Violent protests in the streets of Jerusalem have continued this week amid heightened tensions over the Temple Mount. The fighting began several weeks ago on Yom Kippur, the holiest day on the Hebrew calendar, when Muslims began throwing stones at a group that was visiting the site. The Muslims accused Israel of allowing Jews into the compound to pray on the Day of Atonement, something that the Israeli police forbid on the grounds that it could cause offence to the Islamic Waqf that administer the site. Israel denied that any religious group was planning to pray on the Mount, and believe that the violence was purposely orchestrated to coincide with the Jewish holy day. Last week Israeli police entered the Temple Mount in order to arrest stone-throwers and to bring an end to the rioting which threatens to destabilize the peace process. Jordan expressed concern over the Israeli intervention on the Mount, claiming it was a flagrant violation of international law, while Syria accused the Jewish state of attempting to destroy the al Aqsa Mosque.
Hamas
declared that only war will resolve the contention over Jerusalem. Some Orthodox Jewish groups have called for protests against the Muslim rioters by ascending the Temple Mount, while others have asked their followers to stay away from the area, believing that it is forbidden for any Jew to set foot on the Mount for fear of accidentally entering the place where the Holy of Holies once was. Professor Hillel Weiss, of the Organization for Human Rights on the Temple Mount, has called for the immediate
rebuilding
of the Jewish Temple itself.

Quote: *"In a move that may heighten tensions in the capital, the Organization for Human Rights on the Temple Mount (OHRTM) called for Jews to visit the east Jerusalem compound, which houses the al-Aqsa Mosque. During a rightist event held in Jerusalem Sunday evening, just hours after Muslims rioted in and around the Temple Mount amid reports that Jewish extremists were planning to visit the site, Professor Hillel Weiss said, "The (third) temple must be built now. The mosques do not have to be destroyed in order for us to do this."*

There are of course diverging opinions in Judaism as to whether or not the Dome of the Rock would need to come down in order to build the Third Temple. Some believe that the Temple should be constructed opposite the present Eastern Gate, which would place a rebuilt Temple slightly to the north of the Dome of the Rock. Others believe that the bedrock underneath the Dome of the Rock was the original bedrock where the Holy of Holies once stood, and that the rebuilding of the Temple would necessitate the Dome's destruction. Incidentally, the Dome of the Rock, also known as the Mosque of Omar, is actually a Muslim shrine and not a mosque. Muslims revere the al Aqsa mosque, which is located at the far end of the Temple courtyard, as the place where Mohammed ascended into heaven (even though Jerusalem is not mentioned once in the Qur'an). But the Dome of the Rock is less revered than the al-Aqsa mosque itself. And as we have seen lately, even a prominent Muslim author has already gone on the record

in calling for the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple. Under the present political conditions, Israel could not go ahead and rebuilt the Temple. But religiously speaking, there is little preventing them from doing it. The Bible seems to indicate that it may be the Antichrist who will open up the way for the rebuilding of the Temple, under the pretext of achieving unity between the world's religions.

I have been talking this past week with some friends of mine who are preterists, who believe that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ occurred in 70 AD and that the Jewish Temple was destroyed never to be rebuilt again. I won't go into the rights and wrongs of their views. But I believe the Temple will one day be rebuilt. The Temple mentioned in Ezekiel 40-48 has never been constructed. There are many structural and ceremonial differences between the Temple that was built by Ezra and later expanded upon by Herod and the Temple that is mentioned in Ezekiel 40-48. Whether or not the Temple mentioned in the book of Ezekiel is the Temple that the Antichrist will defile, I do not know. But I do know that preparations are now being made for the rebuilding of the Temple, and that can only mean one thing, that Jesus Christ is coming back. Micah had this to say concerning the rebuilding of the Temple and the return of Christ to this earth.

Micah 4:1-3
But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

One day the House of the Lord will be established in the top of the mountains of Jerusalem. And only then, when the Prince of Peace returns, will there be true peace on Earth and goodwill to all men (Isaiah 9:6-7). But you can know this peace now. Jesus Christ said in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid ". This peace comes through the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins. Jesus Christ died for you. He was the Lamb of God who bore away the sin of the world (John 1:29). He was the one upon whom the Father laid the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). And through believing on Him for salvation, you can know your sins forgiven, and have eternal life in heaven. Why don't you turn away from your sins, and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation today.

Isaiah 53:6
All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

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