

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

I. LAYING A FOUNDATION: UNDERSTANDING THE BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM

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

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

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

² I will gather all...nations to battle against Jerusalem...³ Then 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. When Jesus returns, the Church will be victorious and without spot or compromise. The battle for Jerusalem is a key issue in perfecting the end-time Church in obedience to Jesus.

²⁷ That 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. Gentile believers have a significant role in the battle for Jerusalem. Our role grows in intensity and significance, the closer we get to Jesus' coming. ***Therefore, we must understand this battle.***

- E. God's Word insists that the Church stand with His purposes for Israel. This is not optional; it is a ***litmus test*** of the Church's obedience, especially in the end times. 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 governmental leaders of Israel voluntarily asked Him to reign over them. Jesus "bound" Himself by this prophecy to only come back after Israel's leadership invite Him.

³⁷ O Jerusalem...how often I wanted to gather your children...but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for 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 the earth from Jerusalem only after Israel repents and invites Him to be their king (Acts 3:19-21).

- C. Satan will not be cast into prison until after the battle for Jerusalem is won and Jerusalem is under Jesus' leadership. When the government of Jerusalem is under Jesus' leadership then Jesus will sentence Satan to prison without any probation. This will enrage Satan.
- D. Satan seeks 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 king. Satan wants to demonstrate that Jesus' prophetic word is false. He reasons that if Jesus' prophecy is shown to be a lie, then Jesus can't imprison Satan as a liar. Satan's strategy is to kill the entire Jewish race or to see that they are so offended at Jesus that they will never receive Him as their king.
- E. Satan's end-time strategy includes ***controlling Jerusalem*** more effectively:
 - 1. ***Deceive Israel*** into taking the mark of the Beast (make an alliance with the Antichrist)
 - 2. ***Kill the remnant of the Jewish race*** so there are none to invite Him to rule Jerusalem as king
 - 3. Assure 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 already defeated Satan, but His victory will not be fully manifested 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. Satan is seeking to blow up Jerusalem with terrorism, not mega-ministries. He is not threatened by many growing "successful" ministries, because they are often disconnected from the battle for Jerusalem.

III. ISRAEL WILL MAKE A COVENANT WITH THE ANTICHRIST

- A. Israel's governmental leaders will make a covenant with the Antichrist (called *the covenant with death*) and give their authority to him seven years before Jesus' coming (Isa. 28:14-18; Dan. 9:27; 11:45; Zech. 11:16; Ezek. 38:8-12, 14; 39:26; Jn. 5:43; Lk. 19:11-28; 1 Thes. 5:3).

²⁷ ***He [Antichrist] shall confirm a covenant with many for one week [7 yrs.]; but in the middle of the week he [Antichrist] shall bring an end to sacrifice [breaks the covenant]... (Dan. 9:27)***

¹⁴ ***You scornful men, who rule...in Jerusalem, ¹⁵ because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death...when the overflowing scourge [of the Antichrist] passes through, it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves"...¹⁸ Your covenant with death will be annulled...when the overflowing scourge [of the Antichrist] passes through, then you will be trampled down by it. (Isa. 28:14-18)***
- B. This covenant had an initial fulfillment in Israel's reliance on Egypt to protect them from Assyria (721 BC) but will have its complete fulfillment at the end of the age. In 701 BC, Hezekiah did not look to Egypt to deliver Jerusalem from the Assyrians, but to the Lord (2 Chr. 32).
- C. The Antichrist will plant part of his headquarters in Israel (Dan. 11:45). This will be the first time that Israel's government will ask a man to rule them as their messianic king. It will usher in Israel's darkest hour. The remnant of Israel will resist this decision until it is totally reversed.

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 (*pictured as a dragon*). Satan will seek to destroy Israel, but God will supernaturally protect her from total annihilation (Rev. 12:13-17; Zech. 13:8-9).
- ¹³ *When the dragon [Satan] saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman [remnant of Israel] who gave birth to the male Child [Jesus] ...¹⁵ The serpent spewed water...like a flood after the woman [remnant of Israel], that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood [persecution]...¹⁷ The dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring [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).
- ¹ *At that time...there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was...⁷ He [angel]...swore...that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time [3½ years]; when the power of the holy people [Israel] has been completely shattered... (Dan. 12:1, 7)*
- ²¹ *Then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.²² Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved [physically delivered]; for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. (Mt. 24:21-22)*
- C. Satan's attack on Jewish people will result in 2/3 being killed and the remaining 1/3 getting saved. 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.
- ⁸ *It 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: ⁹ I 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.
- ² *For 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. Israel's condition just before Jesus returns is described in Scripture as being in prison camps and assaulted by foreign armies (Isa. 11:11-16; 27:12-13; 42:6-24; 49:5-25; 61:1-2; 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). Isa. 42 emphasizes Jesus' ministry to Israel related to time of His return.
- ⁶ *I will give You as a covenant to the people [Israel]...⁷ to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness from the prison house...¹⁵ The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man [second coming]...He shall prevail against His enemies...²² But 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. 42:6-22)*

V. THE ROLE OF GENTILES IN THE BATTLE FOR JERUSALEM

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

- A. God requires the Church to stand with Israel in their persecution (Rev. 12:17; Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:24; 11:33-35; 12:7; Rev. 6:9-11). Corrie ten Boom is an example of standing with Israel in persecution. The Church will be brought to maturity as it responds to Jesus' leadership in standing with Israel (Mt. 25:31-46). Many in the Church will be purified but others will fall away from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thes. 2:3; Rom. 11:20-22).
- 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.
- C. Ask the Holy Spirit the question: "What is my part now? What can I do now?" God is calling the whole Church to stand with Israel now and in times of greater trouble.
- D. 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.

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

- E. We are to make prophetic proclamations to Israel and the nations. The Lord requires that we make bold prophetic proclamations to comfort Israel (Isa. 40:1-2).
- 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. We take a stand to pray, declare, and sing the message about Israel's future so that all the nations hear it (Jer. 31:7-10). The Lord requires that we make bold prophetic proclamations to give witness to the Gentile nations about God's purposes in Israel.

⁷ *Thus 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!'" ⁸ *Behold, I will...gather them from the ends of the earth...a great throng shall return there...* ¹⁰ *Hear 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. We declare this as an act of spiritual warfare to shift things in the spirit realm and to show love to Israel. 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.

¹¹ *Indeed 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 [Jesus'] reward is with Him, and His work before Him.'" ¹² *And they [Gentiles in the nations] shall call them [Israel] the Holy People, the Redeemed of the LORD... (Isa. 62:11-12)**