

Jerusalem, The Most Important City in the World!

by
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After years of Middle East "peace talks," attention has turned to the central issue -- Jerusalem. This city has no harbors, no rivers, no natural resources and no trade routes. Why are the eyes of the world focused on a city of almost 700,000 inhabitants situated on the crest of a ridge in the heart of the Judean mountains?

It is the capital of Israel. The Parliament or Knesset, the governing body and officials of the nation, are located there. However, CNN's weather news refused to list it as Jerusalem, Israel, listing it only as Jerusalem because of Palestinian claims to part of the city. It is the spiritual and religious, as well as the political capital for the Jews, and since it is 2,600 feet above sea level, Hebrew speakers "ascend or go up to Jerusalem" literally and emotionally.

I believe we are beginning to see the fulfillment of Zechariah's end time prophesy. Chapter 12:2-3 declares, "Lo, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of reeling to all peoples round about. ... On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it shall grievously hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will come together against it."

The immediate stand-off is between Jewish Israel and Muslim Palestinians. Both claim "rights" to the land. However, Jerusalem or Zion is mentioned 881 times in the Bible -- over 600 times in the Old Testament -- and 0 times in the Koran.

Let's look at its history. It is first mentioned in Genesis 14:18 and called Salem -- city of peace. Melchizedek, king of Salem, was a priest of God Most High who blessed Abraham.

In Genesis 22:2, God said to Abraham, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." Abraham obeyed and God provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac. Just as the ram's blood was shed, God's beloved Son's Blood was shed on the same Moriah mountain called Calvary. Jesus, God's Lamb, was our substitute.

In 1 Chronicles 11:4-5, David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, called Jebus, and took the fortress of Zion, and it was called the city of David.

When David sinned by holding a census as recorded in 1 Chronicles 21, God told him to build an altar on the threshing floor belonging to Ornan the Jebusite in order to stop the pestilence that had fallen on Israel. In verses 22 - 26, David purchased the threshing site for the full price of 600 shekels of gold. That "deed" is still in effect!

A threshing floor was always on a high flat bedrock where oxen could trample the wheat kernels from the straw and the wind would blow away the chaff.

Consider that David's great grandparents, Boaz and Ruth, made a covenant of marriage on a threshing floor near Bethlehem.

Now we come to 2 Chronicles 3:1. "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite." This sacred "mount" held both Solomon's temple and the second temple where Jesus worshiped and taught. Today it is called "the Temple Mount."

God said, "I have chosen Jerusalem that My name may be there..." II Chronicles 6:6

The Jews were never to forget Jerusalem (Psalm 137:5-6). Three times daily for thousands of years Jews all over the world have prayed, "To Jerusalem, Thy city, shall we return with joy." After each Passover Seder the closing shout is, "Next year in Jerusalem!"

Today the Muslims have jurisdiction over the "Temple Mount" because their mosque, El-Aqsa, and the Dome of the Rock stand there. The Dome of the Rock is a "shrine" covering the bedrock which the Muslims say is the place to which Mohammed, who had died in Mecca, was flown on his white horse. He then ascended into heaven from this place, the horse leaving a hoof mark on the rock. The Muslims also claim that Ishmael, not Isaac, was offered by Abraham as a sacrifice from Mount Moriah.

The closest the Jews can go to their Temple Mount is the Western Wall. This is actually what remains of the western retaining wall built by Herod to increase the size of the Temple Mount.

Whose capital is Jerusalem? Whose holy site is it? Most of the Christian sites -- Garden of Gethsemane, Calvary, Mountain of Ascension on Mount of Olives -- are in east Jerusalem, the section the Palestinians claim as their capital.

The bottom line is the existence of the nation of Israel, a country the Muslims won't put on their maps and a word Muslims won't say. Why? Because it is God's Land given to the Jews who brought the world the Holy Scriptures and the Savior -- Jesus, the Jewish Messiah.

The issue won't be settled until the day of the Lord comes. Zechariah 14:1-11 says that all the nations will be against Jerusalem. Then the Lord will go forth and fight. He will set His feet on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem and living waters will flow out from the city. The Lord will be king over all the earth and Jerusalem shall dwell in security!

An interesting footnote -- at the concluding dialogue at Camp David Arafat: "Our mosques stand on the mount." Barak: "Yes, and under them our Holy Temple."