

## ***Session 3: The Storm Gathering around Jerusalem***

### **I. THE GATHERING STORM AROUND JERUSALEM**

- A. Right now the entire earth is focused on the crisis around Jerusalem. While most people on earth try to understand the conflict in the Middle East politically, the crisis is really a spiritual issue that can only be understood spiritually.
1. Why is the earth focused on Jerusalem? Because God is and, because God is, the enemy is focused on it as well. The enemy knows that God’s plan for this age will be finished on this piece of land.
  2. Jesus told us in Matthew 24:15 to go back to the Scripture and “understand.” The coming trouble around Jerusalem is what we must understand and prepare for. Once we understand it, it makes sense of what we can see happening all around us now. Many things happening now are preparation for this final conflict.
- B. Though the crisis will escalate dramatically in the coming decades, the spiritual crisis in the Middle East is already escalating rapidly. All across the Middle East, Islamic leaders are mobilizing their people with anti-Semitism to see Jerusalem and Israel as a land that needs to be “liberated” from the Jews and possessed entirely by Muslims. In fact, what is currently on Middle East media is far worse than anything Nazi Germany ever said in public:
1. “Our capital shall not be Cairo, Mecca, or Medina. It shall be Jerusalem, Allah willing. Our cry shall be: “Millions of martyrs march toward Jerusalem.” Millions of martyrs march toward Jerusalem... Banish the sleep from the eyes of all Jews...Brandish your weapons...Yes, Jerusalem is our goal. We shall pray in Jerusalem, or else we shall die as martyrs on its threshold.” Safwat Higazi speaking at a Morsi campaign rally in Egypt.<sup>1</sup>
  2. “If only Hitler had finished them [the Jews] off, thus relieving humanity of them...” Islamic scholar Tareq Hawwas on television in Lebanon.<sup>2</sup>
  3. “Jerusalem is my land, Jerusalem is my honor... Oh Sons of Zion, oh most evil among creations...Oh barbaric monkeys, wretched pigs.” Young girl on Palestinian television.<sup>3</sup>
- C. The point of all these quotes is simple – we must understand God’s agenda and the enemy’s agenda at the end of the age.

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<sup>1</sup> Middle East Media Research Institute. [http://www.memritv.org/clip\\_transcript/en/3431.htm](http://www.memritv.org/clip_transcript/en/3431.htm) (accessed October 14, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Middle East Media Research Institute. <http://www.memritv.org/clip/en/3832.htm> (accessed October 14, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Palestinian Media Watch. [http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc\\_id=9308](http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=157&doc_id=9308) (accessed October 14, 2013).

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- D. When we look at a map of the Middle East and the areas where radical Islam is spreading, we can already see a siege forming around Jerusalem. We need to understand why and train messengers who can communicate this.



- E. We also see a growing global opposition to Israel often termed as “anti-Zionism” rather than anti-Semitism though various anti-Israel attitudes and campaigns such as “Boycott Divestment, and Sanctions” (BDS). We must understand why so much of the earth is focused on the land of Israel.
- F. We must understand the spiritual roots of the conflict in the Middle East and what the Bible says will happen so that we know how to properly engage in this conflict and how we must bring the gospel to the Middle East.

## II. WHY IS THIS STORM GATHERING AROUND JERUSALEM?

- A. A storm is gathering around Jerusalem because God has made specific promises to Israel and the age cannot end until those promises are fulfilled. The rage of the nations is ultimately the rage against God’s plan for Jerusalem and the nations. It is not simply an issue of men resisting the Jew; it is resistance of God Himself.
- B. God specifically promised that Israel would inherit a specific piece of land forever and that the entire nation of Israel would ultimately be saved.
1. God made an “everlasting promise” to Abraham.

*<sup>4</sup>And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.” <sup>5</sup>Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” <sup>6</sup>And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. <sup>7</sup>Then He said to him, “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it.”... <sup>8</sup>Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.” (Genesis 15:4-7; 17:8 NKJV)*

2. Isaiah predicted a time would come when all the Jews in Israel would be holy before the God.  
*<sup>3</sup>And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem. (Isaiah 4:3 NKJV)*
  3. Jeremiah predicted a time when all of Israel would know God and that the sun, moon, and stars would cease if Israel no longer existed.  
*<sup>34</sup>No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." <sup>35</sup>Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for a light by day, The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, And its waves roar (The LORD of hosts is His name): <sup>36</sup>"If those ordinances depart From before Me, says the LORD, Then the seed of Israel shall also cease From being a nation before Me forever." (Jeremiah 31:34–36 NKJV)*
  4. The author of Hebrews repeats the promise that all Israel will be saved and know God. Note that he does not reinterpret the promise, but keeps its focus on the salvation of Israel.  
*<sup>8</sup>Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah..."<sup>10</sup>For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. <sup>11</sup>None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. (Hebrews 8:8, 10-11 NKJV)*
  5. Paul reminded the church in Rome that God would save all Israel.  
*<sup>26</sup>And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; <sup>27</sup>For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins." (Romans 11:26–27 NKJV)*
- C. This salvation occurs at the very end of the age and the powers and principalities will rage against this plan because they do not want to see God finish His plan in this age. Therefore opposition will increase the closer we get to the end-times. The nations will seek to break YHWH by breaking His promises. They will rage against His promises in in two specific ways:
1. They will rage against Israel's right to the land because God has said He will give that land to Israel and that His Son will rule from Israel.
  2. The nations will rage against Jews individually because God promised that all of Israel would be saved, and they will try to prevent this by attempting to eliminate the Jewish people.

- D. These events ends with Jesus being enthroned in Jerusalem, therefore the rage of the nations against Jerusalem is ultimately the rage of the nations against God's plan for Jesus to rule the nations from His throne in Israel.

*<sup>1</sup>Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? <sup>2</sup>The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, <sup>3</sup>“Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us.” <sup>5</sup>Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: <sup>6</sup>“Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.” (Psalm 2:1-3; 5-6 NKJV)*

*<sup>2</sup>“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; With great fervor I am zealous for her.’ <sup>3</sup>“Thus says the LORD: ‘I will return to Zion, And dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the LORD of hosts, The Holy Mountain.’ (Zechariah 8:2–3 NKJV)*

1. This is the reason for the rage of the nations recorded by David in Psalm 2. The nations will attempt to throw off God's leadership of the planet by resisting His purposes for Jerusalem and the Jewish people. This is why their rage is so deep. It is a war against God Himself.
  2. This is why God speaks in His wrath that He will set His Son Jesus on His throne on Zion. Their rage is against His plan for Jesus to rule the earth from Jerusalem.
- E. This storm around Jerusalem is not only gathering because of the rage of the nations, it is also gathering because it is the hour of God's final judgment of Israel (Ezekiel 22:17-22). The covenant promises and curses of both Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 are still very real.

*<sup>26</sup>I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you will soon utterly perish from the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess; you will not prolong your days in it, but will be utterly destroyed. <sup>27</sup>And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. <sup>28</sup>And there you will serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. <sup>29</sup>But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. <sup>30</sup>When you are in distress, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, when you turn to the LORD your God and obey His voice <sup>31</sup>(for the LORD your God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them. (Deuteronomy 4:26–31 NKJV)*

*<sup>23</sup>Behold, the whirlwind of the LORD— Goes forth with fury, A continuing whirlwind; It will fall violently on the head of the wicked. <sup>24</sup>The fierce anger of the LORD will not return until He has done it, And until He has performed the intents of His heart. In the latter days you will consider it. (Jeremiah 30:23–24 NKJV)*

*<sup>8</sup>And it shall come to pass in all the land,” Says the LORD, “That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: <sup>9</sup>I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And*

***I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.' ” (Zechariah 13:8–9 NKJV)***

1. God told Moses that there would be a future day of judgment for Israel's sin and that day is the time known as "Jacob's trouble." Israel's day of punishment occurs at the end of the age because it is her final punishment and part of the process that leads to all Israel being saved (Isaiah 4:3; Jeremiah 31:34) so that she is never again subject to the curses of the covenant.

***<sup>34</sup>Now therefore, go, lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin.” (Exodus 32:34 NKJV)***

***<sup>7</sup>Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it. (Jeremiah 30:7 NKJV)***

2. God spoke to the children of Israel audibly at Mount Sinai and made a covenant with them. That covenant is still in effect for the nation of Israel until the entire nation is redeemed through the blood of Jesus. The end of the age will again reveal just how accurate the testimony of Scripture is.
3. Because of God's unique covenant with Israel, He will judge them before He judges all the other nations. God will judge all the nations at the return of Jesus, but He will first judge Israel. This both prepares Israel for her millennial destiny and also sets a stage where the wickedness of the nations is revealed in their response toward Israel. Peter emphasizes this principle of God's judgment in 1 Peter.

***<sup>17</sup>For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? (1 Peter 4:17 NKJV)***

4. The offense of Habakkuk at God's judgment of Israel through military invasion will again become an offense for many during Israel's final judgment, but it is a judgment in righteousness that will bring about God's ultimate purpose for Israel. As He did in Habakkuk's day, God will do something astounding both in His judgment of Israel and in her final deliverance.

***<sup>5</sup>“Look among the nations and watch— Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days Which you would not believe, though it were told you. (Habakkuk 1:5 NKJV)***

5. Understanding this judgment helps us to see the mission of the church in its proper context. God will not bring Israel to the final hour of judgment until there is a global witness prepared to help serve her in this hour and to provoke her to call upon Jesus for mercy.

- a. In His mercy, God has orchestrated the end of the age to be the time of the full maturity of the church so that millions of believers are prepared to offer physical help and the gospel to Israel in her final hour of judgment.
- b. The church is called to remind Israel that her final discipline will prepare her for her future glory, while we also are sober about the trial she will face. When we consider the severity of previous periods of discipline such as the Babylonian invasion, the Roman invasion and the Nazi Holocaust, we must tremble at what Israel will face during her final season of judgment.
- c. The church must be prepared that being grafted into Israel's future glory also means being grafted into her present suffering. The church will experience Israel's discipline with her and must be prepared for that.

### III. THE BIBLE WARNS THAT THIS STORM WILL BECOME FAR WORSE

- A. The Scriptures tells us that a siege is coming to Jerusalem and, when it describes the final siege, it is uses very serious language. The Scripture tells us that the trouble that will come around Jerusalem that is unparalleled in human history. By looking at current develops in the Middle East we can already see a large scale siege emerging that is far more anti-Semitic than any previous siege of Jerusalem.

*<sup>7</sup>Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it. (Jeremiah 30:7 NKJV)*

*<sup>1</sup>“At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. (Daniel 12:1 NKJV)*

*<sup>21</sup>For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. (Matthew 24:21 NKJV)*

- B. The siege around Jerusalem will affect the entire earth. People will have to respond to the crisis and make a decision regarding God's plan for Jerusalem.

*<sup>2</sup>“Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>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. (Zechariah 12:2–3 NKJV)*

- C. This siege will lead to a global crisis that will be so serious that Jesus warns that no one would survive if He did not limit it to a short period of time.

*<sup>22</sup>And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:22 NKJV)*

- D. The angel warns Daniel that the antichrist will actually make war on the Jewish people and seem to overcome them for a season. Given that this is a time of unequalled trouble, this is a sobering prophecy. This persecution will not only affect the Middle East, it will reach out to many nations where Jewish populations live.

*<sup>21</sup>“I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them...<sup>25</sup>He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. (Daniel 7:21, 25 NKJV)*

- E. When we consider the magnitude of other seasons of trouble Israel has faced, we begin to understand how serious the coming trouble is. It is greater than what happened in the siege around Jerusalem in 70 AD and even the Holocaust.

#### **IV. AT THE END OF THE TROUBLE JERUSALEM WILL BE SAVED**

- A. The trouble will be so severe, that Israel will believe that God has forsaken her. However, God will not forget His plan for Israel.

*<sup>14</sup>But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me.” <sup>15</sup>“Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. (Isaiah 49:14–15 NKJV)*

- B. Though the trouble will be severe, God has promised that all of Israel will be saved by the return of Jesus. God will fulfill all His covenant promises and Jerusalem will be filled with His glory.

*<sup>5</sup>“Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. <sup>6</sup>In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (Jeremiah 23:5–6 NKJV)*

*<sup>3</sup>Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. <sup>4</sup>And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. (Zechariah 14:3–4 NKJV)*

*<sup>3</sup>Many people shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:3 NKJV)*

- C. When Israel comes into her glory, it will be so dramatic that Paul compares it to resurrection.

*<sup>15</sup>For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? (Romans 11:15 NKJV)*

- D. Not only will Israel be saved, God will do something glorious in many of the nations that surround Israel. Many of Israel's enemies will be transformed into righteous nations.

*<sup>19</sup>In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border...<sup>23</sup>In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians. <sup>24</sup>In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, <sup>25</sup>whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.” (Isaiah 19:19, 23–25 NKJV)*

- E. Though only the return of Jesus can bring Israel into her promises and transform the nations surrounding Israel, there is continuity between the ministry of the church to Israel and in these nations before the return of the Lord to create the context for what He will do at His return.

## **V. THE WITNESS OF BELIEVERS TO ISRAEL DURING THE TIME OF TROUBLE**

- A. Though God will save Israel and fill her with His glory, the time of unequalled trouble just before it will be so dark that it will cause many to lose heart. All across the earth men's hearts will fail due to fear.

*<sup>26</sup>men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. (Luke 21:26 NKJV)*

- B. During these difficult days, God wants believers across the earth to remind Israel of her ultimate deliverance God's faithfulness. We must prepare the church for this.

- 1. The church throughout the nations is to encourage and remind Israel through singing. Isaiah tells us there will be a singing witness in the nations reminding Israel of God's righteousness.

*<sup>14</sup>They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing; For the majesty of the LORD They shall cry aloud from the sea. <sup>15</sup>Therefore glorify the LORD in the dawning light, The name of the LORD God of Israel in the coastlands of the sea. <sup>16</sup>From the ends of the earth we have heard songs: “Glory to the righteous!” But I said, “I am ruined, ruined! Woe to me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously, Indeed, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.” (Isaiah 24:14–16 NKJV)*

- a. A key part of His righteousness is His faithfulness to His promise to make Jerusalem a praise in all the earth (Isaiah 62:7). There is a preliminary fulfillment of this promise in a night and day singing and prayer in the nations for the sake of Zion before Jesus comes.
  - b. Night and day worship in the spirit of the Tabernacle of David is one of the key ways Israel is provoke to her priestly calling as a people.
- 2. The church is also to remind Israel of her promises through bold proclamation of Israel's promises. God has commissioned the church to give Israel the “comfort” of the certainty of His promises.

*<sup>1</sup>“Comfort, yes, comfort My people!” Says your God. <sup>2</sup>“Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the LORD’s hand Double for all her sins.” (Isaiah 40:1–2 NKJV)*

3. The church is also called to pray unceasingly, night and day for Israel’s promises up until and through the end-times.

*<sup>6</sup>I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; They shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent, <sup>7</sup>And give Him no rest till He establishes And till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. (Isaiah 62:6–7 NKJV)*

4. God will also stretch out His hands to Israel through the personal ministry of believers in nations across the earth. He will strengthen His hands to Israel in Isaiah 65:2 through the many that He saves in the nations in Isaiah 65:1.

*<sup>1</sup>“I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. I said, ‘Here I am, here I am,’ To a nation that was not called by My name. <sup>2</sup>I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in a way that is not good, According to their own thoughts; (Isaiah 65:1–2 NKJV)*

- C. Part of reaching the nations in this generation is preparing the nations to respond to this crisis.
- D. God will cause all the earth to stop and watch His courtship of Israel. He will remember His promises to Abraham and His promises made at Sinai. He will remove Israel’s provision and hedge her in with thorns until she loves him.

*<sup>14</sup>“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her...<sup>16</sup>“And it shall be, in that day,” Says the LORD, “That you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ And no longer call Me ‘My Master,’... <sup>19</sup>“I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me In righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy; <sup>20</sup>I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, And you shall know the LORD. (Hosea 2:14, 16, 19–20 NKJV)*

## **VI. AT THE END OF THE CRISIS GOD WILL JUDGE THE NATIONS**

- A. At the end of the siege on Jerusalem, God will judge the nations based on how they responded to the siege. The fact that the Lord will judge the nations so severely for how they responded to the crisis in Jerusalem tells us just how serious it will be.
- B. Joel and Zechariah both describe the moment when God liberates Israel and judges the nations. Look at the language in these passages – what is going to happen that God can judge the nations entirely on how they responded to His plan for Jerusalem?

*<sup>1</sup>“For behold, in those days and at that time, When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land...<sup>12</sup>“Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations...<sup>14</sup>Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the*

*LORD is near in the valley of decision...<sup>16</sup>The LORD also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; But the LORD will be a shelter for His people, And the strength of the children of Israel. (Joel 3:1-2, 12, 14, 16 NKJV)*

*<sup>2</sup>For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. <sup>3</sup>Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle...<sup>12</sup>And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. <sup>13</sup>It shall come to pass in that day That a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor, And raise his hand against his neighbor's hand; <sup>14</sup>Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations Shall be gathered together: Gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance. (Zechariah 14:2-3, 12-14 NKJV)*

- C. It is our mission to prepare the nations for this judgment. Those who respond properly to God's plan will be rewarded. Those who resist God's plan for Israel will be severely and eternally punished. Jesus equates treatment of Israel with treatment of Himself in the last days.

*<sup>9</sup>In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the Angel of His Presence saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old. (Isaiah 63:9 NKJV)*

*<sup>2</sup>I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land...<sup>16</sup>The LORD also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; But the LORD will be a shelter for His people, And the strength of the children of Israel. (Joel 3:2, 16 NKJV)*

*<sup>40</sup>And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' (Matthew 25:40 NKJV)*

*<sup>45</sup>Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' (Matthew 25:45 NKJV)*

## **VII. WE MUST PREPARE THE EARTH FOR THIS CRISIS**

- A. The Scripture tells us that unequalled trouble is coming to Jerusalem, but that this trouble will ultimately conclude in the return of Jesus. Matthew 24:14-15 commissions us, as we take the gospel to the nations, to prepare the nations for this hour of trouble and give them understanding of it because it will affect all nations.
- B. People who lack understanding of what God is doing will be in a panic searching for those who are familiar with God's plan.

***<sup>4</sup>“But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.” (Daniel 12:4 NKJV)***

- C. At the same time, there will be many with understanding. They will teach the people and do great exploits for God.

***<sup>32</sup>Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. <sup>33</sup>And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering...<sup>35</sup>And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time. (Daniel 11:32-33, 35 NKJV)***

***<sup>3</sup>Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. (Daniel 12:3 NKJV)***

- D. It is our job to prepare laborers that have understanding and can lead the people to do great exploits in this time of trouble.