

Session 2 Political Signs of the Times Pertaining to the Nation of Israel

I. REVIEW

- A. The Scripture commands us to know the signs of the times. Many Scriptures emphasize how important prophetic signs are at the End of the Age. In Scripture, Jesus taught more than any of the apostles on our need to discern the time (Mt. 24:32-44; Lk. 21:28-31). My premise is that we are in [the beginning stages of](#) the generation that the Lord will return. I do not know [whether](#) the final 7 prophetic years [begins in 5 years or 50](#) (probably [closer to 50 than 5](#)).
- ¹ Concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night...⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day...⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. (1 Thes. 5:1-6)*
- B. When comparing Mt. 24 with 1 Thes. 5:2-3 we see **3 distinct prophetic time frames** related to the final 7-year period of this age. First, the beginning of birth pangs (Mt. 24:8). Second, the worldwide period of counterfeit peace and safety (*increased birth pangs*; 1 Thes. 5:2-3; Dan. 9:27). Third, the Great Tribulation (*heavy birth pangs*; Mt. 24:21; Jer. 30:5-7).
- C. My opinion is the beginning of birth pangs began in either 1948 (when Israel became a nation) or 1967 (when Jerusalem came under Jewish control). I think they began in 1948. Israel is the reference point for understanding God's redemptive history (past and future). Israel gives us the prophetic timetable for the unfolding of God's End-Time plans.
- D. Five of the most significant prophetic political events in the last 2,000 years are the re-birth of the nation of Israel (May, 15, 1948), the re-capturing of Jerusalem during the Six Day War (June, 1967), Jerusalem being at the center of world controversy (Zech. 12:1-3; 14:1-3), the establishment of the European Union in the same territory as the ancient Roman Empire (Dan. 2:41-42; 7:7, 20, 24; 9:26-27; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16) and an international leader in the unique position to establish a peace treaty with Israel and the Middle East to bring world peace (Dan. 9:27; 1 Thes. 5:2-3). Four of these have occurred (Europe soon to be unified) thus, the most significant political prophetic events in the last 2,000 years are occurring in this generation.
- E. The nation of Israel has always been the primary timing indicator for God's prophetic calendar. The entire End-Time scenario in Scripture is given in context to events related to Israel. Dan. 9:24-27 is the most significant prophecy about nations in the End-Times. It speaks of Israel being in the Land, with a functioning Temple in Jerusalem and in covenant with the Antichrist.
- F. Several prophecies related to Israel are closely linked and interdependent on each other. These include the Abomination of Desolation, the return to the Land to re-establish the State of Israel, gaining control of the Jerusalem, rebuilding the Temple, re-establishing the Hebrew language and the Sabbath (in their civil law), becoming the center focus of world politics, resulting in worldwide anti-Semitism and the gathering of all nations around to lay siege against Jerusalem.

II. THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION: THE PRIMARY SIGN OF THE END-TIMES

- A. The sign of the Abomination of Desolation has many significant implications to it.
- ¹⁵ Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved... (Mt. 24:15-22)*
- B. The Abomination of Desolation will occur when the Antichrist declares himself to be God. Central to this Abomination is the **image of the Beast** (Antichrist) which will be a statue (image or idol) that is demonically empowered so that it will seem to think, talk, breathe, and make laws. This statue (image) will be the abomination in the Temple. The apostle John emphasized this image 10 times (Rev. 13:14, 15; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4).
- ¹⁴ He (False Prophet)...telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast (Antichrist)...¹⁵ He was granted power to give breath to the image...that it...should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image...to be killed. (Rev. 13:14-15)*
- C. This image will be the greatest abomination to God in history because the Antichrist will demand to be worshipped as God. The desolation will occur in two different ways. First, the Antichrist will seek to desolate or destroy any who refuse to worship him. Second, God will desolate or destroy in judgment all those who yield to the pressure to worship the Antichrist. The Abomination of Desolation is referred to 7 times in Scripture, 5 times by Daniel (Dan. 8:13; 9:26, 27; 11:31; 12:11) and 2 times by Jesus (Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14).
- D. After the Antichrist's head wound is healed, the Abomination of Desolation will be the key piece of legislation that begins his aggressive plan to rule the whole earth as God. This act of abomination will occur in the middle of the last 7 years before Jesus returns.
- E. The image (statue or idol) of the Beast will be set up in the Jerusalem temple. When this happens, the daily sacrifices (taught by Moses) that had been recently restored will be stopped.
- ¹¹ From the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. (Dan. 12:11)*
- ²⁷ Then he (Antichrist) shall confirm a covenant with many for one week (7 years); but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering... (Dan. 9:27)*
- F. Antiochus Epiphanes (Antiochus IV; 175-164 BC) defiled the Temple in a way that would prophetically foretell how the Antichrist will defile it in the End-Times.
- ³¹ Forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation. (Dan. 11:31)*
- G. The Abomination of desolation requires Israel to be in the Land with a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem in order to set up an idol in it (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 25:15; 2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:5, 15-18).

III. THE ANTICHRIST FUNCTIONS IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE REBUILT TEMPLE

- A. Significant activities related to the Tribulation Temple signal the End-Times. The Abomination of Desolation cannot occur unless Israel rebuilds the Temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The Temple does not currently exist, but we know that it must be rebuilt (Mt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2; 13:12-18; Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:31; 12:11). Even now plans to rebuild the Third Temple are being pursued aggressively in Israel. This may occur just before the first half of the final 7-year period (often referred to as Daniel's 70th Week).
- B. Paul's prophecy about the Tribulation Temple is founded on Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:27). Paul prophesied of the desecration of the Tribulation Temple by the Antichrist (2 Thes. 2:4).
- ³ The man of sin (Antichrist)...⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God...that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (2 Thes. 2:3-4)*
- ³⁶ The king (Antichrist) shall...exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against God...³⁷ He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. (Dan. 11: 36-37)*
- C. For the Antichrist to stop the daily sacrifices in the Temple, the Tribulation Temple must exist.
- ¹¹ From the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away...there shall be 1,290 days. (Dan. 12:11)*
- D. The apostle John prophesied of the desolation of the Tribulation Temple courts by the Gentile nations under the Antichrist's authority (Rev. 11:1-2).
- ¹ The angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the Temple of God...² But leave out the court which is outside the Temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city (Jerusalem) underfoot for 42 months." (Rev. 11:1-2)*
- E. The Third Temple is NOT the same as the Millennial Temple. There are two distinct Jerusalem Temples prophesied in Scriptures i.e. the Tribulation Temple (Third Temple) which will be built by unbelieving Jews and then desecrated by the Antichrist. The Millennial Temple will be built by Jesus (Isa. 2:3; 60:6, 10, 13; Ezek. 37:26-28; 40-48; Zech. 2:11; 6:12-15; 14:16-21).

IV. THE NATIONS WILL SET A SIEGE AGAINST JERUSALEM

² I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege...Jerusalem. ³ In that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples...all nations of the earth are gathered against it...⁶ In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile...they shall devour all the surrounding peoples...⁸ the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them...shall be like David... (Zech. 12:2-8)

- A. Jerusalem will become the center focus of world attention (Zech. 12:3; 14:2). At that time, Israel's military will be re-established (Zech. 12:6-8).

¹ Behold, the day of the LORD is coming...² For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken...half of the city shall go into captivity... (Zech. 14:1-2)

V. ISRAEL BECOMES A NATION AND GAINS CONTROL OVER JERUSALEM

- A. For the Abomination of Desolation to occur and for Israel to be attacked and in the center of world attention, they would have to be in the Land and be re-established as the State of Israel (Isa. 14:1; 66:7-8; Ezek. 36:22- 37:1-2; Zech. 12:1-6; Mt. 24:32-35; Mk. 13:28-30; Lk. 21:29-31). The people must be re-gathered (Deut. 30:1, 5-9; Isa. 11:10-12; Ezek. 37:1-12).

¹ ***The LORD will have mercy...and will choose Israel, and settle them in their land. (Isa. 14:1)***

- B. Over 5 million Israelites are back in their ancient land, making this the largest movement of people to return to Israel in history (surpassing the Exodus from Egypt over 3500 years ago).
- C. Even 100 years ago, it seemed impossible that Israel would become a nation. The Jewish people were weak and scattered throughout many nations. Then suddenly, out of the burning ashes of the Holocaust, Israel becomes a nation and then captured Jerusalem from the Muslims.

VI. ISRAEL WILL ESTABLISH A COVENANT WITH THE ANTICHRIST

²⁷ ***Then he (Antichrist) shall confirm a covenant (peace treaty) with many (Israel and Middle East nations) for one week (7 year period); but in the middle of the week (after 3½ years) he shall bring an end to sacrifice (in the Jerusalem temple, thus breaking the covenant). (Dan. 9:27)***

- A. The angel Gabriel spoke to the prophet Daniel about the final 7 years of this age immediately before the Messiah would come to rule the world from Jerusalem (Dan. 9:24-27). Gabriel spoke of these seven years as a ***week***. This was a common expression in Israel. They thought of both a week of years (7 years) as well as a week of days (7 days). This final seven year period just before Jesus' return is often referred to as "Daniel's prophetic week" or "Daniel's 70th week."
- B. Israel's governmental leaders will make a covenant with the Antichrist (*called the covenant with death and with Sheol or Hell*), and give their authority to him seven years before Jesus' Coming (Isa. 28:14-18; Dan. 9:27; 11:45; Zech. 11:16; Ezek. 38:8-12, 14; 39:26; Jn. 5:43; Lk. 19:11-28; 1 Thes. 5:3). The remnant of Israel will fully resist this decision. At the end of the Tribulation, ***Israel will reverse their decision*** by asking Jesus to rule over them leading to great blessing.
- C. This political covenant will include peace treaties and economic deals ***with many*** nations including Israel and other Middle Eastern Islamic nations. This covenant will seem to "***guarantee***" political, economic and spiritual prosperity along with protection for Israel.
- D. The Antichrist will win the trust of Israel by establishing peace in the Middle East, making a way for them to build the Temple and gaining financial security by possibly establishing Jerusalem as one of the economic centers of the world. One of the implications of this covenant or peace treaty will be to allow Israel to offer animal sacrifices (commanded by Moses) in their Temple.
- E. The Antichrist will break the covenant and stop the grain offerings and animal sacrifices offered by a restored Levitical priesthood. This gives us insight into the details of this covenant.

- F. The Great Tribulation starts with the Antichrist establishing a covenant or peace treaty (that is designated for 7 years) that results in a counterfeit peace that lasts approximately 3½ years because in the middle of the week (7 year period), the Antichrist will break the treaty resulting in the termination of Israel's religious activity in the Temple.
- ³ ***When they say, "Peace and safety!" then SUDDEN destruction comes upon them, as labor pains (Great Tribulation) upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. (1 Thes. 5:3)***
- G. Twice, Paul refers to "they" as those who rejoice in peace and then those who will not escape. This "they" refers to all the unbelieving nations on the earth, including Israel. Those who are deceived think the time of peace was God's blessing instead of the work of the Antichrist.
- H. The peace and safety will be established by the Antichrist just **prior** to a sudden "coming of destruction" of the day of the Lord, but **after** an escalating "nation against nation" season which is the beginning of birth pangs. The world will wrongly assume that their problems are being permanently solved by the Antichrist's seemingly skillful leadership. The global pressures during the first prophetic time frame (beginning of birth pangs) will set up the situation, in which the Antichrist will look successful as he appears to solve world problems. During this time, he will take control of many governments in order to fix their economy, etc. He will appear to have the answers for a short time.
- I. A man will rise to power who appears to deliver the world from its global political, economic, spiritual and military crisis. The Antichrist's credibility to establish his worldwide empire will come partially by being able to establish peace in the Middle East, which will be the most volatile place in history. He will be seen as the man who ended the time of international conflict when the nations of the world rose up against each other in military conflicts (Mt. 24:7-8).
- ²⁵ ***Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. (Dan. 8:25)***
- ²¹ ***A vile person...shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. (Dan. 11:21)***
- J. This pact will seem to settle the Middle East crisis, bringing Jews and Muslims together regarding Jerusalem and its holy sites. A key issue will be Mount Moriah (in Jerusalem), which is holy to both Muslims (current site of the Dome of the Rock which is their third holiest shrine) and Jews (ancient site of Solomon's Temple).
- K. No one knows **when** the last 7-year period of natural history begins. However, we do know **how** it starts and how it ends. It will start as a result of the Antichrist making a covenant with Israel and various Middle East nations (Dan. 9:27).
- L. The Antichrist will use this covenant to get a stronghold in the land of Israel. He will plant part of his headquarters in Israel. The "glorious holy mountain" is in Jerusalem (site of the Temple).
- ⁴⁵ ***And he (Antichrist) shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas (Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea) and the glorious holy mountain (Jerusalem)... (Dan. 11:45)***

- M. The terrible consequences of this covenant are described by Isaiah (Isa. 28) as a scourge going through the land in a relentless way. The very mention of what happens will cause terror (Isa. 28:19) and every attempt to find comfort at that time will be totally frustrated (Isa. 28:20).

¹⁴ Hear the word of the LORD, you scornful men (leaders of End-Time Israel), who rule this people who are in Jerusalem, ¹⁵ because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge (of the Antichrist) passes through, it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves." ¹⁶ Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation (Jesus' ministry), a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily. ¹⁷ Also I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet; the hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters will overflow the hiding place. ¹⁸ Your covenant with death will be annulled (Antichrist will betray his promises to Israel), and your agreement with Sheol will not stand; when the overflowing scourge passes through, then you will be trampled down by it. ¹⁹ As often as it goes out it will take you; for morning by morning it will pass over, And by day and by night; It will be a terror just to understand the report." ²⁰ For the bed is too short to stretch out on, and the covering so narrow that one cannot wrap himself in it. (Isa. 28:14-20)

VII. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN ISRAEL

- A. Some believe that the re-establishment of the Hebrew language was prophesied by Zephaniah.
⁹ For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the LORD, to serve Him with one accord. (Zeph. 3:9)
- B. Sabbaths will be established in Israel's society and civil law (Mt. 24:15-20).
- C. Islamic terrorism was prophesied by Jesus. The initial fulfillment of this prophecy occurred in the first century at the hands of fellow Jews like Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9), then again by the crusaders through the Middle Ages. The most dramatic fulfillment of this prophecy will be in the End-Times by Islamic terrorists which will greatly increase (Ezek. 35:1-36:7).
² The time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. (Jn. 16:2)
- D. Anti-Semitism will sweep the globe. Satan wants to exterminate the Jewish people so that a believing remnant cannot invite Jesus to rule Israel as her Messiah. (Rev. 12:13-17). An angel reveals Israel's great trouble in the End-Times to Daniel (Dan. 12:1-10). All nations will stand against Israel resulting in 2/3 of the Jews being killed and 1/3 getting saved.
- E. Israel's condition just before Jesus' Coming includes being in prison camps and assaulted by foreign armies (Isa. 11:11-16; 27:12-13; 42:6-24; 49:5-25; 61:1-2; Jer. 30:3-24; 31:1-23; Ezek. 20:33-44; 39:25-29; Hos. 11:10-11; Amos 9:8-15; Joel 3:1-2; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech 9:10-14).