

the jews relinquish more control over the temple mount

A significant error of our time is the idea that the Jews have really “returned” to Jerusalem; that is, to governmental control over it.

A second error is the theory that God predicted that, in the last days, the Jewish people would return to Jerusalem and once again have control over it and make it once again their holy city.

The first error is mistakenly held by many people. The second error is the basis for many Evangelical prophetic teachings. It is even an aspect of their generalized rapture theories.

Some of our own people are also teaching errors in regard to the significance of the 1967 Six-day War.

But all such theories run totally counter to the plain words of Scripture. Anyone, including a Jew, can be saved if he will humbly, sincerely confess his sins and accept Christ as his Saviour. But the Lord has no intention of rewarding the Jewish people with ownership of Jerusalem in these last days. They lost the city because they slew Christ and stubbornly continued in their rebellion. To this day, most Jews continue to reject Christ as the true Messiah.

It is rank error to theorize that they are today, in any manner, the special people of God or that they are to be rewarded for their rebellion by being able once again to have full governmental control over Jerusalem. That will never happen.

In my book, *The Jews and Jerusalem* (\$3.00, plus \$2.00), I discuss all this extensively. You will find there the history of that city, from ancient times on down to shortly after the Israeli retaking of Jerusalem in 1967. Also discussed is the development of the Evangelical error and what the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy have to say on the matter.

Theodor Herzl’s dream (of a full restoration of the Jews to Jerusalem, announced at the first Zionist Congress on August 29, 1897, which started the movement) was destined never to be fulfilled. The Balfour Declaration, issued by the British Government on November 2, 1917, which helped intensify the migration to Palestine, would also never realize its full objective either.

The Jews were destined never to genuinely “return to Jerusalem.” In order to do so, they would have to achieve governmental control over all of Jerusalem—especially all of Old Jerusalem (the “Old City”)—the original Jerusalem of ancient times. That has never happened and never will.

At midnight on May 14, 1948, the British abandoned

their mandated control over Palestine. The next morning, Sabbath, May 15, an immense war started between the Jewish forces and the armies of Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and several lesser Near Eastern nations. July 17 brought an end to the war and the retaking of an area west of the Old City by the Israelis (see map on page 2).

But they had not truly returned to Jerusalem.

On December 10, 1948, the United Nations recognized the existence of the State of Israel, and an uneasy peace continued for eight years.

The prayer of Hebrews for many long centuries had been, “Next year in Jerusalem.” They still could not walk and worship on the Temple Mount, but at least now they could live very close to it.

On October 25, 1956, the Egyptians began the Sinai Campaign, intent on driving the Jews out of the Near East. They had been armed with tanks and armaments by the Soviets. But, with the help of France and Britain, in three days the Israelis won all the land to the Suez Canal and beyond it. The 1956 war was over.

With Soviet assistance, Nassar began additional military buildup; and, with the help of Syria, in 1967 Egypt struck again. But, in just six days of intense warfare, the Israelis took possession of the entire city of Jerusalem!

The Bible had predicted that the Jews would be scattered among the heathen.

“I will scatter them also among the heathen.”—*Jeremiah 9:16*.

“My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto Him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations.”—*Hosea 9:17*.

“Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I shall drive them.”—*Ezekiel 4:13*.

“I lifted up Mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries.”—*Ezekiel 20:23*.

“And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries.”—*Ezekiel 36:19*.

“For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations.”—*Amos 9:9*.

“For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden

THE ABOVE MAPS—There are eight historical maps of Jerusalem spanning the ages in our book, *The Jews and Jerusalem*. Here is a ninth; this one is a map of the area around Jerusalem, prior to the 1967 Six-day War. It shows that, before that war, the Israelis controlled a western part of Palestine; yet they did not control the Old City and Temple—the Jerusalem of David, Solomon, and Jesus’ time. Note the “No Man’s Land” areas dividing the east from the west. Anyone found in those sections would be shot on sight.

However, as explained in detail in our book and in summary in this brief article, as soon as the Israelis captured the Old City and the Temple Mount in the 1967 War, they immediately gave the Waqf (a Moslem religious council) con-

trol of the Temple Mount and the northwest Moslem Quarter! By this act, the Jews not only relinquished their control over much of ancient Jerusalem, but also their right to rebuild their Temple or even worship on the Temple Mount.

It is an astounding fact that, shortly after 1967, the Jews of the world donated an immense amount of money to gold plate the dome of the Haram esh Sharif! That is the eight-sided Islamic mosque built above the Dome of the Rock. The Jewish Temple cannot be rebuilt until that mosque is torn down. Yet, as soon as the Jews took over the Old City and the Temple Mount, they gilded the dome of that mosque, essentially making it more difficult to remove.

down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”—*Luke 21:23-24*.

Have the Jews been able to defy Scripture and return at last to Jerusalem, stop the tramping of Palestinian (Gentile) feet within it, regain control of the Temple Mount and rebuild their Temple? No on all these points, and for three reasons:

First, to this day, Jews throughout the world are scattered among the Gentiles. And, in Palestine and Jerusalem, they are also scattered among the “Gentiles” (New Testament Greek: *Ethnos*, [non-Jewish] nations and nationalities). It is a well-known fact that the Palestinians (non-Jews who are thus “Gentiles”) who

live in Israel have been given voting rights—and will be in the majority within 25 years! Other Palestinians work in Israel daily, and thousands of Christians and Moslems from other countries visit Jerusalem regularly. Let no man tell you that the tramping of Gentile feet has ceased; since 1967 it has greatly increased!

Second, an important Bible prophecy said they would never again be able to regain governmental control of the land or the City.

“Thus saith the Lord God: Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; this shall not be the same. Exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high.

“I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall

be no more, until He come whose right it is: and I will give it Him.”—*Ezekiel 21:26-27*.

Nevermore, after the Jews were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar in 606 and 598 B.C., would the Jewish people ever again be able to do what they wanted in the land.

Not until Christ should return to earth with the New Jerusalem would governmental control be once again given to a Jew—to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

But, *third*, there is another reason why we can know of a certainty that the Jewish people have not, and never will, truly return to Jerusalem.

They cannot do so until they so thoroughly rule the land that they are able to rebuild the Temple on the Temple Mount.

I first learned this in 1953 from a college teacher. Just as he had earlier done, one Sabbath at Christmas vacation, I attended a synagogue service in Temple Emanu-el in San Francisco. After the service, I asked the rabbi why the Jews do not sacrifice lambs on *pasca* (Passover) and goats on *yom kippur* (the day of atonement), in accordance with Old Testament and Talmudic rituals. (The closest they come to it is: On the day of atonement—Yom Kippur—each year, when the father sacrifices a chicken in the home and then, after it has been roasted, waves it over his head as a sign of covering atonement for the family. Then he places it on the table and carves it up for the family to eat.)

The rabbi told me that the Jews could not once again perform the regular sacrifices—until they could do it in their Temple on the Temple Mount.

That time will never come.

Never again will the Jews have the “crown” of governmental authority over all of their former land, nor even over all of Jerusalem.

Until they have the authority to rebuild the Temple on the Temple Mount, they have not returned to Jerusalem. They do not control it; it is not theirs.

What if your group could not enter your local church building and worship there, but instead had to content yourselves with gathering about the foundation wall outside in the open—rain or shine—and worship there? Would you dare tell others that the church building was yours?

So it is with the Jews. They do not dare worship the God of heaven on the Temple Mount.

It is of interest that the only place the Jews can rebuild their Temple is on the site above the dome of the rock, near the center of the Temple Mount. Yet a Islamic mosque (Haram esh Sharif) is already there!

So the Jews have not returned to Jerusalem. They may live in part of it and govern a portion of it, but they do not really own it.

Prior to the 1967 war, the Arabs permitted no non-Arab to walk on the Temple Mount. But that year the situation radically changed.

As soon as the Israelis captured Jerusalem as a result of the six-day war (June 5-10, 1967), they immediately issued an order that everyone could walk all over the Temple Mount,—both Jews and Gentiles. To every Jew, European and American tourists are Gentiles. To every Jew, an Arab Palestinian is also a Gentile.

That order, by the Jewish Knesset, helped keep in place the prophecy of Luke 21:24. —For, in June 1967, more Gentiles began treading the holy place underfoot than ever before in history! The prediction of Luke 21:24 had been buttressed, not ended! Thousands of foreign tourists began walking all over the Mount, and multiplied thousands of Arabs continue to kneel in worship on top of the Mount—while the Jews docilely prefer to stay down below the Temple Mount by the Western (Wailing) Wall. The only time they go onto the top of the Temple Mount is when the Arabs throw rocks down on the worshipers below!

One independent Adventist ministry teaches that, based on Luke 21:24, in 1967 the Jews regained control over Jerusalem; therefore the probation for the Adventist Church closed then, and no one need any longer evangelize the lost! What a ridiculous idea.

That is not what the verse teaches.

“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”—*Luke 21:24*.

Notice that the key point here is that Jesus predicted that the Jews would not return to Jerusalem until the Gentiles (non-Jews) stopped treading—walking—on the Temple Mount (and, for that matter, all over Jerusalem).

But when Christ shall return to earth with His saints and the Holy City, and they shall enter it,—the prophecy of Luke 21:24 will have reached its fulfillment and no “Gentile” (all who are not spiritual Jews) will ever again tread within its walls. The times of the Gentiles treading within the Holy City will have forever ended. Indeed, when the Gentiles gather outside the City to attack it, they will perish in flames.

This 1967 law by the Jewish authorities guaranteed that people of all religions and races could freely tread the top of the Temple Mount and could enter its two Arab Mosques. But that Israeli law also turned control of the Temple Mount over to the Waqf, the Palestinian authority which today governs parts of East (Old) Jerusalem and all of the Temple Mount. For years now, the Waqf has forbidden a Jew to pray on top of the Temple Mount. Can anyone say the Jews have regained control of Jerusalem, when the heathen prohibit them from praying on top of the Temple Mount?

In ancient times, the Temple Mount was the base on which was built the First (Solomon’s) and Second (Nehemiah and Herod’s) Temples. The Temple was lo-

cated there because it was Mount Moriah where Abraham had been told to sacrifice Isaac.

Yet, for centuries, that Mount, so hallowed to Jews, has contained the second and third most sacred holy places of Islam: the Al-Aqsa Mosque (from whence Muhammad is said to have flown to heaven on a winged horse) and, above the Dome of the Rock, the Haram esh Sharif.

Ironically, instead of tearing down the Haram esh Sharif and building a Jewish Temple there,—the Jews gilded the dome of that Islamic mosque with gold to placate the Arabs! This was done shortly after 1967. If you will look on page 495 of the *National Geographic* for April 1959, you will see a picture of what that mosque looked like before 1967: dirty, with holes in its decaying dome.

All the above information, plus much more, you will find in our booklet, *The Jews and Jerusalem*. But here is more news. The situation is becoming more desperate. The Israelis have essentially ceded total control of the top of the Temple Mount to the Palestinians—who have barred both Christians and Israelis from treading on it!

In the mid-1990s, in order to placate the contentious Palestinians, the Jewish authorities permitted the Arabs to prohibit non-Arabs from entering the Temple Mount! After conquering Jerusalem in 1967, the Israelis promptly gave the Temple Mount and a sizeable portion of the Old City back to the Palestinians to govern! That which you could have done in the 1980s, you no longer can do. You, as a Christian, can no longer step foot on the top of the Temple Mount. And no Jew can either! Would you say that the Jews have really returned to Old Jerusalem—ancient Jerusalem?

But the situation is getting even worse. Here is the latest:

In the Fall of 1999, the Waqf began construction of a major arched entranceway, located at the top of the southeast corner of the Temple Mount. It is supposed to be an emergency exit to an underground mosque in that area.

The entire construction project is a pretext for destroying archaeological evidence of an earlier Jewish or Christian presence on, or under, the Temple Mount. Many truckloads of earth filled with giant stones and ancient Jewish artifacts have been hauled away by trucks. Artifacts and Jewish inscriptions on the walls in the great room under the Temple Mount (a large pillared area commonly referred to as “Solomon’s Stables”) have been destroyed.

None of this work has been supervised by the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA). The Arabs will not permit them near it.

The situation is so serious that, in July 2001, Republican Eric Cantor, representing the seventh district of Virginia, introduced a bill (the Temple Mount Preservation Act) into Congress, charging that Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian Authority, had barred Jews and Christians from the Temple Mount and was determined to erase Jewish or Christian connection to the Mount. His bill, if enacted, would halt \$200 million in aid to the Palestinians this year—unless they stop destroying portions of the Temple Mount. The bill will probably not pass the Senate.

The Israelis are irate over what is taking place, yet they fear to do anything about it. They have essentially ceded all control of the Temple Mount to the Arabs.

The situation became even more desperate because the Israeli authorities, fearful of upsetting the Palestinians, told the IAA not to step foot on the Temple Mount. So they cannot check on what is taking place. An IAA official said the Israelis fear to do anything because the ensuing riot will result in the death of at least 10 Israeli policemen.

So let no one tell you that the “times of the Gentiles” treading foot on the Temple Mount has ceased, for today only Arab Gentiles are permitted to walk there.

In reality, the Jews have not, in the full governmental sense, “returned” to Jerusalem. They only control a small part of what once was ancient Israel. (The large area known as the West Bank is essentially in Arab hands.) And they only control part of Old Jerusalem and none of the Temple Mount.

It is of interest that nowhere in the Spirit of Prophecy do we find any hint that any Bible prophecy (Luke 21:24 or any other passage) says the Jews are to return to Jerusalem and once again make it their capital. Think not that, because their capital is next to Old Jerusalem, their capital is in Old Jerusalem or that it is part of their capital. A large part of East (Old) Jerusalem is under full Palestinian authority. The Jews may live in the area, but ancient Jerusalem still is not theirs.

Before concluding this article, let me cite an interesting parallel: The Bible predicted that Babylon would never be rebuilt, but you probably have read articles about how Iraq rebuilt the city, where a village had been for centuries.

But the truth is that the ancient site of Babylon has never been rebuilt. The prediction was that the Arabs would fear to even enter the area, due to superstitious fears about wild animals there.

Those predictions stand to this day. The village, called Babylon, was built several miles from ancient Babylon and Arabs refuse, to this day, to go to the area where ancient Babylon was located. Yet another example is Tyre. When God speaks, His Word stands.

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