

CURRENT EVENTS AND THE BIBLE

Greetings precious people, this week we continue examining today's events and how they relate to the Word of God the Bible. One of the major focuses (if not *the* major focus) of End Time prophecy is the nation of Israel and their place in the whole plan of God concerning this time. It must be noted that one cannot go through a day without hearing, seeing, or reading something about Israel and the Middle East in the news media.

Israel is such a tiny nation, about the size of New Jersey with a total combined population of 7.6 million people. Much of the world's focus and concern is on Israel. The United Nations (also known as the "unnecessary Nations") have passed hundreds of resolutions concerning Israel, most of which have not been in favor of and condemning Israel. How can all of this be? Why is so much attention given to this small, seemingly "insignificant" country which has only been re-birthered since 1948? And what is its future when it seems that most of the world is against it?

Let's look at what the Word of God has to say about this. In Zechariah 12:1-3 we read, "The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it."

All of this began to be fulfilled when Israel became a nation in 1948. After nearly 2000 years of being scattered through out the world without a homeland God "re-birthered" the nation and began to bring the Jewish people back into the land from all corners of the world just as God said He would. In Isaiah 11:12, "And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." Isaiah 43:5-6, "Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." And Psalm 147:2, "The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he will gather together the outcasts of Israel."

Then in the New Testament Jesus speaks of the time when the people of Israel will be gathered back into the Land as being a "sign" that the end is near. Matthew 24:32-35, "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near--at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away." There are 2 important points to keep in mind when reading the previous verses, first, the context (the verses surrounding the text) Jesus is addressing the signs of the "Last Days". Second, the "fig tree" is used many times in the Old Testament as a "type" for the nation of Israel.

Since 1948 we have seen on almost a daily basis Zech. 12:1-3 being fulfilled. It is astounding how the land of Israel held little to no interest to the world for the last 2000 years then when God began to fulfill His Word, all the world woke up and turned its attention toward Israel. Keep your eyes on Jesus, the Bible, and Israel!

One final note that I will just mention now and deal with in greater detail in the future is what God has to say about those that will come against the land of Israel and try to divide it. In Joel 3:1-3, "For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have also divided up My land. They have cast lots for My people, have given a boy as payment for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they may drink." Until next time dearly beloved!

Drew Macintyre is associate pastor of Calvary Chapel of Alpine and can be reached at 619-445-2589, or ccalpine@juno.com