



## SHALOM, JERUSALEM!

The failure of the recent Camp David peace talks between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority President Yasir Arafat has been attributed to the unwillingness of both sides to yield a compromise on the issue of Jerusalem. Arafat maintains his determination to proclaim East Jerusalem, home to 200,000 Arabs, as the capital of a Palestinian State, while Barak reaffirms his claim that Jerusalem will always be the undivided capital of the Jewish State.

Though many Israelis seem willing to give in to virtually every demand of the Palestinians and surrounding Arab states in order to secure peace and eliminate the threat of terrorism, there is one item on the table on which there is nearly unanimous agreement across the breadth of the political spectrum: the future of Jerusalem. It is as if God has built into the heart of every Jew a desire to see this city remain their capital forever. It is this connection

between the ancient people and their ancient city to which the psalmist refers in Psalm 137:5-6:

*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.*

With the Bible in one hand, opened to such passages as Zechariah 12:2-3, and the daily newspaper in the other, it is clear that Jerusalem will be a political "hot potato" until the end of days when David's son, Jesus, will rule the world from His throne in the Old City and finally establish a lasting peace for the City of Peace. Until then, His heart, and the hearts of those who follow Him, mournfully declare:



*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them who are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and*

*ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. (Matthew 23:37-39)*

(Note: The graphic on this page is a stylized version of the three Hebrew words in Psalm 122:6 translated, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.")

### **MASADA SHALL NOT FALL AGAIN**

Herod the Great, who reigned from 37-4 B.C., built a winter palace and desert fortress for himself on the southwestern edge of the Dead Sea. Following the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., a group of Jewish zealots and their families continued to occupy this nearly invincible stronghold which towers above the valley below. There 960 men, women, and children were able to resist a three year siege by the Roman army from 70-73 A.D. Finally, when it was apparent that the enemy was at the gate, each man killed his family members and then took his own life, rather than be captured by the despised "pagan" forces.

- Masada stands as a symbol of Jewish nationalism and determination to resist aggression in the same spirit exhibited by the 960 who preferred death over humiliation at the hands of the invaders.
- "Masada shall not fall again!" is the Israeli equivalent to the Ameri-

can battle cries, "Remember the Alamo!" or "Remember Pearl Harbor!"

- Masada is where the oath of allegiance is taken by graduates of Israel's military academy.
- Israeli Jet pilots flying routine training missions over the Dead Sea region dip their wings in salute as they pass over Masada.



### **IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY. . .**

...when we began to publish *Heart's Desire*, but it was actually five years ago. This issue is the thirtieth and concludes our fifth year. A complete set of all thirty issues—a mini-course on Jewish culture and religious thinking—is available from our office upon request.

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