

Jerusalem

by Wayne Dailey,
Founding Pastor, Bethel Revival Center

We think of the Jews as being God's people; as the fulfillment of the great promise given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Where are they today? What happened to them, and why? Did you ever wonder why the Jews are scattered around the world, with only some in Israel?

This Scripture gives you a time frame when this happened:

Luke 21:20-24

And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled

The Children of God

Jesus did not leave us in ignorance. We could be ignorant if we didn't have the Bible. We wouldn't know why this or that happened.

Now, the Jewish people were a people cast upon the Lord, the Lord's people. They were always called the people of God, whether they were up or whether they were down. God would chasten them sore when they did wrong; but He never threw them out. He never abandoned them.

We see a lot of things happening to the Jews as we look over their history. They faced the chastening rod many times because they didn't do right. In his love, God chastened them.

And if you are a child of God, He will chasten you as a loving Father when you're wrong. Never get mad at God for chastening you. If God is chastening you, He is straightening something out in your life. When He gets done, you'll know why He chastened you.

There will be a day when the prophecies in the Scriptures will be fulfilled. The Lord often spoke prophetically of things that would come, of things that had to yet be fulfilled.

Luke 21:20

And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

When you see Jerusalem surrounded with armies—now that's prophetic. Jerusalem is a walled city, a fortified city. It has big, thick stone walls all around it. Those walls were built to protect the city as a refuge. At night if you didn't get into the city you didn't know what might befall you. They farmed out in the fields, but lived in the city.

Jesus said that you would know something when you saw Jerusalem compassed about with armies—you would know that its desolation is near. He was telling them that the day would come when they would see the armies gathering around Jerusalem: its destruction was coming.

Luke 21:21

Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

He's warning about these things, telling them what to do when they begin to happen. They'd best flee from the city and go way up into the mountains for safety. He's warning them in advance.

Luke 21:22

For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

The armies around about the city would take place in the days of vengeance. This would not be the vengeance of the last days, but the vengeance that would come upon Israel because of their rejection of Jesus. If you're familiar with your Bible you know that the Jews as a nation did not receive Christ. They utterly rejected Him, demanding His crucifixion.

Now, not all the Jewish people rejected Him: but their leadership did. And in the first chapter of John, we find there were Jews who received Christ.

John 1:1-12

He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name

Now, back in Luke we read of the days of vengeance of which they were warned to flee.

Luke 21:23

But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

"This people" refers to Israel. What Jesus said would happen did happen. God had given them plenty of time to repent and turn to receive Jesus Christ. Now, we don't want to think that there were not some people who repented and got saved. There were many Jews who received Christ while He was here upon this earth, or from the day of Pentecost on. A great company of priests believed in Him; and many other Jews turned to believe in the Lord. Let's be mindful that believers we read about in the Bible are mostly Jews. Paul was a Pharisee—and how much we depend upon his writings. King David was a wonderful man who loved the Lord; we certainly talk a lot about him.

Those of us who love Christ have a tie with Paul and with King David. We are tied to the Jewish people through Christ. Remember that the virgin Mary was a wonderful Jewish young woman. She was pure and perfect before God. Yes, we Christians are tied to the Jews. We pick up their Bible every time we open the Old Testament. These Scriptures are as sacred to us as they are to them.

We want to look at the Jewish people in light of where they were and where they stand today. The Lord foretold that the city of Jerusalem would be facing a great desolation: when armies would be gathered around the city to starve the people out. They wouldn't let anyone in or out. So the Jews could either face death, or face the enemy.

These prophetic words of Jesus came to pass when the army of Roman General Titus came to Jerusalem in 70 AD. The Romans were lords over all the nations of the world. The Caesars were world rulers. Everyone was under their dominion. While Jesus was here on this earth Rome ruled the world. Who was Pilate? He wasn't a Jew. He was governor over Judea, put in his office by the Romans.

This wasn't a good time for Israel. They resented the lordship of Rome. The centurions of that day were Roman captains.

Now, General Titus and his army came to destroy this place. That was the day when the Jews did see Jerusalem compassed about with an army. The desolation was nigh at hand that day. This was the time to flee that the Lord had spoken of. Not many fled to the mountains to protect themselves as the Lord had instructed them. They were to understand that these were days of vengeance.

Vengeance is when something is brought back upon you for what you have done. Say someone is killed who has three brothers. If the three brothers say they will not rest in peace until their brother's murderer is dead, they're taking vengeance.

Jesus said that these would be days of vengeance, that all things that were written might be fulfilled.

There would be a hard time like this:

Luke 21:23

But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

"This people" refers to the Jews. They had offended God greatly. He carried those people for generations. They were His people. He classified Himself as being one with them.

What about judgment and wrath, then? There would be a lot of stress in the land. From the time of Titus on, all there's been in Israel is stress. If you think it would be a picnic to go live in the land of Israel now, think again. It's a troublesome place.

Luke 21:24

And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

I asked you where the Jews were today: they're still scattered among the nations. General Titus didn't want the Jews—they dispersed amongst all the nations. They didn't have a homeland then; and they don't have all of it now. They were cast out into the world to find a place to live.

Today there are many Jews who have returned to the small nation of Israel. It's a sovereign nation once more. It's their homeland.

Their being led into captivity in all nations was God's doing. It's not General Titus that brought that about. It was the judgment of God upon them. He used Titus to accomplish this.

Now, there were many other people who hurt the Jews greatly. They had many enemies. And those enemies will one day wish they had never turned on the Jews. They'll be called into question for what they did. And they will find themselves in the same situation. God will scatter them all over the world.

But right now we are looking at the Jews and how they were dispersed amongst the nations, at how they're still scattered to this day. This should cause us to be concerned. Why? Read Paul's writings and trace where he went. The first place he went to preach Christ was in the synagogues. And many Jews turned to the Lord as the result of his ministry.

You know, the Jewish people have always been a prosperous people. They've been hated over the years because of their ability to prosper. In World War II, the Germans and several other nations hated them. They took vengeance on them and slaughtered millions of them. It wasn't an easy time for the Jews in the nations. But a remnant made it through that time alive.

Isaiah 56:6,7

Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

Jerusalem is called the holy city. It was certainly a centerpiece to Israel: to their religion and to their ways. Life revolved around the temple. Their life was a spiritual life. They lived to please God. There's no place in the earth like Jerusalem. It is the only place that God ever permitted His name to abide. It will be called the house of God—the house of prayer for all people.

But here we find out that the Jews would be carried away captive, trodden down by the Gentiles. They would overlord and control the city. It would then become under Gentile domination and control.

We wonder why some things are the way they are today. One great point of contention since the Jews have begun to return to their home land is the city of Jerusalem. The mosque of Omar is there on the temple site, where Israel might want to dig down to the old foundation and rebuild the temple.

Understand what that would require. All the Muslims in the world would be up in arms if the Jews tried to tear down the mosque. It's Israel's capital now, and it was their capital place back before the dispersion. But now the Muslims have roots there, as well as the Christians.

Now, the Scripture say that Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles, *until* (that word is used prophetically). There's a time frame here. What is this time frame? ". . . until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

We are living in the times of the Gentiles. We who are not Jews are Gentiles. And those who have received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour (both Jew and Gentile) are the children of God, along with the Jews.

How did we get into this?

Adopted in

Romans 11:16-24

For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

The Jews were broken off, and we Gentiles were grafted in. We were grafted into a good root, into a good foundation so the tree could grow and flourish. We are not to be high minded. We are only grafted in. If God broke the Jews off because of their unbelief, don't think that He couldn't break you off, too. Don't be high minded, just be thankful that God grafted us in. But that doesn't make us Jews. And if a Jew receives Jesus Christ as Saviour, they are still a Jew: a Jew who has received their Messiah as Lord and Saviour.

"Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." That ought to perk your ears up! There's a certain length of time! If you read the book of Daniel carefully, you'd soon gain understanding of this.

The Past and the Future

We've got to go back historically to the great Babylonian captivity. That was a time in Jewish history when they offended God by not following Him as they should follow Him. They were dispersed abroad in Babylon for seventy years. They lost leadership of their country. And from that time forward, they have always been dominated in one form or another. They never got back their own country. The Romans ruled over them for a long time. But one day the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled.

Let's not be hard on the Jews. They're human beings just like we are, sinners in need of a Saviour. They rejected God's Son whom He sent to be their Saviour. They persecuted Him and demanded His crucifixion in the face of Pilate, who seemingly would have let Him go. He said he could find no fault in Jesus that was worthy of death.

The times of the Gentiles started then: Gentile world dominion. Israel lost her sovereignty even when she lived there.

Gentile dominion started way back at the time of the Babylonian captivity. The Jews lost control, and from then on did not have a king.

Now, we have seen where the Scriptures say they would be in this realm—"Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." And we're approaching that hour. It's coming much faster than we'd like it to.

What country do the Gentiles not control? Within the borders of Israel is a little piece of land that never stretches out for them. It's a piece of land that's about the size of Rhode Island, the smallest state in the union. The Jews have taken this area of land that didn't look like much, and have turned it into a land like the Garden of Eden. They irrigated and farmed the land and turned it into a productive little country. It's a powerful little country. Our nation of America aided them in this with millions and millions of dollars. God used us to aid the restoration of Israel if he's ever used us for anything.

So we've got to think about the Jewish people, and their long period of being dispersed amongst the nations.

God's promises to Israel are clear. God would gather them from the nations wherein He scattered them. He will bring all of the Jews back to Israel. That day is coming. Everybody will want to live in Israel in the day when the Lord comes back to set up His kingdom in Mount Zion; when he will rule gloriously over the whole world from Jerusalem.

Now, the Jews offended God before they were exiled to Babylon. Jeremiah tried so hard to show them the error of their ways and turn them around, but they wouldn't listen. God warned Israel in the Law of Moses that he would cause them to be dispersed if they did this very thing. He would scatter them out amongst the nations.

This happened in 70 AD. They were in Babylon for seventy years before the restoration. We can read of this in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. A remnant came back to Jerusalem in that day, but many of them never came back. Those who did come back worked and labored to rebuild the walls of the city and the temple. Even though they came back to rebuild, they were never free.

The UN made this little place the nation of Israel in 1948. Were you around in 1948? My wife and I were married in 1949.

Now, even though Israel is once again a nation, the Jews are still dispersed amongst the nations. However, in the book of Isaiah, God speaks of their nation being born in a day.

The little nation we call Israel today was born in one day back in 1948. President Truman was one of the greatest friends Israel has had. Because of his strong stance following World War II, the UN finally made a decree that gave Israel this land they now possess. Nobody overlords them there. They are their own nation, not somebody else's.

Our nation has always been friendly to Israel. Without us they would really be in trouble. I'm glad our nation has stood behind Israel.

Now, God allowed this nation to come into being in 1948. This is a sign we have that Jesus told us would take place. It's the greatest sign of the times that we have. The Scriptures say that Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles—"Until the time of the Gentiles would be fulfilled."

We've looked back. It's nice when you're old enough to have actually heard or seen some of these things take place. We can look back at the wars which Israel has fought since it became a nation. The Arabs have tried so hard to overthrow them. There's such bitterness between most Jews and Arabs. It's there all the time. There are attempts to have a little country for the Palestinians in Israel, too. After all, they did live in the land before 1948. The UN made provision for them to have a homeland, but they didn't want it. They didn't take it then, and have been fighting for it ever since.

Israel took advantage of this, turning a place that had been like the dessert into a fruitful land.

Going further back in time, we see the borders of Israel that God gave to Abraham. All of that land is still Israel's land. God gave it to them, and nobody can actually take it from them. Though they may have been thrown out of the land and dispersed amongst the nations, the God-given borders are still their land.

The day is not too far away when the Lord will gather Jews from all over the world and bring them back home. But beforehand, there's going to be a time of trouble that exceeds the imagination.

So the Lord is saying that Israel would be trodden down until the time of the Gentiles was fulfilled. If you want to understand what that means, it means this: look up! For those of us who are Gentiles, our time is about fulfilled. The time of Gentile world domination is about to come to an end.

We've got to go by those things which we see. "Jerusalem would be trodden down of the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled." If you read those words of Jesus with understanding, you would say that there is an end coming here. The end of world domination is coming.

Gentiles rule the world. Gentiles control the nations. The only nation in the world today that the Gentiles don't control is the nation of Israel.

How is God going to have a kingdom over the entire world? A lot has to give way for that to take place.

I enjoy reading Bible prophecy concerning these things. I've had days of revelations from God of many things pertaining to this time.

What if you were one of the Jews who were very religious, but didn't know Jesus Christ? This is a troublesome thing. There they are, trying to hold on to God as their father, but they reject his son, the Messiah, Jesus Christ! Where does this put them? It puts them between a rock and a hard place.

We've got to understand that the holy land is a place that breeds troubles upon troubles. Jerusalem is going to be a burdensome city to this world in these last days. It will have more troubles. Like it had been, so will it be.

There are things that go on concerning the Jews. The land the Jews are willing to relinquish is called the West Bank—the west bank of Jordan's River. Israel let the Palestinians move there. And Palestinians want statehood. They want their own country, without the Israeli government over them. The thorniest issue they have to face is this. The Palestinians desire a portion of property, and Jerusalem is included.

Can you see the handwriting on the wall? Are the Jews going to give up Jerusalem? This has been a strong bone of contention ever since this whole process started. What about that city? Israel says it's their capital and is going to remain that way. Others say, "What's the difference?"

Understand now: Jerusalem is the city of God. It's the place where the great temple sat. There are prophecies in the Scriptures of Jesus coming back to earth, to Mt. Zion. His throne will be on Mt. Zion, one of the mountains that surround Jerusalem. This place is marked by God. The Lord will reign over the earth from there. He's coming back to earth to rule and reign for one thousand years. He's coming back as the great King of kings. The whole nation is going to be under His reign. In fact, the whole world will be under His dominion.

Now, what's going to happen to Jerusalem? Will Israel let this place go? Will the Jews and Arabs fight it out for it? What is to be?

Right now this is a hot issue. The Muslims want this place because their mosque is there. It's their religious capital, just as much as it's Israel's religious capital. Each lays claim of it as theirs. They want that parcel of ground, because they want to have control of Jerusalem.

Listen, this is muddy water, and the mud runs thick. This is a bone of contention that won't be easily resolved.

The early church, made up only of Jews who received Christ as their Messiah, started in Jerusalem. Where did the day of Pentecost take place? In an upper room, in the city of Jerusalem. Jesus said that when the Holy

Ghost was come upon those early believers, the gospel would spread from Jerusalem to Judaea to Samaria—and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

All of this was going on while the Jews tried to make it without Jesus, although other Jews received Jesus and formed the first church.

Now, keep in mind that the time of the Gentiles is about to end. There are a lot of things for us to know and understand about this time. If we consider the time of the Gentiles, we note that it started way back with Nebuchadnezzar. Then we follow history all the way down to today. We see all the various world empires that rose which were ruled by Gentiles: Greeks, Romans, and Babylonians.

What we see out of all this is a picture of how muddy these waters are. This has got to change. God is not going to send His Son back to earth to have a kingdom under Gentile domain. His kingdom is going to cover the entire face of the earth. It will bring all the peoples of the earth together. We recognize that this is where the change is. We can't have Gentile world domination during this time. That will have to come to an end because the kingdom of God is going to replace it. It's going to come to an end. And, in its coming to an end, it will be a judgment that will break all these bondages. Jesus is going to come with mighty power. And it's in the midst of the fight of these things, especially over Jerusalem, that the Jews will turn to receive Jesus. They're going to receive Him as their Messiah and Saviour. That day is coming. There are some Jews today who are believers, but not like there will be in that day. And that is the thing that has to come.

It's going to be the awful pressures of the day when all of the armies of the earth will congregate against Jerusalem. The devil is going to try to stop Jesus from coming back to earth. He's got a plan where he's going to get all the armies of the nations to come against Jerusalem. In this battle he's going to try and circumvent the Lord from coming and setting up His kingdom. How foolish can you be? But that's what's on the devil's drafting board.

I want you to realize how serious this matter is. Two thousand years have gone by and God hasn't restored them. And that won't take place until this time is fulfilled that's mentioned in the Scriptures. What's God going to do with the Jewish people? They believed in God all this long time. There are Jews scattered throughout the world. There are synagogues all over the world. There are Jews that still worship God in them. But they have not had a temple: a place to offer sacrifices. To our knowledge, they haven't made a sacrifice for 2,000 years.

How are they going to get back to their place? Until they accept Jesus, they can't. But you see, these are the great events that are coming. We're here with all of this being fulfilled.

The verse that speaks of the times of the Gentiles is a very plain Scripture which speaks to us. Seeing little Israel as a nation over there now is enough to tell us that this is bringing to an end Gentile world domination. It will bring an end to it. When? In God's time, when Jesus comes. Do you want Jesus to come back and take us? Do you want Him to come back down to earth as He said to set up His kingdom? Will you be glad to see all that?

Look at what there is in the way. Look at the things that have to change or be removed. Look at the powers that have to be broken. Look at what a time it will be. I'm sure glad that Jesus is Lord of lords and King of kings. Jesus gave us an indication of this in Matthew 28— "All power in heaven and earth is given unto Me." How much power? All power.

Now, if you were a great king and you had all the power of heaven and earth behind you, you would be a powerful king. You'd be a world dictator, having everybody under your thumb. There have been many who wanted to become world dictators and run things their way. But all they did was to hurt others.

Jesus is coming. He's not like any other king this world has ever known. He has all power and all might. Anybody who gets in the way of this certainly will go the way of the Word because God has already foretold how He would take up this role. But before He takes this up the world's going to get involved in the great tribulation, the great time of God's wrath with seven years of hardships, with trials like the world has never seen. We have to bear in mind that this time is not very far away. I say that in light of my deep feelings and the knowledge that I have. I believe that we are at the end of the age. I can't give you a verse of Scripture to show you this. I'm just telling you what I sense from what I read in the Scriptures. I understand that one day Jesus is going to come, and that's the one event that we've got to wait for and be ready for. All the other problems will straighten themselves out in the end, the Lord will do it. But we believe, also, that Jesus will come and take us up out of this (see I Thessalonians 5). This is our hope. This is why Jesus told us to pray that we might be found worthy to escape those things that are coming.

How are you going to escape if you're in the world when these things come? The whole world is going to shake. The only way of escape is for the Lord to come and take us home. Some feel they can escape into the mountains (but they're not big enough to hide everybody). Some have stored food in the mountains to help them in that day. They'd do better to serve the Lord with all their heart, and be ready.

Are you ready for His coming? That's your cue. That's a one timer, one chance of escape. We've got to be ready when He comes. Let's be ready.

Know that there is a tie there, whether we want to appreciate it or not. I don't think we should be very high-minded. We see what happened to the Jews. We need to consider the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled: the Lord will have finished making up the church as far as the Gentiles are concerned. That's when we need to be ready when He comes to take us home.

Are you ready? Is that where you live every day? You don't know when that day is coming. But it is coming. He didn't tell us what day or what hour, so we have to wait and be ready at all times. We've got to watch and pray.

Will your life be pleasing to Him? Will you be blood washed that day? You want to be in the realm of being absolutely ready at all times.