



The Times of the Signs Part II

Revelation 6

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Series: Apocalypse, The Book of Revelation

We are currently in Revelation 6 in study through the Apocalypse, the book of Revelation

- But I am deviating from our study to talk about the signs of the times, or the times of the signs.
- We are looking at some of the most strategic signs of our times of the coming of the Lord.
- We have seen the War Room in chapters 4 and 5, and his stored up wrath is about to be unleashed upon the earth.
- Before we begin our look at the opening of the 7 seals and the Great Tribulation, let's look at our current modern times.
 - The question on everyone's mind: Are we living in the Last Days?
 - Are these the "times of the signs?"
 - "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.

Last week, we looked at 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.

- There's a lot we don't understand about what is going on with the Arab/Israeli problem and I'm not condoning all of the policies of the Israeli government nor condoning all that has gone on among the Palestinian Arabs.
- But the establishment of the nation of Israel is nothing less than miraculous.
- Without a doubt, the most important event related to end times prophecy is the establishment of Israel as a nation.

You have to understand that God measures time morally and there is a restraining upon the earth that will be lifted.

2 Thess 2:1-7

Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means ... Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.

- o The wrath of God against the sin of this world is in a state of accumulation.
- o God measures time morally...and the “iniquity of the earth” is almost complete.
- o God’s Spirit and His grace are currently holding back the wrath of God.
- o The Restrainer is the Holy Spirit, holding back the tide of God’s judgment, like a dam restraining the waters.
- o But in chapter 6, the “beginning of sorrows” and in chapter 8, the “Great Tribulation,” the wrath of God will be poured out

On June 7, 1967, God set up His second modern sign that this age is rapidly coming to a close ... let me explain a little bit of modern history ...

Turn in your Bibles to Luke 21.

Luke 21:28

“Now when these things (these signs) begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”

- When you see these signs, lift up your heads.

- This term “lift up your heads” comes from the Greek word, *anakuto*, which is a term of diversion, it means to take your eyes off of something and focus on something else.
- Ex. Lift your eyes off of the TV and look at your children.
- Ex. You are driving off I-25 and see “signs” telling you CDOT roadwork at Cimarron ...
- Why should we look up and take notice of the signs? “Because your redemption draws near.”
- What are some of the signs the Bible gives us?
- We are going to see a short range prophecy and a long range prophecy ...
- **Jesus will make two predictions:**
 1. He will predict the sign of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple...fulfilled only 38 years later.
 2. He will then make a long term prediction that has to do with the Second Advent, the Second Coming of Christ.
- Jesus and his prophets always made short term prophecies to lend credibility to their long term prophecies.
- Jesus’ prophetic words about the Temple and Jerusalem came to pass exactly as He predicted, and that lends faith to us as we also look at His long term prediction.

Luke 21:5-6

Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, “These things which you see—the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.”

- They are looking out over the city as Jesus speaks and the dominate building is Herod’s Temple.
- The Jews were most proud of their Temple.
 - It dominated the entire northwestern corner of Jerusalem.
 - Gleaming white columns with donations of gold plaques, and sculptures adorning the Portico of the Temple.
 - Herod had given a golden cluster of grapes 6 feet tall.
 - The stones measured 37x 12 x 18 feet, some weighing in at 160,000 pounds each—that is huge!
 - It was made of marble, and inlaid with pure gold.
 - It took 84 years to build this Temple.
 - The disciples were small town guys, they had to have been amazed, and they are marveling at it.

But Jesus looked down upon it and prophecies the destruction of this great Temple.

- “Not one stone shall be left upon another!” What a prediction!!
- But most of the disciples would live to see the fulfillment of this prophecy.
- 38 years later, in 70 AD, the Romans turned on the Jews and Titus, the great Roman general, was ordered to completely sack Jerusalem.
 - Titus laid siege on the city, and no one could come or go, and he let the Jews starve to death.
 - For 134 days, he laid siege and after 140 days, he entered the city and found a holocaust.

- o 1.1 million Jews stacked on top of each other.
- o Josephus said their bodies were stacked like firewood.
- o Titus was not finished: He completely burned the city and the remaining Jews fled Palestine to what is now Germany and Poland.
- o He leveled the stones of the Temple ... and the Romans found out that the Jews had laid gold into those stones, and with long pry bars, the Romans tore out the gold and as one historian records, “not one stone remained on top of another.”
- o Jesus predicted it perfectly.
- o Jesus not only prophesied perfectly, he also told them the signs that would precede its fulfillment ...

Luke 21:7

So they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?”

- This is not about the Second Coming, this is about the destruction of Jerusalem.
- From verse 7-19, we will cover when we open the 7 seals in Revelation 6-7, they are identical in nature and scope.

Luke 21:20-22

“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.”

- Josephus, the great Jewish historian wrote of the destruction of Jerusalem, “The siege of Jerusalem was one of the most horrible in history; Jerusalem was a difficult city to take, being on a hill.”

- Jesus is saying “Flee to the mountains” and two sets of Jews responded differently.
 - The Believing Jews did flee, the Christian Jews remembered the prediction by Jesus.
 - Eusebius writes, “When the day of the siege began, the Christian Jews fled to Pella, at the foot of the mountains.”
 - Pella is about 17 miles south of the Sea of Galilee. They remembered what Jesus had said.
- What about the unbelieving Jews?
- Josephus wrote, “When the day came when men should have fled to the mountains, they did not. They crammed themselves into the midst of the city and that very folly multiplied the horror one hundred fold.”
- The famine devoured whole families and over 1 million perished.
- But the sign had been so clear! Jesus predicted it.
- Some took Jesus at his word and they lived; others did not, and they died.
- Jesus not only predicted the signs, but the timing of his prophecy.
- Look ahead at vs. 32 ...

Luke 21:32-33

Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

- A generation in the Bible is 40 years ... this took place 38 years later.
- **What does that tell us? When Jesus predicts the future, expect it to be fulfilled literally to the letter.**

Luke 21:24

And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

- All of this happened.
- The Jews were driven out of Israel up into all parts of Europe.
- **“Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”**
 - Everything hinges on that word “until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled”
 - Gentile nations have trampled Jerusalem for thousands of years...but when that trend is completed, watch out, the end is near!
 - When that pattern stops, and Jerusalem is placed back in Israeli control, and the oppression of Jerusalem ceases, that sign signals something.

The pattern will be that Jerusalem will be controlled by other nations, but when that trend changes, watch out, redemption is near!

- That will be the sign!
- Now lets look at a little history:
 - The Romans trampled Jerusalem in 70 AD, and this was the beginning of the trampling.
 - In 615 control of Jerusalem went to the Persians.
 - In 637 control of Jerusalem went to Caliph Omar.
 - 1099 control of Jerusalem went to the Crusaders.
 - 1187 control of Jerusalem went to Salidan.

- o 1215 control of Jerusalem went to the Egyptians.
- o 1517 control of Jerusalem went to the Turks.
- o 1917 control of Jerusalem went to Great Britain.
- o 1938-1945, over 6 million Jews were exterminated by Adolf Hitler, and the prophecy seemed ridiculous, doomed.
- o 2/3's of the Jews in Europe were exterminated!

But in 1948 that trend began to change...almost unbelievable, the Jews became a nation.

- Vs. 24b “And Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”
- Though they were a nation again, the Jews still did not control Jerusalem.
- From 1948 to 1967, Jerusalem was a divided city with Arabs and Jews separated by barbed wire and machine guns.
- In 1963, the Arab League had decided to introduce a new weapon against Israel, named the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the terror attacks began.
 - o The PLO began terrorists attacks on Israel in earnest in 1965 with 35 raids.
 - o In 1966, there were with 41 attacks.
 - o In just the first four months of 1967 there were 37 attacks.
 - o All the attacks targeted civilians.
- The Israelis were being taunted almost daily in the spring of 1967:

- o Nasser, the leader of Egypt, said, “We shall not enter Palestine with its soil covered in sand; we shall enter with its soil saturated in blood.”
- o Again, a few months later, Nasser expressed the Arab’s aspirations as “the full restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people. In other words, we aim at the destruction of the state of Israel. The immediate aim: perfection of Arab military might. The national aim: the eradication of Israel.”
- o By June of 1967, the Syrians, Jordanians, and Egyptians had encircled Israel with soldiers, planes and tanks, preparing for a full fledged annihilation of the nation of Israel.
- o The United Nations Emergency Force (which had been a buffer since 1956) suddenly backed out of Sinai, leaving the southern territory completely unprotected against the Egyptian forces.
- o On May 22, Egypt closed the Strait of Tiran, blocking trade for Israeli shipping.
- o President Johnson refused to help the Israeli’s.
- o Israel was all alone and surrounded.
- o Nasser again taunted Israel, “Our basic objective will be the destruction of Israel. The Arab people want to fight. We will not accept any coexistence with Israel ...”
- o The Arab rhetoric was matched with the mobilization of Arab forces: 465,000 troops, more than 2800 tanks, and 800 aircraft ringed Israel.
- o But on June 5th, 1967, Israel launched a preempted strike as their Intelligence, The Masad, picked up that all of the Arab nations surrounding Israel were about to attack.
- o At 7:14 AM, the entire Israeli Air Force took off, with the exception of only 12 aircraft.

- o Israel knew when, where, and how the Muslims were coming, and they struck first.
- o Dangerously below the Russian installed radar, almost touching the waves of the Mediterranean Ocean, with phenomenal speed the Israeli AF struck the Egyptian airfields and destroyed roughly 300 aircraft while on the ground.
- o They then struck the Jordanian and Syrian air fields, and knocked out their Air Forces before the pilots had had breakfast.
- o At the end of the day, nearly the entire Egyptian and Jordanian air forces and half of the Syrians were destroyed!
- o Ex. Then began one of the great tank battles of modern times on the Sinai Peninsula in which comes one of the most interesting stories of God's powerful intervention: Egyptian Tank officers testify of hearing noises that sounded like a huge tank force coming toward them, so loud and distinct was this sound that these men abandoned their tanks and ran away... Angels? Probably!! God placed fear in their hearts.
- o Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria, the Gaza Strip from Egypt, and then pushed Jordan back on the West Bank.
- o On June 7th, the order was given to recapture Jerusalem. Israeli paratroopers stormed the city and secured it.
- o At 9:50 AM, on June 7th, 1967, David Ben Gurion announced to a stunned world, "We are at the wall; We have taken control over Jerusalem."
- o The IDF chaplain, Rabbi Shlomo Goren blew the shofar to celebrate.
- o On that date the control of the Gentile nations ended.
- o The Times of the Gentiles is drawing to a close.

- o The second great sign of Christ's coming began on June 7th, 1967.

The Unification of Jerusalem is the Second great sign of the soon return of Christ.

- o Luke 21:28
"Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."

Next Week we will look at other amazing signs that indicate we are living the last days ...