

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.*

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

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Four Blood Moons & the Great City

During early spring of this year, there was a lot of buzz about the upcoming blood moons that will occur in conjunction with Passover and Tabernacles during 2014-2015. Books and many articles have been written about them and their possible implications to the world and the modern-state of Israel, the usurpers of the birthright name given to Joseph, not Judah (1 Chronicles 5:1-2).

Back in March of this year, a well-known televangelist who is also a vehement Christian Zionist had his face plastered on the Internet as he pitched his new book on the Blood Moons. This preacher states with great bravado that the flag of modern Israel will forever fly over Jerusalem. If he is correct, then where does that leave two great prophets, Jeremiah and Isaiah, that prophesied of a total and final destruction of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 19:10-12; Isaiah 29:1-10)? Or, what about Jesus' indictment of Jerusalem and its religion, Judaism? Would they thrive once again as a nation and bear fruit for the Kingdom of God? No; they would not, even if they came back to life, that is, became a fig tree (national state) with green leaves. They would remain barren, along with all the nations of the world.

And, perceiving one fig tree [bad figs of Judah; Jeremiah 24:1-10] on the roadside, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only. And He is saying to it, "No longer, by any means, may fruit be coming of you for the eon [barren with no promise of ever bearing fruit again]. And withered instantly is the fig tree." (Matthew 21:19 CLV)

Because of this I say to you, The kingdom of God will be taken from you, and it will be given to a nation [ethnos] producing the fruits of it. (Matthew 21:43 LITV)

Within 40 years of Jesus' exhortation, Jerusalem was laid waste by the Romans and many Jews were killed, either by the Romans or by fellow Jews. If interested in a detailed account of what happened in 70 AD, read Josephus' *The War of the Jews*. Jesus warned it would come upon those who rejected Him, demanded His crucifixion, and usurped His throne (Matthew 23:2), and it did.

"But the king [God] was enraged, and he sent his armies [Romans from 66-73 AD] and destroyed those murderers [Jews] and set their city [Jerusalem] on fire." (Matthew 22:7 NASB)

Some might retort that Israel (*aka* the Jew) is back on the land as prophesied by Jesus through the parable of the fig tree.

Then He told them a parable: "Behold the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place." (Luke 21:29-32 NASB)

The leaves of a modern-state erroneously called *Israel* came forth in May 1948, but so did the leaves of many other nations. In May 1949, Israel was given full membership in the United Nations (UN), and over the next three decades, the UN membership grew by 92 nations. The greatest increase in UN membership (42 nations) occurred in the same decade that Israel took control of Jerusalem (1967). Truly, the fig tree (bad fig tree of Judah called *Israel*) and all the trees (nations) came to life (put forth leaves). Many take this as a positive sign that the present-

day Israel is God's nation, but scripture may indicate otherwise. It is most definitely a sign but not one of fruitfulness. It is a sign that as we near the end of this present wicked age, the nations will not be bearing fruit for the Kingdom of God. They all will be barren. Does it need to be proven; simply look around the world and see if you can discover one fruit-bearing nation, one that lifts up the name of Jesus as King of kings? Even the United States fails in this regard as our nation is looking more like ancient Sodom (usury, immorality) and Egypt (bondage, spirit of the world) in character.

So, the barren fig tree and all the nations are a sign that the Kingdom of God is near, not a sign that these nations are bearing fruit for the Kingdom or that they will ever bear fruit in this present age. In the next age, many nations will begin to bear Kingdom fruit, but we are not in the next age yet. Jesus said that the barren fruit tree would never bear fruit in this age, and so it will not.

Some might argue that even though Jesus prophesied of Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD, the fact that it has been rebuilt proves that it is the eternal capital of God's Kingdom; consequently, it will never cease to be so. Really? Let's consider another set of scriptures. The first one is from Jesus as He pronounced Jerusalem guilty of all the blood shed on earth. This is a mighty powerful indictment.

"Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, so that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. "Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation." (Matthew 23:34-36 NASB)

Now, turning to the *Revelation of Jesus Christ* as recorded by John, the apostle of love, Jerusalem is described as **the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified** (Revelation 11:8). In Revelation 17-18, this great city is called **a mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth** (Revelation 17:5). This doesn't sound like good news for this great city, and it isn't, for John declared its downfall. **So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer** (Revelation 18:21).

Part of the mystery of this great city is that Babylon (as are Sodom and Egypt) is synonymous with Jerusalem. John was not describing a rebuilt city in the ancient land of Babylon or modern-day Iraq. John proves the point by using the same words as Jesus did in reference to His indictment of Jerusalem.

"Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her."... "And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth." (Revelation 18:20, 24 NASB)

It was thrown down in 70 AD and is destined to be thrown down again at the end of this age. In fact, its demise will be the sign that the Kingdom of our Lord has come. Add to this Paul's allegory to the Galatians in which he clearly states that **the present Jerusalem** [in Paul's day] **is in slavery and must be cast out, for the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother** (Galatians 4:21-31). Has this need changed just because there is a modern-day Jerusalem sitting in the Middle East? Are we now to embrace two Jerusalems? No! Space doesn't allow for more elaboration but further explanation is found in some of my articles. Please see the links below.

Cast Out the Slave Woman: <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art25.pdf>

Fig Tree in Scripture: <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art38.pdf>

Dualism, Reversionism, Graftage: <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art39.pdf>

Why Modern Israel? <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/tuc/tuc480.pdf>

For more on Israel, the Jew, Esau, etc, search the 2010 archives.

<http://www.kingdomandglory.com/tuc2010.html>