

The Watchmen of Ephraim (3)

Christ's rescue at Petra

Many of us realise how close we are now to the End Time. In my travel to Israel and Jordan I have looked at the location of some of those end time events we can read of, from the departure of God's people from Jerusalem, through to the resurrection, and until the time Christ finally returns to Jerusalem in triumph, after breaking some of His people out of captivity in Petra.

I know that the timing and even the existence of these events I have mentioned may be new, a scenario which has been closed up and sealed till the time of the end. But for those with eyes to see, the Bible provides the evidence and guidance we need at the End Time.

There exists a quite common belief that, during the last 3½ years before Christ returns to establish His Kingdom here on earth, some of God's people will be protected in a place called Petra, situated in Southern Jordan, in the Middle East.

However, those who have had the opportunity to visit Petra and examine its rock carved temples and caves, have often left with some doubts about its capability to provide the kind of protection and facilities that maybe thousands of God's people would require for life over 3½ years in the wilderness. (See the photographs on the website with our article 'Christ Goes to Petra')

Now we know that God is able to bring water from the rock, and we also know that God has promised to provide for these people miraculously during those years, (*Isaiah 33:16, 'He will dwell on high; His place of defense will be the fortress of rocks, Bread will be given him, His water will be sure,*) but, many of God's people are unaware of other scriptures which indicate that during those 3½ years, those people will be eventually held captive and prevented from leaving after Christ's return, by the Edomites, in a place the Bible calls Bozrah.

It is for that reason, that immediately after the conclusion of the battle of Armageddon, Jesus Christ leaves Israel and heads for Jordan, and Bozrah. Isaiah 34 starts with a description of Armageddon and then tells of Christ's urgent mission. Verses 5-10 explain that Christ is very angry with Edom, the descendants of the elder son of Isaac, for their persistent hatred and persecution of their brother nation Jacob, or Israel.

'For My sword shall be bathed in heaven; Indeed it shall come down on Edom, And on the people of My curse, for judgment. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, It is made overflowing with fatness, With the blood of lambs and goats, With the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, And a great slaughter in the land of Edom.For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, The year of recompense for the cause of Zion. Its streams shall be turned into pitch, And its dust into brimstone. Its land shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night or day; Its smoke shall ascend forever. From generation to generation it shall lie waste; No one shall pass through it forever and ever.'

Next, we should notice where Christ expects to find those Edomites, some of whom are those we know as the Palestinians today. Jeremiah 49:20-22, *'Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD that He has taken against Edom, And His purposes that He has proposed against the inhabitants of Teman, Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; Surely He shall make their dwelling places desolate with them. The earth shakes at the noise of their fall; At the cry its noise is heard at*

*the Red Sea. Behold, He shall come up and fly like the eagle, And spread His wings over **Bozrah**; The heart of the mighty men of Edom in that day shall be like the heart of a woman in birth pangs.'*

They will be found at Teman, named after Esau's grandson, which is a part of Bozrah. Bozrah was the ancient capital of Edom and is actually some 50km or 26 miles North of Petra along the ancient King's Highway, but because it was the capital of Edom, its name was also applied to the region. (Take a look at the many photographs of Bozrah, Teman and Petra on the web site)

We gain a little more information in verses 7, 12-18.

*'Against Edom. 'For thus says the LORD: "Behold, those whose judgment was not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunk. And are you the one who will altogether go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, but you shall surely drink of it. For I have sworn by Myself," says the LORD, "that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse. And all its cities shall be perpetual wastes." I have heard a message from the LORD, And an ambassador has been sent to the nations: " Gather together, come against her, And rise up to battle! " For indeed, I will make you small among nations, Despised among men. Your fierceness [**'terribleness'**-King James] has deceived you, The pride of your heart, O you who dwell in the clefts of the rock, Who hold the height of the hill! Though you make your nest as high as the eagle, I will bring you down from there," says the LORD " Edom also shall be an astonishment; Everyone who goes by it will be astonished And will hiss at all its plagues. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. And their neighbors," says the LORD, " No one shall remain there, Nor shall a son of man dwell in it.'*

Christ determines to destroy Edom because of their pride and 'terribleness'. That word in Hebrew, implies their use of terror, and we have seen that in the actions of Hamas and Hezbollah, but it seems that they will abuse those who were late in fleeing from Jerusalem in an attempt to reach Petra, and turn to holding God's people captive there.

Bozrah then, is to be destroyed, even as God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, Amos 1:11-12, *'Thus says the LORD: " For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because he pursued his brother with the sword, And cast off all pity; ^[SEP]His anger tore perpetually, And he kept his wrath forever. **But I will send a fire upon Teman,** ^[SEP]Which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah.'* The palaces of Bozrah are found in Teman.

Now we understand why Christ is so angry. This is not just a recent offense of the Edomites - It has been a perpetual hatred and cruelty which has existed for thousands of years.

Once again we see the name 'Teman' mentioned here, upon which Christ will pour the super-heated brimstone which destroyed Sodom, samples of which I collected after snow melt brought flooding and soil erosion to the wilderness of Judea, South West of the Dead Sea.

Some time ago I visited Teman. You won't find Teman on a modern map of Jordan, but you probably will in a Bible atlas. Today, as I discovered when comparing ancient and modern maps of Jordan, Teman is called Wadi Musa (after Moses) and from there it is but a short walk to the ancient rock carved city of Petra. Wadi Musa and Teman are in fact the same place, and in it today are found *"the palaces of Bozrah."* These are actually the many modern hotels where thousands of tourists stay when they visit Petra. Indeed, this was brought home to me by the fact that the hotel in which I stayed, had the word 'palace' as a part of its name!

Here then, at Wadi Musa, is most likely the place where Christ arrives to release His people from the Edomites, though how many are found there or in Petra itself, which close enough to walk, remains unclear. Bozrah city, the ancient capital, is now in ruins, though its one-time wealth is still apparent. Today, it is found next to the modern town of Busayra, just South of Tafila, 26 miles North of Petra. It is the steep road to Tafila from south of the Dead Sea, which God's people who

did not qualify for the first resurrection will probably use after fleeing from Jerusalem, entering the Judean wilderness, and making their way via Engedi, one of David's refuges, to South of the Dead Sea, across the Wadi Araba, and safety in Jordan. Matthew 24:15-16, *“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.**)* And Daniel 11:40-41, *‘At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall **escape** from his hand: **Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.**’(Jordan)*

The reason why the Beast (Europe's German leader) does not enter Jordan in pursuit of God's people is found in Revelation 12:14-16, *‘But the woman [God's faithful Church] was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the **serpent** spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.[biblical symbol for an army] But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth’*

Having lost one of his armies, the Beast (Inspired by Satan, the serpent) is afraid to send another army into Jordan in pursuit of those who have spoken out from Jerusalem against his worship. In Wadi Musa, or Petra, God's people find a place of safety with the Moabites initially, (Moab and Ammon descend from the daughters of Lot, and became the hospitable native Jordanians) who themselves have fled South across the Fords of Arnon (Isaiah 16:1-5),

*‘ Send the lamb to the ruler of the land, From **Sela** to the wilderness, To the mount of the daughter of Zion. For it shall be as a wandering bird thrown out of the nest; So shall be the daughters of Moab at the **fords of the Arnon.** “ Take counsel, execute judgment; Make your shadow like the night in the middle of the day; Hide the outcasts, Do not betray him who escapes. **Let My outcasts dwell with you, O Moab;** Be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler. For the extortioner is at an end, Devastation ceases, The oppressors are consumed out of the land. In mercy **the throne will be established;** And One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, Judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness.’*

...the reason being, to escape the threat from the East. (Revelation 9:14-16, *‘saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.’*

After the destruction of the pursuing army of the Beast, and the resurrection of those who are to become Christ's Bride, and somewhat later during those last 3½ years, it seems that the Edomites gain control of the area and refuse to let God's people go, who were not resurrected when Christ returned for His Bride, so that when He finally returns from heaven **with** His Bride, He turns from his victory at Armageddon to rescue the captives held at Petra, Micah 2: 12-13, *‘I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together **like** the sheep of Bozrah, Like a flock in the midst of their fold; They shall make a loud noise because of so many people. **The one who breaks open [Christ] will come up before them; They will break out, Pass through the gate, And go out by it; Their king will pass before them, **With the LORD at their head.**’***

Here, Christ compares the assembling of the remnant of the Israelite nations as they are later rescued from captivity around the world and gathered into Israel in the Middle East, to His rescue of

His sheep of Bozrah, by breaking them out of Petra, which is then surrounded by the Edomites, or Palestinians, from where He passes on before them as He leads them to Jerusalem.

Finally, we find an account after the events in Edom at Bozrah, in Isaiah 63:1-4. The watchman on the walls of Jerusalem then speaks first, verse 1, first half.

'Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength?— Christ replies in the second half of the verse, " I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save. The watchman questions, verse 2, Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? Christ replies verses 3-4, " I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes. For the day of vengeance is in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come.'

The year of His redeemed has come! God's faithful people are safely returned to Jerusalem, after their sojourn in Petra, to meet again those who fled from Jerusalem with them from the armies of the Beast 3½ years before, but who were taken by Christ to the Sea of Glass, in the resurrection of the Firstfruit Christians. (Revelation 14:1-5) See 'Division of The Saints' on our website. Both God's people from Petra and Christ's Bride are now ready and prepared for their millennial roles, to share rule with Christ here on the earth, *'...and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years'*, Revelation 20:4.

This completes the Biblical End-Time scenario, plain in the Bible. (See the End-time Series 1-5 on our website, and to view a slide show with more photographs, go to our article on the website.)

Finally, please remember that God has given us these prophecies in order that we might be prepared for their arrival after the first angel of Revelation 14 flies, something which is almost never mentioned by the Churches. Only then will the final proclamation of the **watchmen of Ephraim** take place, when time to prepare their move to Jerusalem before the outbreak of world war, will be short indeed. Those who would serve God, and have been hereby forewarned, are invited to participate in the planning and preparation for these clearly biblical events by using the 'Contact Us' tab on the ozwitness.net website.

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