

# Jerusalem – The City of God!

*“Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.” Psalm 147:12*

Of all the cities that have ever existed or exist now, the most contentious of them all has been, and will continue to be, Jerusalem. Why? Because it is God’s city dwelling in the devils world (2 Corinthians 4:4). It has been fought over, conquered, re-conquered, destroyed, and rebuilt many many times. More blood has been shed over and in Jerusalem itself than in any other city that has ever existed.

What makes Jerusalem so contentious and why is it so important? It is the city that the Lord chose “that His name might be there” (2 Chronicles 6:6a, 12:13b). Satan hates that city and everything else that has to do with God Almighty.

Jerusalem is not on a major trade route, has no strategic military value, and has no water reserves to speak of, and yet Zechariah 12:3 states, “and in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” The Jews have it, the Arabs want it, and there will be war over it, even though Jerusalem is not mentioned once in the Quran as compared to the hundreds of times it is mentioned in the Bible.

Jerusalem is both famous and infamous at the same time. It is the city that David conquered and brought the Ark of the Covenant to dwell in. It is the city where the first two Temples were built to house the Ark. It is the city where the church was established and it is also the city where the Lord will return to, and rule the earth from, during His 1,000 year reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

But, it is also the city which rebelled against the Lord (Isaiah 1:1-2), fell into idolatry (Isaiah 2:8), and killed the Lord’s prophets (Luke 13:34). It is the city that condemned and killed the Lord (Revelation 11:8b). It is the city that will house the third Temple (Revelation 11:1-2) from which the Jews will accept and worship the antichrist as their long awaited Messiah (John 5:43, 2 Thessalonians 2:4). And, it is also the city where the Lord’s two Holy prophets (Moses and Elijah) will be killed, and their dead bodies lie in the street unburied for 3 ½ days (Revelation 11:8a, 9).

Yes, Jerusalem, the Lord’s city has quite a history, both good and bad. It has also been known by many names during its time. It has been called Zion, Jebus, Mount Moriah, the city of David, the City of God, and Ariel its ancient name (Isaiah 29:1-2). It is the only city in the history of mankind where we are told to pray for its peace (Psalm 122:6), and that “thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof” (Psalm 102:14). The Bible also states that it is an honor to be born in Jerusalem (Psalm 87:3 – 6) and that the Lord shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come (Psalm 102:13)!

The following information about Jerusalem’s history was taken from the Holmans Concise Bible Dictionary, and Jerusalem, the Endless Crusade website, [www.centuryone.com/hstjrslm.html](http://www.centuryone.com/hstjrslm.html). It is a brief accounting of Jerusalem’s existence from its first mentioning in the Book of Genesis (14:18) to its last mentioning in the Book of Revelation (20:9).

- Circa 1750 BC – As previously stated, Jerusalem is first referred to as Salem in Genesis 14:18. Abraham returning from the slaughter of the five kings is met by Melchizedek, king of Salem, who is Jesus (Hebrews 7:1-3), without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life.
- Circa 1440 BC - Jerusalem mentioned directly for the first time in Joshua 10:1-4 during Israel’s attempt to conquer the land of Canaan. Effort was unsuccessful as the Jebusites remained in the fortress of the city. Thus, the city was called Jebus.
- Circa 1010 BC – David leads his private forces and captures Jerusalem. Name of the original fortress Zion now becomes synonymous with City of David.
- 1010-970 BC – David rules as King of Israel from Jerusalem for 40 years.
- 1005 – 1000 BC - Jerusalem becomes religious center of nation with the moving of the ark by David (2 Samuel 6).
- 970 – 931 BC – David dies and Solomon becomes King. Solomon orders building of the first Temple (962 BC) as a dwelling place for God (I Kings 8:13).
- 930 BC – Solomon dies and his son Rehoboam reigns in his place. 10 Northern tribes revolt and become Northern Kingdom of Israel. Benjamin and Judah become Southern Kingdom of Judah with Jerusalem as its capital.

- 721 BC – Assyrians conquer Northern Kingdom and carry 10 of 12 Tribes into captivity.
- 701 BC – King Hezekiah and Jerusalem successfully withstand king Sennacherib (704 – 681 BC) and Assyria's assault.
- 597 BC – Babylonians capture Jerusalem taking 10,000 captives.
- 586 BC – Further uprising leads to destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and the exile of the Jews to Babylon (Lamentations 1:4; 2:2).
- 539 BC – Cyrus of Persia over runs Babylonians. Encourages Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild Temple (Ezra 1:1-4).
- 537 BC – Remnant of about 50,000 Jews return to Judah and Jerusalem from Babylon by edict of King Cyrus.
- 515 BC – Completion and rededication of the Second Temple under Zerubbabel (Ezra 6:15-18).
- 332 BC – Alexander the Great defeats King Darius at Gaugamela and conquers Palestine from the Persians (Daniel 11:3), captures Jerusalem and Hellenization begins.
- 198 BC – Syrian King Antiochus III conquers Jerusalem.
- 169 BC – Antiochus IV plunders and defiles the Temple.
- 167- 141 BC – The Maccabean war of liberation.
- 164 BC – Judah Maccabee recaptures Jerusalem and restores the Temple.
- 63 BC – General Pompey captures Jerusalem for Rome. Roman Empire rules Palestine and Jerusalem till 324AD.
- 6 MO. BC - John the Baptist born (Luke 1:36, 57-63).
- JESUS BORN six months later (Luke 2:6-7) - end of BC - beginning of AD.
- 33 AD – JESUS IS CRUCIFIED (for the sins of the world).
- 66-73 AD – The Great Revolt – The War of the Jews against the Romans.
- 70 AD - Jerusalem falls and is entirely burned by Titus and the 10<sup>th</sup> Roman Legion. The Second Temple is destroyed and soldiers pry blocks apart to retrieve gold melted from the fire in fulfillment of Jesus' prediction in Matthew 24:2, and recorded in the Book of Josephus – Chronicles of the Jews.
- 132 – 135 AD – Bar Kochba's war of freedom – Jerusalem again becomes the Jewish Capital.
- 135AD – Emperor Hadrian's total destruction of Jerusalem and building of new walls and new city renamed Aelia Capitolina – Jews not allowed in Jerusalem.
- 324 AD – 638 AD – The Byzantines rule Jerusalem.
- 614 AD – Persian conquest of Jerusalem – They destroy most churches and expel Jews.
- 629AD – Jerusalem – recaptured by Byzantines.
- 638 AD – Six years after Mohammed's death, the Caliph Omar enters Jerusalem and Jews are readmitted to Jerusalem.
- 691 AD - Dome of the Rock completed by Caliph Abd al-Malik in Jerusalem.
- 1099 AD – Crusaders, led by Godfrey de Bouillon, capture Jerusalem following Pope Urban's call in 1096. Baldwin I declared King of Jerusalem.
- 1187 AD – Kurdish general Saladin captures Jerusalem from Crusaders. He permits Jews and Muslims to return and settle in the city.
- 1192 AD – Richard the Lion Hearted attempts to re-capture Jerusalem but fails.

- 1244 AD – Khwariziman Turks capture Jerusalem. End of Crusader attempts to recapture Jerusalem.
- 1244 – 1517 AD - Mameluk Sultans defeat Ayyubids and rule Jerusalem until defeated by Ottoman Turks.
- 1517 – 1917 AD - The Ottoman Empire rules Palestine and effects peaceful takeover of Jerusalem.
- 1917 AD - The Ottomans are defeated at the Battle of Jerusalem during the First World War and Palestine becomes a British Mandate. Balfore Declaration issued one month before.
- May 14, 1948 – British Mandate ends and Israel becomes a nation again in fulfillment of Bible prophecy (Isaiah 66:8-9). East Jerusalem remains under Jordanian control.
- May 1948 – January 1949 – Israel wins war of liberation.
- December 1949, Jerusalem declared Capital of the State of Israel.
- The miraculous Six Day War in June 1967 commences. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, Israeli troops capture old city (East Jerusalem) and Jerusalem is reunited and annexed.
- Jesus comes back to battle all nations gathered against Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:2-5). The city is restored and the fourth Temple is built (Ezekiel 40-48). Jesus rules from Jerusalem for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4)!
- Satan, let out of bottomless pit at end of Millennial reign of Jesus, gathers multi-million man army to march against the beloved city (Jerusalem). City is surrounded, then fire comes down out of heaven and devours them (Revelation 20: 3, 7-9).

The days are coming when Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited again (Zechariah 14:11) and that “there shall yet old men and women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very (or old) age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof”(Zechariah 8:4-5). But, for now, Jerusalem’s problems are far from over. Even today, Israel’s enemies are at her gates just waiting to wipe her off the map (Psalm 83:1-8).

Think of Jerusalem as a magnet and the rest of the world as metal. As metal is drawn to a magnet, the whole world is being drawn to Jerusalem. Zechariah 14:2a states “For I will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem: the city will be taken (captured), the houses rifled (looted), and the women ravished (raped).” The Lord will literally have to come back to save His people and His city, or they will both be exterminated.

Time is growing short and the rapture is very close at hand. Most of the signs for the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21) have already been fulfilled and the Church must be removed (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18) so the time of Jacob’s (Israel’s) trouble can commence (Jeremiah 30:7). This is a seven year period in which the Lord not only deals with all of Israel’s enemies, but also cleanses and restores Israel back to her God (Ezekiel 36:25-28).

The Bible states in Psalm 102:16 “When the Lord shall build up Zion (Jerusalem, Israel) He shall appear in His glory.” The first part of this prophecy has already been fulfilled, therefore the Church’s days are numbered and the Lord’s return is imminent. You don’t want to be here for what is coming after that. It is the time of God’s great wrath upon the earth (Revelation 6:17).

The time for repentance is now (Acts 17:30, 2 Corinthians 6:2). Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. He was crucified, died, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Salvation is a free gift from God to all who believe, both Jew and Gentile alike (Romans 6:23). So call on the Lord now and take that free gift while there is still time (Romans 10:13)! The age of grace is coming to an end, and the Rapture is going to hit. Then, the antichrist will be revealed (2Thessalonians 2:7-8), and sign a seven year covenant with Israel (Daniel 9:27) which commences Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week, or, the Great Tribulation. And when the Great Tribulation is finished, then “the Lord shall inherit Judah His portion in the Holy Land and shall choose Jerusalem again” (Zechariah 2:12b). Alleluia!

AMEN!