Meanwhile, the prophetic words of Jesus Christ continued to be fulfilled. Jerusalem suffered as the rival policies of nations dominated it. The city experienced 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.

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 onward, and particularly since the conclusion of World War I, Jerusalem has continued to expand. Today it is divided locally into the Old City and the New City; the former title defining Jerusalem within its ancient walls, and the latter the city beyond those boundaries.

In the early 1900's, 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 (as the land of Israel was then known) 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 the Jewish 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.

## **The Modern Miracle of Jerusalem**

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 Mr John 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 unwalled 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, pages 454-455).*

The author of Elpis Israel was not a prophet; he received no special vision to write as he did. He was, however, a keen student of Bible prophecy, and wrote as he understood the Bible. 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 predictions are based.

Christadelphians have thrilled to the way Bible prophecy has been fulfilled. 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 and its associated forces attacked the Turks at Gallipoli, but on the eve of success (as later history revealed) changed their landing policy and decided to withdraw, and instead drove at them from Egypt, through Palestine (modern Israel), as Bible prophecy specifically required (Daniel 11v40-45). General Allenby was entrusted with the task. The Turks bitterly resisted the Allied advance, but suffered initial defeat at Beersheba. The advance toward Jerusalem was then begun, and that sacred city, was freed on 9th December, 1917.

Now a similar miracle 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 therein, 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 Allenby to walk into the city of Jerusalem without a shot being fired!

That same year, the British proclaimed the Balfour Declaration which granted the Jews permission to establish a national home in Palestine. The 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 12v12). The deliverance of Jerusalem, and proclamation of the Balfour Declaration were welcomed 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 Eastern bloc of nations decided to vote in support of the Jewish request. Their intention was not so much as to help the Jews, for they have been violently opposed to the Jewish national aspirations, but in order to embarrass Britain. Britain was opposed to the establishment of the Jewish State, and that was sufficient for Russia 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 Herzl had announced to the Jewish Congress in Basle, Switzerland, in 1879, 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.*" Fifty years later, contrary to all expectations, the UNO voted in favour of a Jewish State!



Fifty years is a 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 return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family"* (Leviticus 25v10).

## **Who Owns Jerusalem?**

The land of Palestine was partitioned between Jews and Arabs by the UNO. However it also 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, and could not visit their sacred sites. That changed in 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 2,000 years of foreign domination, Jerusalem once again was in the hands of Israel.

**What God had decreed and 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 "indivisible" 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 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 3v8).

Then the words of Zechariah 14v1 will 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 2,500 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 Jesus 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 at his coming again.

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!**

**Jesus 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 Jesus Christ in power and glory. He comes, not as *"the Lamb of God for the sin of the world,"* which was the reason for his first appearance, but as *"the Lion of the tribe of Judah"* (Revelation 5v5) 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 17v14).

The world will resist Jesus 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"* (Revelation 17v14).

He shall *"judge among the nations, and rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more"* (Isaiah 2v4).

Jerusalem shall then become the Holy City in fact. It shall be rebuilt *"unto the Lord"* (Jeremiah 31v38), and will become a rallying centre 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 14v16). 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, and peace will be achieved.

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 4v17), and is moulding history to conform to His will. Today the storm clouds gather over Jerusalem; and tomorrow they will break; but they will pass away to reveal a glorious era of peace: a *"morning without clouds"* (2Samuel 23v4).

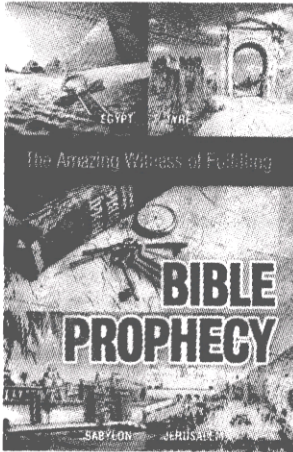
Meanwhile let it be borne in mind that everything that happens to Jerusalem is under God's control, and its ultimate destiny is already shaped in the purpose of God. Jesus Christ is to reign from Jerusalem over a world at peace. When that glorious consummation takes place, he will require assistants with him in the governing of the nations, and the education of the peoples, He offers to all with hearing ears and an open mind, 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 2v21). Again: *"To him that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations"* (Revelation 2v26).

Jesus Christ's coming will witness the resurrection of those responsible to judgment, and the granting of life eternal to those whom he approves (1Corinthians 15v22-26). 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 21v24-28 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"* [Jesus Christ] will come with *"power and great glory"* (Luke 21v28).

**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 you to seriously consider the issues involved, to recognise the significance of the times, and to make your peace with God. This requires that you learn of His purpose, endorse the Gospel message in its truth, and accept Christ by submitting to the sin-covering waters of baptism.**

**Tomorrow may be too late.**

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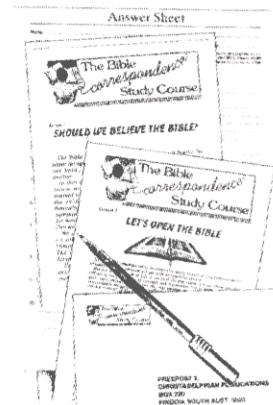
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