

State of Israel was established with old Jerusalem in the hands of the Arabs. For nearly twenty years it remained a divided city, with a no-man's land between two stretches of barbed wire separating the older city from the newer Jewish additions. Then in 1967, as a result of the Six-day War, all of Jerusalem came under Israelite control. Yet the temple area is still in the hands of the Arabs, since the present Jewish government has declared that all religious holdings shall remain in the hands of those who held them prior to the conquest, and therefore the temple area is still trodden down of the Gentiles.

The end of the times of the Gentiles may be very near. It may occur before or after the rapture. God has not told us, because He desires us always to be ready for His coming. World events seem to be heading toward a great climax. Before that climax occurs God may take His own to Himself. We do not know when our Lord is coming back. Over and over in the New Testament we are commanded to watch.

This word "watch" can easily be misunderstood. It does not mean to be constantly inquiring whether there is evidence that it will occur today or tomorrow. We will not know when He will return, until we suddenly begin to rise. In Luke 12, where the Lord is listing the qualities that He wishes His followers to have, He emphatically declares that they must be constantly watching for His return. Then He goes on to say that He will give His special commendation to those whom He finds giving His household its food in due season (Luke 12:35-48). In this and the many other passages in which God's people are told to watch for Christ's return, there are two Greek words that are translated "watch." Neither of them means to be constantly investigating to see how soon something will happen. Both mean "to be wide awake and on the job." They refer to faithful carrying on of the Lord's work, so that when He comes He may find His people faithfully serving Him.