

**FLEE  
TO THE  
MOUNTAINS**

**RAY BRUBAKER**

# FLEE TO THE MOUNTAINS

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# INTRODUCTION

Dwight Pentecost, in his book, **PROPHECY FOR TODAY**, likens the situation in the Middle East to a volcano about to erupt. Here is what he writes: "We know not when, nor by what pretext, another great world conflagration may be set off, for this Arab-Israeli dispute might erupt as a great volcano, spreading destruction as lava over the face of the earth, embroiling the world in the greatest war ever seen."

Notes Pentecost, "Men of state debate the issue: To whom does Palestine actually belong? Does it belong to the Arabs who have been there for generations? Or does the land belong to those descendants of Abraham who first entered the land and whose descendants conquered it, possessed it for centuries as a great and glorious homeland and then were driven out?"

We witnessed this discontent when we traveled through the disputed territory of the West Bank of what was once Jordan, where flows the Jordan River. Though peaceful, the Jordan is not symbolic of relations existing between the Israelis and the Palestinians of the area.

The Arabs living on the West Bank see no peaceful end to the military occupation by Israel. They are largely convinced that this is their land and that violence and military force must eventually drive out the Israelis.

On the other hand, the Israelis are just as convinced that they have a God-given right to the land. The West Bank is part of the land God promised Israel through his servant Abraham.

For in Genesis 12 when God called Abraham he said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

So these Israelis point out that God made a promise to Abraham concerning this land and its future.

The promise contained a personal blessing where God told Abraham, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee." Then there was also a national promise wherein the Lord said to Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation." And finally, there was a promise of international scope for we read: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

**But you say, Where is the promise that this land is to be Abraham's forever, and hence belong to Israel and her posterity?**

**The Lord, who appeared to Abraham on occasion, appeared to him again in Gen. 13:14-15 saying: "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever . . ."**

**Did you hear it?**

**It was an everlasting possession so that Israel's claim to the land was to be perpetual.**

**Thus we have the strife in the land today between the offspring of Abraham—both Jews and Arabs.**

**So what will eventually happen?**

**There's coming a time, my friend, when one will arise within Europe who will attempt to solve the Arab-Israeli crisis.**

**It is interesting to note the various leaders of the European Common Market countries who have expressed themselves over Palestinian autonomy and Israel's future.**

**At times it looks as though the Europeans want to take the ball and run with it exactly as foretold in the Word of God. Expressions can be heard of the rights of Palestinians along with the right of Israel to exist.**

**This is part of the problem.**

**Yassar Arafat, as the spokesman for the PLO, on the one hand said in a newspaper interview with an Austrian editor that he did not want to destroy Israel. But on the other hand, in an interview over a French radio station Arafat said that Western Europe was to stop coddling Israel. Said Arafat: "I am not threatening, but I am warning Europe . . . All you can see in the Middle East is Israel, the stability of Israel, Israel's standard of living. If this policy continues," said Arafat, "you will pay for it very dearly."**

**However, Bible Prophecy reveals the time will come and may soon be here when a leader will arise within Europe who will seize the initiative and will seek to solve the Middle East conflict.**

**Again quoting Dr. Pentecost who says concerning this head of the Federated States of Europe, "He will assert his great authority and power by attempting to settle the Arab-Israeli dispute."**

**The Prophet Amos writes, "In that day will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this." (Amos 9:11-12)**

**Reference to Edom makes us think of Petra, in the land of Edom, where it is believed by Bible students of Prophecy that God will provide a haven for the remnant of Jews that will be spared death in that coming day.**

# FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK



*Ma'aleh Ephraim*

**TIME** magazine, commenting on a new Israeli push to colonize the West Bank with thousands of settlers as quickly as possible, quotes Genesis 17:8. Here the Lord says to Abraham, "And I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." ( 1/17/83)

Does the West Bank belong to Israel which acquired the territory during the Six-Day War? Or does it belong to the Palestinians which according to the United Nations have the right to make it an independent state?

At present, 25,000 Israelis live on the West Bank, occupying parts of the Biblical regions of Judea and Samaria. It is Israel's hope that by the end of 1987 there will be 100,000 settlers.

It is argued that at present the West Bank belongs to no one legally, so it is "up for grabs."

According to the Camp David Accords, signed in 1978 by Egypt, Israel and the United States, and after a period of transition, the West Bank population is to be allowed self-rule. For that reason Israel wants to make sure its people make up a majority on the West Bank. For when they do, the West Bank will almost automatically become a province of the State of Israel.

In the **PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL** (Sept. 15, 1982) the question is asked, "What is the West Bank?"

In reality, it is the West Bank of the Jordan River, lush with citrus fruits. And there is Jericho famous for the battle in which the city's walls came tumbling down.

Again **TIME** magazine has commented concerning the West Bank that "much of it looks today as it must have looked in the time of Jesus. Gnarled, green olive trees cling to the arid slopes while vineyards thrive in the valleys watered by the Jordan River."

Up until the war of 1967 the West Bank included the Old City of Jerusalem, including the Temple area. The Mount of Olives and Gethsemane are West Bank. Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, is located in the West Bank. Bethlehem and the Shepherd's Fields are West Bank.

The United Nations Resolution 242 calls upon Israel to withdraw from territories it occupied in 1967, including the West Bank. But, Prime Minister Begin asserts that this land was divinely given and that Israel's right to it is "eternal."

Prime Minister Begin prefers to make reference to Judea and Samaria as the Biblical name for the West Bank. So when it comes to ownership of the land, he says, "You don't annex your own homeland."

In Bible times you'll recall that Herod was the king of Judea. (Lu. 1:5) As mentioned before, Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the land of Judea. (Mt. 2:1) In Matt. 3:1 we read, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea."

So Judea appears prominently in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. It also is mentioned prominently in the book of Acts. In Acts 1:8 our Lord said to His disciples, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

In many of the Epistles mention is made of Judea as a location of some of the early churches.

And, it is of interest to note that the coming of the great tribulation in which Antichrist is seen appearing and desecrating the temple finds a warning given to all those in Judea. For Jesus said, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (Whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountain." (Matt. 24:15-16)

Did you hear it?

Notice, it does not say, "Let them which be in Jerusalem flee" but rather those who are in Judea are told to flee.

We might ask, Could it be that occupancy of the West Bank by Jewish settlers will provoke hostilities leading to the coming great tribulation?

Our Lord goes on to suggest, "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (Matt. 24:20-21)

Without question, Israel's action in seeking to swell the population of the West Bank is proving to be provocative.

PLO chairman Yasser Arafat wants a Palestinian entity on the Israeli-occupied West Bank. He has called for a freeze on Israeli settlements. In fact, in a fiery speech he declared he would pursue the struggle against Israel "until a just peace has been achieved and the Palestinian flag is hoisted atop the mosques and churches of Jerusalem." (TIMES 2/15/83)

Elias Freij is a Christian Palestinian and the mayor of Bethlehem. He says concerning the consequences of Israel's settlement on the West Bank: "We are fighting against time . . . We are five minutes to midnight, and this is our last chance."

Today, there are more than one hundred large and small settlements at various stages of development on the West Bank.

Israel is determined to push ahead with the settlements, despite Arab warnings that this policy would endanger any future prospect for peace in the Middle East.

The JERUSALEM POST has asserted, "The effort to make the mostly Arab area of Judea and Samaria Jewish has become an intolerable burden on the Jewish state."

The fact is—Israel doesn't want a Palestinian State on its doorstep—at any cost. And that's why Israel is pouring its people onto the West Bank. The Israelis don't believe any state the PLO or the Palestinians would set up could live peacefully by their side.

As Professor Moshe Sharon at the Hebrew University declared bluntly, "Jews and Arabs cannot live together because they bloody hate each other."

The Israelis are convinced they have a God-given right to the West Bank and that nothing, and no one, can force them to leave.

As one Israeli settler testified, "We are not going to leave this place. We will stay here forever in the middle of Samaria. There is no power in the world that can force us out."

Israel's intentions on the West Bank are then quite clear. The government wants an autonomous but Jewish West Bank. And to achieve this, it is prepared to alter the balance of population in the area. That's what the new, large settlements are all about. That's what they hope to achieve.

The big question remains—Will Israel give up the West Bank as she gave up the Sinai?

The editor of the PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL replies: "We think there is about as much chance of Israel agreeing to giving up the West Bank as there is of the U.S. agreeing to give France all of this country west of the Mississippi."

What then can we expect?

We know that the United States and the United Nations are adamant in insisting that Israel not continue to establish homes in Judea and Samaria during negotiations.

What will eventually happen is spelled out in Zechariah 14:2 where the Lord says, "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."

We read, "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 in verse 5 we're told: "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

Witnessing events in Israel and, in particular, the growing crisis on the West Bank, makes us believe the day of tribulation preceded by the coming of our Lord is just ahead.

While we don't know the day nor the hour when our Lord will return, we know it will be a terrible day for the world, including Israel, and no one should want to be left behind to face the awful holocaust of the great tribulation.

If you are not right with God, not ready for the Lord when He comes, you can get ready and be ready.

Knowing the hour is late—that it's minutes 'til midnight, and our Lord's coming hastens, kneel before God and get right with Him. Confess your need of His salvation and receive Him as your Lord and Saviour. Then do His will and live for Him 'til He comes.

And be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

# WEST BANK & THE GREAT TRIBULATION



Street Scene in Hebron, city where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are buried

The **NEAR EAST REPORT** notes, "International diplomacy and 'world opinion' have indubitably placed the future status of the Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza at the top of the world's negotiating agenda for months and years ahead."

It is further noted, "This complex problem must find some equitable resolution, but it would be worse than useless to seek it on the basis of myths, untruths and ignorance of history."

"The truth is that neither in history nor in international law has Palestine ever been a country, still less an Arab country.

The word "Palestine" has its origins in the Biblical name which the Israelites gave the land of the Philistines.

It was only after 1917, under British rule, that the name was reinstated.

**U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT** once observed, "The West Bank is virtually an armed camp, with terrorism and reprisals commonplace." (4/13/81)

It is further stated, "Nowhere is the hatred between Arabs and Israelis more obvious than in Hebron, the second largest and most religious Arab city on the West Bank." (Aug. 17, 1981)

Some question whether Hebron shall be called an Arab city. After all, Hebron had a Jewish community from biblical times until 1929, when Arab mobs killed more than 60 Jews and drove out the survivors.

When Israeli soldiers, in '67, entered Hebron, the Arabs were terrified. They expected to be slaughtered and thought Israel would surely drive them away. But Israel said "stay."

According to history and the Bible, you'll find Hebron is where the Jewish patriarch Abraham bought the Cave of Machipelah for "400 shekels of silver."

Hebron is revered as the burial site of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Ruth Berchlinque, a French Jew, quotes Gen. 23:2 as proof that Abraham bought the land that she is living on. This passage makes reference to the death of Sarah, Abraham's wife, which found him looking for a burial grounds.

We read, "And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her."

Although the inhabitants of the land were most gracious, offering a choice of sepulchres, Abraham was not content until he could purchase a burying place. So, not only was Abraham promised the land, which was given by God for an everlasting covenant, he also paid for some of the land.

Judit Deutsch, a 20-year-old woman from Brooklyn, sees the occupation of the West Bank as a sign of redemption.

She comments, "In 1967 (when Israel occupied the West Bank) we saw the war as the hand of God. The prophets said we would come back, and here was the land . . . According to Jewish tradition," she notes, "the Land of Israel is holier than any other. And four cities are the holiest: Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias and Safad. Certainly we think Jews have a right to live here."

Miracles abound as we reflect on the Six-Day War which some think of as "David wiping out Goliath."

Religious writers continue to reflect on events relating to the war of 1967.

A paratroop commander who led the capture of Hebron relates how a seven-pound mine was discovered at the cave of the patriarchs beside the wall of the building. They first tried to dismantle the mine to prevent damage to the wall, then they fired at it from a distance, but nothing happened. A long fuse was laid. The fuse went off and the mine apparatus came apart but did not explode. The paratroop officer related, "This is the first time we know of a seven-pound mine not exploding under such conditions. The only thing we can attribute it to is the Shekina (divine presence), because it was so close to the wall.

At Hebron, during a fierce battle, it was reported a man dressed in white with long white beard appeared standing all through the battle with his hands lifted to heaven. This report was confirmed by the late Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Levi Eshkil.

Charles Henry French, writing in THE MOUNT ZION REPORTER, declared, "So much happened bordering on the miraculous!" He added, "Gentile times are about finished." And he observed, "The Lord's return will be sudden."

Indeed, witnessing miracles in the land of Israel makes us believe our Lord's coming is near.

The story is told that after the Six-Day War Israeli officials took a group of Arab notables from Gaza on a tour of the Knesset building in Jerusalem in hopes of achieving good will.

At the close of the tour one of the Arabs was not satisfied that he had

seen everything. "Where is the map?" he asked. "What map?" the puzzled Israelis wanted to know.

"You know," he replied, "the map of the greater Israel—from the Nile to the Euphrates."

"But there is no such map," The Israeli explained. But this the Arabs refused to believe.

Arabs know that in the Bible the God of ancient Israel made a promise that the nation would inhabit the land from the Euphrates to the "River of Egypt." This the Arabs believe is the Nile while most commentators feel it only refers to the Wadi El Arish in eastern Sinai.

Many Israelis do not take seriously the promise God made to Abraham in Gen. 13:14-16 when he said, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."

Did you hear it?

And the Lord said, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it: for I will give it unto thee." (Gen. 13:14-18)

It is certainly established in the Word of God that the Lord gave this land to Abraham and the children of Israel.

In recent months we have mentioned that the WEST BANK was really once PART OF JORDAN.

And we have men like PLO leader Yasser Arafat wanting to see an independent Palestinian state occupying the West Bank.

Elias Freij, the mayor of Bethlehem, appeals for help, noting, "Israeli bulldozers are roaming the width and length of the West Bank, leveling hills for Jewish settlements." He warns, "More than half our land has already been ex-appropriated and we are nearing an irreversible situation."

What is the truth of the matter?

Dave Richardson writes: "Public opinion in the West Bank and Gaza is apparently solidly behind a proposed federation with Jordan and the leadership of Arafat."

Polls taken among the 1.5 million Palestinians finds strong support for continued negotiations with Jordan and massive backing for Arafat.

Here's the story of this land.

In the first place, as we have already stated this is the land God gave to Abraham and some of which he purchased as a burial site for his wife Sarah and himself. Thus, the land we call the West Bank is rightfully part of the promised land—the land of Israel.

In the United Nations Partition Resolution of 1947, this area was designated as "Judea" and "Samaria."

Go back to the British Mandate, under the League of Nations, and you'll find Judea and Samaria mentioned as the Jewish national home where Jewish settlers were encouraged to settle the land.

It is only since Jordan conquered Judea and Samaria in its aggressive war against Israel in 1948 that Jordan coined the term "West Bank" to differentiate this land from the East Bank of the Jordan.

One in the Jerusalem Post comments: "The West Bank of the river Jordan is as much a part of Israel as Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa. Those people who talk of "annexation," "occupied territories," "giving back," are using Arab propaganda semantic terminology. Those who even merely advocate ceding Israeli territory in exchange for peace are doing Israel a disservice."

In the second place, in Zechariah 10 and 11 there is the promise that Israel will again occupy this land which will witness both physical and spiritual revival.

Look at verse 1 of Zech. 10: "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to everyone grass in the field."

Witnessing Jews return to their land and now seeking to occupy the West Bank, we believe is fulfilling Bible Prophecy.

Concerning Israel we read, "And they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight, because the Lord is with them . . ." (Zech. 10:5)

Look at Israel in the midst of her battles and you will have to admit as the prophet says, "the Lord is with them."

Again we read where the Lord says, "I will hiss for them, and gather them: for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased." (Zech. 10:8)

So, God's ultimate plan and purpose for Israel is to restore them to their land, and then to revive them spiritually with a mighty and powerful work of the Spirit likened unto "showers of rain." We read, "I will strengthen them in the Lord; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord." (Zech. 10:12)

In the 3rd place,

It is when Israel returns to occupy the land that she is in for trouble. Jeremiah calls it "the time of Jacob's trouble."

Listen to what we read: "For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it." (Jer. 30:3)

Then we read, "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it!"

Now we maintain that it is in the West Bank region of the Jordan, known as Judea and Samaria, where Israel is going to face her greatest trouble.

By attempting to infiltrate among a million and a half Palestinians occupying the West Bank, she becomes a thorn in the midst of the land which is rightfully hers.

Zechariah describes so vividly in chapter 11 what will happen.

The chapter begins, "Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars."

Lebanon is singled out as the strategic and important wedge that brings on the fires of judgment.

John Calvin also included Judea in this reference to Lebanon, since it appeared on its northern border.

And, Josephus points out that the Romans in their conquest of

Jerusalem came through Lebanon.

Mention is then made in verse 3 of Jordan. We read, "For the pride of Jordan is spoiled."

It was during the 1967 War that Jordan lost the West Bank including the Old City of Jerusalem. Now negotiations are underway to see if Israel will return these "occupied territories" including the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

It is this West Bank of the Jordan River where Israel is building settlements in an attempt to try to outnumber the Arabs who live there.

As Ze'ev Ben-Yosef, spokesman for the World Zionist Organization Settlement division, says: "People are moving in every week, by the hundreds."

Israeli officials expect that by 1987 the Jewish population will reach 100,000, if not sooner, and by the year 2010, they say the West Bank will contain 1.4 million Jews and 1.6 million Arabs.

What the inhabitants of Israel are going to have to learn is that if they survive this encounter in the West Bank, God is going to have to work a miracle.

Zechariah goes on to relate how the Lord was sold for thirty pieces of silver. We read: "So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver."

We all know how Judas went to the chief priests and said, "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" We read, "And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver." (Mt. 26:14-15)

How terrible!

Under the Old Testament if an ox were to gore a slave, his master was to be paid thirty shekels of silver. That was the amount paid Judas by the religious priests.

So, the Lord will not have pity on Israel in the day of their calamity— not until they return to the Lord and recognize that He is their Messiah! That is the only basis of revival and regeneration. But the day will come as Zechariah notes: "They shall look upon me whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for His only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."

It is then that the Lord says, "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace." (Zech. 12:10)

Did you hear it?

However, until that time when Israel recognizes her Messiah, she will suffer the consequences of this rejection. We hear the Lord saying, "For I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord; but, lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbor's hand, and into the hand of his king: and they shall smite the land."

Our Lord declared the time will come when a false prophet will arise who will claim to be Israel's protector. He will make a covenant with them while proclaiming to be their Messiah.

Declared Jesus, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation . . . Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains . . . For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (Matt. 24:15, 16,21)

As we have pointed out, Judaea and Samaria are in reality the West Bank. So, when Antichrist makes his appearance, guaranteeing the security of Israel, and allowing them to offer sacrifices again, but proclaiming himself as their Messiah, then let those living in the West Bank flee to the mountains!

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, in their commentary, write: "Antichrist will first make a covenant with them as their ruler, but then will break it, and they shall feel the iron yoke of his tyranny as the false Messiah, because they rejected the light yoke of the true Messiah . . . But at last he is to perish utterly and the elect remnant of Judah and Israel is to be saved gloriously."

We might ask, What is the test of this coming Antichrist?

You'll remember that Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." (John 5:43)

Beloved, one of the saddest words in the New Testament is found in John 1:11 where we read concerning our Lord, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

How tragic!

The next verse goes on to say, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:" (v. 12)

We would ask, Have you received Jesus Christ as your Saviour? Is He your Lord? Can you say today that you are a child of God? And are you ready were He to come today?

Zechariah relates how there is coming a day when Christ will come. We read: "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east . . . and the Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee."

In order for Christ to come with His saints, He must first come for His saints. That is the event we call the rapture when our Lord is seen coming for His own.

That is the event we await and for which we urge, "Be ye ready!"

If you've never done so, pray this prayer: "Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Messiah—the Saviour of the world; that no man cometh unto the Father but by you, and He that cometh to you you'll not cast out. I do come to ask your forgiveness and to receive you into my heart and life. I do believe you died on the cross for my sins, and I do here and now receive you as my own personal Saviour to live for you and serve you 'til you come."

Pray that prayer and mean it. And, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

# WEST BANK UPDATE



U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT (Apr. 13, 1981) once decried the West Bank as "virtually an armed camp, with terrorism and reprisals commonplace."

A new book entitled, *THE WEST BANK, LINE OF DEFENSE*, shows the vulnerability of this area. The author of the book shows how the Israelis will have to remain on the alert in order to defend this area referred to as Judea and Samaria.

THE JERUSALEM POST notes, "One of the major problems will be settling the Palestinian refugees. There are about a million of them."

It is further pointed out, "Jordan, with the help of Iraq, will be able to attack (simultaneously with Syria on the Golan Heights) through the West Bank, and place Israel in serious danger even if the West Bank is demilitarized and there are no Arab forces in it . . . . If the West Bank is demilitarized, which would prevent an advance deployment of forces, Israel's land forces would not be able to begin battle there at the time of

a Jordanian-Iraqi attack, and the IDF would be forced to send regular troops in only after the attack had begun."

The threat, my friends, is very real.

In fact, it is more real in view of several recent happenings.

First, the Russian leader Andropov told King Hussein not to become involved in President Reagan's Mideast peace plan. If he did, he would "find himself in serious trouble."

So Russia is not trying to help solve the Mideast crisis. Rather, they want to keep the pot boiling.

In the second place, the Soviet Union has installed four batteries of long-range SAM-5 anti-aircraft missiles on Syrian soil. Incidentally, with Andropov the leader of Russia, it had to be with his approval. This is the first time that the Soviet Union has deployed the strategic air defense missile system outside Russia. This is also the first time that the Syrians have allowed the Soviets to operate independent bases in their country.

What does this mean?

It simply means the Soviet Union is getting a new hold in the Middle East. These batteries in Syria are operated by several hundred Russians. It is reported there are an estimated 4,500 Soviet advisers in Syria.

Thus, the threat increases, not only to Israel but to American aircraft operating in the Mediterranean area.

The prediction is for a conflict, or sustained tension, between Israel and Syria which could suddenly explode into World War III. It finally appears to indicate the Soviet Union is ready to move into the Middle East to solve the crisis there.

Israel's future is in jeopardy.

Israeli intelligence is said to be the best in the world. She should be able to foresee any Arab attack and, as is her procedure for her own safety, she must move before her attacker strikes.

However, attack planes, flying low, can cross the West Bank in three minutes. Even if planes are put on high alert in Israel's airports, it will take three minutes for the first pair to take off and these won't have time to intercept the attacking aircraft before they have dropped their bombs.

Thus, Israel's defense against attack is precarious.

Another concern is a report that terrorists are streaming back into Lebanon. Again, according to THE JERUSALEM POST (Mar. 5, 1983) there are an estimated 7,000 terrorists in Lebanon. They are reestablishing contacts, opening arms caches, and the Lebanese are not successful in preventing them from doing it.

Now, President Reagan has been warned that the Russians may be attempting to encourage Syria in another round of hostilities. More than 130 retired U.S. generals and admirals wrote the president to suggest that the Soviet-supplied SAM-5 missiles in Syria may be "a possible harbinger of future Russian aggression."

We have reported many times on Ezekiel's prophecy of an invasion from the North. Reference is made to Gog, of the land of Magog, leading an assault upon Israel. Countries seen involved in this invasion in-

clude Persia (Iran), Ethiopia, and Libya and other nations led by this leader. We read, "Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it?"

As a result of the invasion into Lebanon we have seen terrorism dealt a serious blow with the PLO routed. The Israeli prime minister announced her borders safe for the first time in many years.

However, this is a clue as to when the coming invasion takes place. For in the next verse we read, "And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee . . . And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days . . ." (Ezek. 38:14-16)

Again we say, we believe these are the latter days. In a recent publication we asked the question, IS ANDROPOV GOG? Is he the leader referred to here in the Bible seen leading an assault upon Israel? We all know that Brezhnev was too old and feeble to take an active interest in activities in the Middle East. But Andropov may be the one who is destined to lead this endtime invasion prophesied by Ezekiel.

Now we need to look for a world leader to guarantee the security of Israel.

In an address to the American Legion, President Reagan declared that the United States "is prepared to take all necessary measures to guarantee the security of Israel's northern borders in the aftermath of the complete withdrawal of the Israeli army."

Of course, the president has been doing all within his power to get Israel to withdraw from Lebanon. But the Syrians refuse to withdraw, so why should she leave?

Commenting on Reagan's offer to guarantee Israel's northern borders, Begin responded with the comment that Israel was not interested in security guarantees, adding, "There is no guarantee that can guarantee a guarantee."

The Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir said, too, the idea was unacceptable. Said he: "This is for us a great national and ethical principle. Only Jews shall defend the Jewish state. The day we need foreign troops to defend us will be a day of mourning and tragedy for our people."

However, the day will come when Israel will welcome a protector. And on the world stage will appear one who poses as her Messiah who will make a covenant of peace and protection lasting seven years.

Daniel refers to this, saying, "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."

Besides offering protection, there will be an encouragement for Jews to engage in offering sacrifices once again. However, after 3½ years the covenant will be broken. And, instead of protecting Israel, this one we call the Antichrist will pounce on her as a lion attacks its prey.

Our Lord refers to this episode, saying, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (Whoso readeth, let him understand) then let them

which be in Judaea flee to the mountains:"

When this happens, says Jesus, let those in Judaea (in the West Bank area) flee to the mountains.

This is a message to those who today are settlers in the West Bank. These are a courageous group who carry guns even now to protect themselves. All we can say is - what a prophecy about to be fulfilled in our day!

We would mention a comment in the Scofield Bible notes that makes reference to a similar passage in Luke 21:20 where we read, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed about with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea 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."

Verse 24 said, "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations."

So the Scofield notes suggest that Luke's reference which we've just read had its greater fulfilment in the siege by Titus in A.D. 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed.

However, concerning the passage in Matthew which we have been reading, it is suggested that Jerusalem "will be delivered by divine interposition."

However, there are rules that must be followed.

Listen to them.

Jesus says, "Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house." (v. 17)

When this latter invasion takes place, apparently there won't be time to waste. It's a case of run for your life. Tanks and planes can move so fast and drop their deadly bombs so that the only advice is to get out and do it quickly.

Verse 20, "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day."

In Lebanon they saw one of the worst snowstorms in years with at least 50 persons frozen to death on a stretch of highway between Beirut and Damascas. So it could be hazardous for those in Judaea to try to flee in the winter should a storm of this caliber hit the region.

And, since Jews solemnly keep the Sabbath, they are limited in the amount of travel they can do on that day. A Sabbath day's journey is approximately 4/5 of a mile—not very far when you are told to flee.

Finally, verse 21 identifies the period of time when this will happen. We read, "For then shall be great tribulation; such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

My friends, for both Jew and Gentile the time is now to give your heart to the Lord. As we've just heard, there is great tribulation ahead. It will have special significance in Israel but will have its effect upon the whole world.

Because of the use of the term, "elect," there are some who think all

believers will go through the tribulation. However, as Gabelein points out, the "elect" in the epistles refer to the church, but in the gospels refer to the Jews who will be converted during that time.

Be that as it may, as long as we see the hope of escape from this coming tribulation, we are going to declare it. In Luke 21 we read, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

Now this Scripture conditions escape upon watching and praying. Just because you made a confession of faith somewhere in the past, don't rest upon that experience. Rather, get right with God now if you have backslidden, and begin to live for Jesus anew. Read your Bible every day and pray for God's guidance in your life.

We're in a battle against sin and Satan. Don't give up the struggle but live victoriously through the power of the Holy Spirit and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Indeed, be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

# PETRA: CITY OF REFUGE



Petra is in Jordan. It is a city of massive rock rising majestically 400-700 feet high in the Arabian desert.

Actually Petra is two separate sandstone mountain ranges with a valley in between. Entrance inside this once-ancient city of Petra is gained only by a narrow gorge known as the Siq, which tradition says was created when Moses struck the rock with his rod.

At one time the commerce of the world passed through this city. It was not only a manufacturing center but a distribution point from which silks, gold, perfumes and spices were traded. The population may have exceeded 50,000 with the rich merchants and great men of the East being entertained within its walled fortress. Petra also boasts of having more than a thousand temples.

To enter this fortress-city one must travel nearly three miles through this narrow gorge which is often no more than two yards wide. Ancient caravans had to travel single file along this trail. A few soldiers in the opening of the gorge could hold up an army.

The city of Petra lay dead and barren for a thousand years—the result of the judgment of God for her worship of false deities and her licentious practices.

Dr. Louis Talbot, in his book, *I SAW PETRA*, says, "In my opinion there is no spot on earth that proves more conclusively that what God has spoken He will perform than this rocky, rose-red city which lies in the midst of a vast desert in southern Jordan."

Dr. Talbot notes: "Early in their history (the Edomites) incurred the displeasure of God for their treatment of the poor, wilderness wandering Hebrew slaves who, under the leadership of Moses, sought freedom in another land."

For this and other crimes the prophet pronounced the destruction of this sinful people and their great city.

So just as Edom once desired to destroy the ancient Hebrew chil-

**dren, God, just as he had promised, destroyed the people of Edom.**

**Not until 1812 did a Swiss explorer by the name of John Lewis Burchhardt, disguised as a Moslem, come into this incredible ruins of antiquity so marvelously preserved.**

**Dr. Louis Talbot, now gone to be with the Lord, tells of a visit to this ancient rose-red rock city. Accompanied by Dr. Louis Baumann he recorded this message for posterity.**

**"Uh. . .the city of Petra covers many civilizations because the architecture there is Roman, and Greece and Egyptian and, evidently, the city was there, flourishing, when Egypt, ancient Egypt, was at the height of its glory. It was there in the days of David. . .we know that because he refers to the city of Petra in some of his writings.**

**"Dr. Bauman and I were sitting before one of the buildings in Petra and I saw some inscriptions on the front of the building that I thought were Egyptian. And he said, 'No, those inscriptions antedate anything Egyptian.' The inscriptions that we saw were very, very faint because the blowing of the wind for thousands of years had almost eliminated what had been put there by those who had dwelt in Petra many centuries ago. As I said that it's about 70 miles south of the Dead Sea. And then you engage some horses and you. . . uh, then you come to a gorge. . .and the gorge is about 20 feet wide and about 1500 feet high. And you're in that gorge winding around. When you come to the end of the gorge, there you see the most marvelous sights that you ever saw. Buildings that were erected thousands of years ago, and when the sun shines on them, uh. . .they are all in colors. And that's why the artists who have been there call Petra 'the rose-red city of the dead.'**

**"You know that, uh. . .the city of Petra is built altogether different than our cities. All the buildings are carved out of solid rock. And the Edomites, for Petra is in the city of Edom, they must have had thousands of slave laborers. And, when they carved a building, they would sometimes carve 15 feet deep into the rock, in order to get a smooth surface, and then they would start to carve. They did not build any building like the way that we build ours. For instance, we saw some of the buildings down there with tremendous pillars. Some of them as many as five and six pillars right in front. When you examine them you find that they're a part of the building and no part of the building has been put there piecemeal. Uh. . .the pillars were carved out of the rock and then they carved behind the pillars and then they carved the doors, and all the doors were about 26 feet in height. . .which has led many people to believe that they were carved by a race of giants. And then they carved behind the doors and there you see these auditoriums on the inside. And when you get on the inside you are conscious that the air is very, very fresh. And it seems as though there is a system of ventilation in there because of openings but we could not discover just where these openings were.**

**"You know the amphitheater is distinctly Roman and that's right in the heart of the city. It would accommodate about. . . , from eight thousand to ten thousand people. And, evidently, the Romans were down there in. . .uh, some two thousand years ago and right in front of this amphitheatre, . . you see where the gladiators fought. And then all around there are high rocks so that thousands of people, uh. . .could**

stand there and watch these games. Now the people in Edom, evidently, uh. . . worshipped the sun, and in order to see where they worshipped, you have to climb right to the top of the buildings and they carved the top of the mountain off so that there was what the Bible calls the 'high places.' They got as near to the sun as possible and there are the ancient altars standing just as they were standing thousands of years ago. You see on the altar the place where the head of the human being was placed and then, uh. . . from that, uh. . . round carving for the head you see a little groove and the blood ran through the groove and right at the, in front of the groove, there is a picture of the sun.

"And so they evidently offered human sacrifices, and you could just stand there and visualize, uh. . . that sight with thousands of people standing there watching this scene."

Some of Petra's buildings are said to be more gorgeous than anything Athens can boast. The reflecting rays of the sun and playing shadows may turn the walls to pastel pink, deep purple, or ruby red. It certainly is a tourist's paradise.

It is believed by many Bible students and prophetic writers that Petra will become the habitation of persecuted Jews during this coming tribulation period.

For instance, our Lord spoke of the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet. . . "Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. . . For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (Matt. 24:15a,16,21)

Could Petra be the "mountains" of which Jesus spoke where Jews are to flee?

Again in Isaiah 26:20-21 we read: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a moment, until the indignation be overpast. For behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

Petra is a rock-walled city made up of rooms and chambers in its many temples. It could very well be the hiding place during the coming Armageddon battle, when the earth "shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

Turn yet to the book of the Revelation, Chapter 12 where we read of a place prepared in the wilderness as a haven against the attack of Satan in a future day upon the remnant of Israel.

The description is given as follows: "And when the dragon (Satan) saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman (Israel) which brought forth the man child." (Christ)

We read, "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood.

"And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with

**the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Rev. 12:14-17)**

The book of Revelation is a book of symbols. You have to understand the meaning of these symbols to understand the book. For that reason many have not read, nor do they understand this book.

However, the picture here given is of the remnant of Israel who flee into a hiding place in the wilderness there to be protected for 3½ years. Satan sends a flood to try to destroy the remnant but the earth opens so that the flood is swallowed up, and the remnant is saved.

In April of 1963 TIME magazine carried this story. Two parties of tourists arrived at this stone fortress anxious to journey the remaining three miles to Petra itself.

In the first of these groups were 23 French women led by a Parisian priest. The second was a larger group of Italian Pilgrims.

The rock city appeared lovely in the desert sun. However, as the French group was gaily entering the gorge a sprinkle of rain began to fall. Suddenly it became a cloudburst—the worst in Petra’s recorded history. Within half an hour, torrential floods were streaming down the hills and cliffs and pouring like a funnel into the gorge.

Flood water carried 21 of the Frenchwomen to their death along with the priest and their Arab guide and driver. Two of the women managed to scramble up the rock wall to a ledge 12 feet above the ground and were saved.

Upon reading this account we thought of a day coming when Satan will send a flood in an attempt to destroy the remnant of Israel. But God miraculously opens the earth and the remnant is spared death.

The NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC magazine reports that Petra has enormous cisterns dug into the rock, lined with plaster, covering the reservoir with stones, hiding them from all who did not know the secret. To the inhabitants of Petra, water was important in order to live.

Water flows down a narrow gorge beginning at the “rock of Moses.” It was at that rock that the Jews failed in regard to the Promised Land and were punished by wandering 40 years in the wilderness. Today you see that water still flowing after almost 3500 years. A remnant of Israelites will return, and if they are to be kept at Petra for at least 3½ years, they’ll be drinking again of the same waters that they did then. . .for the water is still flowing.

Truly we believe we are living in the era of history when this prophecy will soon be fulfilled.

Though Israel faces days of oppression God has ordained that a remnant be saved and spared destruction from Satanic attack.

God is not willing that any should perish. He would desire that all men repent and receive salvation so freely offered as a gift to all who would believe.

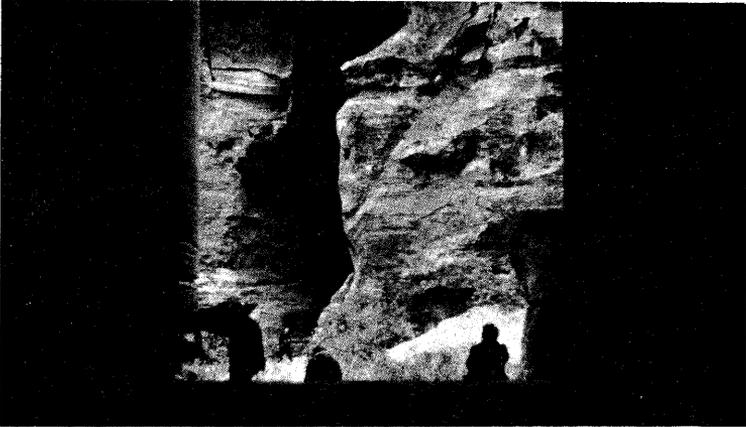
Listen to this verse in John 6:37, “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”

Did you hear it?

So come to Christ today. Receive Him as your Saviour and Lord and live for Him daily, remembering that He is coming soon.

Indeed, be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

# PETRA: CITY OF PROPHECY



*This picture taken from inside the Treasury Building shows the narrow exit from the Siq at the point where it enters Petra. It offers unique protection to the dwellers of Petra.*

**THE NEAR EAST REPORT** states, "International diplomacy and 'world opinion' have indubitably placed the future status of Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza at the top of the world's negotiating agenda for months and years ahead. This complex problem must find some equitable resolution . . ." (Feb. 26, 1982)

We would point out that this statement was made just prior to Israel's invasion into Lebanon. There, "Operation Peace for Galilee" was supposed to clear out nests of terrorists found assaulting Israel's borders.

Clarence H. Wagner, Jr. writes: "It was not an easy decision to go to war, for Israel is a country that has always worked towards peace and the building of a nation." He adds, "Israel would not have made a decision to fight unless the threat to her people became intolerable and all other alternatives to remove this threat were closed." (Wagner heads up an organization, Bridges for Peace.)

Once Israel headed toward Beirut, they discovered at least two things: First, they found ten times more arms than they had anticipated. And, second, they found plans being laid for a terrorist army ready to "fight to the finish led by the PLO leader, Yasser Arafat."

On March 29, 1970, Arafat was quoted in the **WASHINGTON POST** as stating, "The goal of our struggle is the end of Israel, and there can be no compromise."

On Feb. 11, 1980, in Caracas, Venezuela, Arafat declared, "Peace for us means the destruction of Israel. We shall not rest until the day when we return to our home, and until we destroy Israel . . ."

We all know how the PLO were routed from Lebanon. Although Arafat continues his tough talk concerning Israel, he does show some

signs of conciliation.

For instance, Arafat is said to favor the Fez plan which calls for a sovereign Palestinian state in the Israeli-occupied West Bank of the Jordan River and Gaza strip. The proposal would call for peaceful co-existence between Israel and all Arab states including the new Palestine.

The plan proposed by President Reagan does not support an independent state. However, it would create a Palestinian entity in association with Jordan.

You'll recall it was Jordan that lost its control of the Old city of Jerusalem and the West Bank during the Six-Day War. Likewise, in extraordinary military fashion, the Israeli army took over other huge areas of Arab land, the Sinai, the Golan Heights and the Gaza strip.

Jordan is probably the only state in the world whose law specifies that a Jew cannot be a citizen. The law reads: "Any man will be a Jordanian subject if he is not Jewish."

During Jordanian rule of the West Bank and Old Jerusalem (1949-67), access to the Holy Places was barred to Jews. And during this time there was mass desecration of synagogues and Jewish cemeteries.

While attempts are being made to entice King Hussein to the peace table, it must be remembered that Jordan refuses to recognize Israel.

On one occasion when King Hussein of Jordan visited the United States, the following conversation took place at the State Department.

Jim Anderson of UPI asked some very pointed questions of Dean Fisher, State Department spokesman.

Explained Anderson, "Down stairs in the lobby on the Hussein exhibit there's a map of Jordan and the surrounding countries." He noted, "All the surrounding countries are identified except that the area west of Jerusalem remains unnamed. Can you tell us what that territory is?"

The reply: "Well, I'd have to look at the map. It's a map in the State Department?"

"Yeah, in the lobby. What country lies west of Jerusalem?"

Says Anderson, "Think . . . I'll give you a hint. Between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean.

"You want me to say Israel? I'll say Israel lies between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean."

Question, "Can you explain why it is not identified on the map?"

Answer: "I don't know."

The facts are these. Jordan presently occupies 75% of the land of Palestine which was supposedly divided between a Jewish and Arab nation. Because Jordan questions Israel's right to exist, Israel is not recognized on some Arab maps.

The hostility between Jordan and Israel does not prevent some commerce and trade between Jordan and Israel. Crossing the River Jordan at the Allenby Bridge reflects the agreement these two countries have which permitted truckloads of fruit and vegetables to go from one country to another. Although there are no diplomatic relations between the two countries, there have been citizens from these countries cross-

ing here, although no pictures were to be taken.

The hatred and animosity are still there, however, as evidenced by an experience we had in crossing the border. The situation may change from time to time and we relate an actual incident that took place at the time we crossed these borders.

Tourists are told by alert guards not to have their passports stamped by the Israeli immigration officials because finding an Israeli stamp on a passport could delay the crossing of a whole group.

It is also not expedient to come from Israel with anything that is a reminder of Israel's existence.

For example, in our group was a pastor who purchased a beautiful large menorah to take back to his church. In crossing from Israel into Jordan this pastor had the menorah well-wrapped. However, because of its size it was difficult to conceal.

In Jordan, guards came on our tour bus and somehow were led to open and inspect the package that contained the menorah. Seizing it, one of the guards twisted it into all kinds of shapes, attempting to destroy it. The reason is that the menorah is a symbol of the nation of Israel. This incident could have resulted in everyone facing an inspection that would have required the opening of suitcases and any boxes on board. Or, it could have resulted in the guard ordering the bus back to Israel. It depends on the mood of the guard or of the relations that exist that very moment between the two countries as to what may happen.

We explain this situation to show something of the tension that exists in the Middle East today.

When the Israelis talk of the West Bank, they prefer to speak of it as Judea and Samaria.

With both Arabs and Jews wanting to claim the area, it provides for continued hostility with the future bound to become more tense.

A public-opinion poll in Israel showed that 80 percent of the people believe there will be another war over the West Bank.

A leader of the Israeli left predicts: "We are witnessing a transitional period between civil disobedience and armed rebellion."

Whereas, a leader of the right says: "Another war is inevitable. If we give away Judea and Samaria, there will be war. If we do not, there will be war." (US NEWS & WORLD REPORT, June 2, 1980)

So, war over the West Bank seems to be a definite possibility.

This seems to be a matter discussed both by Daniel and by Jesus. If you'll turn to Matthew 24, then begin reading with verse 15 where Jesus says: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whose readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:"

Isn't that interesting?

Judea is a part of the West Bank which is becoming a focal point of contention because of Israel's development of additional settlements in the area.

Bible scholars such as Dr. John Walvoord, president of Dallas Theological Seminary, say this is proof that this land belongs to Israel.

Says Walvoord, "In this text Jesus warned the disciples that those

who were in Judea should flee to the mountains. Obviously," he notes, "Israel couldn't flee to the mountains in Judea unless they were in Judea. So this prophecy, and apparently all prophecies that relate to end times, pictures Israel back in her ancient land."

Now there are some insights in Scripture as to where those in Judea are to flee, and how they are to go about making their journey.

We continue to read: (v. 19) "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter; neither on the sabbath day; For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

The Prophet Jeremiah speaks of a day coming, wherein Israel will undergo great tribulation. We read: "Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness." Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it."

The name Jacob is another name for Israel.

Dr. Charles H. Stevens, President of Piedmont Bible College, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, calls attention to the word "Israel," which means "he shall rule as God."

Israel will one day be the leading nation of earth. And as a woman does not give birth without birth pangs, so Israel is not without suffering and her time of trouble.

To understand what will happen to Israel, one must read from the book of the Revelation. Here in chapter 12 we have a picture of a woman whose son is to rule all nations.

Concerning the woman, believed to be a reference to Israel, we read, she "fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three-score days."

So when those in Judea are told to flee to the mountain, there are Bible scholars who believe this is a reference to Petra, the rose-red city carved out of rock in Southern Jordan.

Dr. Louis Talbot, in his book, I SAW PETRA, says, "In my opinion there is no spot on earth that proves more conclusively that what God has spoken He will perform than this rocky, rose-red city which lies in the midst of a vast desert in southern Jordan.

Actually Petra is two separate sandstone mountain ranges rising majestically 400-700 feet there in that Arabian desert country. Entrance is gained only by a narrow gorge known as the Siq which tradition says was made when Moses struck the rock with his rod.

Within this area it is believed Jews will flee during the coming time of Jacob's trouble. Here is where Satan will attempt to destroy this Jewish remnant, but God comes to their aid.

Again we read, "And to the woman (Israel) were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

So for 3½ years it is believed this Jewish remnant will be protected here in this wilderness hiding place.

So when our Lord told of a time when those in Judea were told to flee to the mountains, it is believed those living in the West Bank area of Judea are the ones he had in mind. And, the place they were told to flee was this once-ancient city of Petra with chambers carved into the sandstone rock where it is believed the Jewish remnant may hide during the tribulation.



*One of the Petra houses carved into stone. Note the weathering lines in the rock face.*

It is believed Isaiah makes reference to this future day. We read in Isa. 26:20 where the Lord says, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

Did you hear it?

What a day of reckoning when God punishes the inhabitants of the earth for their sin.

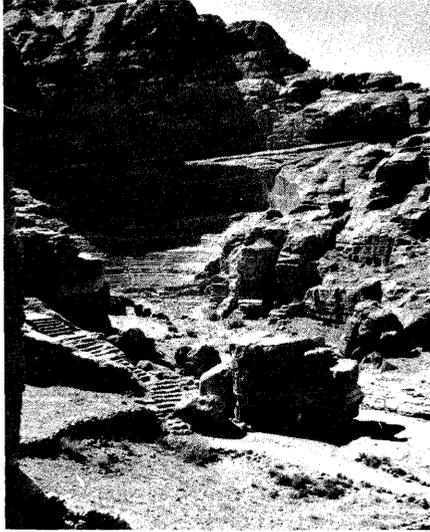
Beloved, now is a time to repent of sin, of all wrong-doing. Now is the time to turn to Jesus Christ and find forgiveness. For a day is coming when this world will be in the throes of great awful tribulation. Armageddon will find the nations gathered around Jerusalem and the blood flowing to the horses' bridles.

But we repeat, today is still a day of salvation. And you can come to Christ and be saved by placing faith in Him as your Saviour and Lord.

Pray this prayer.

# PETRA:

## CITY OF ANTIQUITY



*Ancient steps carved into rock leading to Court House building.*

**“There is a whole city out there that has not been touched.”** So spake Dr. Philip C. Hammond, an anthropologist at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, of the rose-red rock city of Petra.

Petra, located 180 miles south of Amman in Jordan, is a city believed carved from sandstone rock more than 2,000 years ago.

What makes this city so unique is that it remains hidden—its main entrance being a narrow cleft in the rock called “the Siq.”

The Siq is actually 6,000 feet long as the crow flies and from 12 to 20 feet wide at its narrowest points. The sides or walls are stupendous, the towering cliffs so high they make man look small in comparison.

This narrow approach made this ancient city nigh impregnable from attack. And it remained largely hidden until 1812 when an explorer by the name of John Lewis Burkhardt, disguised as a Bedouin sheik, discovered Petra anew. He induced his Arab guides to show him this long lost city by expressing a desire to sacrifice a goat at the traditional tomb of Aaron, brother of Moses.

That is how this ancient city of Petra was found to be a citadel of color, as iron oxide, carried by the water, has stained the rocky fortress walls with colors of tawny reds and browns, ivory, yellow and tan.

As Burgon, the poet, described the city, “From the Rock as if by magic grown, eternal, silent, beautiful, alone.”

What makes Petra of significance is not only its beauty as a tourist attraction, but also its history dating back to the time of Esau, and its future accommodation as a place of refuge to the Jewish remnant dur-

ing the coming awful great tribulation.

The Rev. David Webber, speaker for the SW Radio Church, expresses the belief that "the builder of Petra was Esau."

Climbing through this rocky ledge, one must wonder whether some of Esau's descendants once dwelt here.

Webber quotes Gen. 36:1 and 8 to indicate that this land is mentioned in the Bible. For we read: "Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom." And again, "Thus dwelt Esau in Mount Seir: Esau is Edom."

He further points out that before the dynasty of Jacob was established through his 12 sons, Esau reigned as king in Edom, from his throne in Mt. Seir, which is Petra. He adds, "His sons and grandsons became dukes in his kingdom, and archaeological markings in the dwelling places that Esau had dug out of the beautiful red sandstone, indicate that the population of the city grew to 267,000."

Notes in the Scofield Bible likewise refer to Edom (called also "Seir") . . . is the name of the country lying south of the ancient kingdom of Juda, and extending from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akaba. It includes the ruins of Petra . . ."

In the Bible you have the word "Selah" which means "Rock." This is the same name given Petra. Some believe the name originated when Moses struck the rock in the Bible from which water gushed out.

In driving to Petra you pass the small village of Wadi Musa meaning "Valley of Moses" where water still runs to this day.

There you get the horses that will take you into this great ravine surrounded by cliffs on either side that rise higher and higher as the path you travel twists and turns as you hasten to your destination.

The silence is broken only by the horses' hooves hitting the rocks, or maybe by a gust of wind that sighs through the opening chasm.

Deeper and deeper you penetrate into the unknown when suddenly you come upon this lovely scene framed in between the narrow gorge.

What you see is a building carved out of a sandstone cliffside. It is called "the Treasury" and said to be a tomb. This rocky edifice is the best preserved of all the ruins because it has been sheltered from wind and rain. Most of the other buildings are badly weathered, as the sandstone can't take the treatment of wind and weather.

The question comes to mind—Could this have been built by giants?

Dr. Louis Talbot, in his book, I SAW PETRA, notes: "All the doors were about 26 feet in height . . . which has led many people to believe that they were carved by a race of giants."

All you have to do is to read related passages which describe the area during the time of Esau and mention is made of giants in the land.

For instance, turn to Deu. 2 where the Lord told Moses, "Command thou the people (of Israel) saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore: Meddle not with them: for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession." (Deu. 2:4-5)

Very plainly this area of Petra is said to belong to Esau. Now down in the chapter we read of various groups which dwelt in the land even

before the time of Esau of whom it was implied that they were giants.

Deu. 2:10 says: "The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; which also were accounted giants . . ."

Deu. 2:20 likewise notes: "That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwelt therein in old time."

In Chapter 3 mention is made of Og, king of Bashan, who alone remained among the remnant of the giants. It was said that his bedstead was of iron . . . "nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it." A cubit is 1 foot, 5½ inches. So Og the giant's bed was around 13½ feet long which means a giant was around 13 feet tall, or at least Og was that tall.

So this is the early history of the land—a land once dwelt in by giants which could very well account for the doors carved into the rock 26 feet in height.

Now what about the future of this land of Petra? Will this be the hiding place of persecuted Jews during the coming tribulation, as some prophetic writers believe?

Homer Duncan, in his book, *ISRAEL, Past, Present and Future*, writes: "When the antichrist reveals his true character, the Jews will turn from him in horror, and will flee to the rock fortress of Petra where they will stay until the battle of Armageddon is fought . . ."

Now this assumption is based on several portions of Scripture.

First, our Lord referred to the time of antichrist's appearance by quoting the prophet Daniel, saying: "But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand), then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains." (Mark 13:14)

It is believed by many that Antichrist's appearance and desecration of the temple by placing an image of himself therein will constitute this abomination of desolation. When this happens, Jews everywhere are told to "flee to the mountains." Petra is located 60 to 100 miles to the south of Jerusalem in a mountain chain so that here is where it is believed many will flee during the time of trouble spoken of by Jesus, Jeremiah and Daniel.

Turn to the book of the Revelation where we read of a place prepared in the wilderness that again prophetic scholars believe is a reference to Petra.

In Rev. 12, the description is as follows of a dragon persecuting the woman that brought forth the man child. The book of Revelation is largely one of symbols so that the woman is a type of Israel, and the man-child is Christ the Messiah of Israel, whereas the dragon is Satan seeking to destroy Israel. For it is through Israel that Messiah will return to rule the world during the thousand-year reign, the millennium.

We read what happens in Rev. 12:14, "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

As Cyrus Osterhus points out, "When you enter the city of Petra, the first thing which faces you is the image of a great eagle carved in the rock." He asks, "Was the carving of this eagle a method used by God to

mark this place into which the Israelites should flee?"

Personally, we believe that the reference here to "two wings of a great eagle" is a reference to the way God is going to bring the remnant into this secret hiding place. Although no plane, unless it were a helicopter, could land in Petra, there is enough evidence in Scripture to see where God could pick up the remnant as he did Elijah and transport them marvelously and miraculously to the place He has prepared for them.

In the 68th Psalm we read: "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name; extol him that rideth upon the heavens, by his name JAH, and rejoice before him."

Then, after describing the Lord as riding upon the heavens, mention is made of His chariots. We read: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels are among them . . ."

What are the chariots? Are they similar to the chariots of fire that came for Elijah? Could they be conveyances to bring the remnant of Israel to their hiding place who are seen coming on "two wings of a great eagle"?

That chariots will play a leading role at Armageddon is clearly established in Isaiah 66, verses 15-16, where we read: "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire, and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many."

Did you hear it?

The battle of Armageddon is going to find the Lord returning to this earth. In the book of Revelation the description is given of Christ coming on a white horse and the saints following with Him.

The book of Revelation is filled with pictures to illustrate events still future. Whatever our interpretation, whether there are real horses or whether this symbolizes the chariots described by Isaiah, makes little difference.

The important lesson to learn is this. Christ is seen returning to this earth. He comes first of all for His saints in an event we call the rapture—when those who are ready are caught up to meet Him in the air. Then, while on earth there is great destruction referred to as the time of tribulation, we will be with our Lord in heaven. Following the tribulation, believed to be a period of seven years, we then return with Him back to earth. Witnessing these armies in the skies finds the kings of earth rallying their forces who gather to this battle predicted to take place at the end of this age—the battle of Armageddon.

It is seeing these chariots in the sky, or the armada of white horses led by our Lord Jesus Christ, that attracts the armies of earth. And with one blast of his breath, for out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, our Lord destroys those who have gathered on the plains of Megiddo, and the blood flows for 186 miles even to the horses' bridles so great is the carnage.

So, it is our belief based upon the Word of God that somehow God will pick up the remnant of Israel wherever they may be and miraculously transports those seeking to escape the cruelty of the anti-christ's despotism in demanding the world's worship. He will bring

those who cannot flee by foot to this place prepared in the wilderness which many believe to be Petra.

It is said that Dr. W.E. Blackstone and George T.B. Davis have placed Bibles in sealed containers in some of the rocks and crannies of Petra. Whether this is true, and whether they are still there, we do not know. If they find such Bibles we're sure the book in the New Testament they will want to read is the book of Hebrews.

Here is where we believe Isaiah refers to when he says, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

What a picture!

Petra may very well be the hiding place referred to by Isaiah in the day when the armies of earth gather in plains near Petra for the battle of Armageddon.

Again in Revelation we read where the kings of earth gather their forces to fight the one the Scripture calls "the Lamb." For Jesus is the lamb of God whose blood was shed as a sacrifice for the sins of the world.

Concerning these armies of earth, we read: "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen and faithful."

In closing we would ask—which army would you be in if Christ were to come today?

Would you be among those who are "called, chosen and faithful"—caught up to meet Him when He comes?

Or might you be one today who has never received Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

Today you can still be saved. But you must act now. Tomorrow may be too late.

By turning to Christ you can make your calling and election sure.

By living for Him you can fulfil the command of God who has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we be holy. That is, we are to be separate from the world and found living for Jesus when He comes.

And by doing the will of God we can be found faithful. For our Lord has said, to those who invest their talents or money in His work He will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Which will it be when Jesus comes?

May we be among the "called, chosen and faithful!"

Amen!

And be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh!