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Trusting God

by Bill Faith

One of the greatest lessons that we can learn in life is to place our complete trust in God and not lean to our own understanding. In the book of Proverbs we read, *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths"* (Proverbs 3:5-6).

How do we learn to trust God? We can do so by following the instructions of Jesus when He said to him, *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind"* (Matthew 22:37). If we do this, our whole life in everything we do will be patterned after Christ and His righteousness; and He will have our complete trust.

Yet as we look around the world, it appears that very few people are willing to do this. It seems that most people lean to their own understanding; and at times even some who perhaps believe that they are trusting in God mistakenly lean to their own understanding or to false teachings.

Perhaps one of the most profound examples of this is found in the writings of Josephus, a Jewish historian who lived shortly after the time of Jesus. His writings explain what happened in 70 A. D. when the Temple was destroyed and how the people were misled into believing in a false hope. He wrote, *"...A false prophet was the occasion of these peoples destruction, who had made a public proclamation in the city that very day, that God commanded them to get up upon the temple, and that there they should receive miraculous signs of their deliverance. Now, there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose upon the people, who denounced*

this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God; and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes. Now, a man that is in adversity does easily comply with such promises; for when such a seducer makes him believe that he shall be delivered from those miseries, which oppress him, then it is that the patient is full of hopes of such deliverance. Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers..." (Josephus Wars of the Jews, book 6, chapter 5, sections 2 and 3).

Less than forty years before the destruction of the temple, Jesus had prophesied concerning Jerusalem and the temple. Had they adhered to His warnings, they would not have sought refuge in the temple. For He told one of His disciples concerning the temple, *"...Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down"* (Mark 13:2). Furthermore, He told them what signs would proceed the destruction. He warned them, *"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her"* (Luke 21:20-21).

From Josephus writings, it appears that God did indeed warn the inhabitants of Jerusalem immediately prior to the attack. Josephus told of several strange wonders that happened before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple that he believed were signs from God, which the people ignored. One of the signs he mentioned was, *"On the one-and-twentieth day of the month Artemisius, [Jyar,] a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared; I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not*

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related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sun-setting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armour were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities” (Josephus Wars of the Jews, book 6, chapter 5, section 4).

Indeed it does appear that God warned the people not only through Christ, but also through a miraculous vision as well. Yet many did not heed the warnings. Is it possible that this strange phenomenon might repeat itself just before the final siege of Jerusalem, a time yet in the future? Will those living in Jerusalem at that time listen to Jesus warnings? Only time will tell.

But with these thoughts in mind, it is interesting to read a recent article at Israelnationalnews.com concerning Jerusalem by Baruch Gordon. In the article, he stated that Israel’s leading known Kabbalistic Elder, Rabbi Yitzchak Kaduri, called upon worldwide Jewry to return to Israel due to natural disasters that threaten to strike the world. Gordon quoted Rabbi Kaduri as stating, “This declaration I find fitting to issue for all the Jews of the world to hear. It is incumbent upon them to return to the land of Israel due to terrible natural disasters, which threaten the world.”

“In the future, the Holy One, Blessed be He, will bring about great disasters in the countries of the world to sweeten the judgments of the Land of Israel.”

“I am ordering the publication of this declaration as a warning, so that Jews in the countries of the world will be aware of the impending danger and will come to the Land of Israel for the building of the Temple and revelation of our righteous Mashiach (Messiah).”

Rabbi Kaduri was also quoted in the Yediot Acharonot newspaper as saying, “The Mashiach is already in Israel.”

From the Bible we know that the Messiah, Jesus Christ, is not already in Israel. Jesus Himself stated that He would not return until after the tribulation and that all eyes would see Him return. We find this recorded in Matthew 24:29-30 where Jesus is quoted

as saying, “*Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken...and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*”

There are many Scriptures that tell us of the terrible calamity that is to come upon the earth including Jerusalem at the close of this age. One such Scripture is found in Zechariah. It reads, “*Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. 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. Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. 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. Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah...*” (Zech 14:1-5).

As these verses tell us, Jerusalem will be taken and the spoil divided. And just when the armies of the nations seem undefeatable, Jesus Christ personally will return to the Mount of Olives causing it to split and provide a valley through which survivors may flee.

According to Jesus, Jerusalem at the time of the end of this age will be a very dangerous place to be. As mentioned earlier in this article, Jesus said, “*But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter in*” (Luke 21:20-21). It appears that Jerusalem will not be a safe place.

Jesus continued, “*For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this*

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people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:22-24).

Matthew’s account of what Jesus said adds a little more understanding to what will happen. He quotes Jesus as saying, *“Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place”* (whoever reads, let him understand), *“then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes...For then there will great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be”* (Matt 24:15-18, 21). These Scripture stress the importance of leaving Jerusalem immediately when they see the abomination of desolation happening.

We have to wonder, will history repeat itself? Will a new temple or some form of tabernacle be built in Jerusalem before the return of Christ in which false prophets will be telling everyone to stay in for safety? Time will tell.

In the past, Jews falsely assumed that because their temple had been chosen by God as His dwelling, that it could never be destroyed. Yet, God warned them, *“Do not trust in these lying words saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these...Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit”* (Jeremiah 7:4,8).

God warned that unless they repented of their ways, He would do to Jerusalem and the temple what He had done previously to Shiloh (Jeremiah 7:5-14).

In conclusion, to have true security, we must place our trust in God, and only in God. As David said, *“I will love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn*

of my salvation, my stronghold. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies” (Ps. 18:1-3). Finally, in Psalms 37:40 we are told, *“And the Lord shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, And save them, Because they trust in Him.”*

Surely one of the greatest lessons that we can learn in this life is to place our complete trust in God and not lean to our own understanding.

(All Scripture references are NKJV)

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