

The Battle for Jerusalem: Litmus Test for the End-Time Church

I. UNDERSTANDING THE BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM

- A. The battle for Jerusalem is a spiritual, political, and military battle for the control of Jerusalem. It is one of the most significant battlefronts in the spirit today. It will only end at Jesus' second coming, when He comes to reign over the whole earth and cast Satan into prison (Rev. 20:1-3).

¹¹Behold, a white horse. He [Jesus] who sat on him...makes war...¹⁶He has on His robe...a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS...¹⁹I saw the beast [Antichrist], the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him...²⁰The beast [Antichrist] was captured and the false prophet...these two were cast alive into the lake of fire...²¹The rest were killed with the sword...^{20:1}I saw an angel...²He laid hold of...Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³and he cast him into the bottomless pit... (Rev. 19:11-20:3)

- B. The battle for Jerusalem will be the decisive battle to end the Armageddon campaign.

²I will gather all...nations to battle against Jerusalem...³Then the Lord will go forth [second coming] and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. (Zech. 14:2-3)

- C. The battle for Jerusalem will be one issue used to perfect the Church in her obedience to Jesus.

²⁷That He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish [compromise]. (Eph. 5:27)

- D. Even now we can see the early stages of the battle of Jerusalem in the growing hostility against Israel. Thus even now, Gentile believers have a significant role in this spiritual battle. Our role grows in intensity and significance the closer we get to the physical battle. We must understand it. Scripture insists that the Church stand with God's purposes for Israel. It is a ***litmus test*** of our obedience. The highest issue in serving God's purpose for Israel is ***obeying Jesus' sovereign leadership***. We love Him; therefore, we want to do what He does and love what He loves.

II. JESUS RULES FROM JERUSALEM AFTER THE JEWISH LEADERSHIP RECEIVES HIM

- A. Jesus will not forcibly take the kingship over Israel, but will wait until it is given to Him by those in positions of authority over the land. He prophesied that He would not come back to Jerusalem until the leaders of Israel ask Him to reign over them. He "bound" Himself by this prophecy.

***³⁷O Jerusalem...how often I wanted to gather your children...but you were not willing!
³⁸See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹for I say to you, you [leaders of Israel] shall see Me no more till you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!" (Mt. 23:37-39)***

- B. Israel's leaders are the official representatives of that national covenant with God. Jesus will rule from Jerusalem only *after* Israel repents and asks Him to be their king (Acts 3:19-21).

¹⁹Repent...and be converted, that your [Israel's] sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, ²⁰and that He may send Jesus...²¹whom heaven must receive [retain] until the times of restoration of all things... (Acts 3:19-21)

- C. Satan will *not* be cast into prison (Rev. 20:1) until the battle for Jerusalem is won (Rev. 19:21) and Jerusalem is under Jesus' leadership. Jesus will sentence Satan to prison without probation.
- D. Satan's strategy is to seek to exploit Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 23:39 as a "loophole" in God's end-time plan, by seeking to keep the leaders of Israel from receiving Jesus as their king. Satan knows that Jesus cannot violate His own prophetic word. Therefore, Jesus cannot return to earth to rule from Jerusalem until Israel's governmental leaders beckon Him to be their king.
- E. Satan's end-time strategy includes seeking to permanently ***control Jerusalem*** by:
 - 1. ***Deceiving Israel*** into taking the mark of the Beast (making an alliance with the Antichrist)
 - 2. ***Killing the remnant of the Jewish race*** so there are none to invite Him to rule Jerusalem
 - 3. Working so that Israel is so ***offended at Jesus*** that they will not receive Him as their king
- F. After Satan is cast into prison, Jesus will renew the conditions of Eden across the whole earth. He will reverse what occurred in Eden (Gen. 3:1-8). Christ's death has defeated Satan, but His victory will not be fully manifest on earth until His second coming (Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14).
- G. Satan's main agenda and rage is in seeking to stay out of prison. He is seeking to blow up Jerusalem, (not popular ministries), through terrorism. He is not threatened by people growing "successful" ministries, because they are often disconnected from the battle for Jerusalem.

III. THE CENTERPIECE OF GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE

- A. Jesus will join the heavenly and earthly realms together at His coming. ***Heaven***: supernatural realm where God's presence is openly manifest. ***Earth***: physical realm where natural processes, human emotions, and physical sensations are experienced to the highest degree.

⁹...made known to us the mystery [hidden plan] of His will...¹⁰that He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth... (Eph. 1:9-10)

²⁰... by Him to reconcile all things to Himself...whether things on earth or things in heaven... (Col. 1:20)
- B. Jesus will rule all nations in the millennial kingdom. His throne will be in the New Jerusalem as well as in millennial Jerusalem. Jesus rules in heaven now as the *Son of God* (New Jerusalem) and will rule on earth as the *Son of David* (earthly Jerusalem). All authority has been given to Him in both realms (Eph. 1:21-23, Mt. 28:19; Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 1:15-21; 1 Cor. 15:24-28).

³¹When the Son of Man comes in His glory...then He will sit on the throne of His glory.
³²All the nations will be gathered before Him... (Mt. 25:31-32)

¹⁷At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. (Jer. 3:17)

³The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it [New Jerusalem]. (Rev. 22:3)

- C. At Jesus' coming, the New Jerusalem will descend and connect with the millennial Jerusalem.

¹⁰Showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven... (Rev. 21:10)

IV. SATAN'S RAGE AGAINST JERUSALEM AND ISRAEL

- A. Satan wants to exterminate the Jewish people so that a believing remnant cannot invite Jesus to rule Israel as her Messiah. John uses a prophetic picture of Israel as a woman being attacked by Satan as a dragon. God will protect Israel from total annihilation (Rev. 12:13-17; Zech. 13:8-9).

¹²Woe to the inhabitants of the earth...for the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time." ¹³When the dragon [Satan] saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman [remnant of Israel]...¹⁴But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. ¹⁵The serpent spewed water...like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood [persecution]...¹⁷The dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring [the Church], who...have the testimony of Jesus. (Rev. 12:13-17)

- B. The Great Tribulation will be the most severe time in history for Israel, the Church, and for unbelievers (Mt. 24:21; Jer. 30:7; Ezek. 5:9; Dan. 12:1; Joel 2:2).

¹At that time...there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was...⁷He [angel]...swore...that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time [$3\frac{1}{2}$ years]; when the power of the holy people [Israel] has been completely shattered... (Dan. 12:1, 7)

²¹Then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. (Mt. 24:21)

⁷For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble. (Jer. 30:7)

- C. Satan's attack on Jewish people will result in 2/3 being killed and the remaining 1/3 receiving salvation. Since there has never been a time when 1/3 of the Jews in Israel testified that they received Jesus as their Messiah, we know that this prophecy has a future fulfillment.

⁸It shall come to pass in all the land...that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it: ⁹I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name... (Zech. 13:8-9)

- D. Half of Jerusalem will be taken into captivity (Zech. 14:2). About 600,000 Jews currently live in Jerusalem; thus, as many as 300,000 Jewish people may be deported in the coming crisis. The city shall temporarily be taken, creating the context in which Jesus personally delivers Israel.

²For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken...half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off... (Zech. 14:2)

- E. Isaiah emphasized that Jesus' ministry to Israel will include delivering their captives from prison (Isa. 11:11-16; 27:12-13; 42:6-7, 22-24; 49:5-25; 61:1-2). Scripture describes an aspect of Israel's persecution just before Jesus returns as their being in prison (Jer. 30:3-24; 31:1-23; Ezek. 20:33-44; 39:25-29; Hos. 11:10-11; Amos 9:8-15; Joel 3:1-2; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:10-14).

***⁷To bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house...
²²But this [Israel] is a people robbed and plundered; all of them are snared in holes, and they are hidden in prison houses; they are for prey, and no one delivers. (Isa. 42:7, 22)***

V. THE ROLE OF GENTILES IN THE BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM

- A. God will force all to decide to stand for or against Israel (Zech. 12:3). He requires the Church to stand with Israel in their coming persecution (Rev. 12:17; Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:24; 11:33-35; 12:7). Corrie ten Boom is an example of standing with Israel in persecution. The Church will be brought to maturity as she responds to Jesus' leadership in this (Mt. 25:31-46). Many will be purified, but others will fall away from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thes. 2:3; Rom. 11:20-22).

³In that day...I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples... (Zech. 12:3)

- B. Gentile believers will provoke Israel to godly jealousy to know Jesus (Rom. 11:11; 10:19). Israel will desire to have what Gentile believers possess spiritually. This will happen as we risk our lives to provide refuge for Jewish people in flight; perform miracles like Elijah (*multiplying food, healing the sick, and prophesying, etc.*), walk in godliness, and are fearless in the face of death.

¹¹To provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. (Rom. 11:11)

- C. Prayer is the context in which we receive supernatural insight, love, boldness, and power to act. Spiritual warfare requires continual fasting and prayer as we act in sacrificial love now and then.

⁶Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you." (Ps. 122:6)

- D. Ask the Holy Spirit the question: "What is my part now? What can I do now?"

- E. The Lord requires that the Church make bold prophetic proclamations to comfort Jerusalem.

¹"Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" says your God. ²"Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned..." (Isa. 40:1-2)

- F. The Church must take a stand to boldly pray, declare, and sing the message of God's purposes for Israel so that all the nations hear it clearly (Jer. 31:7-10).

⁷Thus says the Lord: “Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘O Lord save Your people, the remnant of Israel!’...¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd does his flock.’” (Jer. 31:7-10)

- G. The prophetic declaration of God’s purpose for Israel, along with showing love for Israel, is an act of spiritual warfare. The result will be increased understanding in the Church at large and greater revelation, authority, and boldness in those who faithfully declare this divine decree.

¹¹Indeed the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the world [Gentiles in the nations]: “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Surely your salvation is coming; behold, His reward is with Him...’” (Isa. 62:11)

VI. QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Identify one point that inspired or challenged you. Why? What will you do differently to apply it?
2. Identify one point that you want to impart to a younger believer. Why? How will you approach this?
3. Identify one point that you would like to gain more understanding of. How will you seek to gain it?