ISRAEL

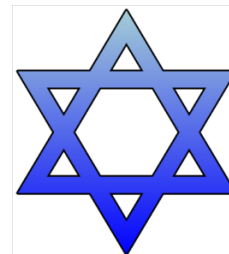## 5. Prayer for Jerusalem

Introduction

Jerusalem is one of the few ancient cities that still exist today. In Acts 3 Peter says that Jesus will only return when all things that the prophets spoke about have been restored. One of the things the prophets spoke of was the restoration of Israel, and the city of Jerusalem. In our previous study we saw how this is being fulfilled. Obviously God has a purpose for the city in these last days. It is important we understand this so we know how to pray.

1. What will happen to Jerusalem in the last days?

✡ What did the prophet Zechariah predict would be the attitude of the nations of the world towards Jerusalem? In what ways is this true today? Zechariah 12:1-3
  (Jerusalem would be the cause of great contention to the surrounding nations and seen as a problem to the nations of the world.)

✡ Describe the events that will take place in the last days regarding Jerusalem. Zechariah 12:3, Joel 3:2
  (All the nations of the earth will gather against Jerusalem and fight her.)

✡ What will God do for Jerusalem at that time? Zechariah 12:8-9
  (God will intervene and preserve Jerusalem and destroy the nations that attacked her.)

There are many remarkable stories of how God has intervened and fought for Israel during Old Testament times, as well as in the recent history of Israel. It will happen again when the nations come against Jerusalem in this final battle.

✡ We often think of God as a God of love, but here we see a different aspect of God's character. Why does God destroy these nations, and what does it reveal about God? Joel 3:2, 12-13
  (God will use this battle to bring about judgment on the nations for their wickedness, particularly the way they have treated the people of Israel.)

✡ Why does God preserve Israel and Jerusalem? What is his purpose? Joel 3:16-17, Zechariah 14:3-4, 16
  (God will prove to his people, and the nations of the world, that he indeed is the Lord God. Jesus will return to the Mount of Olives and enter the city of Jerusalem. From that time on, those remaining from the nations of the world will go up to Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles to worship the Lord.)

When King Solomon dedicated the Temple in Jerusalem God spoke to him and promised that he had chosen this place and his name would be there forever. Read 2 Chronicles 7:15-16. Although Jerusalem will go through great turmoil there will be a day when God will fight for this city. In fact he has a glorious future for this place!

2. How should we pray for Jerusalem?

As we understand what the Bible says about Jerusalem, it will help us pray for effectively. To do so we need to know God's purposes and also feel his heart.

✡   How does God 'feel' about the city of Jerusalem? 2 Chronicles 7:16, Luke 13:34
(The Lord said that his eyes and his heart were there. He loves Jerusalem and so did Jesus.)

✡   What should be our attitude towards Jerusalem? Psalm 122:6-9, Isaiah 66:10
(We should want Jerusalem to be blessed – that she will be protected, have peace and prosperity.)

Although we are to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, we do need to understand that true and lasting peace will only come when Jesus, the Prince of peace returns.

✡   How then are we to pray for Jerusalem? Isaiah 62:1-2, 6-7, 10-11
(We are to pray earnestly and urgently for Jerusalem until God's purposes for this city come to pass. This will be fulfilled when Jesus returns and sits on his throne in Jerusalem.)

✡   Discuss other ways we can pray for Israel and the people who live in this land. Spend some time in prayer using the suggestions that members have made.

Conclusion

It is clear from the Word of God that we are to bless Jerusalem. God has a prophetic destiny for this city and he wants to use us so that his plans and purposes come to pass. This happens when we PRAY!

In the prayer Jesus taught us, it begins with, 'your Kingdom come, your will be done'. We are to make this declaration, this affirmation, to stand with God to see the fulfilment of his eternal purposes. This includes his plans for the city of Jerusalem. So let's do it!