

# BIBLE TRUTH

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'... and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king.'

2 Kings ch.11 v.12

# THE IMPORTANCE OF PALESTINE

by Michael D. Bennett OBE, Ph.D.



Of all the places on this earth none can compare with Palestine when it comes to importance. Other places are significant to people for a variety of reasons; strategic, economic or emotional, but Palestine owes its significance not to the fact that men have designated it so, but God Himself has. The Bible records this description of Palestine.

‘A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.’

Deuteronomy ch.11 v.12

It is for ever true that the greatest existing distinction is the difference between those entities which are God’s and those which are not. It is the difference between that which is sanctified and holy and that which is profane. This distinction applies to geographical locations just as much as it does to mortals and angelic beings. The simple fact is that at the present time, some land is God’s and some is not, but instead is under the rule of Satan who is the Prince of this world. Palestine is important to God because unlike the vast proportion of the earth’s surface it is part of God’s portion on earth and hence does not constitute part of Satan’s domain. That Palestine does belong to God is proven by His giving it in covenant bond to Abraham and his seed. How could God give something which was not His?

‘And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.’

Genesis ch.17 v.8

On the other hand, proof that the other kingdoms of the world are Satan’s comes from the fact that he was able to offer them all to Christ when tempting Him, for what would be the temptation in offering God something which was already His? Another proof that the kingdoms of this world are not God’s is found in the Book of

Revelation where we read that they will change hands, passing from Satan's to God's at the time of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. They will pass from Satan, whose they are, to God whose they are to become.

'And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.'

Revelation ch.11 v.15

At this time the following prophetic statement will come to pass.

'The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.'

Psalms 24 v.1

Palestine has always had a natural importance due to its strategic position astride the main trade routes of the ancient Middle East. Recently its importance has depended on its proximity to the trade routes of the modern world that is, oil pipelines and the Suez Canal.

Jerusalem, the most fought-over city, owes its importance on the human level to the fact that it is the principal city of Palestine. On the spiritual level however, it is important because it is the land adjacent to Jerusalem. Palestine is important because it is the backdrop against which nearly all of Old Testament and the whole of our Lord's ministry was enacted. Palestine is important because of what has happened, is happening and will yet happen there. It is the place where God has impinged on human affairs as nowhere else. Here Christ ruled as Melchizedek, the king-priest, king of righteousness, king of peace. Here Abraham offered Isaac, and God appeared to Jacob. Here the Temple of Jehovah stood and the prophets walked. Here God appeared to Isaiah, and here He afflicted Sennacherib.

The land knew the voice of God, the land witnessed the whole of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, the miracles, the teaching, His atoning death, His resurrection and His ascension to the Father. Here the Holy Ghost was given at Pentecost and the New Testament Church was founded, and from here the Israelite missionaries set out to the rest of the world to spread the Gospel. It is in Palestine that the outworking of prophecy is most closely observed, including, in recent years, the liberation of Jerusalem from the Gentile domination in 1917, the reformation of the Israeli State in 1948, and the recapture of the Old city and the Temple site in 1967. In the future it will be in this land that Armageddon will be fought, and to this land the Lord

Jesus Christ will return at His second coming. Palestine will be the centre of the millennial kingdom when the Lord will reign over the whole earth. For these reasons Palestine is important.

If Palestine is the centre of God's attention on earth, then Jerusalem is the centre of the centre. God commends the importance of Jerusalem to us by many statements in Scripture. We are commanded to pray for its peace and a special blessing of prosperity is promised to those who 'love' Jerusalem.

'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.'

Psalm 122 v. 6

God says that He has chosen Jerusalem.

'And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: ...'

Zechariah ch.3 v.2

(See also 2 Chronicles ch.6 v.6)

What is more, God has said that He will yet choose Jerusalem.

'And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.'

Zechariah ch.2 v.12

God has redeemed Jerusalem.

'Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.'

Isaiah ch.52 v.9

It is proclaimed that God has a covenant with Jerusalem.

'Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.'

Ezekiel ch.16 v.60

Because Jerusalem is what it is, it has been a rock of destruction leading to the downfall of all those who cast covetous eyes upon it. Jerusalem is described as 'a cup of trembling' in Zechariah chapter twelve. Possession of the Ark of God was an embarrassment and an astonishment to the Philistines of the five cities bringing them under the judgments of the God of the Ark. So, in the end Jerusalem acts as a lure to the ungodly nations, but in coming to possess it they must enter God's land and in so doing they put themselves in a position where God can judge them according to His law, all in one place and at one time.

Palestine, for all its historical importance, has never attained anything like the geographical pre-eminence that it will have when it contains the seat of the Kingdom of God on earth — the throne of David, ruling the whole earth from Jerusalem.

‘At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: ... .’

Jeremiah ch.3 v.17

Until that glorious day dawns, consider the following statement in Isaiah chapter sixty-two.

‘I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.’

Isaiah ch.62 vv 6 - 7

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