

Christ in Prophecy
Mountains of Jerusalem 1: “The Mount of Olives”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: There are several mountains in Jerusalem today that have historical and prophetic significance. One of these is the Mount of Olives from which Jesus ascended into Heaven. And according to the Scriptures, it is the place where He will return to earth. Stay tuned for a biblical tour of this Mount.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy! Welcome also to the land of Israel and to the city of Jerusalem. I have come here to the city of Jerusalem to explore four mountains. Three of them are important in biblical history and in Bible prophecy. The fourth is important because of what is situated on it. The 4 mountains are the Mount of Olives, the Temple Mount, Mount Zion, and Mount Herzl. I might point out right here at the beginning that these mountains that we are going to be taking a look at are really not a mountain by American standards. We would call them hills, but in the Bible they are referred to as mountains. And you know they really are when you consider the fact that they are high hills here in Israel and Israel really only has one true mountain by American standards that's Mount Hermon which is located in the far north on the border with Syria. The first mountain we are going to take a look at is the Mount of Olives, and the best place that we can get a really good view of it is from the Eastern Gate of the Old City. So, let's go there first.

Part 2

Dr. Reagan: Well, here we are at the Eastern Gate, sometimes referred to as the Beautiful Gate or the Golden Gate. It was a gate that was used for ceremonial purposes by priests during the time of Jesus. As you can see, there is a cemetery here in front of the gate. It's a Muslim

cemetery that was placed here for a very definite reason but we will talk about that more when we focus on the Temple Mount. For now, our subject is the Mount of Olives. Directly below me is a deep ravine called the Kidron Valley. This valley runs north and south, and it separates the Old City of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives which is located to the east of the city.

This is the mount from which Jesus ascended into Heaven. It is also the place that the Bible says He will return to. At the base of the mount is the beautiful Church of All Nations, also called the Church of the Agony. It is located at the traditional site of the Garden of Gethsemane. The construction of the church was completed in 1924. Located right above it is the incredible Church of Mary Magdalene. It is a Russian Orthodox Church that was built in 1888 to honor the Tsar's mother. Located above the Russian Church is a chapel shaped like a tear drop. It is called Dominus Flevit, which in Latin means "The Lord wept." As the name of the chapel indicates, it is located at the traditional site where Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem. It was built in 1955. Zooming in on the top of the mountain, we see the Hotel of the 7 Arches. When it was built in 1964, it was discovered that a major geological fault line lies beneath it. That is significant because the book of Zechariah says in chapter 14 that when the Messiah returns to the Mount of Olives, it will split in half when His feet touch the ground. The Mount of Olives runs north and south along the Kidron Valley it is a ridge mountain. And when you reach Hebrew University where you see that tall spire, the name of the mountain changes to Mount Scopus; Mount Scopus is where Titus and his legions camped while they destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD. Let's go now to an observation site on the Mount of Olives.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Well, here we are on the Mount of Olives. Looking east in that direction you see the Old City of Jerusalem. Looking back over my shoulder to the West here you see the Seven Arches Hotel, and over the mountain here is the beginning of the Judean wilderness. Let's go right over here and take a look at the Old City. This is one of my favorite places in all the land because you can get a such a great panoramic view of the Old City of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, where the past two Jewish temples were located, both the Temple of Solomon that was destroyed by the Babylonians and the temple that existed at the time of Jesus' that was destroyed by the Romans. The Bible says that Jerusalem is the center of the world, and I want to tell you something when you stand here, you sense that reality. This is where God in the flesh came and spilled His blood for our sins to make it possible for us to be reconciled to God

the Father. And this is the place where the Messiah will return to reign in majesty and glory over all the earth.

As we look at the Temple Mount the building with the gold dome is of course the object that immediately grabs our attention it is called the Dome of the Rock. It was completed in 691 AD it is not a mosque rather it is a shrine for Muslim pilgrims. The Dome of the Rock sits on the site there where Muslims believe Mohammed ascended into Heaven, although there is no historical record that Mohammed was ever in Jerusalem. At the south end of the Temple Mount is the Al-Aqsa mosque. It serves as a worship center for Muslims. Beneath the mosque, on the outside of the wall are steps that were used in the time of Jesus to enter the Temple Mount. Those steps led to gates, which led, in turn, to stairs that took people up to the top of the Mount. To the left of the steps is an Arab village that sits on top of the original City of David. That's right folks the ancient city of Jerusalem was located on a small finger of land to the south of the current city. That city started growing north, up the hill toward the Temple Mount, which in those days was called Mount Moriah. As the city grew north up the hill, David decided to purchase the Temple Mount for a future location of a temple. At that time it was the threshing floor of Araunah. Later, after David's death, his son, Solomon, built the first Temple there on the Temple Mount. In the distance, on the south side of the city is Mount Zion. In the days of Jesus it was located inside the city walls. But when these walls were rebuilt in the 1500's, it was left outside. Today, Mount Zion is dominated by a huge church called Dormition Abbey. It was built by Kaiser Wilhelm II and was completed in 1910. That mount is also the location of the Upper Room where Jesus had his Last Supper with His disciples. And it is also the traditional site of the tomb of David. Well now that we've had our orientation, let's go down to the base of the Mount of Olives and visit the Garden of Gethsemane.

Part 4

Dr. Reagan: This is a small section of the Garden of Gethsemane located adjacent to the Church of All Nations, also known as the Church of Agony. This is an authentic site where Jesus wrestled with His fate that was approaching Him on the Cross, and this is also where He was betrayed and arrested. The church is very dark inside because it was built to commemorate Jesus' agony in the garden. The windows are made of alabaster to filter out as much light as possible. At the front of the church there is a large outcropping of stone. It marks the traditional

site of the Lord's agony, where he sweated drops of blood and prayed, "Father, not my will but Yours be done." Incidentally, from this vantage point you can get a very good view of the Eastern Gate and you can also get a feel for how steep and deep that ravine is that constitutes the Kidron Valley.

Now we're going to start ascending the Mount of Olives and our first stop is going to be the Dominus Flevit Chapel. Let's go that way.

Part 5

Dr. Reagan: As you can see, that's a very steep walk up that hill and we have now arrived looking at this sign up here at the Dominus Flevit Chapel. Let's go into the beautiful grounds. This lovely chapel is shaped in the form of a tear drop to commemorate the fact that Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem in this area. He did that during the last week of His life after he made his triumphal entry. He wept because the Jewish people had rejected Him as Messiah, and He knew that would result in God pouring out His wrath upon this city.

That event is described in the book of Luke in chapter 19, verse 41 where it says:

Now as Jesus drew near to the city, He saw the city and wept over it, saying . . .

"For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave upon you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

That, of course, was a prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD. One of things that I love about this beautiful site is it gives you such a magnificent view of the Old City of Jerusalem, there is the golden dome, the Eastern Gate in front of it, and over here these golden domes are the top of the Russian Church of Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus came here riding on a donkey on the day of His triumphal entry, the Kidron Valley was filled with thousands of people who had heard about His resurrection of Lazarus. They were waving palm branches as a sign of adoration, and they were crying out, "Hosanna to the Son of David," meaning, "Messiah, save us!" But within a few days that same crowd was

screaming, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" You know folks the Scriptures tell us that one day very soon Jesus is going to be returning to this mountain. He is going to be returning this next time not on a humble donkey, but He is going to be returning on a white war charger, the symbol of a victorious general. And once again, that valley is going to be filled with people, hundreds of millions of glorified saints, with angels above. And He is going to ride down into that valley again on that white war charger and once again the redeemed saints will cry out, "Hosanna, Hosanna to the Son of David," as He rides up to that Eastern Gate. Psalm 24 tells us that as the Messiah, Jesus approaches that Eastern Gate that it will blow open supernaturally to welcome Him into the city.

Here's how it is describe in the Hebrew Scriptures in Psalm 24, beginning with verse 7:

Lift up your heads, O gates!

And be lifted up, you everlasting doors!

That the King of glory shall come in.

And who is this King of glory?

The LORD strong and mighty,

The LORD mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O you gates!

Lift up, you everlasting doors!

And the King of glory shall come in.

And who is the King of glory?

The LORD of hosts,

He is the King of glory.

Jesus will then enter the Temple Mount where He will be coronated the King of kings and the Lord of lords and will begin His millennial reign over all the earth.

Oh, my! What a day that will be!!

There's a garden over here adjacent to the chapel. And I'd like to show you something very special there.

Part 6

Dr. Reagan: The first time I came to Israel to do video shooting was in 1987. We traveled all over this land shooting a video entitled "Israel in Bible Prophecy." And it's one we re-shot in the

year of 2000. The final scene in that particular video was going to be one about Jesus' parable of the fig tree that's recorded in Matthew 24 the one where He said watch the fig tree and when it re-blossoms you will know that His coming is about to occur. He was referring, of course, to the reestablishment of the nation of Israel. Well we used an Israeli film crew that time instead of a crew of our own and I told the head of the crew, "I want us to end this at a fig tree on the Mount of Olives, and I am going to read that parable." He looked at me like I was nuts. And he said, "What do you mean?" I said, "What did I say wrong?" He said, "Sir it is called the Mount of Olives, not the Mount of Fig Trees!" He said, "There are no fig trees on the Mount of Olives." Well as you can clearly see there are a lot of olive trees behind me, and not any fig trees. But I was determined to find a fig tree on the Mount of Olives. He said, "No there aren't any." He said, "I know where there are some and we will take you there." And he said, "The viewers will never know the difference." I said, "Well sir, I will know the difference. I want to try to find a fig tree on the Mount of Olives."

So when we came up here one day to do some shooting here at Dominus Flevit, I went to the gardener and I said, "Do you know if there is a fig tree anywhere on the Mount of Olives?" And he smiled real big and he said, "Yes, sir we have one right here in our garden." And sure enough they did, and that is where we shot that final shot. Let me show it to you. Here is the fig tree right in front of us here. It looks mighty pitiful today, like it hasn't had enough water. But when we filmed here in 1987, it looked very healthy and that certainly is a fig leaf that I am showing you there in my hand. So we found a fig tree on the Mount of Olives, and it is here that I opened my Bible to Matthew 24 and I began to read that wonderful statement of Jesus about the fig tree. He said, "Learn the parable from the fig tree, when its branches already become tender and puts forth its leaves you know that summer is near, so also when you see all these things know that it is near, at the door. Assuredly I say to you the generation will not pass away until all things take place. What Jesus was saying there was, "Watch Israel, and when Israel is reborn, we will know that we are in the season of the Lord's return." Well Israel was reborn on May the 14th 1948.

This particular spot is important to me for another reason and that is because back in the early 1990's I had a good friend in the Dallas Texas area who was going to come to Israel with me he and his wife for the first time, they had never been here before. He was so excited, and 2 months before we were to leave he drowned in a tragic boating accident. His wife and his daughter decided to come anyway; they brought his ashes with them. And we scattered his

ashes at the base of this fig tree and had a memorial service here. So, I can say to you with confidence there is at least one Gentile on this mountain who is waiting for the coming of the Lord. And that reminds me of something this mountain is primarily known for one thing and that is thousands, and thousands of Jewish graves, and I want to show you those in just a moment.

Part 7

Dr. Reagan: Well as you can see, I was not exaggerating when I said this mountain is covered with tens of thousands of graves. Notice all these stones here on this grave. The reason for these stones is because over here people don't bring flowers to a grave because the climate is so harsh the flowers wouldn't even last a day. Instead what they do is they put a stone on the grave, and that is called a stone of remembrance. So this particular person has had this many people to visit the grave since the last time the stones were cleared off.

Incidentally, the bodies are not in these stone boxes here, the bodies are down in the ground. The stone boxes simply represent where the bodies are buried. After the War of Independence in 1948 and 1949 this whole area of the Mount of Olives ended up under the occupation of Jordanian forces. Not only did they go into the Old City which they controlled and blow up the entire Jewish quarter. But they came over here and desecrated this cemetery. They took for example these cap stones and they used them as stepping stones to the military latrine. It was only after the Six Day War in 1967 that the Jews were able to reoccupy this area and to put these graves back in order. Incidentally I see a grave right over here that has quite a lot of stones on it, so it must be somebody who is important to the Orthodox Jewish community. Let's go over and take a look at it.

Well this is the tomb that I was talking about. As you can see it has a lot of stones on it, but I can't read Hebrew, so I'm going to invite our guide to step into the picture here with me. Come over here Shai and have him read what's on this tomb. This is Shai-Shalom Matter who has been our guide over here for over 20 years. Shai, what does it say here?

Shai-Shalom Matter: First of all this guy studied at a Yeshiva, his name is Avia Yehoshua Goldberg.

Dr. Reagan: Now Yeshiva is?

Shai-Shalom Matter: Study hall.

Dr. Reagan: Where you study to be a rabbi.

Shai-Shalom Matter: Right, right.

Dr. Reagan: Okay.

Shai-Shalom Matter: And he is the son of Yisrael and Ronit Yvle. And he was a righteous man with his vigor. He loved the Torah and the land of Israel. And he especially loved the city.

Dr. Reagan: Okay, that's all we need to know about him right now. But he evidently was a very righteous man who was well known among the Orthodox community. You know Shai we were standing here talking just a few minutes ago and you pointed something to me at a grave up here that I found very interesting. Tell our viewers.

Shai-Shalom Matter: A tradition is in Jerusalem that if you had family who were killed in the Holocaust and there is no bodies to bury you at least put their name on your grave stone, at least their name is remembered.

Dr. Reagan: There is no body but their name is remembered. Very profound, and a wonderful way to remember them.

Shai-Shalom Matter: I agree.

Dr. Reagan: Here's a grave I want to show you. This is the grave of former Prime Minister, Menachem Begin. Most of the former prime ministers who have died have been buried in the national cemetery of Israel which is called the Mount Herzl Cemetery. But Menachem Begin was the only person to serve as prime minister in the history of this country who was an Orthodox observant Jew. And therefore, he desired to be buried here on the Mount of Olives. Orthodox Jews do not believe in embalming, they are simply buried in a simple shroud, and they are buried if at all possible before sunset on the day that they die.

And so it was with Menachem Begin. He died in Tel Aviv of a heart attack on March 9, 1992 at the age of 78. His death occurred at 3:30am in the morning, and so according to Orthodox tradition he had to be buried before sunset on that day, and he was. By the time they got his body here ready to be put in the ground over 300,000 people had gathered on this mountain. One of the reasons that I admired Menachem Begin so much is because he was a man who understood the Biblical significance of this land. He understood the significance of God regathering the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth and bringing them back into this land and reestablishing their state. He had a biblical view of Israel and for that reason when it came to the West bank he never referred to it as the West bank, he called it Judea and Samaria. Israel needs more leaders like him. The second special grave I would like to show you is located very nearby. Let's go take a look at it.

Part 8

Dr. Reagan: This is the grave of a really remarkable man by the name of Eliezer ben Yehuda. He was born in Lithuania in 1858 and he became obsessed with reviving the Hebrew language from the dead. You see, when the Jews were scattered from this land in 70 AD, they stopped speaking Hebrew. The Jews that went into the European area took Hebrew and mixed it with German and came up with a language called Yiddish. And the Jews that were scattered throughout the Mediterranean basin they took Hebrew mixed it with Spanish and came up with a language called Ladino. Ben Yehuda worked his entire life to revive Hebrew from the dead, and you know what? He lived to see it happen. Before he died in 1922 the British who were control of this area declared biblical Hebrew together with English, and Arabic to be the 3 official languages of the land. Biblical Hebrew is the only language in the world that has ever been revived from the dead. And it fulfilled a prophecy that is recorded twice in the Hebrew Scriptures that the language would be revived in the End Times. Let's go now to the pinnacle of the Mount of Olives.

Part 9

Dr. Reagan: I'm standing now on the pinnacle of the Mount of Olives, and we are on the beautiful grounds of the Russian Church of the Ascension. As you can see, it has a very tall tower that can be seen as far away as the Dead Sea. As I mentioned earlier, there is another site for the Ascension of Christ called the dome of the Ascension. It has archaeological remains that date back to the 4th Century, but it has been taken over by the Muslims and made into a mosque. And in their traditional way of not respecting other religions, they do not allow Christians and Jews to read Scripture or to pray there.

I wanted to end our exploration of the Mount of Olives here in this beautiful garden adjacent to the Church of the Ascension the Russian church, because this is the place where Jesus has promised to return. In Acts 2 we are told that when He ascended into Heaven He ascended from the Mount of Olives. And that 2 men in white who were probably angels promised the disciples that He would return here to the Mount of Olives. And that He would return in the same way that He left visibly, and physically. That is confirmed over in the Hebrew Scriptures in Zechariah 14 when it says, "That in the end times when the city is surrounded by the Antichrist and its forces, and the city is about to fall that the Messiah will come to this mountain and when His feet touch the mountain it will be a great earthquake. The mountain will split in half and the earthquake will affect all the earth. He will speak a supernatural word and the Antichrist and his forces will be destroyed." And in verse 9 of Zechariah 14 it says, "And on that day, the Lord shall become king over all the earth." What a glorious day that will be and how I yearn for it. And so on the top of this the Mount of Olives I cry out "Maranatha! Maranatha! Come quickly, Lord Jesus!"

Part 10

Dr. Reagan: I hope you were blessed by our exploration of the Mount of Olives. At the end of my comments there at the Russian Church of the Ascension, I mentioned signs of the times that indicate the Lord's soon return. There are many of those signs; signs that relate to weather, to world politics, religion, but the most important are those that relate to the land of Israel. The many end time signs that relate to Israel are covered in detail in our video entitled, "Israel in Bible Prophecy," but the four most important these: First, the regathering of the Jewish people in

unbelief from the four corners of the earth, which began in the late 19th Century and continues to this day. The second key end time prophecy is a natural result of the first, and that is the re-establishment of the State of Israel which occurred in 1948.

The third key prophecy of the end times is the Jewish re-occupation of the city of Jerusalem which occurred in June of 1967 at the end of the Six Day War. The fourth key prophecy about Israel in the end times is one found in Zechariah 12 which states that all the nations in the world will come against Israel over the issue of who is going to control the city of Jerusalem. And, of course, that prophecy is being fulfilled right this moment, as the United States, the United Nations, the European Union, the Vatican, and the rest of the nations of the world are demanding that Israel surrender either all or part of Jerusalem.

My friends, these prophetic developments I have just summarized clearly indicate that we are living in the season of the Lord's return. In other words, we are living on borrowed time. The crucial question is, "Are you ready?" Have you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior? I hope so. Next week, the Lord willing, we will take you on a similar tour of the Temple Mount, which is, without a doubt, the most important mount on planet earth. The Temple Mount is where the ancient Jewish temple stood, and it is where the Third Temple, the temple of the Great Tribulation will stand.

In future weeks we will also be taking a look at Mount Zion and Mount Herzl. Mount Zion is the location of many biblical sites such as the upper room where Jesus and His disciples shared their last supper together. Mount Herzl is not so familiar to most Christians. And that's because it's not mentioned in the Bible. But it is a very important mount in the Jerusalem area because of two sites located on it both of which are dedicated to the memory of the dead. One is the Holocaust Museum, called Yad Vashem. The other is the National Cemetery of Israel where soldiers and political leaders are buried. I hope you will make it a point to tune in for these future programs about the Mountains of Jerusalem. Until next week at this same time, the Lord willing, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our redemption is drawing near."

End of Program