



Empowering People to Change the World

The Times of the Signs Part I

Steve Holt

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Revelation 6:1

Introduction:

- I want to welcome all of you who are new to The Road—we are on a verse by verse journey through:
 - One of the most exciting books in the Bible
 - One of the most misunderstood books of the Bible
 - This is God’s “Intelligence Briefing on the End Times”
 - Of course I’m talking about The Apocalypse, the book of Revelation
 - God is showing us what will take place in the last days before the coming of the Lord.
 - We have already covered the first 5 chapters of Revelation and you can access these messages on our website, TheRoad.org, and watch or listen to all the previous messages on Revelation.
- We are moving into the opening of the 7 seals, the Great Tribulation ... and for the next 14 chapters we will look at the events that will take place during this horrible time.
- In ancient times, a scroll of major importance—to a king or ambassador—was sealed by 7 seals. The scroll in heaven, revealing to John what is going to happen in the last days is about to be opened.
- It is not unlike God showing us His “Future Strategic Plan” for the earth—amazing prophecy!

- There are different opinions as to whether this is the Great Tribulation period or not. Let me share what I believe.
- **Matthew 24:3-8**

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.

- We have seen the War Room in chapters 4 and 5, and his stored up wrath is about to be unleashed upon the earth.
- I don't believe that chapters 6 and 7 are the Great Tribulation period, but rather, as Jesus says here, "the beginning of sorrow." Chapter 8 will open up the Great Tribulation period.
- Before we begin our look at the opening of the 7 seals and the Great Tribulation, let's look at our current times.
 - The question on everyone's mind: Are we living in the Last Days?
 - Are these the "times of the signs?"
- Jesus spoke of the last days when he spoke to the Pharisees and Sadducees (in Matthew 16:1-3).

Matthew 16:1-3

Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is

red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. NKJV

- Ex. Recently, the enlargement and enhancement of Cimarron has been going on, and at many of these new intersections, we see signs and these signs will say, “Work Ahead,” and then, “Expect Delays.” Then you will see, “Right Lane Ending,” and finally, you see the DOT worker waving a “Stop” or “Slow” sign.
 - “Signs” are not placed out until the time is right for changes.
 - If you are smart, you heed these signs or an accident is waiting to happen.
 - Many things consume our lives (deadlines, school, marriage, etc.) but we must give attention to something very urgent that appears to be on the horizon.

1st Sign: Israel becoming a Nation

- The first sign of the coming tribulation and Christ, and the closing out of this age happened on May 14th, 1948, with the establishment of Israel as a united nation.
- Without a doubt, the most important event related to end times prophecy is the establishment of Israel as a nation.

All the Eyes of the World are Fixed on Israel and the Middle East

- Doesn't it seem strange that almost every night on the evening news the eyes of the world are fixed on a little country, smaller than any of our 50 states?
- Mexico City, the largest city in the world, is virtually never on the news.
- Singapore, one of the most thriving countries in the world, that if you took a two-thousand mile circle around this island would encompass 50% of the world's population.

- Shanghai, the largest city (22 million) in the largest country (1.3 billion) in the world is rarely ever mentioned.
- Yet, daily, weekly, monthly, the center of the world's attention is on the nation of Israel and what's happening in the Middle East.
- Every presidential candidate is largely judged by his or her view of Israel—not China, not India, but Israel.
- The reason is that Israel, even in her current rebellion from God, is still the apple of His eye.
- It is the center of a storm because God so willed it.
 - All of the OT prophets prophesied that the last days events would occur most centrally to Israel.
 - Armageddon, “Tel Megiddo,” found in Revelation 16, the great valley, will be the place of the final great battle before the coming of Jesus. It is found in present-day Israel.
 - It will be in Jerusalem that the Temple will be rebuilt.
 - It will be in Israel that the two witnesses will appear.
 - In Revelation 19, it is in Jerusalem that Jesus will return victorious on a white horse, with a sword coming out of his mouth, with a tattoo on his thigh that reads King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
 - In Revelation 21, there will be a new Jerusalem coming down from heaven on the recreated earth.

The Bible predicts again and again that the Jewish people must be back in their homeland for the events of the end times to occur

- Jeremiah 30:1-3
The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, "Thus speaks the LORD God of Israel, saying: 'Write in a book for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you. For behold, the days are coming.' says

the LORD, 'that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,' says the LORD. 'And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.' "

- Ezekiel 34:11-13

'For thus says the Lord GOD: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country.

- Ezekiel 37:21

Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;
NKJV

- Isaiah 11:11-12

*It shall come to pass in that day
That the LORD shall set His hand again the second time
To recover the remnant of His people who are left,
From Assyria and Egypt,
From Pathros and Cush,
From Elam and Shinar,
From Hamath and the islands of the sea.
He will set up a banner for the nations,
And will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
And gather together the dispersed of Judah
From the four corners of the earth.*

Two Worldwide Gatherings of the Nation of Israel

- There will be two worldwide gatherings of the nation of Israel:
 1. The first will be a physical gathering of the people, which began most obviously in 1948.

2. The second will be spiritual gathering of the people, which will happen leading up to and during the Great Tribulation.

Turn to Ezekiel 37

Introduction:

- In the famous “valley of dry bones” vision of Ezekiel 37, the dry bones symbolize the nation of Israel coming together in the end times.
- Note Ezekiel 37:11
Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel."
- In this passage, Ezekiel sees a graveyard vision illustrating the national return, restoration, and regeneration of the nation of Israel.

Ezekiel 37:1-3

The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" So I answered, "O Lord God, You know."

- These many dry bones represent the nation of Israel, apparently dead in their dispersion.
- Ezekiel is prophesying at a time when Israel has been taken captive by the Babylonians.
- Ezekiel’s prophecies speak of the future restoration of the Jews to their beloved homeland.
- This is a picture of a nation that is dead spiritually, lifeless, and scattered.
- The question is, “Can these bones live?” It seemed impossible that God’s powerful Spirit could infuse this nation again.

- Especially today, it seems impossible. Over 50% of Jews in the United States today, consider themselves agnostics or atheists.

Ezekiel 37:4-6

Again He said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the Lord."'"

- Ezekiel is now prophesying that a day will come when God will reassemble the Israelites from around the world and restore the nation of Israel back to life.
- God will bring the nation back together and bring a great spiritual revival in the last days.

Ezekiel 37:7-8

So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone. Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over; but there was no breath in them.

- This rattling is the physical gathering of the nation of Israel.
- The physical gathering of the nation of Israel really began about 135 years ago.
- The modern return to Israel by the Jews began in a trickle as early as 1871, when a few Jews began to leave Europe and Russia.
- By 1882, about 25,000 Jews had settled there.
- At the first Zionist Congress in 1897, led by Theodore Herzl, the goal of reclaiming the land for the Jewish people, was officially adopted.
- By 1914, the number of Jews in the land was about 85,000.

- During World War I, the English were on the verge of losing the war. England was desperate to find a rapid method for manufacturing TNT and smokeless gunpowder.
 - A brilliant Jew named Chaim Weizmann invented such a formula that made it possible for the rapid production of these vital materials, thus changing the course of the war.
 - In return, David Lloyd George, representing the British government told Dr. Weizmann to name the price.
 - Rejecting personal reward, Dr. Weizmann requested that Palestine be declared the international homeland for the Jewish people.
- As a result, the Balfour Declaration was drawn up and signed on November 2, 1917.
- The famous letter said, “His Majesty’s Government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.”
- After this signing, Jews began to pour into Palestine.
 - By 1932, there were over 180,000.
 - By 1935, 300,000
 - By 1937, 430,000
 - And by 1945, over 500,000
- The British never kept their promise, but the United Nations on May 14th, 1948, proclaimed the new nation of Israel.
- David Ben Gurion was appointed Prime Minister and Dr. Chaim Weizmann was elected president of the provisional council.
- Both the United States and Russia recognized the new nation.

- The population was 2 million in 1960, 5 million by 1993, and, today, the population is 8 million and growing.
- Over 40% of the world's Jews now live in Israel.
- Prophetically, the bones are coming together.
- This is, by far, the most significant fulfillment of prophecy in the past 20 centuries.
- All that is left for Ezekiel's vision to be complete relates to the Spirit coming upon the Jews ...

Ezekiel 37:9-14

Also He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live."'" So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army. Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' Therefore prophecy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it," says the Lord.'"

- This breath or wind is the Holy Spirit.
- Israel is going to have a fresh work of the Holy Spirit.
- In the last days, a great revival will sweep this nation and God will raise up 144,000 Spirit-empowered, Word-rooted evangelists that will spark a great revival in the nation of Israel.
- God is setting up a great Jewish revival.

Revelation 14:1

Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.

- I recently read of a professor in Israel who said that the religious Jews are really studying Jesus and the Messianic prophecies.
- One of the Rabbi's in America, who is an expert in Old and New Testament admitted on television that Jesus fulfilled so many prophecies during his lifetime that He was the Messiah for the Gentiles—but the Jewish Messiah is yet to come.
- Some Jews are beginning to take the “Breath Test” and are opening their hearts to Christ.
- These are indeed exciting times!!

Next week, we will look at the Second Prophetic Sign of the End Times.

What about your life? Could you see yourself in the field of dry bones?

- Maybe you once believed.
- Maybe you once attended church.
- Maybe you were baptized as a baby, went to catechism.
- Maybe you've just gotten busy—life happens.
- And your spiritual life has just dried up.
 - You may feel unworthy, not good enough.
 - We have a saying around here, you'll never be good enough, but you can be bad enough to return to Christ.
 - Let Him be your good.
 - Let Him be your power.

- o Let Him take your shame and pain and breath new life into your spiritual lungs.

I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live!

- Come to Jesus this morning—give Him your shame, pain, addictions, struggles.
- Open up your heart to Jesus and His Spirit will come in.
- Open the door of your life to Him.
- He will take your dry bones, your dark past, and breath new life into your spiritual lungs.