

Jerusalem; It's Place Yesterday And Today

Sunday AM 05/20/18

Introduction:

Jerusalem has been the center of religious attention and activity for a long time. Three "major" religious groups look at this city with special interest. The Jews because of the promise to Abraham in *Genesis 11* and the establishment of Israel. The Muslims because they say this is the place where Mohammad was taken into heaven and saw a vision. Christians because of the death of Jesus and the events in *Acts 2* with the establishment of the church.

I) Modern Day Jerusalem and Current Events

A) After World War Two, the United Nations set up a modern day "Israel".

1. For years the United States did not formally recognize Jerusalem as its capital but set up an embassy at Tel Aviv.
2. December 6, 2017 - President Trump recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.
3. May 14, 2018 - The United States opened an embassy in Jerusalem.

B) The Reaction.

1. Palestinians rioted with at least 60 dead and over 900 wounded.

2. Others proclaimed this as more than a political statement but fulfillment of prophecy.
 - a. "Donald Trump recognized history, he like King Cyrus before him, fulfilled the Biblical prophecy of the God worshipped by Jews, Christians and, yes, Muslims, that Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the Jewish state and that the Jewish people finally deserve a righteous, free and sovereign Israel," Pirro said. (Judge Jeanie on Fox News)
 - b. One person observed, "I remember reading about the United States embassy in the bible. Can anyone tell me whether it was in Deuteronomy or Leviticus? Can't recall,"
3. Some view Jerusalem as still God's Holy City due to the promise to Abraham.
4. Some view this as important because of Jesus' death.

II) The Old Testament History of Jerusalem.

A) The city of Salem, *Genesis 14.18*

1. Melchizedek is called the king of Salem and priest most high.
2. Salem could mean "city of Peace" or the "City of (the god) Salem".

B) Jebus

1. *Joshua 18.28* Jebus is identified for us as Jerusalem.
2. Belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. But *Joshua 15.8* lists it as belonging to Judah.
3. The Jebusites are mentioned in *Genesis 10.16* as a distinct tribe of the people of Canaan.
4. *Numbers 13.29* Jebusites are a mountain people.
5. *Judges 1.21* Israel could not drive the Jebusites out of Jerusalem "till this day."

C) Jerusalem the City of David, *2 Samuel 5.6-7*

1. David conquers the city and it is called "the city of David", *2 Samuel 5.9*.
2. Also called:
 - a. Ariel, *Isaiah 29.1* "the hearth of God"
 - b. Holy City, *Isaiah 48.2; Nehemiah 11.1*.
 - c. Zion, *Isaiah 2.2-3*.

III) Features of Jerusalem

A) Physical features

1. 2,474 feet above sea level, hence the people spoke of going up to Jerusalem even when they were north of the city.
2. Part of the "spine" of a mountain range in Canaan.
3. Jerusalem to the Dead sea only 20 miles from goes from 2,474 ft. above sea level to 1,384 ft. below sea level.
4. A spring in nearby in the Kidron Valley supplied Jerusalem with water as an aqueduct was dug. We read about the pool of Siloam in *John 9*.
5. Ancient Jerusalem covered roughly 220 acres - no way of knowing how many people actually lived there.
6. Population during the time of Christ was less than 30 to 50 thousand with its number increasing during the festivals. Josephus says there were around 600,000 Jews in Jerusalem at the time of the siege.
7. Today Jerusalem covers 48 square miles with a population of over 800,000 people.

B) Spiritually

1. The Ark of the Covenant brought to Jerusalem by David in *2 Samuel 6.12*.

2. Solomon built the temple, the house of God, *1 Kings 8.4-7, 10-11*.
3. Jerusalem was conquered three times by Babylon, 606 BC; 598 BC, and 586 BC.
4. The last time the temple was destroyed the ark of the covenant was taken by Babylon and is never read about again.
5. Rebuilt during the days of Ezra 536 BC.

IV) During The Time of Christ

A) Herod's Temple.

1. Herod began a major building project which lasted for more than 46 years, *John 2.20*.
2. The center of Jewish activity as Jews came to worship.
3. Jesus foretold of its destruction, *Matthew 23.37-38*.
4. Place of Jesus' trial and burial.

B) Jerusalem and the Gospel of Christ.

1. First Gospel sermon at Jerusalem, *Acts 1.8; 2.1-4*.
2. The establishment of the church at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost as 3,000 were added to the Lord, the church. *Acts 2.38, 47*.

3. The next chapters of *Acts* speaks of the Gospel in Jerusalem and persecution.

C) Destruction of Jerusalem.

1. 66 AD Jews revolted against Rome.
2. 68 AD northern region was brought into subjection.
3. Hence the siege of Jerusalem lasted until August 30, 70 AD. Titus was the Roman General, the son of Vespasian. The temple was totally destroyed.

V) Jerusalem's Place Today

A) Not

1. Israel's eternal city. The promise to Abraham was fulfilled, *1 Kings 8.56*.
2. God's promise to bring back a remnant from captivity was fulfilled during the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.
3. Place where Christ will return to rule the earth for 1,000 years.

B) Is

1. Fulfillment of prophecy of destruction, *Matthew 24*.

2. The place of the first Gospel sermon, the establishment of the church, and the Gospel going from there to the rest of the world, *Isaiah 2.2-3*.

Conclusion:

We should concentrate on the "new Jerusalem" and not the old one. *Revelation 21.1ff*.