

# Teaching *from* Zion

"...for out of Zion shall come forth Torah  
and the word of the Lord from  
Jerusalem." — Isaiah 2:3

# JERUSALEM

*"I have chosen Jerusalem  
for My name to be there."*  
2 Chr. 6:6





# Netivyah **נתיביה** Teaching from Zion

ISSUE 43 | IYAR 5781 | MAY 2021

Published by Netivyah Bible Instruction  
Ministry, Jerusalem, Israel

The articles printed in this issue of Teaching from Zion are the sole responsibility of their authors. Feel free to contact us at [tfz@netivyah.org](mailto:tfz@netivyah.org) or by mail at **PO Box 8043, Jerusalem 91080, ISRAEL.**

Layout & Design: [itzodesign.com](http://itzodesign.com)

### About Netivyah

Netivyah in Hebrew means "the Way of the Lord." "The Way" was one of the names by which the early community of believers was known in the Brit Chadashah (New Testament). Paul says, "I worship the God of our fathers in accordance with the Way (which they call a sect). I continue to believe everything that accords with the Torah and everything written in the Prophets." (Acts 24:14 CJB). As followers of "the Way," we believe in the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We try to be faithful to God's law (the Torah) and to the rest of Scripture—the Prophets and the Writings. We believe that the Messiah promised in God's word is Yeshua (Jesus), the one who "saves His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

**More Information:** [www.netivyah.org](http://www.netivyah.org)

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# News from Netivyah

**Greetings Dear Friends,**

*It is really heating up in Israel, and not just the summer in this desert climate we call home, but also politically. It has been a challenging two years with four elections, and it seems we are on our way to a fifth as the vote results did not change much between the elections. I would like to ask you all to pray not for any specific outcome but rather for a lowering of the flames of animosity and of hostility between all sides. Each person is entitled to his opinion, but it is how we treat those around us, including those with whom we disagree, which matters much more. Yeshua taught us the same so many times. This idea can be taken much further than “simple” political disagreements, but it stays the same no matter how it is implemented.*

*The Covid19 restrictions are gradually being lifted: children are back in school, masks are no longer required outside, and businesses are open. Soon the congregation will be able to gather inside with up to fifty people, and life as we know it is getting back to normal. This year has not been easy on anyone, so please keep this matter in prayer.*

*Yehuda has decided to start up the Munchkin’s youth group once again (post-Covid). Kids ages 12-15 from congregations all over the city gather here for a fun-filled afternoon of social bonding and teaching from the scriptures.*

*As you know, we have been able to keep running our food distribution center “Hamotzi” throughout the year blessing so many people through this crisis. Please pray that the Lord will open the hearts of these people to see the light of Yeshua through these actions. We make it a policy not to share the gospel with the families while they are here to receive aid, but at the same time we make sure that they know who we are and what we believe in. We do not want to create a situation where people feel obligated due to receiving aid.*

*We are very glad to be able to keep publishing our magazine “Teaching from Zion” multiple times a year and hope that you are as blessed and enriched by reading it as we are by publishing it.*

*Joseph and Yehuda continue to produce multiple video teachings per week on Facebook and YouTube. Joseph is currently going through the book of second Samuel in English and Yehuda is following the weekly Torah portions in Hebrew.*

*Without your prayers and support and without you standing with us, with Israel, and with the God of Israel, we would not be able to do the work God has put on our hearts. We are vessels for Him.*

**Thank you! For standing with us.**

**Blessings,**

**Daniel Stern**

# AN EPHRAIMITE

By Glenn Miller

It was the year 1976, while living in Sitka, Alaska that I started to wonder why the Palestinians and Jews were fighting over the Land of Israel. I read all that I could get my hands on to find out why two nationalities were fighting over a small parcel of land in the Middle East. The more I read, the more I sided with the Jewish people, after all, the Land of Israel is their ancient homeland. I believe the Creator of the universe had a hand on me and directed my paths before I really acknowledged Him or had a desire to walk the Land of Israel.

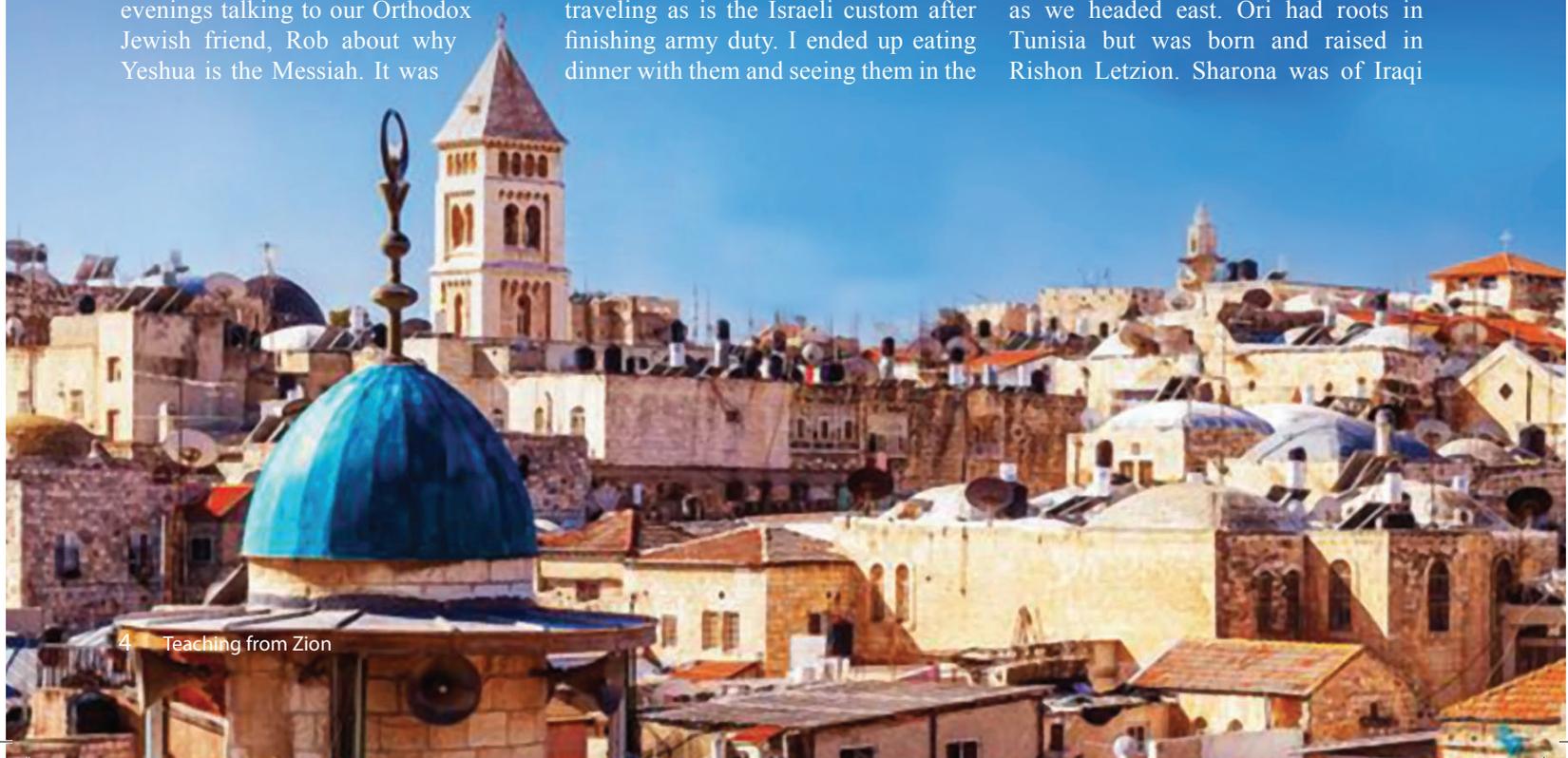
It was in 1980 that I met a Jewish man who believed Yeshua to be the Messiah, and we became instant friends. Phil Schmitt was a grizzled Alaskan gold miner with very long hair and ZZ Top style long beard. I ended up mining with him for two seasons in the summers of 1981 and 1983. Phil spent many evenings talking to our Orthodox Jewish friend, Rob about why Yeshua is the Messiah. It was

my first encounter with Jewish men of differing persuasions and, boy, did I get an earful of great insights. They both spent summers mining in Alaska but had an apartment in Jerusalem where they tried unsuccessfully to persuade me to visit them during the winter. I had no desire while in my twenties of leaving the beautiful Pacific Northwest, but eventually Adonai יהוה Elohim intensified my love of the Jewish people and the Land of Israel, and I would read, with interest, intense stories of Holocaust survivors and kept abreast of the 1982 Lebanese War and any and all news I could find about Israel.

In the 1990s, I had more encounters with Israelis during my travels. One especially good encounter was in a tiny village in Turkey where I met a young Israeli couple, Ori and Sharona, who had just finished their Israeli Defense Force requirements and who were also traveling as is the Israeli custom after finishing army duty. I ended up eating dinner with them and seeing them in the

*She told me that I am a part of Israel, a Lost Sheep of the House of Israel, an Ephraimite from the northern tribes who were dispersed in 722 BCE.*

next couple of Mediterranean villages as we headed east. Ori had roots in Tunisia but was born and raised in Rishon Letzion. Sharona was of Iraqi



# IN JERUSALEM

heritage, raised in the German Colony of Jerusalem. At that time, I did not yet get to travel to Israel, but eventually, when I did, I saw them and have visited them every time that I have been blessed with visiting Israel.

It was August 19, 2003 when I first arrived in Jerusalem. As I entered the city of the Great King, the first thing I recognized was not an historic or ancient landmark, it was the Sbarro Pizzeria where a horrific terrorist attack had occurred while I was in Alaska on August 9, 2001. I saw many photos of the Sbarro building, and they were permanently etched into my mind.

If you recall, 2003 was the worst year for terrorism and the worst year for tourism in Israel. That is, up until 2020 when the virus caused Israel to go into lockdown. In fact, not everyone will

remember that my first day in Jerusalem on August 19, 2003 ended up having the worst bus bombing terrorist attack in Israel's history. I believe it was Adonai יהוה Elohim's desire and plan for me to enter His city during this critical time. I walked everywhere alone and silently prayed. Something else that happened as I entered Jerusalem was that the Muslim Waqf decided to reopen the Temple Mount to "infidels" or non-Muslims. It was on September 29, 2000 that Ariel Sharon set foot on the Temple Mount and made some declarations of Jewish heritage that were used by Palestinians' Chairman Yasser Arafat to spark the Second Intifada also known as the Al Aqsa Intifada. So, the Temple Mount had been closed to infidels for nearly three years. I had no idea until arriving in Jerusalem that I was going to get to walk up onto the Temple Mount.

It was on Shabbat, September 23, 2003 that I was invited to meet a journalist friend whom I had never met in person. We only "knew" each other online. Stan Goodenough wanted to write a story about the reopening of the Temple Mount and to meet me there and give me a tour. He said to meet him at the Mughrabi Gate where there is a ramp that ascends up to the top. I was supposed to meet him at 9:00 in the morning. I usually get up early, so I had coffee and breakfast with my new Jewish Quarter friend whom I rented from, Avraham Moyal, and then walked down to the Kotel to pray and prepare for the day. When it got close to 9:00, I walked over to the Mughrabi Gate and milled around, still praying silently, while watching for Stan. When it got to be 9:15 or so, I started thinking, "maybe he wanted to meet me on the top of the ramp." So, I went through the security

*I believe it was Adonai יהוה Elohim's desire and plan for me to enter His city during this critical time. I walked everywhere alone and silently prayed.*





check, including a metal detector, while a policeman looked through my small backpack. I was allowed through and ascended the ramp, but saw no Stan, so I just walked around slowly, while praying silently. I walked away from the Al Aqsa Mosque and toward the Dome of the Rock. I circled the Dome three times and then put my hands on it and proclaimed, “This mountain is for Your people to worship You in spirit and in truth.” I then pivoted back toward the north and asked our Creator if there was anything that He wanted to reveal to me at this time. Now, if you do not know this already, it is illegal to pray or carry a Bible on this Muslim controlled site.

I then pulled my little pocket Bible out of my left front pocket and opened it up randomly to Zechariah 6:15 where it says, “Those who are far off will come and build the Temple of יהוה. Then you will know that YaHuVeH Tsevaot has sent me to you. And it will take place if you completely obey יהוה your Elohim.” Tears welled up as I contemplated those words.

Now you know that I snuck my little pocket Bible up onto the Temple Mount and prayed continuously without being hassled or arrested as I have heard has been done to others that might be more blatant about

bowing, kneeling or praying out loud.

I did meet Stan later that day at his home, where he had a view of the Temple Mount. It turns out that his reliable van would not start that morning. It did eventually start after I had my encounter with the King of the universe. That is what Stan told me. Stan and his journalist colleague, Ryan Jones, who now is the managing editor at Israel Today, did go up on the Temple Mount and did write a story including several photos. I even recognized some of the people in his photos and came to the realization that we indeed were up there at the same time.

*I circled the Dome three times and then put my hands on it and proclaimed, “This mountain is for Your people to worship You in spirit and in truth.”*

Since that first visit in 2003, I returned solo in 2005 during Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot, where I participated in the Jerusalem March.

During Sukkot of 2008, I got married to a like-minded bride, Amanda, who also had a love for Israel and a desire to return. She is the one who told me that I am a part of Israel, a Lost Sheep of the House of Israel, an Ephraimite from the northern tribes who were dispersed in 722 BCE. She had visited just the year

previous with her sister and toured with a tour guide, Avi ben Mordecai. When I called the airlines to book a flight to Israel for our honeymoon, the day they had available seats just happen to be three weeks after our Sukkot wedding. I did not realize it at the time but soon discovered that the Torah portion for the day we left the United States was Lech L'cha where יהוה Elohim tells Avraham to leave the country of his fathers and go to “a land that I will show you.” The day we entered Israel, the daily Torah portion was where יהוה Elohim tells Avraham to “arise and walk the land, north, south, east and west, the length and breadth of the land of Israel.” We don't believe in coincidences, but for some lame brained reason, I didn't realize that Adonai Eloheinu desired for us to “arise and walk the land”—yet!

The following year we returned on our first anniversary. For Amanda this was her third visit in three years! We were invited to Ori and Sharona's family's Rosh HaShana family get together and made to feel like a part of their family. It was wonderful. We spent Yom Kippur in Tsfat, when we also hiked up and around Mount Meron where we first encountered the Israel National Trail. We were in Jerusalem during Sukkot and got to, again, walk in the Jerusalem March among many other walks around the city and the country.

After reading a book called, *“Walk the Land—A Journey on Foot through Israel”* by Judith Galblum Pex, did we

finally realize that Adonai Eloheinu really did want us to walk the land, north, south, east, and west. We made the decision and planned for the spring of 2018 where we would start hiking from Kibbutz Dan near the Lebanese border and head southbound on the Israel National Trail. We didn't get as far as we hoped, but we did do much walking and had many fantastic meetings with many beautiful people along the way and realized that meeting these people from all walks of life and trail angels was the best part of the trek. We took breaks during Pesach and haMatsot in Jerusalem during this journey where we partook of the Ephraimite Gathering in Independence Park that occurs every Shabbat over both Passover and Sukkot. What a family reunion it was! There were people from all tribes and all nations meeting.

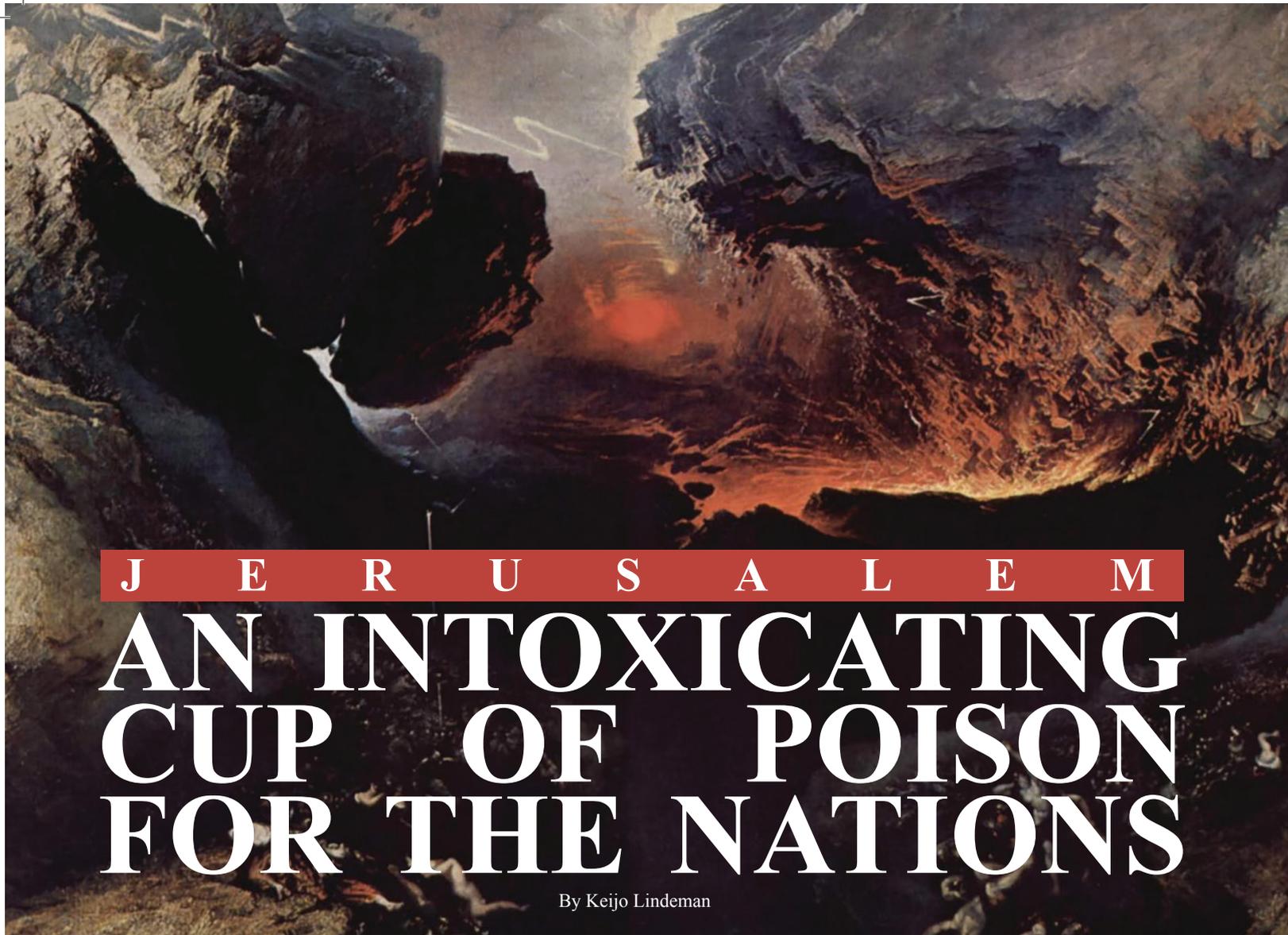
We returned again in December 2019 and journeyed on a seven-day Negev hike with a group that Aviel Schneider, the editor and publisher of Israel Today magazine, put together. It was another wonderful experience. It was my sixth trip to Israel, but my first during which I did not see Jerusalem. It was Amanda's fifth trip and also her first without visiting Jerusalem.

We had a Golan Trail hike planned for October 2020, but COVID put a halt to our plans. We are now waiting and hoping for our next visit. Now, we lost sheep from the House of Israel are also proclaiming, “Next Year in Jerusalem!”

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#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Glenn Michael Miller, son of Joseph Miller, goes by מיכאל בן יוסף (Meekhael ben Yosef) on social media. He is what some consider a “gentile” but prefers to be called an Israelite. He is not Jewish, but he has a love for the Jewish people, the Land of Israel, and the Elohim of Avraham, Yitschak, and Yaakov. In 1998 while he was living in Alaska, God impressed a passage of scripture on him to “go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel!” that led to his multiple visits to Israel. He has been married to the love of his life, Amanda, since Sukkot of 2008, and they live in Southern Oregon.



# J E R U S A L E M

# AN INTOXICATING CUP OF POISON FOR THE NATIONS

By Keijo Lindeman

*“For we know in part and we prophesy in part”*

(1 Cor.13:9)

“**T**his is the word of the LORD concerning Israel. The LORD, who stretches out the heavens, who lays the foundations of the earth, and who forms the spirit of man within him, declares: I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling [Hebrew saf ra’al = a cup of poison]. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock [Hebrew, ‘even ma’amasah = a heavy stone, a heavy burden-stone] for

all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves” (Zechariah 12:1-3, NIV).

“This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: Take from my hand this cup filled with the wine of my wrath and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. When they drink it, they will stagger and go mad because of the sword I will send among them. So I took the cup from the LORD’s hand and made all the nations to whom he sent me drink it: Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, its

kings and officials, to make them a ruin and an object of horror and scorn and cursing, as they are today... But if they refuse to take the cup from your hand and drink, tell them: This is what the LORD Almighty says: You must drink it! See, I am beginning to bring disaster on the city that bears my Name, and will you indeed go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, for I am calling down a sword upon all who live on the earth, declares the LORD Almighty. Now prophesy all these words against them and say to them: The LORD will roar

*Zechariah's and Jeremiah's prophecies are being fulfilled. Jerusalem is about to become a bone of contention, an intoxicating cup of poison, a cup filled with wine of wrath, and an immovable rock to the nations surrounding Israel and even to all nations.*

from on high; he will thunder from his holy dwelling and roar mightily against his land. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, shout against all who live on the earth. The tumult will resound to the ends of the earth, for the LORD will bring charges against the nations; he will bring judgment on all mankind and put the wicked to the sword" (Jeremiah 25:15-18, 28-31, NIV).

Jerusalem is built like a city that is closely compacted together. That is where the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, to praise the name of the LORD according to the statute given to Israel. There the thrones for judgment stand, the thrones of the house of David" (Psalm 122:3-5, NIV).

Finland celebrated its 100 years of independence on December 6, 2017. On that same day, U.S. President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and promised to transfer the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, according to his election promise. After this decision, a few other countries planned to transfer their embassies to Jerusalem also. The decision made by the U.S. has caused much anger and protest in the Arab world that continues to demand cancellation of that decision.

President Trump's decision has been widely criticized in the Muslim world. The situation is also very excited because Israel is planning to take some areas under its control in Judea and Samaria and the Jordan Valley, according to his peace plan. Palestinians insist on having their own state with eastern Jerusalem as its capital, and they are furious about President Trump's decision because according to them it debilitates their chances to reach their goal. The United Nations is also doing its best to invalidate Trump's decision.

The most fanatic radical Muslims (such as Hamas militants) do not even acknowledge the existence of the state of Israel, and they are prepared for violence and war to purge Israel and Jerusalem from Zionist occupiers, as they put it. The European Union also objects to the U.S. President's decision and is prepared to support the establishment of a Palestinian State on the Westbank area, with eastern Jerusalem as its capital.

Israel, on the other hand, is happy about President Trump's decision and considers Jerusalem as its undivided capital, whose history as the capital of a Jewish state is as old as 3000 years, ever since the days of King David. According to Psalm 122, Jerusalem is "a closely compacted" (undivided) capital, where "the thrones for judgment stand, the thrones of the House of David."

Zechariah's and Jeremiah's prophecies are being fulfilled. Jerusalem is about to become a bone of contention, an intoxicating cup of poison, a cup filled with wine of wrath, and an immovable rock to the nations surrounding Israel and even to all nations. The Temple Mount is a very sensitive area to the religious. All those who try to move that Jerusalem rock will injure themselves badly. There comes a time when God will make the surrounding nations and eventually all nations drink that cup of God's wrath. All nations have to drink it, even those who don't want to. Jerusalem is the place of God's feet and the city of the great King, and when the nations rise to attack and divide her, they rise against God, and they will be judged for it (Isa. 60:13; Matt. 5:34-35). Joel also prophesies that trying to divide the land of Israel brings judgment on the nations, and the Lord will judge every nation that tries to divide the land of Israel and touch Jerusalem with evil in their minds (Joel 3:1-3, or MT 4:1-3).

### **The Generals of Israel and the Atomic War**

"On that day I will strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness," declares the LORD. "I will keep a watchful eye over the house of Judah, but I will blind all the horses of the nations. Then the leaders of Judah (Hebrew, 'alufei Jehudah= the princes or generals of Judah) will say in their hearts, 'The people of Jerusalem are strong, because

the LORD Almighty is their God.’ On that day I will make the leaders of Judah (Hebrew *alufei Jehudah*= generals of Judah) like a brazier in a woodpile, like a flaming torch among sheaves. They will consume right and left all the surrounding peoples, but Jerusalem will remain intact in her place. The LORD will save the dwellings of Judah first, so that the honour of the house of David and of Jerusalem’s inhabitants may not be greater than that of Judah. On that day the LORD will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of the LORD going before them. On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem” (Zechariah 12: 4-9, NIV).

This text speaks about the leaders of the tribe of Judah. The original Hebrew text uses the phrase ‘*alufei Jehudah*, which in modern Hebrew has the meaning “generals of Judah” who will play a

their teeth were like lions’ teeth. They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle” (Revelation 9:7-9, NIV).

In that war the technology of the enemy’s planes fails; their system goes blind and confused, and the pilots will not be able to control the planes anymore. The pilots themselves get mad. One may ask if Israel has such superior military technology that she can throw into disorder the information technology of enemy planes in a way that makes their system go wild, or is it God working His miracles, or both.

All will culminate in an atomic war. The atomic fire sent by the generals of Judah will consume the attacking nations surrounding Israel, and the devastation will be huge. In chapter 14, Zechariah appears to speak about the use of atomic weapons.

silver and clothing. A similar plague will strike the horses and mules, the camels and donkeys, and all the animals in those camps” (Zechariah 14:12-15, NIV).

The attacking forces will find themselves in a state of utter chaos and start fighting against each other. The atomic weapons of the generals of Judah will destroy them. Zechariah’s description refers to the use of neutron bombs whose explosive power does not do much damage to buildings or infrastructure, but their neutron radiation kills/rots everything animate. Incidentally, the scientist who developed the neutron bomb was a Jew named Samuel Cohen.

Psalm 83 also speaks about this battle and names the attacking nations: Edom, Moab and Ammon, i.e. Jordan, the Hagrites, i.e. Egypt (Hagar was Abraham’s Egyptian concubine), Gebal and Tyre, i.e. Lebanon, Assur, i.e. Syria, and Iraq, and Philistia, i.e. Palestinians.

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decisive role in this war, consuming like a brazier and a flaming torch the surrounding peoples who attack Israel. The horses of the nations will be struck with panic and the riders with madness. The Book of Revelation speaks about flying war horses, i.e. fighter planes.

“The locusts like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces. Their hair was like women’s hair, and

“This is the plague with which the LORD will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. On that day men will be stricken by the LORD with great panic. Each man will seize the hand of another, and they will attack each other. Judah too will fight at Jerusalem. The wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected – great quantities of gold and

Egypt and Jordan, in spite of their peace treaty with Israel, are on the enemy lines. Those who attack Israel want to wipe out the name of Israel from the face of the earth and take possession of the dwellings of God, namely Jerusalem. But the Psalm assures us that the enemies of Israel will be destroyed. Fire will burn the attacking forces, and the destruction and shame of the attacking nations will be great. God gets the glory.

**The Land Area of Israel will**

### **Enlarge as a Result of the War**

“The LORD will save the dwellings of Judah first, so that the honour of the house of David and of Jerusalem’s inhabitants may not be greater than that of Judah” (Zechariah 12:7, NIV).

“People from the Negev will occupy the mountains of Esau, the people from the foothills will possess the land of the Philistines. They will occupy the fields of Ephraim and Samaria, and Benjamin will possess Gilead. This company of Israelite exiles who are in Canaan will possess the land, as far as Zarepath; the exiles from Jerusalem who are in Sepharad (Hebrew sfarad = Spain) will possess the towns of the Negev. Deliverers will go up on Mount Zion to govern the mountains of Esau. And the kingdom will be the LORD’s” (Obadiah 19-21, NIV).

“He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth. Ephraim’s jealousy will vanish, and Judah’s enemies will be cut off; Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim. They will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia to the west; together they will plunder the people to the east. They will lay hands on Edom and Moab, and Ammonites will be subject to them. The LORD will dry up the gulf of the Egyptian sea; with a scorching wind he will sweep his hand over the Euphrates River. He will break it up into seven streams so that men can cross over in sandals. There will be a highway for the remnant of his people that is left from Assyria, as there was for Israel when they came up from Egypt” (Isaiah 11:12-16, NIV).

“I will signal for them and gather them in. Surely, I will redeem them; they will be as numerous as before. Though I

scatter them among the peoples, yet in distant lands they will remember me. They and their children will survive, and they will return. I will bring them to Gilead and Lebanon, and there will not be room enough for them. They will pass through the sea of trouble: the surging sea will be subdued, and all the depths of the Nile will dry up. Assyria’s pride will be brought down, and Egypt’s scepter will pass away. I will strengthen them in the LORD, and in his name, they will walk, declares the LORD” (Zechariah 10:8-12, NIV).

The area occupied by Palestinians is called the Westbank, but in the Bible that area belongs to Judah and Samaria. According to Zechariah, the area of Judah will be delivered from enemy occupation and returned to Israel. Along with Samaria, also the areas of Esau in southern Jordan will be connected to Israel, as Obadiah prophesies. Sefardic Jews, descendants of so-called Anusim Jews of Spain, Portugal, Brazil among other South American countries, and other nation, who were forced to convert, will come and settle the “Sepharad,” the Negev.

The areas of Edom and Moab in southern and central Jordan will be in Israel’s possession. According to Zechariah, Gilead, the area towards Syria and northern Jordan from Golan as well as Lebanon will be connected to Israel for the Exodus of the End times. The peninsula of Sinai in the south will be Israeli area as far as the river of Egypt, probably even up to the Nile, as God had promised Abraham. That is how God will enlarge, as the result of the storms of war, the land of Israel for the return of the End time Exodus Jews.

Something will happen that will cause a tremendous wave of global antisemitism and hatred against Israel that will compel Jews to flee the persecutions and come

*Something will happen that will cause a tremendous wave of global antisemitism and hatred against Israel that will compel Jews to flee the persecutions and come up to the land of Israel, so that no Jew will be left among the nations.*

up to the land of Israel, so that no Jew will be left among the nations (Jeremiah 16:14-16; Zechariah 2:6-8; Ezekiel 39:28).

### **Why does the Devil want to take Jerusalem and destroy Israel?**

The devil knows that when Yeshua the Messiah returns to the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem the time of his judgment has come. The devil is well aware that he and his troops will be thrown to the Abyss for

## *The Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west to form a vast valley. People will flee to this valley for shelter.*

a thousand years, after which he will be released for a short time to raise a last revolt against Jerusalem, but he will be overcome and thrown into the lake of burning sulphur with his troops, as the Revelation 20 tells us (cf. Matt. 25:41). The devil has no power to resist the Almighty God, but he tries to prevent the judgment from falling on him by taking Jerusalem in his control and inciting the enemies of Israel against Jerusalem and Israel. The devil tries to erect obstacles in the hopes of obliterating the people of Israel in Jerusalem who would shout “Blessed be He who comes in the Name of the Lord!”, thereby preventing the Messiah from returning to the Mount of Olives. The schemes of the devil will fail, however, because the God of Israel is all-knowing and almighty, and He takes care of His people Israel.

### **Israel will be purified through fire to be a people of priests**

“In the whole land,” declares the LORD, “two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it. This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like

gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, “They are my people,” and they will say, “The LORD is our God” (Zechariah 13:8-9, NIV).

“However, the days are coming”, declares the LORD, “when men will no longer say, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt,’ but they will say, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.’ For I will restore them to the land I gave their forefathers. “But now I will send for many fishermen, “declares the LORD,” and they will catch them. After that I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them down on every mountain and hill and from the crevices of the rocks. My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from me, nor is their sin concealed from my eyes. I will repay them double for their wickedness and their sin, because they have defiled my land with the lifeless forms of their vile images and have filled my inheritance with their detestable idols” (Jeremiah 16:14-18, NIV).

“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God, speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD’s hand double (Hebrew *kiflaim*: twice as much) for all her sins” (Isaiah 40:1-2, NIV).

There are many interpretations of Zechariah’s text. One of them explains that two thirds of mankind will perish in the end-time judgments and one third will be left. This interpretation can hardly be right because the context of the text is clearly focused on the Jewish people and Israel. According to another interpretation this prophecy came true in the year 70, when the Roman troops

occupied Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple. Two thirds of Jews were killed in those battles and one third was taken captive to be sold on the slave market in Rome. Zechariah’s prophecy, however, relates to the end times, which, in my opinion, shows that this interpretation has come true only in part in 70 AD. According to the third interpretation two thirds of the Jews have already been destroyed in pogroms, persecutions and nazi Holocaust in Europe and in the whole world. The fourth explanation proposes that two thirds of the Jews in Israel or elsewhere in the world will perish in the end times, and only one third will survive and receive Yeshua as their Messiah.

Which of these, if any, is the right interpretation? The original Hebrew text gives us some indications in verse eight. The term “two parts” comes from the Hebrew פִּי שְׁנַיִם, *Pi shnaim*. It is a mathematical term which means “twice, two times”. This somewhat difficult text could be translated as follows: Two times will there be in it destruction and people starve and die, and the third time will remain there, and I will bring the third/on the third (time) into the fire and purify them.

Jeremiah sheds more light on the matter in his prophecy. He prophesies that before the great Exodus from the northern country and from other countries, when fishermen coax and hunters (persecutors) chase the Jews so as to make them return to Israel, God will first revenge them two times for their iniquities and sins. Isaiah has a similar expression. Before the time of consolation for Israel and Jerusalem in the end time, the Jewish people has had twice (Hebrew, *kiflaim*) for her sins from the Lord’s hand.

This has come true two times: twice has the land of Israel and the Jerusalem Temple been destroyed, twice has the

people been sent into exile. The first time it happened in two parts. First the northern part of the divided Israel, the ten tribes or Ephraim, i.e. Joseph, were deported to Assyria in 722 BC. Then southern Judah was taken to exile into Babylon in the days of Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC, and Solomon's Temple was destroyed. The second time came in about 70 AD; the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Second Temple, and surviving Jews were deported to Rome and sold as slaves among the nations, and the land was deserted for two thousand years.

Now, in the End time, it will be the third time; the people of Israel will have to undergo God's purifying fire which cleanses them from their sins and turns their hearts to receive Yeshua, their Messiah. The prophet Malachi speaks about this:

"See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come, says the Lord Almighty. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years" (Malachi 3:1-4, NIV).

In the last moments before the Messiah's coming, the people of Israel

will be refined by fire in order to make them a holy people of priests in the Messiah's Millennial Kingdom of Peace (Revelation 20; Isaiah 61:4-6). The congregation of the Lord will also be purified and refined in fire, so that it would be holy and blameless for the Messiah's coming and the taking up of the ekklesia (Ephesians 5:25-27).

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**Israel will Repent in the Synagogues**

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. On that day, the weeping in Jerusalem will be great like the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. The land will mourn, each clan by itself, with their

wives by themselves: the clan of the house of David and their wives, the clan of the house of Nathan and their wives, the clan of the house of Levi and their wives, the clan of Shimei and their wives, and all the rest of the clans and their wives. On that day, a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity. On that day, I will banish the names of the idols from the land, and they will be remembered no more, declares the LORD Almighty, I will remove both the prophets and the spirit of impurity from the land" (Zechariah 12:10-13:2, NIV).

The Spirit of grace and prayer will be poured out on the Jewish people in those days of distress. They will look upon their Messiah Yeshua nailed to the Cross and they will receive Him. All Israel will be saved, as Paul writes to the Romans (Rom. 11:25-29). The first to repent will be the house of David, i.e. political leaders of Israel; the house of Nathan, i.e. prophets; the house of Levi, i.e. religious leaders, and the house of Shimei, i.e. government officials. The whole nation will join in the repentance with secular and religious leadership.

Special mention is made to "their wives" several times. This means synagogues which maintain the orthodox tradition of men and women sitting separately. This is to say that when Israel repents, synagogues and worship that takes place in them have an important role in Israel getting saved through faith in Yeshua as their Messiah. Why synagogues? Because God will not allow the people of Israel be led astray by unbiblical

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doctrines infiltrated into Christianity by the Roman Church. The Israeli people of priests need to be rooted in biblical teaching and the model of the Early Church to be the people of priests in the Messiah's Kingdom.

**All Nations will Gather against Israel and Jerusalem**

“A day of the LORD is coming when your plunder will be divided among you. I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. You will flee (Hebrew, *nastem*) by my mountain

valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him” (Zechariah 14:1-5, NIV).

Finally, all nations will gather against Israel and Jerusalem. This has been happening already in the UN, where resolutions are piled one after another against Israel, and where all nations want to divide the land that God has promised to Israel. Let us consider the situation of the Kurds, for instance: there are about 30 million Kurds, but they are not allowed to have their own state, while resolutions are continually made to ensure the Palestinians will get their own state. Such is the double standard of antisemitic nations, and it shows the latent hatred that nations harbour against Israel and the God of Israel. This hatred will culminate in the assault of Gentile nations on Jerusalem and Israel.

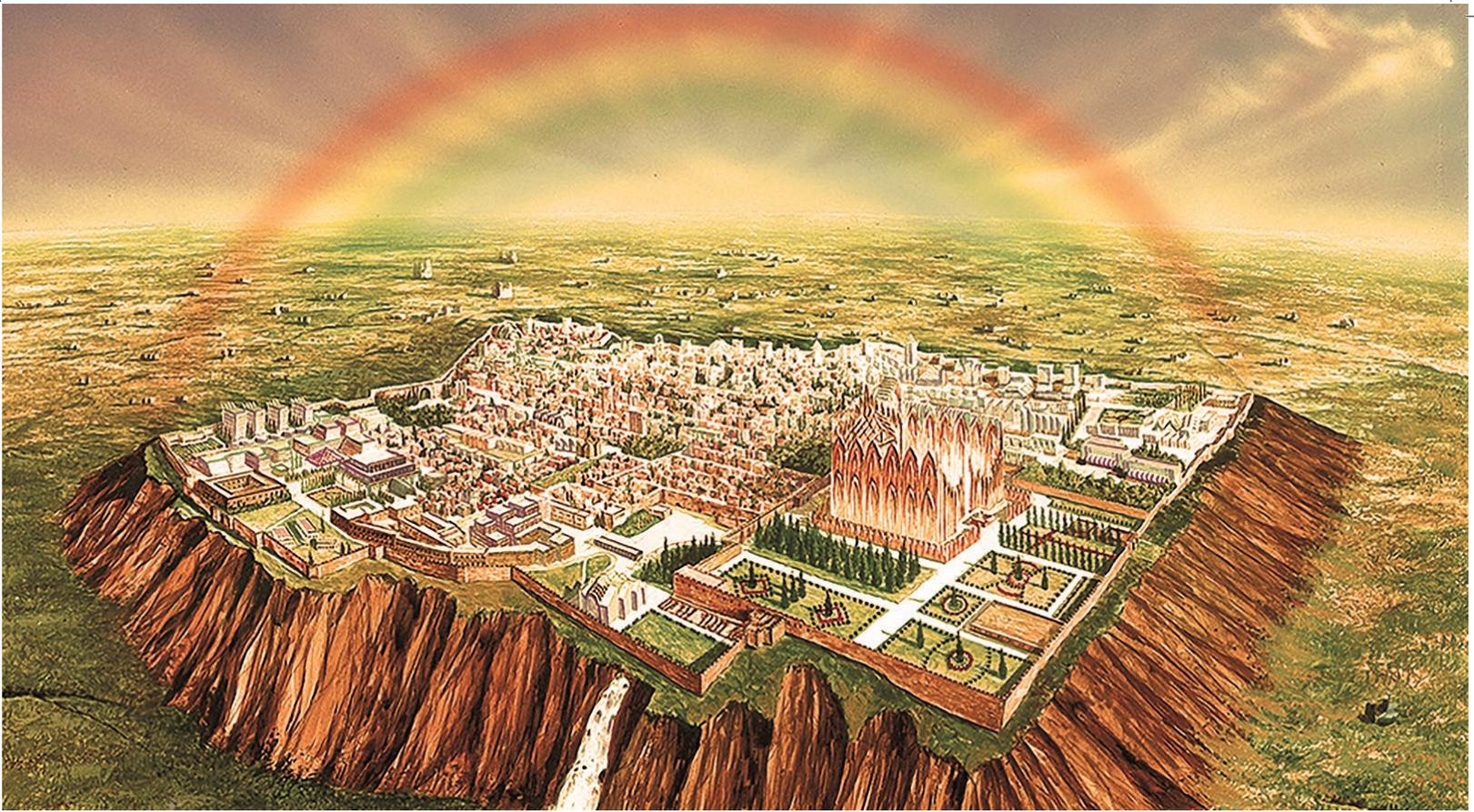
That is when the Messiah will fight against them. He rose into heavens from the Mount of Olives, and that is where He will return to, according to Acts chapter one. The Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west to form a vast valley. People will flee to this valley for shelter.

Moshe Ben Meir, a late Messianic pioneer, had an interesting theory. The word “you’ll flee” is “*nastem*” in Hebrew, but as there was no vocalization, the word could be read “*nistam*”, which means “closes”. According to this interpretation the people of Israel will flee (*nastem*) to the valley born through the split in two of the Mount of Olives, the enemy will come after them, and then the Mount of Olives will close (*nistam*), and the enemy will be destroyed just like the Egyptians in the Sea of Reeds, when they were chasing the Israelites. The Book of Revelation suggests this possibility, too (Rev. 12:15-

16). The river, or the forces, sent by the enemy to overtake the wife Israel, will perish when the earth swallows them like it swallowed the rebellious Korah and his family in the days of Moses (Numbers 16). The Mount of Olives will close up and swallow the enemies. The holy ones in their resurrected bodies will come with the Messiah to fight against Israel’s enemies, to save Israel from destruction, to judge the ungodly world and to establish the Messiah’s Millennial Kingdom on earth, as Jude also writes (Jude 14-15).

**The Messiah’s Millennial Kingdom and the Temple**

“On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea and half to the western sea in summer and in winter. The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name. The whole land, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, will become like the Arabah. But Jerusalem will be raised up and remain in its place, from the Benjamin Gate to the site of the First Gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the royal winepresses. It will be inhabited; never again will it be destroyed. Jerusalem will be secure... Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain. If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The LORD will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. On that day “Holy to the Lord” will be inscribed on the bells of



*Mount Zion will be the highest mountain on earth. Other mountains will collapse, and the earth will be like plains of the Garden of Eden.*

the horses, and the cooking pots in the LORD 's house will be like the sacred bowls in front of the altar. Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the LORD Almighty, and all who come to sacrifice will take some of the pots and cook in them. And on that day, there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD Almighty” (Zechariah 14:8-11, 16-21, NIV).

The end of all will be that the Messiah

establishes a thousand-year kingdom where in the resurrected holy ones will rule with the Messiah as it is written in Revelation chapter 20, for instance (see also the parable of the talents in Luke 19:11-28). In Jerusalem, the third temple will be constructed, and the glory of the Messiah will dwell there (Isa. 2:1-4; Ezek. 40-48). The survivors of the nations that attacked Israel, and all nations, will come up to Jerusalem and worship the Lord Almighty and

celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles, and they will learn the Word of God, the Torah, taught by the believing people of the priests of Israel. Mount Zion will be the highest mountain on earth. Other mountains will collapse, and the earth will be like plains of the Garden of Eden (Rev. 6:16).

We are all invited to this wonderful Kingdom of the Messiah and, after that, to the eternal Kingdom of God in a new heaven and a new earth, the ultimate home of those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 21-22). I urge everyone to receive in faith Yeshua the Messiah as their Savior and King, and thus have part in that final and wonderful future that awaits those who belong to the Lord.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Keijo Lindeman is a retired, 74-year-old Finnish electrical engineer and writer. He has been a believer and Bible teacher for more than 50 years, focusing especially on Israel, restoration, and prophecy. His organization, Israel-Apu Ry, has supported Netivyah for more than 30 years, and it has regularly hosted its founder, Joseph Shulam, to teach in Finland for its Israel-seminars and meetings.

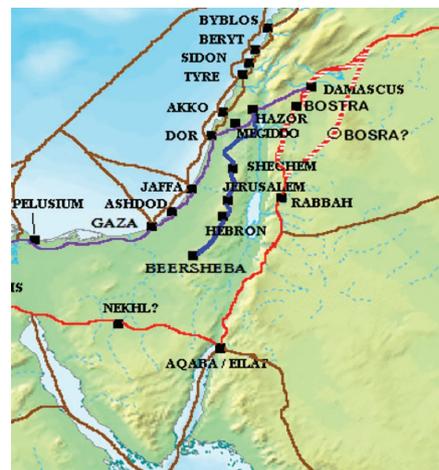
# J E R U S A L E M

# JEW S/ISRAELIS, CHRISTIANS & MUSLIMS IN THE CITY OF DAVID

By Joseph Shulam

The geography of Jerusalem is one of its most important assets of one of the most ancient cities in the world. The land of Israel, ancient Canaan, is situated between the Mediterranean Sea on the west and the Arabian desert to the east. The geographic advantage of Jerusalem is that it is located between the most important ancient overland highways that connected Africa, Asia, and Europe. The two major highways of antiquity that connected the continents passed right through Israel. The first is the Way of the Sea that connected Africa with Asia and Europe by passing from Egypt along the Sea Coast of the Mediterranean, crossing through the Jezreel valley eastward before crossing the Jordan River, turning north to Damascus, and from there extending northward to Asia and Europe. The second major highway

is called the King's Highway. It also came through Egypt crossing the Negev desert below the Dead Sea to the eastern side of the Jordan river, continuing northward to Damascus, and from there extending to Asia and Europe. Jerusalem sat on the hills between these two major highways. Jerusalem is located in the center of the country in the middle of the central mountain range that goes from Beersheba in the northern Negev Desert to the lower Galilee and looks like the spine of the land of Israel. Jerusalem also connects the Way of the Sea (Via Maris) with Jericho and on across the Jordan River to the King's Highway. This land bridge and by-pass option from one of these ancient highways was a relatively narrow bridge. Between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, the widest part would be between 40 and 80 miles across.



You can see on the map that Jerusalem is located right in the heart of the land. It lies on the path from the Sea shore (Jaffa/Tel-Aviv) through the mountain range of Judea, to Jerusalem in the middle, to Jericho on the Jordan River Valley, and to Rabbat Amon.



*This unique history connects the three major monotheistic religions of the world to this city. Jerusalem has a history that relates and connects these three religions in a bond that is both bloody and inseparable.*

**The Names of Jerusalem Tell the History of Jerusalem**

Some of Jerusalem’s names are: Salem (Genesis 14), Jebus, Jerusalem, City of David, Zion, City of the Great King, City of Peace, Ariel, Kingdom of Jerusalem, Aelia Capitoline, The Holy City – El Kudo’s, New Jerusalem (In the book of Isaiah and in John’s Revelation.) According to the Jewish Rabbinical Midrash, “Jerusalem has 70 names”. Jerusalem is a spiritual center and a holy place for Judaism because the Temple was built in Jerusalem by King Solomon the son of King David. It is the place where Yeshua (Jesus) was dedicated in the Temple. Jerusalem also has connection

with Islam, because the Dome of the Rock is the place that, according to a Muslim narrative, Muhammad sprang to heaven on the back of his horse, El Buraq. This unique history connects the three major monotheistic religions of the world to this city. Jerusalem has a history that relates and connects these three religions in a bond that is both bloody and inseparable.



Jerusalem is mentioned in the 19th century BCE Egyptian inscription of “Abdi-Heba” from Tel-El-Amarna letter EA 287 and 289.



This is the way that the name of Jerusalem was written in hieroglyphs pronounced as URU ú-ru-sa-lim.

Jerusalem is considered holy by all three Monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This is what makes the History of Jerusalem and the City of Jerusalem so very interesting. All three religions have “holy shrines”

# *The archaeological evidence in Jerusalem suggests that Canaanites, or to be more specific the Jebusites, built massive fortification walls on the eastern side of the city and an intricate water system in the city of Jerusalem.*

or “holy places” in this relatively small city. However, what makes Jerusalem so special is actually the claim of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to the holiness and pertinence of Jerusalem to the very essence of their faith and history. The city of Jerusalem has direct relevance to both the past and the future of these three religions. The nationalism, the theology, and hopes of the future of these three religious and to some degree ethnic groups are intimately connected with the past and the future of Jerusalem. This is the very reason why Jerusalem is and was a city of controversy and strife, a city of great love and also great enmity. In this article I would like to discuss the roots of these characteristics of Jerusalem.

## **What is the Source of Judaism’s Hold and Relationship to Jerusalem?**

For those who believe that the Bible is the authoritative and inspired Word of God, the whole land of Canaan was given to Abraham and to his seed forever: “The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever” (Genesis 13:14–15 ESVi). For those who do not believe the Bible as the authoritative and inspired Word of God, the hold of the Jewish nation on the city of Jerusalem comes from the conquest of Jerusalem by King David from around 1000 BCE. The Jebusites do not exist, and the other nations (the Canaanites, Gergashites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, and Amorites) that were around during the settlement of Canaan in the end of the second millennium BCE., do not exist on the map of history for at least during the last 2000 years. The archaeological evidence in Jerusalem suggests that Canaanites, or to be more specific the Jebusites, built massive fortification



walls on the eastern side of the city and an intricate water system in the city of Jerusalem. There is evidence that in the 15th-12th centuries BCE, Egypt’s New Kingdom ruled Jerusalem, and the king or ruler of Jerusalem during that time had the title of Abdi-Heba, which in Egyptian means “Head Men.” This Abdi-Heba is a vassal of Egypt during

that period. The Hebrews entered into the picture and took Jerusalem sometime during the 12th century BCE.

Jerusalem’s History before the Israelite invasion was not an integral part of any other nation, but it changed hands between empires and outside invaders like the Egyptians, Jebusites, Hittites, and others. In the 10th century BCE, Canaanite/Jebusite Jerusalem was conquered by King David, and since that time around the year 1000 BCE, Jerusalem has been the royal capital of the nation of Israel. In fact, it has never been the capital city of any other nation. Although both Christianity and Islam claim to have at least a spiritual hold on the city of Jerusalem, both trace their relationship to Jerusalem through King David, the King of Israel, or through Yeshua the Messiah the son of David.

For the last several decades, archaeologists have had a feast digging up the past of this ancient city of Jerusalem. The finds and the discoveries have been phenomenal. Clay seals have been found that served as the personal seal/signatures of kings like Hezekiah, of prophets like Isaiah, of Jeremiah’s scribe (with his name, Barachiau son of Neriah/Baruch ben Neriah on it), and other seals that belonged to very obscure characters who are mentioned only once in the Bible were also found. Some of the archaeologists claim that King David’s palace was found. Streets were unearthed which connected the pool of Siloam—for the crowds to bathe in and be ritually cleansed—to the Temple. Homes of the wealthy and of the ruling class of Jerusalem during Biblical periods were unearthed, and they are now open for visitors to see both the splendor and the destruction that took place during the Roman invasion and destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Even five heavy volumes of books would not be enough space to describe everything



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that archaeologists have discovered in Jerusalem in the last 40 years. However, one that is of interest to me for this paper is the place and relationship of the Christians and Muslims to this great city.

Visiting Jerusalem, even casually, immediately will bring to your attention that Jerusalem has both a significant Christian and Muslim presence. For the Muslims of the world, Jerusalem is the third most holy place after Mecca and Medina. According to Islam, Muhammad visited Jerusalem and ascended to Heaven riding his steed, El Buraq, right from on top of the rock that most probably was a part of the altar of sacrifice of the Jerusalem Temple which was originally built by Solomon the son of David and rebuilt by Herod the great in the first century BCE. In fact, when one visits the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount, the Muslims will show you the horseshoe shape stamped on the rock from El Buraq's push upward

from there to Heaven. The Dome of the Rock Mosque is one of Jerusalem's most prominent landmarks, and it has a golden roof that shines bright and is visible from most of the high vantage points in Jerusalem. Muslims first came to Jerusalem in the 7th century CE.

Christianity started in the land of Israel, and Jerusalem from the very beginning played a major part in the formation and development of the birth of the Christian faith. Jerusalem is the location of the Messiah's dedication as a baby, His death, burial, and resurrection, and his promised return. After 70 CE, the Jewish population moved to the Galilee, and the Galilee became the center of Judaism. From there, the center of Jewish life moved to Babylon and stayed there well into the 6th century CE, the end of the Byzantine Roman Empire, and the rise of Islam. The spread of Christianity through the Greco-Roman Empire was mainly in Asia Minor and

## *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was a Crusader state established by Godfrey of Bouillon in 1099 CE after the first Crusade.*

Europe. By the middle of the second century CE, Christianity lost interest in Jerusalem and transferred its center to Rome and Constantinople, as the song says, “Istanbul is Constantinople.” The Emperor Constantine, in the early 300s CE, sent his mother Helena to visit Jerusalem, and with her inspiration, he rebuilt Jerusalem as a Christian center of worship building the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 335. Jerusalem had received special recognition in Canon VII of the First Council of Nicaea in 325. However, Jews were banned from the city throughout the remainder of its time as a Roman province, except during a brief period of Persian rule from 614 to 629.

Christianity essentially lost interest in the historical Jesus and Biblical narrative, and it concentrated on other issues that were more pertinent for the Roman Empire. This continued until the 12th century, when Europe was in deep decline, and for political and financial reasons, the so called “Christian” Europe focused on the “Holy Land” and on war against the infidels (the Muslims) who had conquered Jerusalem and the Land of Israel and desecrated the so called “Christian Holy Places.”

For the sake of reminder and review, although the birth of Christianity was among Jews only for several decades and the city of Jerusalem was the center of the Jewish disciples of the Messiah only until the beginning of the second century CE, by the middle of the second century CE, the “Western Church” abandoned all interest in Jerusalem and in the land of Israel, and it moved its attention and center to Rome. The number of Jewish disciples of Yeshua (Jesus) in the land of Israel declined, and the number of non-Jewish Christians increased in the Roman Empire. By the end of the second century CE, Jerusalem and the land of the Bible, Israel, were no longer in the interest of Christianity. New interest in the land of Israel and in the “holy sites” started with the beginning of the Crusades in the 11th century of the common era. This new interest in Jerusalem and the Holy Land was all for the wrong reasons, and it happened only after Islam conquered the Land of Israel and took interest in Jerusalem. The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was a Crusader state established by Godfrey of Bouillon in 1099 CE after the first Crusade. A religious fever for Jerusalem and the “holy land” started in Europe because of the decline of the economy and the collapse of the political structure in Western Europe, and it was fanned by the fires and religious zeal looking to what the French called “cause célèbre.” This interest was an excuse to harvest in fields that they did not plant. The action and horror that the crusades brought to Europe and to the Levant on their way to Israel can be called many things, but it cannot be called moral, ethical, or even Christian. The crusades were not a quest for spirituality or faith in God or even in Jesus. They were mainly a political and financial quest motivated by false Christian sentiments, fear from a Muslim incursion to Europe, and political aspirations disguised as spiritual and noble causes.

## **The Muslim Interest in Jerusalem is a Totally Different Issue**

The Qur’an does not mention the name “Jerusalem”, but the hadith asserts that it was from Jerusalem that Muhammad ascended to heaven in the Night Journey to Heaven. According to the Arab historians, Umar ibn al-Khattab personally went to Jerusalem in 638 CE to receive the document of surrender of the city Jerusalem. He was the first to force the Christian bishops to clean the Temple Mount. After the Temple Mount was cleaned Umar ibn al-Khattab was the first Muslim to pray on the Temple Mount. Sixty years later, the Muslims built the Dome of the Rock Mosque on the Temple Mount. The octagonal dome was to commemorate the ascension of Muhammad from the top of the rock that is enshrined in the dome. The Al-Aqsa Mosque which is south of the Dome of the Rock was sanctified by Islam much later.

The interesting thing is that the same Umar Al-Khattab was the one that allowed and in fact invited the Jews to return to Jerusalem. During the Byzantine period, Jews were not allowed in the city of Jerusalem. In the subsequent years, especially under the Umayyad and Abbasid periods (650-969 CE), Jerusalem prospered, and the city grew and expanded. Muslims ruled Jerusalem, and even though the different Muslim dynasties exchanged who exactly would rule and control Jerusalem, the Abbasid’s or the Fatimid or the Seljuk or the Umayyad or the Mamluk Sultanate, the Jews were always a very small minority in Jerusalem. There were periods in which they were needed, were treated more fairly, and sometime even respected.

There are some interesting episodes in the relationship of the Jewish population

in Jerusalem during the Muslim rule. In 1267, the Jewish Rabbi from Spain, Nahmanides (Ramban), came to Jerusalem, lived in the old city of Jerusalem, and built one of the oldest synagogues in Jerusalem.

There was limited Christian presence in Jerusalem, but in the 14th to 15th century, limited freedom was given to Christians to come to Jerusalem. In about the year 1333, the French Catholic priest Roger Guerin was able to buy the Cenacle on Mount Zion, the room in which according to Catholic tradition the Last Supper was eaten by Jesus and his disciples (even though that room was built by the French Crusaders, and their emblems are still visible on the

walls). Of course, to declare that room on Mt. Zion as the room where Jesus and his disciples ate the Lord's Supper, the Catholic Church had to have the Pope's approval. The local Catholics in Jerusalem received the Papal approval in November 1342, signed by Pope Clement VI and coming from Avignon, France, since there were wars between Popes, and Pope Clement VI was not in Rome. Those Christian wars spread also to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and in fact they continued and still continue even to this very day.

In 1516, Jerusalem was taken over by the Ottoman Empire, and Jerusalem enjoyed a period of renewal and peace under Suleiman the Magnificent

including the construction of the walls that you see today surrounding the old city of Jerusalem. Suleiman the Magnificent actually defined the outline of what we today call the Old City of Jerusalem. The rule of Suleiman and subsequent Ottoman Sultans brought an age of "relaxed religious attitudes". Jews, Christians, and Muslims enjoyed freedom of religion, and it was possible to find a synagogue, a church, and a mosque on the same street. The city remained open to all religions. Like in other parts of the Ottoman Empire, the heritage of Suleiman the Magnificent is appreciated in Jerusalem to this day for his architectural accomplishments.

After Suleiman the Magnificent, the city

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*Jerusalem has grown from end to end and has become the biggest city in Israel, both in area and in population. It is a city with full freedoms and civil rights for all religious communities and even for communities that are called an abomination in the Torah.*

fell into a difficult situation because the economy was bankrupt in Jerusalem and in the Ottoman Empire. After the rule of Sultan Suleiman, the Catholic Monks were expelled by the Turks, and in 1551, the Cenacle was taken from the Christians and turned into a Mosque. The Jewish presence was so minor that they were not disturbed in any significant way, but like before, their freedoms were limited by law and by harsh taxation.

In 1700, Judah HeHasid led the largest organized group of Jewish immigrants to the Land of Israel in centuries. His disciples built the Hurva Synagogue, which served as the main synagogue in Jerusalem from the 18th century until 1948 when it was destroyed by the Arab Legion. The synagogue was rebuilt in 2010.

In the mid-19th century, with the decline of the Ottoman Empire, Jerusalem was a backwater city with a population that did not exceed 8,000. Even with the limited opportunities to make a living in Jerusalem during that period, the city still had a Jewish, Christian, and Muslim population.

The Old City of Jerusalem was populated mainly within the city walls. The Old City was divided into four parts, the Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Armenian quarters. The Christians were also divided between the Greek Orthodox, Catholic, Armenian, Coptic, and Ethiopian churches. There were

Christian wars about the control and the turf of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and who is going to control the space in the church, and in the end, the Turkish governor had to give the key of the church to a Muslim family. Until today, the opening and the closing of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is done by the same Muslim family.

After World War I, the British Mandate started (1917-1948). In 1916, the British and the French had the Sykes-Picot Agreement which was formed in order to divide the territories that the Ottoman Empire controlled in the Middle East. They divided the whole middle east between themselves. The English took South Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, and Israel (what they called Palestine), and the French took what they wanted, Syria and Lebanon.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the small Jewish population in Jerusalem was concentrated in two areas: in the Old City of Jerusalem and in Abraham's Vineyard. Abraham's Vineyard was a significant piece of land north of the Old City. Today, this area of Jerusalem is called "Mea-Shearim." This land was purchased by James Finn (1806–1872) who was the British Consul in Jerusalem. He came to Jerusalem in 1845. He was married to a Jewish lady who was also a disciple of Yeshua (who today are called Messianic Jews). James and Elizabeth Anne Finn were involved in creating the London Society

for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews (now called Church's Ministry Among Jewish People or CMJ). James Finn let a small and very poor community of ultra-Orthodox Jews settle on the land north of the Old City of Jerusalem that he purchased.

By the 1860s, the old city was overcrowded. The Russian Orthodox Church started building outside of the Old City and put a church and monastery outside the city walls, a location which is called even today "The Russian Compound." The Catholic Church also built churches and Monasteries outside the Old City of Jerusalem. The first residential settlement outside the walls of Jerusalem was undertaken by Jews with the help of Sir Moses Montefiore, an English Jew who was very wealthy, and financed the building of a settlement called Mishkenot Sha'ananim. This community was built very close to the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem for protection, near Mt. Zion.

In 1882, around 150 Jewish families arrived to Jerusalem from Yemen. Initially, they were not accepted by the Jews of Jerusalem, and so they lived in very poor conditions and were supported by the Christians of the Swedish-American colony. In 1884, the Yemenites moved into Silwan just to the east of the walls of the Old City on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. Today, Silwan is a totally Arab village that is not friendly to Jews and Israelis.

General Sir Edmund Allenby, commander-in-chief of the British Army in the Middle East, dismounted his horse and commanded all the British officers to do the same at the first sight of the Old City of Jerusalem. They entered Jerusalem on foot out of respect for the Holy City on 11 December 1917. (Today, behind the central bus station



of Jerusalem, there is a monument commemorating this event.) I am sad to say that the years of the British mandate in Israel were not as gracious or considerate as General Edmund Allenby was upon his entrance to Jerusalem.

With the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the expulsion of the British Mandate over the land of Israel, Jerusalem has received the right respect as the capital of the Jewish nation, not only within the Jewish State of Israel. Nation after nation recognizes that Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Israel.

Jerusalem has grown from end to end and has become the biggest city in Israel, both in area and in population. It is a city with full freedoms and civil rights for all religious communities and

even for communities that are called an abomination in the Torah (Scriptures).

In 1967, after nearly two thousand years, Jerusalem (including the Old City and the Temple Mount) is in Jewish hands, in the hands of the State of Israel. This event of restoring Jerusalem into the hands of Jews in the Six-day war in June of 1967 is a fulfillment of major prophetic promises. These prophetic promises relate to the salvation of Israel, all of Israel.

**Here are the texts that I am referring to:** Luke 21:20-24, “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”

Verse 20 describes the events of the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE. The Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and expelled the Jews that survived out of the city. Verse 24 puts a limit to the period of Jerusalem’s disrepute, the period that Jerusalem is being ruled by Gentiles. The operative word in verse 24 is the

word “until” – a time word. The second phrase that is of importance to clarify the meaning of this text is the phrase that appears only twice in the New Testament, here in Luke and in Romans 11:25-26. The phrase is “until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” The implications of this prophecy state that while the Gentiles are ruling, trampling Jerusalem underfoot, the times of the Gentiles will not be fulfilled. Meaning that when the Gentiles no longer rule and trample Jerusalem under foot, all of Israel will be saved. The liberation of Jerusalem from Christian and Muslim rule and the restoration of Jerusalem to control by the Jewish State of Israel is a marked turning point for the Jewish people as a nation to receive the salvation that was prepared for Israel by the promises of God to the prophets of Israel and proclaimed by the Apostle Paul in the letter to the Romans:

Rom. 11:25-27, “For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.’”

In conclusion, Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the Jewish people. Neither the Christian Church nor the Muslim Mosque have an inheritance or a foothold in this city of the Great King because when He returns, He will return to Jerusalem.

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### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Joseph Shulam was born in Sofia, Bulgaria on March 24, 1946 to a Sephardic Jewish Family. In 1948, his family immigrated to Israel just before the establishment of the State. While in high school, he was introduced to the New Testament and immediately identified with the person of Yeshua. In 1981, Joseph and the small fellowship that was started in his house established one of the first official non-profit organizations of Jewish Disciples of Yeshua in Israel – Netivyah Bible Instruction Ministry. Joseph has lectured extensively and has assisted in encouraging disciples around the world. He and his wife Marcia have two children and two grandchildren.

# Jerusalem

By Vadim Birman

**A**mong all geographical locations mentioned in the Bible, none comes close to both the number of references and overall significance as Jerusalem. So great is Jerusalem's importance that it is the only city that transcends the physical and translates into the spiritual realm, a double city being located both above and below—a place of the first visitation and the future return of the Messiah, having a central presence even in the world to come. Why was Jerusalem chosen to the exclusion of all other places? What made it so important?

The name Jerusalem first appears in the

Bible in Joshua 10 in connection with its king at the time, Adoni Zedek, who was one of the Amorite kings opposing the Israelite conquest of the land. This king was the leader of the first Canaanite alliance of the five kings who were defeated by Israel with the help of what appears to be a meteor shower, and God heeding Joshua's prayer for the sun and the moon to stand still extending the day of the battle. After such a celestial intervention, the five kings quite understandably hid in the cave, but were found, hung on stakes, and afterwards buried in the cave with huge stones rolled to its opening.

Jerusalem as a locale, however, appears in the Bible before this

*What then made Jerusalem so special? It seems that the Akeida, the binding of Isaac, played a pivotal role in the selection of the city to be at the crossroads of humanity's experience.*

extraordinary battle. The appellation “Zedek” used by the king of the ill-fated alliance was already used before by another and much loftier king. I am, of course, referring to Malki Zedek, the king of Shalem, to whom Abraham brought a tenth of the spoils after defeating an alliance of the four kings and freeing his nephew Lot. It is very likely that Shalem is one and the same as Jerusalem, as we read in Psalm 76:3, speaking of the Temple: “In Shalem is His sukkah and His dwelling place in Zion.” What made Jerusalem important and special, of course, was the Temple. What remains to be understood is why this particular city was chosen to be the location for the House of God.

From 2 Chronicles 3:1, we know that king Solomon built the Temple on the threshing floor of Araunah (Ornan) the Jebusite from whom David purchased the place where he saw the plague being stopped by the angel of the Lord. That same verse in Chronicles adds another identifier to the Temple location—it calls it Mount Moriah. That, of course, is the most famous place in the entire Torah, the place of the binding of Isaac who was designated by God to be the burnt offering in a grand test of faith which Abraham passed. While on the way to Mount Moriah, Abraham responded to his son’s question about who was to be the burnt offering by saying that the “Lord will see to it” (Elokim yireh, Gen. 22:8), the saying that was reiterated by the Torah at the conclusion of the test when Abraham named the

place HaShem Yireh (Gen 22:14), the ubiquitous “Jehovah Jireh.” And so, it appears that from the two words yireh and shalem, came the name Yerushalayim—Jerusalem, the fact that has not escaped the attention of the Rabbis who have traced the name of the city to these two components.

What then made Jerusalem so special? It seems that the Akeida, the binding of Isaac, played a pivotal role in the selection of the city to be at the crossroads of humanity’s experience. What had Abraham accomplished when he obeyed the Lord and was willing to offer his son—his only son, the one whom he loved, Isaac—to be the sacrificial lamb? Abraham was willing to give up everything he had. He did not consider his son as belonging to him and acknowledged that God is the Master of all and is entitled to all that Abraham possessed regardless of how it felt in the moment. That readiness to give up one’s rights and possessions stood in stark contrast with all generations, twenty to be exact, that came before Abraham, starting with the sin of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and concluding with the debacle of the Tower of Babel. God used this test to reestablish His covenant with humanity, this time through the people, the kingdom of priests that God had raised from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the people who would have custody of the future Temple for the benefit of all nations. As Isaiah 56:7 says, “this house will be called

the house of prayer for all nations.” And by passing the test on Mount Moriah, which later became the Temple Mount, Abraham was able to take and pass the test of the first man in the Garden of Eden, which can be even seen by the words that the Torah uses in talking about both events, including God’s question to the man: “where are you?” – ayecha; and Isaac’s question to his father: aye - “where is the lamb?” In addition, the word Abraham uses for the knife, “machelet”, and the trees that God placed in the garden that were “good for food,” l’meachel. The firewood, “eytzim,” literally “trees,” that Isaac was carrying possibly corresponding to the two trees, eytizim, the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. All of these textual parallels suggest connection. However, even more strikingly, the implications of both stories—paradise lost by appropriating something that was not Adam’s and the path to paradise regained by giving up something, or someone, that was seemingly Abraham’s but nevertheless belonged to God, Abraham’s son—makes Jerusalem the place where the way back to the Garden was again revealed to all humanity. It is only fitting that the Temple which was designed to be a reminder and a sign of Eden’s experience would be built in the place where the way back to Eden was once again revealed.

This is why there are two Jerusalems—one below and one above. That is why Jerusalem

*It is only fitting that the Temple which was designed to be a reminder and a sign of Eden's experience would be built in the place where the way back to Eden was once again revealed.*

transcends the physical creation; because it is the place where eternity once again would invade the temporary and reveal what the communion of God and man would look like. Messiah's departure from

and his future return to Jerusalem underscore the point that through Abraham's faithfulness, the place that otherwise would be an ordinary mountain became Zion, a place of excellence (metzuyan), a point of contact between the Divine and the human. It is a place of waiting for the return of the Master.

But aren't we supposed to worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth (John 4:24) without respect to where the place of such worship is? This does not negate the fact that Jerusalem is still the designated place of arrival. If one knows that her most beloved is coming to a specific train station, wouldn't she literally camp out there, eager to greet her beloved, if she knew the time was near, even if the exact schedule was never published? By looking around, I cannot help but conclude that the time of arrival is near. There are, however, other conditions of Messiah's return, one of which is that Jerusalem must say, "blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord" (Mat 23:39, Ps 118:26) in order to invite back her long-awaited king. And how can Jerusalem say this if there is no one there proclaiming it into the ears of its inhabitants beforehand?

As we know, the earthly Jerusalem is enslaved with her children (Gal. 4:25), but what is the dream of any slave except to be set free? For some reason in Galatians 4, Paul compares earthly Jerusalem to Hagar and to mount Sinai in Arabia. Arabia and Hagar are related, since Hagar is the mother of the Arab nation; but beyond that, comparing them to Jerusalem sounds strange. That is, until we see in the lives of Hagar and Ishmael parallels with Abraham and Isaac. Just like Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac when God saw to it that there was a substitution, so it was with Hagar when she was about to lose her son. God saw her and provided the well which she named be'er l'chai roi—the well of the one who sees me. Yireh of Jerusalem and roi of Hagar's well are related in that both received the salvation for their beloved children. It is also easy to conclude that Hagar's well became a holy place for Ishmael (although paling in comparison with Mecca), the place of his salvation, the place of revelation, his Temple in the desert. And it is in this place that Isaac settled (Gen. 24:62) just before meeting Rebecca. Why did Isaac settle there? It was most probably to reconcile with his brother, which is evident in that both of them together buried their father Abraham, and Isaac again settled near Ishmael after the death

1. Baseless hatred – sinat chinam an "official" traditional reason for the destruction of the 2nd Temple, cf. Psa. 69:5.

of Abraham (Gen. 25:11). Isaac did not settle in Jerusalem, the place where he was a sacrifice on the altar, but first went to reconcile with his brother who had something against him (cf. Mat. 5:23-24).

If these images for us are shadows of future events, we understand today an enmity may exist between the Jewish people and their brother whom they handed over to be hung on the tree, but tomorrow they may be reconciled; those who are now slaves tomorrow can be free men; today they can be in exile but tomorrow in the rebuilt Jerusalem. All the Jewish people need is a coherent, Scripturally accurate testimony. Testimony like that of Isaac who was almost dead but brought back to life (Heb. 11:19), the testimony of the risen one, the testimony of the Messiah's Jewish disciples situated squarely in the city so that once more the Torah would go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3).

When Isaac blessed Jacob without knowing who was in front of him, he said prophetically, “the voice, the voice of Jacob; the hands, the hands of Esau.” Isaac was testifying that the person who was in front of him was the one destined to receive the blessing. This was the one new man with the voice of the Jew and the hands of the Gentile; and what else would the voice of the Jew be saying

other than the words of the Torah? For to the Jews were entrusted the oracles of God.

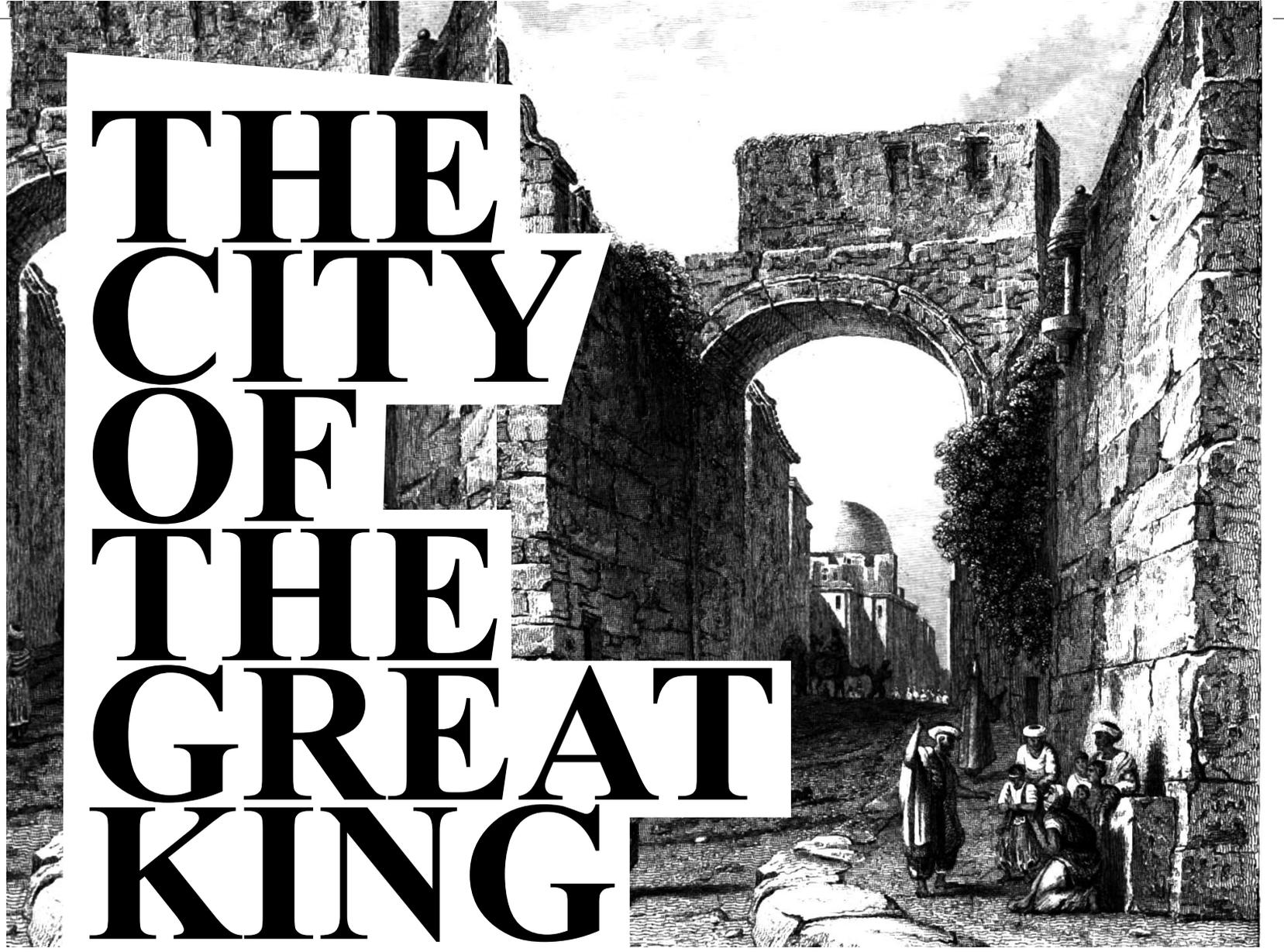
As it was in the beginning, so it will be in the end. The disciples, under the leadership of Peter and later of Jacob (“James”) the brother of the Lord, were gathered in Jerusalem; and it was there that the first and only recorded Apostolic decree of Acts 15 was issued. The leadership of the body of the Messiah was located in Jerusalem in the beginning. It was an enslaved and oppressed Jerusalem, populated by a wicked generation marked by baseless hatred culminating in the killing of the Messiah. This generation received their due when the Temple and the city were destroyed. Nevertheless, the message of the word of the Lord, the Good News, emanated from Jerusalem in the beginning, and so will it be in the end. There has to be a restoration of the “See of James”—the seat of Jacob the brother of the Lord—before the coming of the Day of the Lord, great and terrible; because there has to be a proclamation, a blowing of the trumpet (Ezek. 33) in the ears of the inhabitants of Jerusalem for them to open their eyes, emerge from the desert of slavery, and enter into the rest of their Lord and King by proclaiming, “blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord.” How then shall they call on the One in whom they have not trusted? And

how shall they trust in the One of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without someone proclaiming? And how shall they proclaim unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim good news of good things!’ who announces salvation, who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’” (Rom. 10:14-15, Isa. 52:7)

It is therefore imperative that the seat of Jacob, the presence of the Jewish disciples, the Jewish arm of the Ecclesia, be restored in Jerusalem so that the “voice of Jacob” is again heard in the land, so that the children of Israel/Jacob would be willing to receive their king back in Jerusalem, the place where heaven meets the earth, where righteousness and peace kiss each other, where lovingkindness and truth meet together (Psa. 85:11-12); so that the faith of the Jewish people will precede the return of our King; so that we are not ashamed when he returns to rule the nations with the rod of iron. It is in Zion that we are to wait for him, like a hopeful lover at the train station, waiting for her beloved to return. She does not know the day or the hour, but she knows that the station is the right location and the time is near.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Vadim Birman, or Dima, is originally from Odessa, Ukraine. He immigrated to the US in 1995 and became a follower of Yeshua in 1997. He graduated from CSU Northridge with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and then from the Golden Gate University with a Master of Science in Taxation. Dima is currently enrolled in the Messianic Jewish Theological Institute with the possibility of ordination in the future. He is currently residing in Guadalajara, Mexico with his wife and three children leading a Spanish-speaking home group with the purpose of reaching out to the local Jewish community.



# THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING

By David Friedman

Recently someone once asked me for my take on the most beautiful city in the world. When we think of that question, some of us may think of places like canal and art-laden Venice, or historic and artistic St. Petersburg, or possibly Thira, Santorini, especially at night. Others would say Rome, Florence, Paris, and Kyoto rate right at the top. Everyone has their favorite beautiful spots. But I answered my questioning friend with no hesitation, “Jerusalem, Israel.” My professor of archaeology in university once stated in class that, “I can’t understand why everyone fights over Israel, why there’s so much tension about Jerusalem. If you look at it, it’s

just a bunch of boulders and rocks.” I suppose beauty is indeed “in the eye of the beholder.”

The key is that Jerusalem’s beauty is not merely a physical one. Yet her hills, teeming life, and golden sunsets do hold much beauty. “Ten measures of beauty were given to the world. Nine were taken by Jerusalem, and one was distributed all over earth” (b. Kiddushin 49b).

But like many modern cities, today she is crowded, polluted, full of traffic jams, and expensive for the consumer. And yet, she has a beauty that is unequalled in the world because of the spiritual and

*Jerusalem, in her history, has been the city of miracles, that is, acts and events that defy explanation and fly in the face of all expectation.*

historic sides to the city. She also will have a unique future that no other place in the world will have.

She is described in Torah as “His (G-d’s) holy mountain”, “His city” (Psalm 48), “the faithful city” (Zech. 8:3), and the “throne of G-d” (Jer. 3:17). The city is mentioned in Torah some 669 times. When the ancient Jewish people thought about Jerusalem, they beheld such a rich, meaningful city that it is written in the Bible that pilgrims to her should “walk around Zion, go around her, count her towers, think about her ramparts, look at her military quarters, and tell the generation all about them” (my paraphrase of Psalm 48:11-13).

Every generation of the Jewish people was to hear about and experience her meaning through the description of the city’s nature, followed by seeing it for themselves. In the book of Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:16 in the Torah, we learn that there would be a place where G-d Himself would choose to be honored and worshipped. “Three times a year all your men must appear before Adonai your God at the place he will choose: at the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks, and the Festival of Tabernacles. No one should appear before Adonai empty-handed” (NIV).

Since the Almighty G-d of the Universe, Creator of all, picked a specific city where He wants to be served, this confers a specialness shared by no other place in the world. As history unfolded, this chosen city mentioned in Devarim 16:16 ended up being Jerusalem.

I am in awe when I walk through and examine the City of David archaeological park, which is over 3,000 years old and parts of it are even 3,800 years old. The Bible in so many ways comes alive in the modern city today. From the City of

David, to the remains of Second Temple Jerusalem, to the city walls in the days of King Hezekiah and Isaiah, to the historic Mount of Olives, she is a city that resounds with her special history.

And when we consider the future of the city, then her uniqueness among the cities of the world stands out even more. It is written that Jerusalem will be the future site of the return of the Messiah! Zechariah in 14:4 foresaw his appearance in Jerusalem, as it is written,

“Then His feet will stand on that day on the Mount of Olives that is facing Jerusalem from the east. And the Mount of Olives will be split in two, with half of it moving east, and (half of it moving) west—(forming) a very great valley. Then half of the mountain will go north, and the other half towards the Negev” (author’s translation).

This verse has not yet seen a fulfillment in history. As part of a magnificent spiritual renewal that will take place in Israel, Jerusalem will be the scene of a large “t’shuva” (Hebrew for an act of “turning to G-d”). “Then I will pour on the House of David and on the residents of Jerusalem the spirit of favor and of comforting mercy. So they will look on me, the one whom they stabbed through, and mourn for him, according to the mourning rites for individuals, with bitterness concerning him like bitterness over a first born” (Zechariah 12:10, author’s translation).

Rabbi Dosa and Rashi both considered Zech. 12:10 as describing the Messiah’s arrival in Jerusalem. So, we wait in expectant hope with the city that her redemption will come soon.

The city will also host a continuation of this amazing spiritual renewal, as described by the prophet Zechariah in chapter 13:1-4 of his book. “On that day,

*Jerusalem, as Israel’s capital city, and her people have been cast in a negative light in the international media and in the halls of politics, but G-d will heal the city!*

a water source will be opened up for the House of David and for the residents of Jerusalem, for violations of the Torah and ritual impurities. ‘So, when that day comes,’ declares Adonai of the Heavenly Armies, ‘I will cut off the names of the deities from the Land, and they won’t be remembered any longer. In addition, I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the Land. Then it will be that if anyone gives prophecies anymore, his own father and mother who bore him will say to him, “You won’t live, because you spoke a lie in Adonai’s name,” so that his own father and mother who bore him will stab him.’ It will happen that in that day, every ‘prophet’ will be thoroughly ashamed of his vision and his prophecy; and they will no longer put on a prophet’s hairy garment in order to deceive” (author’s translation).

These events also have not occurred yet in history. This healing, redemptive water immersion, and ridding of false religious practices will occur in Jerusalem. Her future is one of being a center for powerful spiritual renewal which will have positive consequences worldwide.

Nations are depicted as sending representatives to Jerusalem to honor and worship the One True G-d. The city will be the spiritual renewal center of the world for all peoples with the Jewish people playing host to this state of affairs. "Then whoever remains from all the nations invading Jerusalem will come up from year to year to fall down before the King, Adonai of the Heavenly Armies, and to observe the festive time of Sukkot. It will be that (whoever) will not come up from the nations of the world to Jerusalem to fall down before the King, Adonai of the Heavenly Armies, they will have no rainfall" (Zech. 16:16-17). Micah the prophet also foresaw the time wherein Jerusalem will function as an international center for G-d's kingdom. "And many nations shall go, and they shall say, 'Come, let us go up to the Lrd's mount and to the house of the Gd of Jacob, and let Him teach us of His ways, and we will go in His paths,' for out of Zion shall the Torah come forth, and the word of the Lrd from Jerusalem" (Micah 4:2).

Jerusalem is also a city of miracles. From a sleepy town of 60,000 inhabitants in 1920, Jerusalem has grown into a modern city of 900,000 people, replete with an inner-city train line, two malls, incredible museums, numerous hotels, an array of busy restaurants, with many languages spoken in her streets on a daily basis. With no trouble, one can hear Hebrew, Arabic, French, Russian, English, Romanian, Spanish, and Amharic spoken by her citizens. Three and a half million tourists have annually visited her, on the average, over the past few years with 2019 setting a record of four and a half million visitors. Her growth from a Middle Eastern town into a modern metropolis is nothing short of miraculous. The prophet Isaiah foresaw such a miraculous development when he noted, "They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long

devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations" (Isaiah 61:4, NIV).

Renowned American author Mark Twain described Jerusalem in 1867 with the words, "So small! Why, it was no larger than an American village of four thousand inhabitants" (<https://blog.nli.org.il/en/mark-twain-in-palestine/>). Yet look at her today!

The city's protection and survival during our War of Independence (1947-1948) defies rational explanation. A handful of high school students and just a few IDF members beat the mighty, British trained and manned Jordanian Legion to save the Jewish residents of the city then. Nineteen years afterwards, the divided city was reunited when the IDF once again beat the Jordanian military in fierce fighting that took incredible courage on behalf of the victors. The once-divided city was one city again, as artist Naomi Shemer's song "Jerusalem of Gold" captured the hearts of our nation in 1967. Just 2,133 years before then, a small militia of Jewish priests and Torah loving Jews beat the mighty Seleucid army to free Jerusalem from the grips of pro-Hellenists, who sought to destroy the Torah and the Jewish way of life. Some 500 years before then, the mighty Assyrian army was destroyed as she sat at the city walls of Jerusalem, waiting to overrun her. The Torah makes no bones about the fact that this was a G-d-induced miracle. Jerusalem, in her history, has been the city of miracles, that is, acts and events that defy explanation and fly in the face of all expectation.

One day while driving in downtown Jerusalem, I saw two policewomen directing traffic at a specific corner. One of them was quite tall, very blonde, clearly her family had recently immigrated from the former Soviet Union to Israel. Her partner was a

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shorter Black woman, with black hair, whose family were immigrants in recent days from Ethiopia. Isaiah wrote, "Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east,

and gather you from the west; I will say to the north, 'Give them up,' and to the south, 'Do not keep them back, Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth'" (Isaiah 43:5-6).

Here I was, driving in Jerusalem, an immigrant "from the west" watching an immigrant "from the north" (USSR) and another "from the south" (Ethiopia). If you take a straight edge and draw a line upwards from Jerusalem, you arrive in Moscow. If you do the same and draw a line downwards from Jerusalem, you arrive in Ethiopia. Flip that straight edge going west, and you land in the USA from which I immigrated. Isaiah's words about Israel's immigration were literally being fulfilled as I drove in Jerusalem that day. That day, I experienced Jerusalem as the city where the predictive prophetic words of Isaiah came to life. She indeed is a city of miracles.



Yet today, Jerusalem is a city that takes her brunt of abuse from the nations, those nations who scorn the State of Israel and the Jewish people, those who adapt anti-Zionist political platforms. “Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, ‘Let us break their chain and throw off their shackles.’ The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, ‘I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain’” (Ps. 83, NIV).

Jerusalem, as Israel’s capital city, and her people have been cast in a negative light in the international media and in the halls of politics, but G-d will heal the city!

“For I will restore your health, I will heal you of your wounds,” says Adonai,

‘because they called you an outcast, Zion, with no one who cares about her’” (Jer. 30.17, CJB).

Finally, we who believe that our holy King Yeshua will rule from this very city look at Jerusalem as a city which holds the source of all hope: hope for humankind, for redemption, for G-d’s purposes, and for healing of the entire world. When things are in their final state of being, a Heavenly Jerusalem will appear and is described as, “... the holy Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from G-d, having G-d’s glory. Her light was like a most precious tone...and also she had a great and high wall with 12 gates...and names written on them, which are the names of the 12 tribes of the sons of Israel...the city had no need of the sun or moon to shine in it, as the glory of G-d illuminates it. The Lamb is its light...In its street...was the tree of life, which bore 12 fruits, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Yohanan’s Vision 21-22).

Yohanan envisioned a future Jerusalem, a perfect city, where G-d Himself and Messiah live. The city is dedicated to being a place of healing, life, and holiness for all of humanity. It is the fullness of all that the city of Jerusalem was created to be. What other city has such a future? What other city holds such promise, such a future filled with redemption?

I live in the environs of today’s Jerusalem, and this makes me very fulfilled as a Jew and as a Jewish believer in Messiah. I have seen her grow over the past 40 years from when I was a student at the Hebrew University and touched the history of the city intimately every day that I lived there. That started a love story with Jerusalem that has never waned. “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill. Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth, if I don’t remember you, if I don’t place Jerusalem above my greatest joy” (Ps. 137:5-6).

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

David Friedman is the rabbi at Congregation Darchei Noam and Director of Bet Midrash Lev Zion, both located in Israel. He holds a PhD in Jewish Studies and an MA in Arabic. He was born in Germany after WWII, lived in the USA, and made aliyah to Israel 4 decades ago. He served as the Academic Dean at ICOB in the 1990s, authored 10 books all focusing on Biblical books or Shoah-era subjects, and belongs to three different Jewish-Arab reconciliation groups. He also participates as a lecturer each year at the former Auschwitz death camp at a reconciliation conference.

# THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROVERSY OVER JERUSALEM

By Sonia Waters

There is no other city in the world that is contested today like the capital of the State of Israel, Jerusalem—historically, politically, and religiously. It is the most important city in the world in the prophetic calendar of God with more than 800 mentions in scripture, the place where all the final events of this world will take place and where Yeshua will eventually come to reign for 1000 years. The UN, in 1947, declared it to be an International City and hates the fact that it is in the hands of the Jews. This city has caused endless controversy at the deliberations of the UN and resolutions passed against Israel's hold of it. Eventually this organization's animosity against Israel will cause their attack on this city described in Scripture, both in the books of Zechariah and Revelation. This hatred of Israel and its attack on Jerusalem will determine when Yeshua arrives back on this earth. He is returning to this City to defend it. Still, the Jewish people consider Jerusalem to be their "Eternal Capital", where their Temples once stood and the centre of their faith. This article will look at world history, religion, and politics to determine to whom does this city really belong.

In modern history, at the UN Partition of the Land of 1947, Jerusalem was going to be an International City—that is, belonging to all monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. They envisioned an international force looking after it. However, in 1948,

Jews and Jordanian Arabs fought for control of the City. When Israel declared its independence in 1948, the only part of Jerusalem they had was the western section. The east side was in the hands of Jordan, including the Old City. Israel managed to liberate the city from the Jordanians during the Six-Day War in 1967. Sadly, it was not before the Jordanians' systematic destruction of the holy sites of other religions.

Jordan was in control of the West Bank from 1948–1967 which included not only Judea and Samaria, but also the east part of Jerusalem. During this time, they wreaked havoc within mainland Israel. According to Raphael Israeli, 58 synagogues in the Old City of Jerusalem were desecrated or demolished by the Jordanian forces, resulting in the de-Judaization of Jerusalem. Moreover, the Western Wall, one of the holiest sites of Judaism, was transformed into an exclusively Muslim holy site associated with al-Buraq—the winged horse that tradition says flew Mohamad to Jerusalem. Furthermore, 38,000 Jewish graves in the ancient Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives were systematically destroyed, and Jews were not allowed to be buried there.

These events were a direct violation of the Israel-Jordan Armistice Agreement in 1949 which stipulates in Article VIII-2 "...free access to the Holy Places and cultural institutions and use of the cemetery on the Mount of Olives..."

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Regardless, when Jordan was in control of the West Bank, which includes part of Jerusalem, they did not respect other religions and destroyed many of the holy sites, including synagogues and churches alike.

Furthermore, other parts of mainland Israel also suffered terribly from having the Jordanians next door. This is because of rapes, murders, and vicious mutilation of bodies on the border. Terrorists were infiltrating into mainland Israel to carry out their crimes with the hope that Israel would leave. Constant, every-

<sup>1</sup> Jerusalem must be the capital of both Israel and Palestine, the Ban says. UN News Centre (28 October 2009).

<sup>2</sup> J. D. Van der Vyver; John Witte (1996). Religious human rights in global perspective: legal perspectives, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, p. 380.

day criminal atrocities were carried out which created incredible suffering for the Israeli people. In 1967, Israel expelled the Jordanians during the Six-Day War.

As soon as Israel unified Jerusalem under Israeli rule in 1967, the City began to flourish, mainly due to the fact that Israel protected the holy sites for all religions,

not just their own. According to the Israeli constitution, people of all religions have the right to follow their beliefs, and their holy sites should be protected by law. The UN should be praising the Jews for how this city has prospered under Israel. However, the UN rejected the unification of Jerusalem with Resolution 2253 in which it condemns Israel's measures

to change the status of Jerusalem and considers it invalid. Moreover, the UN rejects Israel's declaration of the city as its capital. This is why most of the world's embassies are in Tel Aviv—apart from the United States and Guatemala, countries which moved their embassies to Jerusalem in 2018. The rest of the world is listening to the UN.

### Divided Jerusalem 1948-1967

West Jerusalem (blue)  
East Jerusalem (green)  
"No Man's Land" (red)  
Walls of Old City (black outline)

#### Jerusalem History:

- 1947** – UN Partition of the Land – Intended Jerusalem to be an International City
- 1948** – War of Independence – Jordanians take the east part of Jerusalem/Jews have the west side
- 1949** – Israel declares Jerusalem to be its capital
- 1948-1967** – Jordanian systematic destruction of Holy Sites in East Jerusalem
- 1967** – Six-Day War – Israel expels Jordan from Jerusalem and unifies the City
- 1967** – UN Resolution 2253 against the unification of Jerusalem
- 1980** – UN Security Council Resolution 478 rejects the unification again and the fact that Jerusalem is Israel's capital

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Moreover, Palestinians want Jerusalem to be their capital. This move is fully supported by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) consisting of 57 Muslim countries who in 2017 announced East Jerusalem as the State of Palestine's capital and requested "all countries to recognise the State of Palestine and East Jerusalem as its occupied capital". This is an incredible declaration considering Muslims have never considered Jerusalem important enough to make it their capital, and the State of Palestine does not exist. Muslim

countries have tried to remove Israel from the Promised Land since its creation in 1948. Moreover, even though Israel has tried no less than 8 times to come to an agreement with the Palestinians to form their state, they never accepted it, and therefore, never has the Palestinian State existed. This declaration by the Muslim countries regarding East Jerusalem to be the capital of the Palestinian State is nothing short of a delusion.

The UN fully supports the Islamization of Jerusalem and the undermining of

the historical connection of the Jewish people to the City. For example, UNESCO, a branch of the UN, has recently declared that the Temple Mount, where the first and second Jewish Temples stood, has nothing to do with the Jewish people. They have done so by refusing to call it the Temple Mount, and referring to it by Al-Haram al-Sharif (the Muslim name) instead. Moreover, the Palestinians have recently declared that the Western Wall (or Wailing Wall) is not a Jewish holy site, but a Muslim one. This is actually one of the holiest

3 <https://jcpa.org/the-status-of-jerusalem-in-international-and-israeli-law/>

4 Compilation of UNCHR resolutions Archived 2009-09-07 at the Wayback Machine from Eye on the UN

<https://fanack.com/israel/history-past-to-present/the-blind-ally/jerusalem>; <https://jcpa.org/the-status-of-jerusalem-in-international-and-israeli-law/>

5 Moshe Hirsch, Deborah Housen-Couriel, Ruth Lapidoth. Whither Jerusalem?: Proposals and Positions Concerning the future of Jerusalem, 1995.

Jewish sites in the whole world, where Jews come to pray to the God of Israel. There is an attempt by the Palestinians and the world to delegitimize Israel and its hold on Jerusalem by ignoring all historical connection between Israel and Jerusalem.

The UN and the Muslim world are very wrong. The Jewish connection to this city goes back at least 4,000 years to the time of Abraham. He nearly sacrificed his son Isaac on Mount Moriah (Genesis 22:2) which later came to be known as the Temple Mount. Jerusalem is the ancient capital of the Jewish people. It was first mentioned in the Bible when Melchizedek was King of Salem 3,800 years ago whom Abraham met after rescuing Lot (Genesis 14). Later, it became part of the territory of Judah (Judges 1:8). This city passed to the Jebusites (who were Canaanite descendants of the Amorites and Hittites, Joshua 15:63), until King David conquered it 3,000 years ago in the 10th century BC (2 Samuel 5). Since then, Jerusalem has been the capital of the Jewish kingdom. This City has been passed from hand to hand throughout the centuries as different empires have come and gone. However, the Jewish people have never forgotten their “Eternal Capital” where the two Jewish Temples once stood, the centre of their faith.

If we take into account all the periods of time when there was Jewish/Israelite rule—from the moment the Israelites entered the Land in the 12th century BC after the exodus, to the period of the Judges, to the Israelite Period, to the Maccabees, including the State of Israel—we come up with more than 900 years. Jerusalem was the capital for 770 of those years. When we look throughout

history at the different Muslim Empires that controlled Jerusalem, none of them ever made it their capital. The City was not important enough for the Muslim world to even consider it. Moreover, Palestinians never had their own rule and therefore, never made Jerusalem

their capital. Palestinian and UN desire to undermine the historical importance of Jerusalem to the Jewish people is beyond belief! Please see the historical timeline of Jerusalem below. Have the Arab Muslims ever made Jerusalem their capital?

Date	Empire	Capital
2,000 BC	Canaanite Period – Abraham’s period	
1,400 BC	Jebusite Jerusalem (Amorites and Hittites)	
1,200 BC	Judges Period – Joshua conquers Jerusalem and puts it to fire. Later – Jebusites return.	Capital at Shiloh
<b>1,000-586 BC</b>	<b>Israelite Period – 1<sup>st</sup> Temple Built. Time of David begins.</b>	<b>Capital Jerusalem – more than 400 years</b>
586- 538 BC	Babylonian Rule (Iraqis)	Capital Babylon
<b>538 – 332 BC</b>	<b>Persian Rule – Jews have autonomous rule under Persia – 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple is built</b>	<b>Capital Jerusalem – for more than 200 years</b>
332-167 BC	Hellenistic Period (Greeks)	Capital Constantinople
<b>167-63 BC</b>	<b>Maccabean Rule (Jewish Kingdom)</b>	<b>Capital Jerusalem – more than 100 years</b>
63 BC - 324 AD	Roman Rule	Capital Rome
324 – 638 AD	Byzantine Rule (Roman Christians)	Capital Constantinople
<b>638-</b>	<b>Umayyad Dynasty (Saudi Arabia)</b>	<b>Capital Damascus</b>
<b>750-</b>	<b>Abbasid Dynasty (From Iraq)</b>	<b>Capital Baghdad</b>
<b>970-</b>	<b>Fatimids Dynasty (North Africans)</b>	<b>Capital Cairo</b>
<b>1071 - 1099</b>	<b>Shelducks (Turks)</b>	<b>Capital Iznik (Nicaea), later Konya (Iconium)</b>
1099-1291	Crusader Period (Europeans/Christians)	Capital Jerusalem and later Acco
<b>1291-1917</b>	<b>Second Arab Muslim Period</b>	
<b>1291-1516</b>	<b>Mameluke Period (Arab Muslims from Egypt)</b>	<b>Capital Cairo</b>
<b>1517-1917</b>	<b>Ottoman Period (Arab Muslims from Turkey)</b>	<b>Capital Istanbul (previously known as Constantinople)</b>
1917-1947	British Mandate	Capital London
<b>1948-present</b>	<b>State of Israel – Jewish</b>	<b>Capital Jerusalem – more than 70 years</b>
	<b>Jerusalem – Jewish/Israelite Capital for more than 770 years</b>	<b>Never was Jerusalem an Arab Muslim Capital</b>

6 See Did UNESCO Deny that the Temple Mt had Jewish Temples? At <https://www.livecience.com>

7 See Palestinian Authority tells Palestinians: The Western Wall belongs only to Muslims at <https://m.jpost.com>

8 Address by PM Netanyahu at the Opening Ceremony of the 19th Maccabiah Games at <https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/speechmaccab180713>

*The worldwide controversy over it between the nations and Israel will lead to the coming of Christ. The UN and Palestinian opposition to the Jewish control of Jerusalem will cause all the nations of the world to come and attack it. And Yeshua will come to defend it as it says in Zecharia.*



will be in the hands of the Jews in the end times (Revelation 11). Therefore, what is happening now is in line with the will of God. Jerusalem is the most important city on the face of the earth. It is mentioned in Scripture more than 800 times, more than any other city around the globe. The worldwide controversy over it between the nations and Israel will lead to the coming of Christ. The UN and Palestinian opposition to the Jewish control of Jerusalem will cause all the nations of the world to come and attack it. And Yeshua will come to defend it as it says in Zechariah 14:2-5:

“For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken ... Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. On that day, his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; ... Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him” (NRSV).

This scripture demonstrates that when the nations of the world come to attack the city, the time will be very near to the return of Christ. We do not know the hour of the day that it will happen, but we will have the signs. In my opinion, this will be the beginning of Yeshua’s 1,000-year reign when he comes with all the saints.

Biblically speaking, God planned for Jerusalem to be the Holy City belonging to the Jewish people as part of the inheritance given to Israel. This was decided long before Palestinian Muslims even existed. The New Testament, even though it was written two thousand years ago, predicts that Jerusalem

*This article contains excerpts from the author’s book, “Contested Ownership of Israel”.*

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Sonia Waters, MA PGCE LITG, is an Israeli citizen, a messianic Jewess, an historian who graduated from Cambridge University in England, a professional teacher, an international speaker, and a tour guide in Israel. She has a desire to see the truth about Israel spread around the world and all deceit from the enemy to be destroyed. Her message to Christians all over the world is that the return of Christ goes hand-in-hand with the homecoming of the Jews to the Promised Land. It is God’s inheritance to them, and these are indeed the “Latter Years”. You must see “the truth and the truth will set you free.” Sonia has a self-titled YouTube channel and a Facebook group called “The Bible and Israel”.

# The LORD our Righteousness

By Hannah Kovner



## ***Introduction***

Jerusalem, who has not heard of it? Even in the far away Alaska, the Amazon jungles, or islands of the South Pacific, the name of Jerusalem is well known. What is so special about it?

Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities of the world. Its first people came and settled on a narrow hill near Gihon

spring sometime in the early Bronze era. The city is first mentioned in Egyptian execration texts as Rusalimum in the second millennium BC. Its name, pronounced as Salem, Shalem, or Shalom, can mean peace or completion, and it was also the name of an ancient Canaanite deity of dusk. Sometime around 1700 BC, around Abraham's time, major fortifications were built in Jerusalem to protect its water supplies.

A spring fortress and a city wall made out of massive rocks were discovered in 1993. Another evidence from the past is found in the Amarna letters where the ruler of Urusalim named Abdi Hepa sent six letters to the Egyptian Pharaoh Amenhotep III complaining about local attacks and asking for reinforcement from Egypt.

The geographic location of Jerusalem is

# *Jerusalem has a special relationship with righteousness, but it is not her own character, rather it is He who fills His city with the righteous character.*

also incredibly important as it is situated in the center of historical Canaan – a bridge of the ancient world. It is built on top of the mountain ridge, at an important historical crossroad between the local road (from Negev and Hebron towards Shechem and northwards) and the east-west route which linked two of major international roads: the Kings Highway (Num. 20:17) and Way of the Sea (Isa. 9:1). Overlooking surroundings from a height of 800 m (2400 ft), Jerusalem enabled its rulers to control the lower areas to the east and to the west.

Much can be said and written about this great city, the spiritual capital of the world. But what caught my attention was two nearly identical passages from the book of Jeremiah, in chapters 23 and 33.

“In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David a Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In those days Judah will be saved, and

Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” (Jeremiah 33:15-16 NKJV)

“Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” (Jeremiah 23:5-6 NKJV)

It is common to find similar texts and prophesies in the Bible, but in spite of the similarity, there is a major difference in these passages. While in one text, the city of Jerusalem is called “The righteousness of God,” yet in the other, the same title is given to Messiah. In this article, I would like to look at the connection between Jerusalem and the character of righteousness (justice) and the Messiah’s role in its fulfillment.

## ***Tsedek (š-d-q)***

The Hebrew word *Tsedek* or *Tsedaka* can be translated with a variety of words: righteousness, justice, justification, integrity, charity and more. The word *Tsadik*, which derives from the same root, means the righteous-one. According to the Anchor Bible dictionary, “the meaning of the words that derive from the root šdq (*tsedek*) cannot be determined a priori. There is no basic š-d-q notion that must always be present with the three radicals š-d-q. The OT texts must not be read through the eyes of the Reformation controversies...and theological associations which must be laid aside when dealing with the Hebrew terms *tsedeq*, *tsedaqa*.”

The root šdq is common to many Semitic languages and is used in Akkadian, Amorite, Old Arabic, Ugaritic and others, always within the range of meanings like right, true, legitimate, just, proper, fulfilled obligation, and even loyal. Words derived from this root occur in the OT 523 times (*tsedek* 119, *tsedaka* 157) and 79 times in the Delitzsch NT translation under a broad variety of circumstances and meanings. While some scholars chose to distinguish between *tsedek* and *tsedaka*, referring to one as an action toward the right order and the other as connected to the will of God (Schmid and Jepsen), others do not see it possible to make such a distinction. “I would like to point out that it is not always advisable to draw theological conclusions on the basis of a particular word, differentiating between *tsedeq* and *tsedaqa* both basically meaning ‘justice’. They can have different connotations but there are texts (e.g., Ps. 72:3) where choice has been dictated by poetic convention” (Watson, 1980).

One of the famous passages about *tsedek* (translated as “justice” in this context) speaks of it as a condition of our presence in the land. “Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the LORD your God is giving you” (Deut. 16:20, ESV). These words are written at the entrance of Israeli Supreme Court in Jerusalem with the hope that the human representatives of our justice system can follow the high road of this almost impossible calling. Theologians and scholars were intrigued with the repetition of the word *tsedek* twice in the same sentence. When the Bible repeats the same word twice, it is done as a tool of amplification to emphasize the importance of this particular word or phrase or the continuity of the process. According to Nachmanides, there is more in this repetition than meets the eye, for if the first “justice” is the earthly one

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which enables us to possess the land of Israel our physical inheritance, then the repetition of the word *tzedek* (meaning righteousness or justice) applies to the Glory of God, his great light, and His presence. “In your courts you shall pursue justice, look for justice now, so that you will receive it in the world to come. And the second justice is the eternal justice (eternal righteousness) -- the Great Light preserved for the future of the righteous, it is the Glory of God. And you possess the land through the first justice, which is the Land of Israel”. (Nachmanides on Deuteronomy 16:20 – translation mine, HK)

***Righteousness Used to Dwell in Her***

The promised land and its capital, Jerusalem, have a special relationship with righteousness, but it is not her own character, rather it is He who fills His city with the righteous character, “The LORD is exalted, for He dwells on

high; He has filled Zion with justice and righteousness.” (Isa. 33:5 NKJV)

Zion (*tzion*) is another name for Jerusalem. For the first time, it is mentioned in the Bible as a name of a fortress that David built after conquering the Jebusite controlled Jerusalem. When his son Solomon constructed the Holy Temple on Mount Moriah, the mountain identified as Zion “moved” from the lower eastern hill which is the earliest populated site of the city, to the much higher Temple Mount and to the city of Jerusalem as a whole. It is in Zion that the gates of righteousness should be opened for God’s glory.

Speaking of God’s anger against the city, Isaiah says, “See how the faithful city has become a prostitute! She once was full of justice; righteousness used to dwell in her-- but now murderers!” (Isa. 1:21 NIV). If righteousness can dwell somewhere, it means that it can be in one place and not in another. When righteousness stopped dwelling in Jerusalem, the city became unfaithful and brought God’s wrath upon itself. If there is no justice and no righteousness in the city, it has no right to exist. According to Jeremiah (3:11), even unfaithful Israel whose people were taken into Assyrian Exile a century earlier was more righteous than Judea and Jerusalem. When king Zedekiah inquired of the fate of Jerusalem, Jeremiah answered that God’s wrath will not pass, and there will be no mercy to the unfaithful city. Since the royal house broke its covenant with

God by forsaking justice and committing evil, Jerusalem would be destroyed, and its people sent into Babylonian Exile.

From these texts, we learn that righteousness belongs to the Lord, and He is filling Jerusalem with it. When we choose to abandon it, we lose our peace, our stability, and even our right to exist. Lack of righteousness is followed by destruction, but it is not forever. After punishment will come restoration – both physical and spiritual. “And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city” (Isa. 1:26 ESV).

***Behold, a King will Reign in Righteousness***

For the first time, Jerusalem appears in the Bible in Genesis 14 by the name Salem. After saving his nephew Lot, Abraham meets Melchizedek, a king of Salem. The name Melchizedek means “my king – righteousness,” a very unique name given to the priest of the Most High God. Abraham gave him a tenth of his possessions, and Melchizedek blessed Abraham by the “God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth.”

A later king of Jerusalem, Adonizedek (my lord is righteousness or the Lord of Righteousness), will be leading the coalition of five Canaanite rulers into

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*The king of Jerusalem must be a righteous and just ruler, one who is merciful to his people and cares about God and His will. Was it always the case? Not at all!*

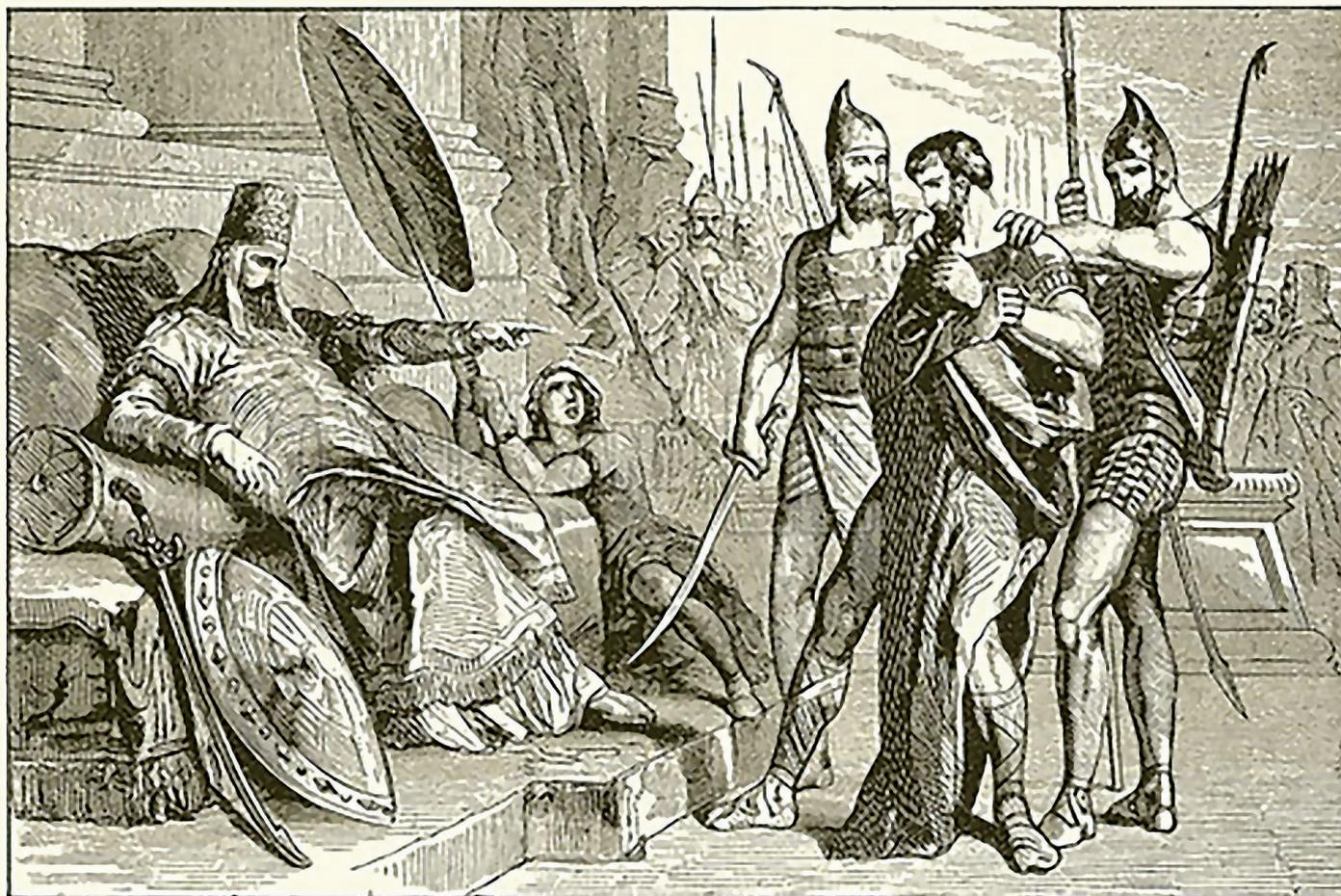
battle against Joshua in chapter 10 of the book. Both names, Adonizedek and Melchizedek, are rare and only found in the Bible in connection to ancient kings of Jerusalem. It seems like it was a unique custom for Jerusalem kings to attribute to themselves special relations with righteousness and justice. The last independent king of Jerusalem before Babylonian destruction of the city in 586

BC was called Zedekiah, which means the righteousness of God.

“Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice,” says the prophet Isaiah (32:1 ESV). The king of Jerusalem must be a righteous and just ruler, one who is merciful to his people and cares about God and His will. Was it always

the case? Not at all! If Melchizedek was sincerely serving God, we cannot say the same about the latter king of Jerusalem, Adonizedek. The result of his unrighteous war against Israel was complete devastation and defeat of the Canaanite armies in battle. God Himself fought on the side of Joshua bombarding Adonizedek’s army with huge hailstones. For the first time in history, the cosmic order was changed by the Creator when sun stood still over Gibeon and the moon over Ayalon.

The last king of Jerusalem, Zedekiah, was not particularly righteous either, and his fate, as well as the fate of Jerusalem under his rule, was tragic. Jerusalem was destroyed, the Temple and palaces



THE BLIND ZEDEKIAH, LAST KING OF JUDAH, BEFORE NEBUCHADNEZZAR OF BABYLON

***We all know that in the days of Jesus, high priests in Jerusalem were anything but righteous. They were more than willing to sacrifice God’s truth for their position and wealth.***

were burned with fire, and the people were exiled to Babylon. Zedekiah was caught by Babylonians and blinded after witnessing the execution of his sons. According to ancient legend, he lived his last days in a large cave that is still seen at the northern side of the Old city of Jerusalem. To this day, it is called Zedekiah’s cave.

***Let Your Priests be Clothed with Righteousness*** (Ps. 132:9 NKJV)

The focal point of Jerusalem was and still is Mount Moriah – the Temple Mount. It was a dwelling place of God, where his presence—Shechinah—was visible to all. Here, absolute righteousness must be present. “By Your favor, do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, in burnt offering...on Your altar” (Ps. 51:19 NASB). Aaron and his descendants were chosen by God to become his inheritance, to represent people before the Almighty God, and be his representatives among Israel. They were separated from the rest of the people and had to abide by the strict rules of purity, integrity, and righteousness.

In addition to performing religious ceremonies, priests in the Bible also carried the responsibility of being judges, priests inquire of God who passed his judgment to the people. Difficult cases should be decided not only by the right person but also in the place of God’s choosing. “If a matter arises which

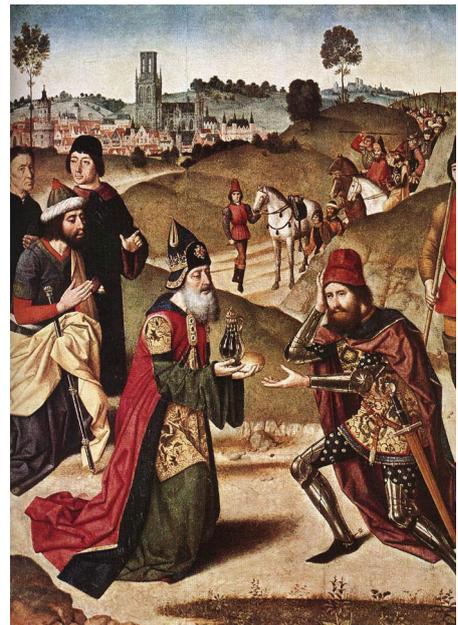
is too hard for you to judge, between degrees of guilt for bloodshed, between one judgment or another, or between one punishment or another, matters of controversy within your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the Lord your God chooses. And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge there in those days, and inquire of them; they shall pronounce upon you the sentence of judgment. You shall do according to the sentence which they pronounce upon you in that place which the Lord chooses. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they order you” (Deut. 17:8-10 NKJV).

In the Second Temple Period, the Sanhedrin – the Supreme Jewish Court— was only allowed to judge difficult cases resulting in capital punishment in their formal courthouse, a Chamber of Hewn Stone called “Lishkat haGazit,” in the Temple. All 71 members of the Sanhedrin had to agree to a capital punishment for the accused. Only there under the cover of God’s presence and His righteousness could such a decision be made. We all know that in the days of Jesus, high priests in Jerusalem were anything but righteous. They were more than willing to sacrifice God’s truth for their position and wealth. Since Jesus’ illegal trial happened secretly at night in the private home of Joseph Caiaphas, they were not allowed to pass capital punishment, and Jesus’ fate would pass into the hands of the oppressive Roman regime. Unrighteous priests would cause Jerusalem to suffer yet again. Only one generation after the crucifixion, the city

was destroyed, and not a stone was left on another stone of all the incredible Herodian buildings. A city without righteousness does not have a right to exist.

***You are a Priest Forever, in the Order of Melchizedek***

Melchizedek was not only the king of Jerusalem, but he was also a priest of the Most High God. Psalm 110 and the later



Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek – by Dieric Bouts the Elder

book of Hebrews call Messiah “a priest according to the order of Melchizedek” who is to rule in Zion.

“The Lord says to my lord: ‘Sit at my

right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’ The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion, saying, ‘Rule in the midst of your enemies!’... The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek’” (Ps. 110:1-4 NIV). The book of Hebrews (7:26-27 NIV) continues, saying, “Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.” The book of Hebrews tells us that whereas human priests from the order of Aaron were unable to reach perfection and had to repeat sacrifices over and over again, first for their own sins, then for the sins of the people, the eternal priest is to serve in God’s sanctuary as the priest and king of righteousness.

***Only one generation after the crucifixion, the city was destroyed, and not a stone was left on another stone of all the incredible Herodian buildings.***

And He Believed the LORD and He Counted it to Him as Righteousness (Gen. 15:6 ESV)

Abraham is known as the father of faith and righteousness. He achieved it by trusting and believing in God’s promise even when it seemed impossible. This great faith that made Abraham a father of all believers was tested once again on Mount Moriah when God asked Abraham to sacrifice everything – his son, his faith, and his future. It was his faith in God’s promise of Isaac’s birth that was counted to Abraham as righteousness, and now this faith stood before an impossible request. On the way to the place chosen by God, Isaac asked his father, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” And Abraham said, ‘My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.’ So the two of them went together. Then they came to the place of which God had told him” (Gen. 22:7-9 NKJV).

Abraham believed that nothing is impossible for God; his actions on the mountain in the land of Moriah showed great faith. Writing to the first church, the brother of Jesus, Jacob who is known to English readers as James, says, “Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,’ and he was called God’s friend” (James 2:21-23 NIV).

Mount Moriah is mentioned in the Bible one more time during the construction of the Holy Temple. “Then Solomon began to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father

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David” (2 Chr. 3:1 NIV). God’s most important promises connect us to Mount Moriah in Jerusalem as a focal point of divine righteousness. On Mount Moriah, Abraham’s faith and righteousness were fulfilled through his actions.

### ***To Fulfill All Righteousness***

When Jesus came to get baptized in the Jordan river, John was hesitant saying, “I need to be baptized by you and do you come to me?” Jesus replied, ‘Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then John consented” (Mt. 3:14-15 NIV). Seeing Jesus for the first time, John called him “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29 NIV). He is the Lamb chosen by God to replace Isaac,



in accordance to the prophetic words of Abraham, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.”

Jesus is baptized in Jordan river, to fulfill all righteousness and to take away the sin

of the world, so the way to God will be open to many.

According to Paul, baptism symbolizes death and resurrection to a new life. “Or

don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (Rom. 6:3-4 NIV). Jesus fulfilled all righteousness, God’s righteousness, when he became an ultimate sacrifice for the sins and transgressions of humanity. He was the lamb of God who was to be sacrificed in Jerusalem to fulfill all righteousness. “When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem” (Lk. 9:51 ESV) to fulfill everything that the

***In the days to come, Jerusalem will be the seat of the eternal King—the seat of the Lamb and the place of justice, prosperity, and peace.***

# *The city and Messiah are one and cannot be separated. Through Jesus, the ultimate Lamb of God, the righteous order of the universe is to be restored, starting from Jerusalem, and extending to the four corners of the world.*

prophets had written about the Son of Man (Lk. 18:31).

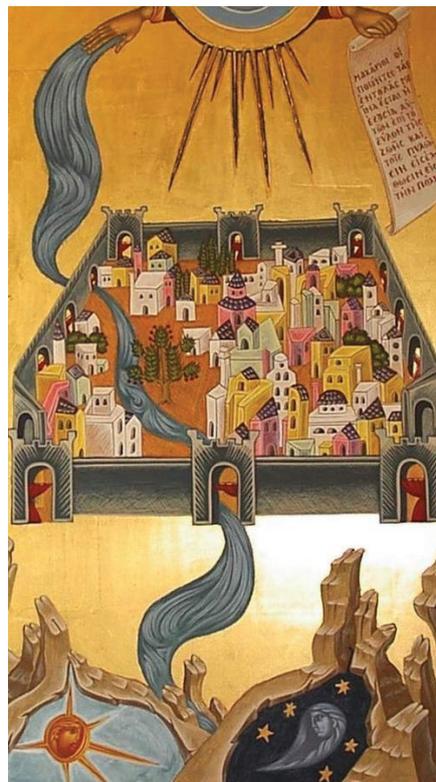
It was absolutely essential that the crucifixion, the ascension to heaven, and Jesus' glorious future return take place in Jerusalem in the land of Moriah. It had to be in the same place, where almost two millennia earlier, the father of all believers was willing to not spare his only beloved son.

## ***Until Her Righteousness Shines Like a Bright Light***

Through his sacrifice, Messiah defeated sin and death and is to restore the right order of the universe. In the days to come, Jerusalem will be the seat of the eternal King—the seat of the Lamb and the place of justice, prosperity, and peace. “Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads” (Rev. 14:1 ESV). This time the King will not come as a suffering servant who takes upon himself our transgressions and sins, and not as a sacrificial Lamb of God, but as a mighty ruler who will

subdue his enemies under his feet. Messiah will come back to Jerusalem in might, power, and glory to restore the righteousness of God.

When Jeremiah gives us two almost



The New Jerusalem (by Athina Alexopoulou Pappa)

identical prophecies calling both Messiah and Jerusalem by the same name, “The Lord our Righteousness,” he is revealing to us one of the greatest mysteries hidden between the old stones of this Eternal City: that only through God’s Righteous Son the righteousness of Jerusalem can be fulfilled. The city and Messiah are one and cannot be separated. Through Jesus, the ultimate Lamb of God, the righteous order of the universe is to be restored, starting from Jerusalem, and extending to the four corners of the world.

Earthly Jerusalem is here and now holding within itself past and future. It is filled with everyday struggles and challenges, annoying to some and loved by many. It is so familiar and so unique, my beloved home and a shadow of the great things to come. It is waiting and longing for the day about which Isaiah prophesied, “For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not keep still, until her righteousness shines like a bright light, her salvation like a blazing torch. Nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow” (Isa. 62:1-2 BSB).

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Hannah Kovner is an Israeli tour-guide, who specializes in teaching and guiding Messianic and Christian visitors to the Holy Land. Before switching to full-time guiding, Hannah worked at Netivyah for many years and had a chance to learn and research the Bible and the Jewish Roots of the New Testament. She has an extensive knowledge of the Land of Israel, its history, and the Bible which she is able to present in its original cultural and spiritual perspective. Hannah was born and raised in Moscow, Russia and moved to Israel after finishing her degree in communications. Hannah lives in Jerusalem and feels deeply connected and in love with this Eternal City.

There's a lot more to Netivyah than meets the eye; the Teaching From Zion magazine is only one of our outreach and humanitarian ministries. We invite you to connect with the other branches of our ministry.

### **Publications**

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### **Congregation**

Roeh Israel, "Shepherd of Israel," is a Messianic Jewish Congregation in Jerusalem. The Congregation is made up of followers of Yeshua, both Jews and non-Jews, who worship together in a traditional synagogue environment.



### **Humanitarian Aid**

There are many families in Israel, even entire sections of the population, who fall between the cracks. Hamotzi Food Distribution Center is a place that literally brings forth food for local needy families in Jerusalem. Without charities and organizations like Netivyah, they would not be able to put food on the table.



### **Video Teachings**

The world is watching videos online, so we are producing high quality teaching videos in English and Hebrew and publishing them on the internet to continue to present the Good News to the world in its original Jewish and Hebrew culture.

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