

Ancient Prophecy Predicts Jerusalem will Intoxicate the Arabs and Burden the Nations

Part One: Jerusalem a Burden to the Nations

By Bill Salus

“I will make Jerusalem like an intoxicating drink that makes the nearby (*Arab*) nations stagger when they send their armies to besiege Jerusalem and Judah. On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone, a burden for the world. None of the nations who try (*to intervene*) to lift it will escape unscathed.” (Zechariah 12:2-3, NLT; emphasis added)

Zechariah the prophet predicted that a future day would come when the Arabs would besiege Jerusalem and the international community would intervene and become burdened by the Arab-Israeli conflict. This two-part article looks at



Zechariah 12:1-6 to see if that day has arrived. Part one will deal mostly with the warnings to the world, especially as it relates to America, whereas part two will narrow the focus down to the surrounding Arab nations that share common borders with Israel. Part-two will explain how the Arab-Israeli conflict concludes prior to the seven-year Tribulational Period.

Historical Setting of Zechariah’s Prophecy

Zechariah’s prophecies in chapter 12:1-6, concern Israel generally, but Jerusalem and Judah more specifically. At the time Zechariah issued these predictions, sometime between 520-518 BC, the Israelites were returning from seventy years of exile in

Babylon to re-inhabit the territory of Judah, rebuild Jerusalem and reconstruct their Second Temple. According to 2 Kings 25:8-9, the Babylonians had burned the first Jewish Temple, the king's house, and all the houses in Jerusalem. In this post-exilic period, Zechariah's generation was given the monumental task of the temple's rebuilding and the city's restoration.

JERUSALEM and JUDAH are Sovereign to the JEWS

(Zechariah 12:1) The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. Thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:ⁱ

This sovereign declaration serves as the Lord's certificate of authenticity concerning Zechariah's prophecy. This acknowledgment was first made by the Isaiah who prophesied between 740-701 BC.

Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: *(forms the spirit of man within him)* **“I am the LORD, Who made all things, who stretched out the heavens alone, who *(laid the foundation and)* spread out the earth—Who was with me. Who confirms the word of His servant, And performs the counsel of His messengers;** (Isaiah 44:24)

Portions from Zechariah 12:1 are inserted within the above Isaiah verse to evidence that Zechariah was specifically drawing our attention to Isaiah 44:24. Isaiah 44:24 and Zechariah 12:1 are the only two verses within the Bible where the Lord has the prophets in tandem acknowledge three specific miracles. That the Lord;

1. Stretches out the heavens,
2. Spreads out the earth,
3. Forms the spirit of man within him.

These bold collective claims are intended to add credibility and provide authority to Isaiah's predictions that follow.

Who says to Jerusalem, ‘You shall be inhabited,’ (by Jews) To the cities of Judah, ‘You shall be built,’ (by Jews) And I will raise up her waste places; Who says to the deep, ‘Be dry! And I will dry up your rivers’; Who says of Cyrus, (King of Persia 600-530 BC) ‘He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, “You shall be built,” (by Jews) And to the temple, “Your foundation shall be laid. (by Jews)”’ (Isaiah 44:26-28; emphasis added)

This Isaiah prophecy was issued well over a century before Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians around 586 BC. Isaiah essentially stated that, as sure as the Lord single-handedly stretched out the heavens, spread abroad the earth and created mankind, the JEWS would rebuild JERUSALEM and JUDAH. Isaiah anticipated the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians and the subsequent need to restore it.

Isaiah 44:26 prophesied that JERUSALEM would be inhabited with JEWS and the cities of JUDAH would be rebuilt by JEWS. Isaiah 44:28 proclaimed over 150 years in advance, that King Cyrus of Persia would issue the command for the restoration of JERUSALEM and JUDAH!

In 539 BC, the Persian King Cyrus conquered the Babylonians and according to Ezra 1:2, he immediately commanded the Jews to return to Israel to rebuild the Jewish Temple and restore the devastation in Judah. Zechariah’s generation was the living fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy. Thus, his repeat declaration of Isaiah 44:24 in Zechariah 12:1, is intended to leave no doubt that what he is about to prophesy will surely find fulfillment! The question is when?

The Arabs Contest Israel’s Rightful Claims to Jerusalem and Judah

“Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah *and* against Jerusalem. (Zechariah 12:2; KJV)

Zechariah 12:1, which called to remembrance Isaiah’s prophecy about King Cyrus, clearly declared that the JEWS possessed God given sovereignty over all of

JERUSALEM and JUDAH! King Cyrus commanded the JEWS, not the Arabs, to return to Israel and restore their homeland. Zechariah 12:2 foretells that someday Israel's rightful claims to these areas would be falsely and forcibly contested by the surrounding Arab peoples. Jerusalem becomes the center of the controversy and it causes the Arabs to tremble as long as they place a stronghold over the area. The Hebrew word for "siege" is "matsor," which can also be translated as *hemming in*.ⁱⁱ



As this study will point out, this appears to be dealing with the current Arab-Israeli dispute over portions of these territories, namely the West Bank. During Zechariah's time, these regions were called Judah and Samaria. Presently, the Arabs claim that these areas are under illegal Israeli occupation, but Zechariah's claims make it clear that it is the Arabs that are trespassing into these lands.

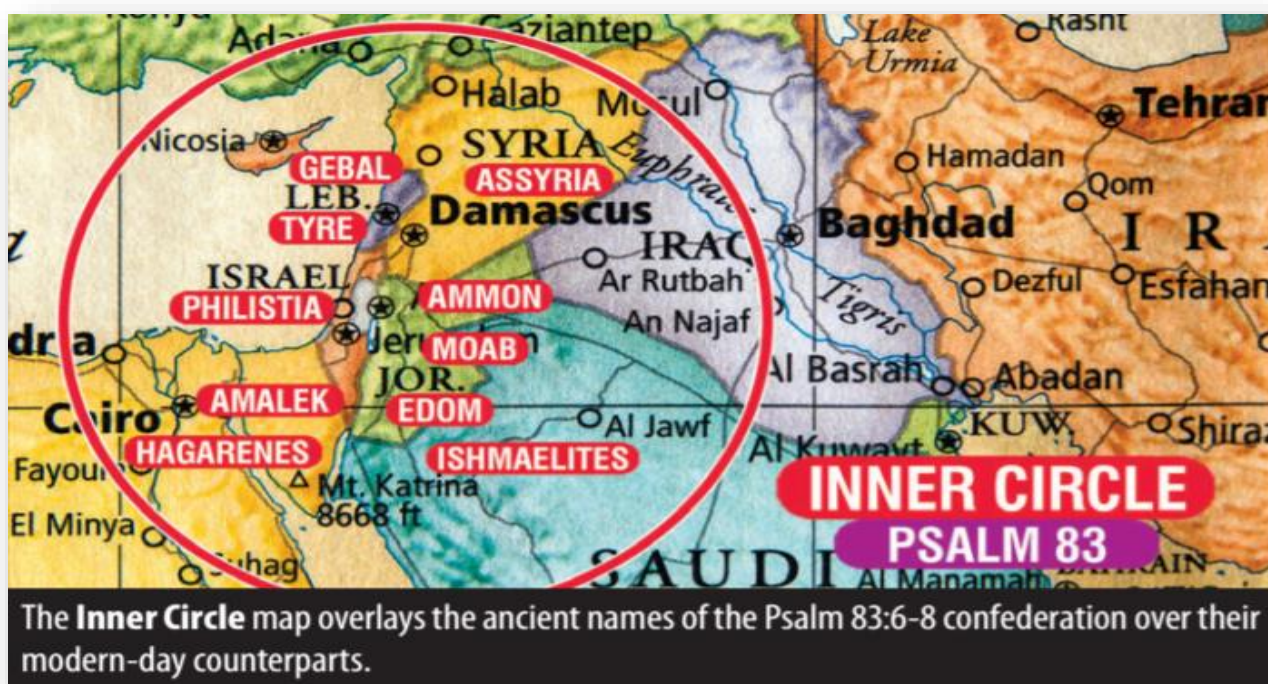
During the Jewish Diaspora, which essentially began about 70 AD, many Jews abandoned Jerusalem and Judah. In 135 AD, the Romans renamed the land as Palestine and over the centuries, the Arabs began to homestead the Holy Land. Jeremiah 12:14-17 anticipated this problem, and revealed God's compassionate end time's plan to remedy the predicament.

Thus says the LORD: "Against all My (surrounding) evil (Arab) neighbors who touch the inheritance (land of Israel) which I have caused My people Israel to inherit—behold, I will pluck them (evil Arabs) out of their land and pluck out the house of Judah (Jews) from among them (evil Arabs). Then it shall be, after I have plucked them out, that I will return and have compassion on them and bring them back, everyone (Jews and evil Arabs) to his heritage and everyone to his land. And it shall be, if they (evil Arabs) will learn carefully the ways of My people, (the Jews) to swear by My name, 'As the LORD lives,' as they taught My people to swear by Baal, then they (evil Arabs) shall be established in the midst of My people. But if they do not obey, I will utterly pluck up and

destroy that (evil Arab) nation,” says the LORD. (Jeremiah 12:14-17; emphasis added)

Today, these evil Arab neighbors are out of compliance with God’s compassionate Mideast peace plan. They are worshipping Allah, not Jehovah, and they are cursing the Jews and staking false claims upon Jerusalem and Judah. As a result, the Lord will be left no other choice than to **“utterly pluck up and destroy that (evil Arab) nation.”**

The evil Arab nations likely represent the inner circle of nations depicted in the Psalm 83 map image. Correlating verses that seem to identify them and their participating role in Zechariah 12:2 are, the Arab confederacy of Psalm 83:6-8, the evil neighbors in Jeremiah 12:14-17, the despisers of Israel in Ezekiel 28:24-26, the plunderers, mockers and trespassers of Ezekiel 36:1-7 and elsewhere.



It is interesting to note that the word “trembling” in Zechariah 12:2 is the Hebrew word “raal,” and it is only used this one time in the entire Old Testament. Some Bible versions translate it as trembling, reeling, or drunkenness.

Moreover, the Hebrew word for “cup” is “saph” and it differs from another Hebrew word for cup, which is “kos.” “Kos” is used to depict God’s wrath contained in a cup for

divine judgment purposes in Isaiah 51:17, 22 and Jeremiah 25:15. I point this out, because some biblical scholars believe that this mention of cup is dealing with God's wrath or judgment, but this does not appear to be the case. Zechariah's cup of trembling contains a concoction, which when ingested, results in a reaction of reeling and intoxication. The point Zechariah is making to the Arabs is, abandon your erroneous claims upon Judah and Jerusalem because they are causing you to behave like a violent drunkard.

The International Community Intervenes on the Status of Jerusalem

And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. (Zec. 12:3, NKJV)

And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it. (Zec. 12:3 ASV)

This verse predicts that when the status of Jerusalem is contested by the Arabs, "*in that day*," the international community will intervene. Zechariah 12:1-6 uses the term "*in that day*" three times in (Zechariah 12:3, 4, 6). The adage, "*in that day*," appears over 100 times in the Bible and it mostly refers to the correlating progression of events that occur within the same general time period. Like, a domino effect, with one event prompting the succession of a sequence of other interrelated scenarios. For example, in the future prophecy of Ezekiel 38 a formidable coalition of nations invades Israel and Ezekiel says that, "*in that day*," the Lord becomes furious and then proceeds to supernaturally destroy this confederacy in the events described in Ezekiel 38:14-23.

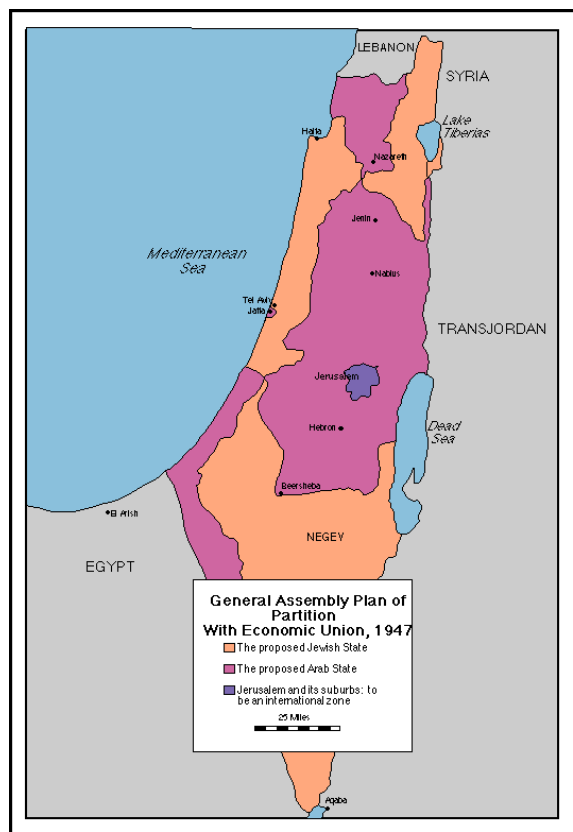
Zechariah 12:3 makes a clear distinction between, "all the surrounding peoples" in verse 2, with "all nations of the earth." In verse 3, Zechariah seems to intentionally omit the word surrounding from the prior verse. Thus, now the prophet is referring to the international community, "***all the nations of the earth***". Part two of this article will further explain this difference.

The word Zechariah uses for burden can also be translated as to “impose a burden.” What the prophet appears to be stating in verse 3 is;

When Israel’s surrounding Arab neighbors attempt to besiege and possess Jerusalem, “*in that day*,” the international community will attempt to intervene and “impose a burden” upon the city. Zechariah warns that this is a bad idea because the burden will boomerang back to “sorely wound,” or “cut to pieces,” those nations.

Before I comment on how Zechariah 12:3 seems relevant today, it’s important to note that most Bible prophecy teachers connect this verse with the gathering of the nations in Joel 3:2 and Zechariah 14:2. They believe that this verse finds fulfillment during the campaign of Armageddon near the end of the Tribulation Period.

For example, the *Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, authored by John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck reads, “*That day*,” (alluding to Zechariah 12:3), *refers to the future Battle (or better, Campaign) of Armageddon, in which the nations’ armies will gather against Jerusalem.*”



My belief is that the meddling of the international community spoken of in Zechariah 12:3 began on November 29, 1947, with the passage of UN Resolution 181, also called the Partition Plan. November 29, 2017 marks the seventy-year anniversary of this event. On “*that day*” the United Nations imposed a severe burden upon Israel’s sovereign claims to Jerusalem by turning the city into an international zone. The “Partition Plan” partitioned Palestine into a state for the Jews and one for the Arabs, but Jerusalem was segregated from both into an international zone.

(Map image shows Jerusalem in **blue** as an international zone. Image was taken from this website: <http://www.mideastweb.org/unpartition.htm>)

The evil Arab neighbors of Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon were among the 13 nations that voted against the passage of the Partition Plan. Jordan was not admitted into the UN until 1955, so they aren't listed in this elite group. Unsurprisingly, these are the primary nations that went to war with Israel in 1948.

These Arabs lost that war and Israel's Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, declared Jerusalem as the "Eternal Capital of Israel." However, in the Armistice Agreements of 1949, the United Nations again imposed a burden upon Jerusalem by drawing a green line of demarcation that separated Jerusalem into two parts. Only West Jerusalem was allotted to the Jews.



This 1947-1949 map image evidences that the international community intervened again on the status of Jerusalem by dividing the city. This marked the first time in history that the city of Jerusalem had been divided. The dividing of Jerusalem is not biblically endorsed. Nowhere in the Bible does it mention an East or West Jerusalem.

Then, in the Six Day War of in June of 1967, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) left the Arabs "reeling" again by defeating them in another

war. As a result, Israel gained control of East Jerusalem and the West Bank (from Jordan), the Gaza Strip (from Egypt) and the Golan Heights (from Syria).

In the aftermath of their victory, Israel made the unwise choice of allowing the Waqf based in Jordan to maintain control over the Temple Mount. The West Bank & Gaza mapⁱⁱⁱ depicts the current condition of the status of Jerusalem. Lo and behold, Israel presently has control over the entire city, apart from the Temple Mount. What's observable as we look at the border changes in Israel since the Partition Plan of 1947, is that the biblical claims that Jerusalem belongs to the JEWS is prevailing over the geo-political efforts of the Arabs and the international community.



The US Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995

Over the past three decades, the US has been at the forefront of dealing with Middle East peace and the final status arrangements of Jerusalem. On his presidential campaign trail, Donald Trump promised to relocate the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. However, on June 1, 2017, US President Donald Trump signed a presidential waiver that prevented the move. Relocating the US embassy to Jerusalem is not just a friendly gesture to Israel, rather it is an act of compliance with the US Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995.

On October 23, 1995, the 104th Congress passed The Jerusalem Embassy Act. It was passed for the purposes of initiating and funding the relocation of the Embassy of the United States in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, this was to be accomplished no later than May 31, 1999. However, the move never took place because on the 6-month anniversary date, US President Bill Clinton signed a presidential waiver suspending the move. Like Clinton, Presidents George W. Bush, Barrack Obama and now Donald Trump, have all continuously signed this waiver.

Some of the important points from the 17 congressional findings contained in Section 2 of the legislation are below.

Finding #1: Every sovereign nation, including Israel, may designate its own capital.

Finding #2: Since 1950, the city of Jerusalem has been the capital of the State of Israel.

Finding #7: Since 1967, Jerusalem has been a united city administered by Israel,

Finding #9: Congress “strongly believes that Jerusalem must remain an undivided city in which the rights of every ethnic and religious group are protected.” This is reaffirmed in finding #10.

Finding #17: In 1996, the State of Israel will celebrate the 3,000th anniversary of the Jewish presence in Jerusalem since King David’s entry. (This finding acknowledges that Israel’s presence in Israel pre-dates any Arab claims to the city in modernity).

What the Jerusalem Embassy Act acknowledges is that America believes that Jerusalem is the undivided capital of Israel and this is validated by the historical fact that the Jewish presence in Jerusalem predates all Arab claims to the city. This means that moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem would be in alignment with the Bible’s similar claims.

Should Donald Trump serve a full first term, he will have several more opportunities to make good on his promise to move the embassy. If he does, it will;

1. Signal that the world's greatest superpower supports Israel's rights to Jerusalem as its undivided capital,
2. Further undermine the international control and oversight of Jerusalem,
3. Pave the way for other nations to move their embassies to Jerusalem.

These three things are problematic for the Arabs claims over Jerusalem. Zechariah 12:2 informed that the surrounding Arabs are intoxicated over Jerusalem. If the world's greatest superpower moves its embassy to Jerusalem, it could create uproar within the neighboring Arab states and a firestorm throughout the greater Islamic world, which considers Jerusalem as its third holiest city.

What Donald Trump and Americans need to be concerned about is the warning of Zechariah 12:3. Imposing a burden upon Jerusalem, like asking Israel to relinquish control over an area with the city of Jerusalem or territory of Judah (Judea), will have consequences. It will "break to pieces," or "sorely wound" America.

White House correspondent Bill Koenig of www.watch.org points out in his book called, *"Eye to Eye, Facing the Consequences of Dividing Israel,"* that dividing the land of Israel results in adverse consequences to the nation(s) directly involved. He cites the case of Hurricane Katrina in August of 2005. He correlates the evacuation of the Jews from Gaza at that time to the devastation caused during the category 5 hurricane. Former president George Bush had influenced Israel to withdraw from the Gaza and the Lord responded swiftly by slapping America with its most costly disaster in its history.

The lesson to the nations is do not divide the land of Israel. If Donald Trump dares to separate the Jews from their land, especially Jerusalem as specified in Zechariah 12:3, then the warning is that America could suffer severely.

On May 24, 2017, The Times of Israel reported; *"US President Donald Trump is said to be pressing Israel to transfer parts of the West Bank to Palestinian administrative control as a goodwill gesture to help revive peace talks between the two sides. Specifically, they have asked for areas in the northern West Bank to be transferred from Area C to Area B, according to the report."*



Area A is under full civil and security control by the PA (currently governed by Fatah). **Area B** is under PA civil control but Israel and the PA are cooperating to provide security services. **Area C** is fully Israeli in all but name.^{iv}

Zechariah 2:8 says that “he who touches Israel,” referring to the land and / or the people, “touch the apple of God’s eye.”

If Trump plans to make America great again, he will need to make wise decisions concerning Israel and the future status of Jerusalem. He needs to tread lightly when it comes to Israel so as not to poke God in the eye. Perhaps it’s best for him to move the US embassy to Jerusalem and then just keep his nose out of God’s business concerning the final status of Jerusalem.

NEWS FLASH! THIS JUST IN!

As I’m preparing to publicize this article, Israel National News declares on July 27, 2017;

[Report: Netanyahu offers major land swap with PA](#)

“PM reportedly told Trump envoys he is prepared to surrender large swath of pre-1967 Israel to PA in exchange for 'settlement blocs'.”

Stay tuned for part two, which explains how the Arab-Israeli conflict concludes!

“In that day, says the LORD, “I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider



with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of

Jerusalem *are* my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.' In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; **they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left**, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem.” (Zechariah 12:4-6)

ⁱ Zechariah 12 verses are taken from the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.

ⁱⁱ Matsor definition taken from Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries; H4692

ⁱⁱⁱ West Bank & Gaza map is taken from this website: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/05/19/israel-map-the-palestina_n_864379.html

^{iv} Area A, B, C map taken this website: <http://www.polgeonow.com/2014/06/palestine-west-bank-and-gaza-reunited.html>