

PROPHECIES OF JERUSALEM

Jon Macon

It is not unusual to see prophecies of the same event recorded in multiple places in the Bible. Sometimes we find a prophecy of a particular event in both the Old and New Testament scriptures. This should be no surprise to us, because we know that *all* scripture, both in the Old and New Testaments, is inspired of God (2 Tim 3:14-17). God, being the author of the entire Bible, is quite able to repeatedly foretell a future event through many different prophets over the course of many hundreds of years. One such event is the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans which occurred in the year 70 A.D.

Old Testament prophecy of Jerusalem's fall in 70 A.D.

Zechariah 14:1-5 says, "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. *For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.* Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. *And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.*" Zechariah spoke these words well after the Babylonians had first destroyed Jerusalem and Solomon's temple. Here, the Lord was foretelling another fall of Jerusalem, which was fulfilled in 70 A.D. At that time, certain ones would not be spared or delivered while certain others would be during this particular "*day of the Lord.*" When Jerusalem was spoiled, besieged, and taken, God said a residue would not be cut off (Zech 14:2). For this "residue," the Lord would create a path running west-to-east from the Mount of Olives, by which his saints would flee like they had from the earthquake in king Uzziah's day (Zech 14:4-5).

Christ's prophecies of Jerusalem's destruction

Jesus also prophesied of the very same things Zechariah did (see Matt 23:37-38; 24:1-2,15-22; Mark 13:1-2,14-20; Luke 13:34-35; 19:41-44; 21:5-26; 23:27-31). When Jesus entered Jerusalem to begin his last week on this earth, he lamented over what would happen to her: "*For the days*

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(continued)

shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another” (Luke 19:43-44). A few days later, “Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. *And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down”* (Matt 24:1-2). Jesus’ disciples then asked him when this would happen and what sign there would be of its coming, and the Lord gave this reply: “*And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! 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 down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”* (Luke 21:20-24).

Prophecy fulfilled

Both the Old and New Testament prophecies of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by the Romans under Titus, son of Caesar and heir to the throne, were fulfilled in all their detail. When the Lord’s disciples saw the sign of the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem, they were warned by Christ to immediately flee for their lives (Luke 21:21). History records that the Christians in Jerusalem, the “residue” of the city mentioned in Zechariah 14:2, recognized the signs and heeded Christ’s warning and fled Jerusalem and were spared from those calamities. As prophesied by Zechariah, the Roman army paused from their siege before destroying Jerusalem and at that time, the Christians fled Jerusalem and took refuge in Pella, eastward of the River Jordan. God suddenly gave Christians this way of escape, the pathway to escape the danger foretold by Zechariah. As a result, none of the Christians were harmed when Jerusalem fell. In contrast, the Jews who remained in the city were destroyed and scattered. Everything prophesied in scripture was exactly fulfilled when the Christians escaped the destruction of the Jews and Jerusalem in 70 A.D.