

Session 5 Sign Events and Trends in Israel

I. JERUSALEM: THE KEY TO END-TIME PROPHECY

- A. Jesus gave ***sign events and trends*** pertaining to Jerusalem and the nation of Israel to indicate the generation of His return. Examples of ***sign events*** are the rebirth of the state of Israel (1948) and their regaining control over Jerusalem (1967). Examples of ***sign trends*** are the salvation of Israel (Rom. 11:26), prayer related to Jerusalem (Isa. 62:6-7), and global anti-Semitism (Zech. 14:2).
- B. Jesus connected the timing of His return to events and trends that will emerge in one generation. In this session, we will look at ***10 sign events*** and ***5 sign trends*** prophesied in the Scripture, that mark one generation as unique. When all the events occur and trends accelerate at the ***same time***, we are to know that we are in the generation in which the Lord returns.
- C. End-time prophecy is ***“Jerusalem-centric.”*** In other words, God’s end-time plan in Scripture is given in the context of events related to Jerusalem, which is the reference point and primary timing indicator of God’s prophetic timetable for the end times. What happens in Jerusalem gives insight into God’s timing for other significant end-time events leading up to Jesus’ return.
- D. In Dan. 9:24-27, Gabriel gave Daniel one of the most significant prophecies in the Bible. It describes Jerusalem in the end times, with a temple, and in covenant with the Antichrist. It contains many significant implications related to events occurring in Jerusalem. Many end-time prophecies related to Jerusalem are interdependent. For example, the Jewish people could not build the temple in Jerusalem until Israel became a nation and they regained Jerusalem.
- E. When Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70, God put a pause on His prophetic time clock related to key end-time events. When Jerusalem came back under the control of the State of Israel (1967), the “pause button” was taken off, marking the beginning of a chain of events that set the stage for the fulfillment of many other prophetic scriptures, for the first time in 1,800 years.
- F. Jerusalem is the city of the King where Jesus’ throne is; it is the place of convergence between the ***heavenly Jerusalem*** (New Jerusalem) and ***earthly Jerusalem*** (millennial Jerusalem). After Jesus returns, the New Jerusalem will descend to earth to connect with millennial Jerusalem.
- ³⁵ ***Jerusalem...is the city of the great King. (Mt. 5:35)***
- ¹⁰ ***He...showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven... (Rev. 21:10)***
- G. Jesus’ throne will be in millennial Jerusalem *and* in the New Jerusalem (Jer. 3:17; Rev. 22:3). It will be one throne, with two expressions, called the mountain of the Lord’s house (Isa. 2:2-3). Jerusalem will be the capital of Jesus’ government (Jer. 3:17; Isa. 2:2-4; 24:23; Ezek. 43:7; Mic. 4:7; Zech. 6:12-13; 14:9-11). At this time, Jerusalem will be a praise in all the earth (Isa. 62:7)
- ¹⁷ ***At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. (Jer. 3:17)***

II. SIGN EVENT #1: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL (1948)

- A. The state of Israel had to be reestablished to fulfill many end-time prophecies related to Jerusalem. Israel was scattered to the nations in AD 70. On May 14, 1948, Israel became a nation **in one day** after almost 2,000 years without a homeland. This is unprecedented in history.
- ⁸ *Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once?...Zion...gave birth to her children. (Isa. 66:8)*
- B. The gathering of the Jewish people back to their land is one of the most emphasized aspects of God's end-time plan (Deut. 30:3-5; Isa. 11:11-12; 14:1; 66:7-8; Ezek. 36:24-28; 37:1-12).
- ³ *The LORD your God will bring you back from captivity...and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you....5 Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. (Deut. 30:3-5)*
- ¹ *The LORD will have mercy...and will choose Israel, and settle them in their land. (Isa. 14:1)*
- ⁸ *In the latter years you [Antichrist] will come to the land [Israel] of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely. (Ezek. 38:8)*
- C. Israel returned to her land in unbelief as dry bones without the Spirit (Ezek. 36:24-26; 37:1-12).
- ²⁴ *I will...gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. 25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness...26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you... (Ezek. 36:24-26)*
- D. No end-time sign event is more dramatic or convincing than the return of Israel to her homeland. Ten years before Israel became a nation, it would have seemed impossible to anyone. Suddenly, out of the burning ashes of the Holocaust, Israel became a nation. Over 5 million Israelites are back in their homeland, making it the largest return to Israel, surpassing the exodus from Egypt.

III. SIGN EVENT #2: JERUSALEM UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE (1967)

Jerusalem being under the control of the State of Israel fulfills many prophecies (Dan. 9:24, 27; Joel 3:2, 12; Zech. 12:3; 14:2; Lk. 21:24). For the first time in 2,000 years, the Jewish people gained control of Jerusalem as a result of the Six Day War in June 1967.

⁶ *In that day...Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place. (Zech. 12:6)*

IV. SIGN EVENT #3: THE RESTORATION OF THE ISRAELI MILITARY

The restoration of the military in Israel in the end times is a sign (Zech. 10:5; 12:6-9). However, this does not imply that God approves of all the morality or policies of the Israeli military in this hour.

⁸ *In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one [soldier] who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David...9 In that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. (Zech. 12:8-9)*

V. SIGN EVENT #4: THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION OCCURRING IN JERUSALEM

- A. The abomination of desolation refers to the Antichrist putting an image of himself in the holy place of the temple in Jerusalem. The Antichrist will declare himself to be God (2 Thes. 2:3-4).
¹⁵ Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place'...¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...²¹ Then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been...until this time... (Mt. 24:15-21)
- B. The Antichrist will stop the daily sacrifices in the temple (Dan. 8:11-12; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). The activities of Antiochus Epiphanes (175–164 BC) give us a prophetic picture of the Antichrist.
²⁷ Then he [Antichrist] shall confirm a covenant with many for one week [7 years]; but in the middle of the week [7 years] he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering... (Dan. 9:27)
³¹ Take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation. (Dan. 11:31)
- C. For the abomination of desolation to occur, Israel must be a nation with a rebuilt temple and the Antichrist must have political authority in Jerusalem.

VI. SIGN EVENT #5: THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM

- A. The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. Currently, there is no temple in Jerusalem, but it will be rebuilt (Mt. 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2; 13:12-18; Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:31; 12:11). Paul prophesied about the desecration of the temple by the Antichrist (2 Thes. 2:3-4). John prophesied about the desolation of the temple courts by the Gentiles (Rev. 11:1-2).
³ The man of sin [Antichrist]...⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God... sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (2 Thes. 2:3-4)
- B. There have been two temples in Israel's history. Solomon's temple was destroyed in 586 BC and then Zerubbabel's temple (also called Herod's temple), which was destroyed in AD 70. There are two temples prophesied in Scripture. The Tribulation temple will be built by unbelieving Jews and 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).
- C. There is a groundswell of public interest to rebuild the temple in Israel. The most prominent organization dedicated to rebuilding it on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem is the Temple Institute. They have been raising public awareness of its significance by conducting public seminars and producing educational materials. A team of rabbis, scholars, scientists, and other experts in various fields have been researching temple-related subjects. They have made over 60 of the nearly 100 ritual items, sacred vessels, and priestly garments necessary for the temple. They have made them according to the exact specifications of the Bible. They have completed the menorah, the altar of incense, the table of showbread, and the vessels to burn incense and have designed the high priest's breastplate, crown, ephod, and garments, as well as the garments of the priests. Most in mainstream Orthodox Judaism are not pursuing the rebuilding of the temple, but are waiting for the Messiah to return and build it.

VII. SIGN EVENT #6: ESTABLISHING ANIMAL SACRIFICES BASED ON THE LAW OF MOSES

There will be sacrifices according to the laws of Moses by a restored Levitical priesthood. The sacrifices will include animal sacrifices and grain offerings as described in Leviticus. The Antichrist will stop the daily sacrifices (Dan. 8:11-12; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) as Antiochus Epiphanes did (175–164 BC).

¹¹ **By him [Antichrist/Antiochus Epiphanes] the daily sacrifices were taken away... (Dan. 8:11)**

²⁷ **Then he [Antichrist] shall confirm a covenant with many for one week [7 years]; but in the middle of the week [7 years] he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering... (Dan. 9:27)**

³¹ **Take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation. (Dan. 11:31)**

VIII. SIGN EVENT #7: ESTABLISHING THE HEBREW LANGUAGE

The Hebrew language being established fulfills an end-time prophecy spoken by Zephaniah. For Israel to speak Hebrew, after being out of their homeland for 2,000 years, is unprecedented in history. No nation has maintained its national language for more than 40 years without having a homeland.

⁹ **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)**

IX. SIGN EVENT #8: ESTABLISHING THE SABBATH IN ISRAEL

A. The Sabbath being established in the social and civil law is a prophetic sign (Mt. 24:20).

¹⁵ **When you see the abomination of desolation...¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...²⁰ Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. (Mt. 24:15-20)**

B. For the first time in nearly 2,000 years, Israel established an official Sabbath day. The day is so strictly observed by Orthodox Jews that all activity shuts down (including certain elevators). One visitor wrote: “*Keeping the Israeli Sabbath is hard work. Hence the dislike of many secular Israelis for Saturday—the streets cleared of buses, the shuttered grocery stores, the understaffed hospitals—as well as for the black-hatted men in ultra-Orthodox neighborhoods who “stone” Sabbath-breakers and who have twice brought down governments for violating Sabbath laws.*”

X. SIGN EVENT #9: PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

A. The Antichrist will establish a counterfeit peace in Israel and the Middle East. Israel will make a covenant with the Antichrist for one week, or a period of seven years. However, the Antichrist will break the covenant in the middle of the seven years. The ability to offer sacrifices in the rebuilt temple will be a key component to this covenant. The Antichrist will break the covenant and will stop sacrifices (animal and grain) offered by a restored Levitical priesthood.

²⁷ **He [Antichrist] shall confirm a covenant [peace treaty] with many [Israel and Middle East nations] for one week [7 years]; 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)**

- B. A key issue in the covenant will be Mount Moriah in Jerusalem, which is holy to both Muslims and Jews. To Muslims, it is the current site of the Dome of the Rock, and is their third holiest shrine. To the Jews, it is their most holy place, being the ancient site of Solomon's temple.
- C. The Antichrist will be revealed on the world stage as a man of peace. He will solve many of the problems that bring distress in the nations as he seemingly establishes world peace. Israel will have a short season of peace until the Antichrist betrays and then attacks them (Ezek. 38:8-12).
³ ***When they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction [Great Tribulation] comes upon them, as [heavy] labor pains upon a pregnant woman. They shall not escape. (1 Thes. 5:2-3)***
- D. Israel's leaders will make a covenant of death with the Antichrist and will give their political authority to him (Isa. 28:14-18; Dan. 9:27; 11:45; Zech. 11:16; Ezek. 38:8-12, 14; 39:26).
¹⁴ ***You scornful men [leaders of 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 [Antichrist] passes through, it will not come to us...18 Your covenant with death will be annulled [Antichrist will betray this covenant]... (Isa. 28:14-18)***

XI. SIGN EVENT #10: RAISING UP ELIJAH AND THE TWO WITNESSES

- A. The release of the two witnesses in Jerusalem will be used to bring about great miracles.
³ ***I will give power to My two witnesses...6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls...they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues... (Rev. 11:3-6)***
- B. The Lord will send Elijah to Israel (Mt. 17:11). He may be one of the two witnesses.
⁵ ***I will send Elijah...before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. (Mal. 4:5)***

XII. SIGN TREND #1: THE SALVATION OF ISRAEL (ROM. 11:26)

- A. There are more Jewish people coming to Jesus than at any time since the first century. In 1970, there were less than 100 Jewish believers in Israel with only 2 congregations. In 1980, there were about 500 Jewish believers and 10 congregations. Now, there are 120 congregations in Israel and 15,000 believers. Peter prophesied that the Jewish people would repent before Jesus returns.
¹⁹ ***Repent...be converted, that your sins may be blotted out so that...20 He may send Jesus...21 whom heaven must receive [retain] until the times of restoration of all things... (Acts 3:19-21)***
- B. One-third of the Jews on earth will call on the name of Jesus and be saved. The Hebrew word for *land* is also translated *earth*. Today, there are approximately 18 million Jewish people on earth.
⁸ ***It shall come to pass in all the land [Hebrew for earth]...that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die...9 I will bring the one-third through the fire...they will call on My name...I will say, "This is My people"... and each will say, "The Lord is my God." (Zech. 13:8-9)***
³⁵ ***I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples [nations], and there I will plead My case with you face to face...37 I will bring you into the bond of the covenant... (Ezek. 20:35-37)***

XIII. SIGN TREND #2: PRAYER AND PROPHETIC MOVEMENT IN JERUSALEM (JOEL 2:28-32)

A. Isaiah prophesied of 24/7 prayer ministries continuing in Jerusalem until the city is made a praise in the earth (Isa. 62:6-7). Today, Jerusalem is not a praise in the earth, but is hated by the nations.

⁶ *On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen [intercessors]; all day and all night they will never keep silent... ⁷ until He...makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. (Isa 62:6-7)*

²⁸ *I will pour out My Spirit... ³² In Jerusalem there shall be deliverance. (Joel 2:28-32)*

B. We are living in the time of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy that God would set or appoint watchmen intercessors who will never be silent day or night. Since 1999, four houses of prayer have been established in Jerusalem that are devoted to night and day intercession. The recent surge of 24/7 prayer ministries in Jerusalem and for Jerusalem worldwide is a sign of the times.

C. Zechariah prophesied about the spirit of prayer or supplication being poured out on Jerusalem.

³ *Though all nations of the earth are gathered against it [Jerusalem]...10 I will pour on...the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication [prayer].* (Zech. 12:3, 10)

XIV. SIGN TREND #3: JERUSALEM AS THE CENTER OF WORLD CONTROVERSY

The prophets prophesied that Jerusalem would be the center of world controversy in the end times as all nations gather against her (Zech. 12:3, 9; 14:1-3; Joel 3:2, 12; Zeph. 3:8; Lk. 21:20-24). Jerusalem is now the center of world attention. For 2,000 years, these prophecies about all nations attacking the nation of Israel and Jerusalem seemed impossible because Israel did not exist as a nation.

³ *Jerusalem...all nations of the earth are gathered against it... (Zech. 12:3)*

¹ *The day of the Lord...² I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem... (Zech. 14:1-2)*

XV. SIGN TREND #4: THE RISE OF GLOBAL ANTI-SEMITISM

Anti-Semitism will increase worldwide (Rev. 12:13-17; Joel 3:1-7). We see anti-Semitism growing in intensity and frequency, particularly in Europe. There will be significant Arab hostility against Israel (Ezek. 35:1-36:7). I believe Jesus prophesied of Islamic terrorism in Jn. 16:2. The initial fulfillment of this occurred at the hands of religious Jews in the first century (Acts 9). The most dramatic fulfillment will be by Islamic terrorists. The "you" speaks of Jewish believers and Christians in general.

² *The time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. (Jn. 16:2)*

XVI. SIGN TREND #5: KINGDOM RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ISRAEL, EGYPT, AND IRAQ

Believers from Israel, Egypt, and Assyria (parts of modern-day Iraq, Syria, etc.) have a significant relationship and role in the end times and the millennial kingdom. The apostolic leaders in Egypt, Iraq, and Israel will have strategic relationships. The Spirit is emphasizing and blessing these relationships.

²⁴ *Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria... ²⁵ the Lord...shall bless saying, "Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance." (Isa. 19:24-25)*