

December 11-7, 2023

Revelation 6–14

“THEY OVERCAME . . . BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB”

Summary: *Revelation 6. Christ opens the six seals, and John sees the events therein—In the fifth seal, he sees the Christian martyrs; and in the sixth, he sees the signs of the times.*

Revelation 7. John also sees in the sixth seal the Restoration of the gospel, the sealing of the 144,000, and the hosts of the exalted from all nations.

Revelation 8. John sees fire and desolation poured out during the seventh seal and preceding the Second Coming.

Revelation 9. John also sees the wars and plagues poured out during the seventh seal and before the Lord comes.

Revelation 10. John seals up many things relative to the last days—He is commissioned to participate in the restoration of all things.

Revelation 11. In the last days, two prophets will be slain in Jerusalem—After 3½ days, they will be resurrected—Christ will reign over all the earth.

Revelation 12. John sees the imminent apostasy of the Church—He also sees the War in Heaven in the beginning when Satan was cast out—He sees the continuation of that war on earth.

Revelation 13. John sees fierce-looking beasts that represent degenerate earthly kingdoms controlled by Satan—The devil works miracles and deceives men.

Revelation 14. The Lamb will stand upon Mount Zion—The gospel will be restored in the last days by angelic ministry—The Son of Man will harvest the earth.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

How did Moses arrange the Camp of Zion, a “City of the Lord.”

The land of Israel was to stand out as the Holy Land. Reviewing Israel’s history and sacred way of dwelling seems to suggest a pattern in preparing His people to have a Terrestrial, Telestial, and a Celestial identity. We can see the Lord’s purpose in preparing His people as a “temple society,” a “Zion.” In the exodus, there were twelve parts of the camp of Israel on the periphery. The tribe of Joseph had a double portion, Ephraim, and Manasseh. Each tribe carried or sunk stakes that had colorful banners

identifying their location. They enclosed another tribe, the priestly Levites, who enclosed the Lord’s “presence,” His tabernacle (it had three areas as well). The tabernacle, the “Holy of Holies” with its three areas was the center part of the camp of Israel, and likewise identified by stakes that were draped with curtains because of its very holy and high priestly state.

How did the Children of Israel compromise from a Temple City?

Eventually, Israel began to grow and wander from the unity that the temple society required. So, a system of cities and capital cities began to develop. The

capital city had the tabernacle with temple courtyards large enough to handle tens of thousands of worthy Israelites to teach and remind them of ordinances that still applied to the whole Zion society. There still was an outer ring for the multitude that circled a secondary ring that was under the priestly Levite administration. Only worthy members were able to be brought through the priestly courtyard to participate in ordinances and sacrifices that occurred in center ring, the higher priestly part of the temple with its altar in front of the "Holy of Holies." Eventually, in modern times, the temple courtyards gave way to sacred "temple buildings" with telestial, terrestrial, and celestial identity. Instructions were, and still are given to prepare the people to be a Zion society. Again, its Aaronic and Melchizedek priestly environments and ordinances are designed to bring us into the Lord's presence.

What is the biblical "going back to the future?"

Going back in history, turning around, and looking at today, we begin to better understand the present and the future of temple compounds as well as the arrangement of two capital cities, the Lord's cities of new and old Jerusalem. We see the possibility of being the Lord's people, dwelling with him in his city and cities. We have additional Apostolic insights; "Up to now, through all of earth's long years, there has been one time, one time only, when the Lord's system of capital cities has worked perfectly. Such was in the day of Enoch, the seventh from Adam. In that holy day, so faithful were the saints that the Lord, the Great Jehovah, "came and dwelt with his people," even as he will in the millennial era that is to be. In that holy day, the saints "dwelt in righteousness," even as they shall when the Lord comes again to dwell among mortals." (Bruce R. McConkie, **The Mortal Messiah, Vol.1, p.84**) "And the

Lord called his people ZION, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there were no poor among them. And Enoch built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even ZION . . . And Enoch and all his people walked with God, and he dwelt in the midst of Zion; and it came to pass that Zion was not, for God received it up into his own bosom; and from thence went forth the saying, ZION IS FLED." (Moses 7:16-21, 69)

How can I imagine a future Temple City?

Other scriptures help us understand more about a ZION or "temple society." "And he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come--after it should be destroyed it should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord; wherefore, it could not be a new Jerusalem for it had been in a time of old; but it should be built up again and become a holy city of the Lord; and it should be built unto the house of Israel." (Ether 13:5) There is a parallel between old Zion and new Zion. Prophecies of one may apply to both. One thing is for sure: The Lord will come, and He will dwell in his cities. That means that a degree of sanctity and cleanliness must exist in these cities. It is the same sacredness that any temple building requires. It will require us to be a "temple society." "Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain." (Zechariah 8:3) The Prophet Joseph Smith said, "Judah must return, Jerusalem must be rebuilt, and the temple, . . . and all this must be done before the Son of Man will make His appearance" (History of the Church 5:337). Temple ordinances were restored step by step, to ultimately lead us to a temple city, a City of the Lord.

What is a “City of the Lord?”

“He manifested Himself unto us, and designated, to me and others, the very spot upon which He designed to commence the work of the gathering, and the upbuilding of an ‘holy city,’ which should be called Zion—Zion, because it is a place of righteousness, and all who build thereon are to worship the true and living God, and all believe in one doctrine, even the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. ‘Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion’ (Isaiah 52:8).” (*History of the Church, 2:254; from a letter from Joseph Smith to the elders of the Church, Sept. 1835, Kirtland, Ohio, published in Messenger and Advocate Sept. 1835, pp. 179–80.*) “Jerusalem of old, after the Jews have been cleansed and sanctified from all their sin, shall become a holy city where the Lord shall dwell and from whence he shall send forth his word unto all people. Likewise, on this continent, the city of Zion, New Jerusalem, shall be built and from it the law of God shall also go forth. There will be no conflict, for each city shall be headquarters for the Redeemer of the world, and from each he shall send forth his proclamations as occasion may require. Jerusalem shall be the gathering place of Judah and his fellows of the house of Israel, and Zion shall be the gathering place of Ephraim and his fellows, upon whose heads shall be conferred “the richer blessings.” (Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., *Doctrines of Salvation, Vol.3, p.69 - p.70*) “Now many will feel disposed to say, that this New Jerusalem spoken of, is the Jerusalem that was built by the Jews on the eastern continent. But you will see, from **Revelation 21:2**, there was a New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband; that after this, the Revelator was caught away in the Spirit, to a great and high mountain, and saw the great and

holy city descending out of heaven from God. Now there are two cities spoken of here. As everything cannot be had in so narrow a compass as a letter, I shall say with brevity, that there is a New Jerusalem to be established on this continent, and also Jerusalem shall be rebuilt on the eastern continent (**see Book of Mormon, Ether 13:1-12**). “Behold, Ether saw the days of Christ, and he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come; after it should be destroyed, it should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord, wherefore it could not be a New Jerusalem, for it had been in a time of old.” This may suffice, upon the subject of gathering, until my next.” (**Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Section Two 1834-37 p.86**) “Jerusalem of old, after the Jews have been cleansed and sanctified from all their sin, shall become a holy city where the Lord shall dwell and from whence he shall send forth his word unto all people. Likewise, on this continent, the city of Zion, New Jerusalem, shall be built and from it the law of God shall also go forth. There will be no conflict, for each city shall be headquarters for the Redeemer of the world, and from each he shall send forth his proclamations as occasion may require. Jerusalem shall be the gathering place of Judah and his fellows of the house of Israel, and Zion shall be the gathering place of Ephraim and his fellows, upon whose heads shall be conferred “the richer blessings.” (Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., *Doctrines of Salvation, Vol.3, p.69 - p.70*)

How do I recognize the future unfolding?

The conflicts that precede this great era are as a refining fire. We are fortunate to have prophetic indications so that we can prepare ourselves for the future. As for the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem, there are specific signs and even timing to guide us through future

peril. As some see it, a simply explained five-phase era brings us to and through the "Armageddon" scenario. **(1)**. The world turns against the nation of Israel. **(2)**. Two Prophets will hold back the armies of the enemies for three-and-a-half years. **(3)**. The prophets will be killed and lie in the streets for three-and-a-half days. **(4)**. The Messianic event occurs as besieged Jerusalem will be freed and the Mount of Olives divides. **(5)**. The preceding holocaust will have left so many dead that it will take seven months to find and bury them. The leftover instruments of war will provide the survivors in the country with seven years of fuel. A more detailed explanation includes. **One**: "And when that day shall come they [those who then dwell in all lands] shall be visited of the Lord of Hosts, with thunder and with earthquake, and with a great noise, and with storm, and with tempest, and with the flame of devouring fire." We have seen these things as they were manifest among the Nephites at the time of the crucifixion of Christ. We have seen them in the wars and butchery of modern times, particularly where atomic weapons are involved. And we shall yet see them, in a measure never before manifest on earth, when all nations gather against Jerusalem in the days of the coming Armageddon. This Nephi knew, and this we know." **(Bruce R. McConkie, A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p.435)** "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." **(Zechariah 12:3)** **Two**: "And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them." **(Revelation 9:16)** ". . . for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." **(Revelation 11:2-4)** Two Prophets will hold back the armies of the enemies for three-and-a-half years. **Three**: then the two prophets will be killed and lie in the streets for three-and-a-half days They may be identified as: "followers of that humble man Joseph Smith, through whom the Lord of Heaven restored the fulness of his everlasting gospel in this final dispensation of grace. No doubt they will be members of the Council of the Twelve or of the First Presidency of the Church." **(Bruce R. McConkie, Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 3:509.)** "And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths." **(Revelation 9:17-18 - see also 16:14-21)** "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God." **(Zechariah 13:8-9, see also 11, 12, 13)** **Four**: "These are the two . . . standing before the God of the earth . . . when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them . . . And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves . . . And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into

them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them . . . And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.” (Revelation 11:4-12) “. . . 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 the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.” (Zechariah 14:2-5): **Five:** “And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the LORD GOD. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land.” (Ezekiel 39:9-12)

When will my city become a “City of the Lord?”

Some cleansing symbolism can be seen. As in the war of heaven when one third were cast out, one third of Israel will perish. Yet, as Israel was once a Zion society, the “Camp of Israel,” reduced to a series of large courtyards dedicated to the Lord and eventually became a House of The Lord, so it will return to the stakes of Zion and become the “Camp of the Lord,” or the “City of The Lord” again. Every dwelling place will be sacred and cleansed for the Lord to be able to dwell there. “For verily I say unto you, that after you have had sufficient time to build a house to me, wherein the ordinance of baptizing for the dead belongeth, and for which the same was instituted from before the foundation of the world, your baptisms for your dead cannot be acceptable unto me; For therein are the keys of the holy priesthood ordained, that you may receive honor and glory. And after this time, your baptisms for the dead, by those who are scattered abroad, are not acceptable unto me, saith the Lord. For it is ordained that in Zion, and in her stakes, and in Jerusalem, those places which I have appointed for refuge, shall be the places for your baptisms for your dead.” (Doctrine and Covenants 124:33-36) “And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defense.” (Isaiah 4:5) In picturing this “city temple” scene from our own home in Jerusalem, my sweetheart, Marilyn, said to me, “Daniel, that means you’ll have to have a temple recommend to carry out the trash!” Our goal is to be worthy and make our home holy, becoming a part of a “City of the Lord.”