

God Has Chosen Jerusalem

✖ There is no city on the face of the earth like Jerusalem. *Jerusalem*—the very word excites and stirs deep emotions, memories of the past, and hopes for the future.

The temple. The chanting of pilgrims. The palaces and towers. Wars and conquests. Religious longings of Jews, Muslims and Christians. Jews praying at the Western Wall for peace in the Holy City. Jerusalem is where heaven and earth meet.

There are cities famous for their size, their industrial and manufacturing capacities, their sports teams, or their unique locations. But Jerusalem is like no city on the face of the earth.

From its earliest times, the history of Jerusalem is the history of war and peace, of greatness and misery, of splendor and squalor, of Solomon's wisdom, and of blood flowing in the gutter like rainwater in spring.

The golden thread running through that blood-soaked historical tapestry is the unshakable association of the Jewish people with the sacred city. Jerusalem is sacred to Christians, Muslims, and Jews, but God has given Jerusalem only to the Jews.

The Jewish love affair with Jerusalem has been interrupted through the centuries by a series of greedy and bloodthirsty conquerors, including the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Seleucids, Romans, Muslim Arabs, Crusaders, Mamelukes, the Ottoman Empire, and the British Empire. Even today, the roots of anti-Semitism still run deep in the hearts of people throughout the world—including in our own nation. We will take a closer look at the sinful root of anti-Semitism in a later chapter and establish the need for repentance today—nationally, corporately, and in a later chapter and establish the need for repentance today—nationally, corporately, and

individually. Anti-Semitism is sin, and sin damns the soul!

There is evidence that many Christians around the world are beginning to own up to the role the church has played in promoting this hatred of the Jews. In spite of the effects of anti-Semitism expressed against them, throughout the 3,000 years since David made Jerusalem the capital city, the spiritual attachment of the Jewish people to Jerusalem remains unbroken. It is a bond created by covenant between God and Abraham, which no amount of suffering or sacrifice can sever.

During the Diaspora, wherever the Jews found themselves on the face of the earth, the Jews prayed for the return to Zion, the biblical synonym for Jerusalem.

Their synagogues, wherever in the world they are built, were built facing Jerusalem. When the Jew built a house, part of a wall would be left unfinished, symbolizing the fact it was a temporary dwelling-until the owner could return to Jerusalem.

Without the city of Jerusalem, the State of Israel could not exist. Jerusalem is the heart and soul of Zionism. Jerusalem is now and will be in the future the center of the universe. There will be no world peace until there is peace in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is like no city on the face of the earth because Jerusalem is nothing less than the City of God.

God himself chose to establish Jerusalem as His dwelling place on earth forever. Jerusalem is the city where God's presence dwells on the earth. I have traveled the world several times and have visited the celebrated cities of the earth, but I have found that in Jerusalem there is a very special and powerful presence. It is the literal presence of the living God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That divine presence appeared to Moses in the burning bush, calling him to liberate the Jewish people from the iron grip of Egyptian slavery.

That presence caused the crest of Mount Sinai to glow with God's glory as He gave Moses the Ten Commandments. That divine

presence was on Moses' face as he descended the mount. The powerful presence can be felt at the Western Wall in Jerusalem where legions of prayers pound the gates of heaven day and night for the peace of Jerusalem.

That presence was established by God through King David, as we can read in 1 Kings 11:36: "And to his son [Solomon] I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chose for Myself, to put My name there."

Jerusalem is the heart of Israel. There are voices now calling for the sacred city to be shared as a part of the Roadmap for Peace in the Middle East. Let it be known to all men far and near, the city of Jerusalem is not up for negotiation with anyone at any time for any reason in the future. It has been and shall always be the eternal and undivided capital of the State of Israel.

After the return of Israel from Babylonian captivity, when people from other nations sought to share in the restoration of Jerusalem, Nehemiah, the Jewish governor, said to them: "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem" (Neh. 2:20, emphasis added). It is important to see this notation-the nations of the world have no inheritance in Jerusalem.