

# Truth Bombs

A series of concise papers which seek to explain lies, errors, misunderstandings or misrepresented facts.

## Why Jerusalem has been occupied by so many empires

I have explained elsewhere that Jerusalem has not been the capital of Israel for 3,000 years but for less than 100. Many other nations have a better claim on the city. Why is this?

God, who controls history according to his sovereign purpose, allowed multiple empires, nations, tribes, clans and confederacies to govern Jerusalem in continual succession. Few capital cities have been victim to more sovereigns than Jerusalem. Paris has been the capital of Frankish people for far longer (with a Roman interlude). Rome has been the capital of Italian people far longer (with a Goth interlude). London has been the capital of Britain for nearly 1,000 years. God could have let Israel remain in Jerusalem – but did not.

The clue is in the covenant with Abraham. A key initiative in God's electing purpose was the choosing of Abraham out of Chaldea, making a covenant with him and promising him that he would be the father of many nations (Gen 17:4-6). His very name means 'father of a multitude'. This covenant is the Gospel in principle and God's purpose is a particular people taken out of all nations. The representation of God's people is universal. God's people are not from one fleshly nation but are chosen people from all nations. God's kingdom comprises of people from the whole earth.

Hebrews were meant to understand this and be God's missionaries; instead they restricted the knowledge of God and became elitist. This was just one of their sins that led God to reject them (Matt 21:43) and judge them (Matt 21:44; 1 Pt 2:8); their chief sin was idolatry.

Abraham never lived in Salem (Jerusalem) but the city became associated with Israel after its capture by David, who also had a covenant with God and was the type of the Lord Jesus as King over a kingdom of elect people. David also symbolised universality as well as election; note his mighty men from many nations, even a Hittite, and his alliance with Tyre.

Jerusalem became the centre of God's symbolic chosen people as the City of David. It was where the tribes went up (Ps 122:3-4). It was the gathering of the Lord's people and the centre of God's worship on Mt Zion, one of the hills of Jerusalem.

Since God calls people out of all nations in the Gospel, Jerusalem, as the symbolic centre of worship, is the symbolic centre of the elect from all nations. Under the New Covenant it is not to be viewed in material terms but symbolically as the mother of all believers (Gal 4:26). Thus in Revelation Jerusalem is the heavenly home of the elect (Rev 3:12, 21:2, 10).

So Jerusalem is a picture of the purpose of God to call people out of all nations; the Gospel is universal in scope but particular in design. People are called universally but elected specifically (Matt 20:16) to live in heavenly Jerusalem.

To illustrate this principle in history, God deliberately allowed multiple nations to occupy and govern Jerusalem. It demonstrates universality as well as particularism.