

## Knowing the Signs of the Times

### I. THE COMMAND TO KNOW THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

- A. Jesus gave **12 trends** as signs of the generation in which He will return (Mt. 24:4-8; Lk. 21:7-18). Matthew gave us 7 trends which are false christs, war, ethnic conflict, economic warfare, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes. Luke described 5 more which are commotions, fearful sights, great signs from heaven, distress in the nations and roaring waves.
- <sup>5</sup> Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 6 You will hear of wars and rumors of wars...for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation...and there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes...8 All these are the beginning of sorrows (birth pangs). (Mt. 24:5-8)*
- <sup>9</sup> When you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately...11 There will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven...23 There will be great distress in the land...25 There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 men's hearts failing them from fear.. (Lk. 21:9-11, 23-26)*
- B. Jesus commanded the people in the generation of His return to know that His return was near when they saw **ALL** the sign events of Mt. 24 occurring at the same time. There is only one generation in which all these things happen simultaneously on a global basis.
- <sup>33</sup> When you see all these things, know that it is near--at the doors! 34 Assuredly...this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place... (Mt. 24:33-34)*
- C. How long is a biblical generation? A generation in Scripture ranges from 40 to 100 years (Gen. 15:13-16; Num. 32:13; Ps. 90:10; Mt. 1:17; Acts 7:6). Moses spoke of Israel's captivity in Egypt as lasting 400 years or 4 generations (Gen. 15:13). Thus, a generation could refer to 100 years. There were 14 generations from Abraham to David (Mt. 1:17) each averaging about 70 years.
- D. Jesus rebuked His generation for not being able to read the signs of His first coming. Asking for a sign was a legitimate request because Joel prophesied that the Messiah would give signs from heaven (Joel 2:30). Their hypocrisy was in testing Jesus by asking for signs beyond those He did.
- <sup>1</sup> The Pharisees...came testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven...2 Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. 4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign... (Mt. 16:1-4)*
- E. Israel's unresponsiveness to God was partly related to them not knowing the time of their visitation. There is a relationship between the measure to which people are informed of coming prophetic events and the measure in which they respond to God in context to those events.
- <sup>42</sup> If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace...43 For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground...because you did not know the time of your visitation. (Lk. 19:42-44)*

- F. Paul taught that the Church should know the times and seasons related to the Lord's coming.  
*<sup>1</sup> Concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. <sup>2</sup> For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night (the unprepared suffer unnecessary loss)...<sup>4</sup> But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief...<sup>6</sup> Therefore...let us watch and be sober. (1 Thes. 5:1-6)*
- G. Paul said that we are not in darkness that the Day of the Lord should overtake us as a thief. A thief causes one to suffer loss of things that could have been avoided by watching. The thief motif mostly emphasizes the element of loss that one suffers because of an unexpected coming.
- H. Any who set specifics dates for the day of Jesus' return are corrected and rebuked. However, Jesus told us to know the generation and Paul exhorted us to know the times and seasons.  
*<sup>36</sup> Of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels...but My Father only. (Mt 24:36)*

## II. FOUR TYPES OF PROPHETIC SIGNS

- 1). **Sign Events:** signs predicted in Scripture will alert the Church to the timing of His return.
- 2). **Sign Trends:** happen in society and creation and will escalate and thus signal the final generation.
- 3). **Cosmic Signs:** highly unusual phenomena will happen in the sky, this even includes weather
- 4). **Personal Signs:** subjective prophetic experiences will alert believers to the End-Times.  
We do not put undue focus on these because they are subjective and fallible.

## III. COMMON LIES AGAINST KNOWING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

- A. **Lie #1:** we cannot understand End-Time Scriptures or the signs of the times. Scripture was written to be understood by all. The majority of people throughout history have been uneducated.
- B. **Lie #2:** some think that understanding the End-Times will minimize the work of the Kingdom.
- C. **Lie #3:** since we are not able to know the day or hour of Jesus' return, we should not try to know the times and seasons or the signs of the generation in which Jesus returns. The truth is that the Scripture requires those in the generation the Lord returns to know it and prepare accordingly. Jesus and Paul emphasized the know-ability of the prophetic signs of the End-Times (Mt. 24:32-34; Lk. 21:25-29; 1 Thes. 5:1-6; 2 Thes. 2:1-11).
- D. **Lie #4:** every generation believed they were the last one. It is probably true that a very small number (less than 1%) in each generation believed this. In only **one generation** has the majority of God's people believed in a sustained way (for decades) that we will see Jesus' return. Some in history spoke of the End-Times when a great crisis occurred (but the emphasis was temporary). There was Millennial fervor for a short time just before 1,000 AD but it was not sustained.
- E. **Lie #5:** it will all pan out in the end. The question is how well will it pan out for you?

#### IV. THE THREE PROPHETIC TIME FRAMES: SEEING THE BIG PICTURE

- A. Scripture describes **3 prophetic time frames** related to the last 7 years of this age (Dan. 9:27). The last 7 years is made up of 2 distinct periods each lasting 3½ years.
- B. First time frame: beginning of birth pangs with ***distress in the nations*** (Mt. 24:4-8; Lk 21:23, 25)  
Second time frame: increased labor pangs with ***counterfeit world peace*** (first 3½ year period)  
Third time frame: hard labor pangs with the ***Great Tribulation*** (final 3½ year period)

#### V. UNDERSTANDING THE FIRST TIME FRAME: DISTRESS IN THE NATIONS (MT. 24:4-8)

- A. ***The beginning of birth pangs*** occurs before the 7-year period starts. Israel is the timetable for God's prophetic plans. They are the reference point for understanding redemptive history past and future. Therefore, my opinion is that the beginning of birth pangs started in 1948 when Israel became a nation or in 1967 when Jerusalem came under Israel's authority.
- B. Jesus spoke of a specific period of time called the "beginning of birth pangs." The Greek word *birth pangs* is translated as *sorrows* (NKJV). It is to be compared with the increasing trauma a woman experiences during childbirth. This trauma will result in a new world order being birthed at the Millennium. Paul spoke of creation as groaning before the Millennial earth.
- C. Jesus gave twelve major trends that are to be discerned and received as prophetic signs to help the Church prepare for the coming years (Mt. 24:4-8; Mk. 13:5-8, Lk. 21:7-18). Jesus gave us accelerator signs in different areas of life including spiritual (positive and negative), social, political, technological, natural (signs in heaven and earth).

#### VI. UNDERSTANDING THE SECOND TIME FRAME: COUNTERFEIT WORLD PEACE

- A. The second prophetic time frame occurs in the first 3½ year period. It begins with the Antichrist being revealed as a man of peace who solves the "***distress in the nations***" (Mt. 24:4-8) and then establishes a counterfeit world peace (1 Thes. 5:3). At this time the Harlot Babylon religion persecutes the Church (Rev. 17:2-6) leading to many falling away from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1).
- B. The last 7 years begins when the Antichrist makes a covenant with many nations bringing world peace that lasts 3½ years. When he breaks this covenant the Great Tribulation starts (Dan. 9:27).  
<sup>3</sup> ***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)***
- <sup>27</sup> ***He (Antichrist) shall confirm a covenant with many (nations) for one week (7 years); but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice (in the Jerusalem Temple). (Dan. 9:27)***
- C. There are two stages in Satan's end-time plan to be worshipped by all nations (Rev. 13:8). First, he will establish the Harlot Babylon worldwide religion as a means to deceive the nations and cause Christians to fall away from the faith. Next, he will establish the Antichrist religion.

- D. The Harlot Babylon will be a counterfeit “justice” movement and religion that will masquerade as an answer to injustice as it deceives the earth by feeding the poor, meeting humanitarian needs, loving peace, and championing the dignity of humanity with no moral absolutes. The two main characteristics of the Harlot's ideology are *moral relativism* and *religious pluralism*.
- E. The Harlot religion serves as a “forerunner” to prepare the nations to worship the Antichrist. Revelation 17:1-6 vividly describes the seductive power, cruel persecution, and destruction of Harlot Babylon's one-world religious system.
- F. The Harlot's system will cause the nations to be drunk with her seductions that offer great benefits including humanitarian aid, unified religion (that ends war) and a prosperous world economy. The nations will get drunk or intoxicated with joy with her promises of goodness, prosperity, compassion and a theology of tolerance.  
<sup>2</sup> *The inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication. (Rev. 17:2)*
- G. The Harlot religion will have great prominence. It will be arrayed in purple (royal status) and will be respected by the elite financial leaders of the earth who will give their allegiance to her.  
<sup>4</sup> *The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet (royalty), and adorned with gold...having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. (Rev. 17:4)*
- H. The Harlot will cause multitudes to be intoxicated with the blood of the saints who expose her.  
<sup>6</sup> *I saw the woman (Harlot Babylon), drunk with the blood of the saints... (Rev. 17:6)*
- I. Surprisingly, the Harlot worldwide religion will be hated and destroyed by the jealousy of the ten kings that serve the Antichrist (Rev. 17:16). They will burn her at the beginning of the Great Tribulation (which is in the middle of the last 7 years). The Antichrist will replace her with his own Antichrist religion. The Harlot religion will be joined voluntarily and characterized by tolerance. The Antichrist religion will force all to worship him with strict rigidity.  
<sup>12</sup> *The ten horns which you saw are ten kings... 16 The ten horns...on the Beast will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. (Rev. 17:12, 16)*
- J. Two signs that Paul gave to indicate the time of Jesus' Coming are a falling away from the faith combined with the revealing of the Antichrist on the world stage to establish peace (1 Thes. 5:3).  
<sup>3</sup> *Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day (Jesus' Second Coming) will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin (Antichrist) is revealed... (2 Thes. 2:3)*
- K. There will be a falling away from the faith at the end of the age (Mt. 24:9-13; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3). A doctrine of a demon is a teaching inspired by demons.  
<sup>1</sup> *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry... (1 Tim. 4:1-3)*

## VII. POSITIVE SPIRITUAL TRENDS INDICATING THE GENERATION JESUS RETURNS

- A. There are positive spiritual trends prophesied in the Scripture that will occur in the generation the Lord returns in a great measure with a unique intensity on a global basis. They are measureable.
- B. **Gospel preached to all nations**: Jesus connected the timing of His return to the preaching of the gospel to all nations. Mission organizations project from statistical data that the gospel will be heard by every people group and language on the earth for the first time by 2025.  
<sup>14</sup> ***This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations (ethnos) and then the end will come. (Mt 24:14)***
- C. Churches exist in all 232 nations and territories of the earth. The greatest harvest of souls in history is occurring now. The Bible has been translated in over 2,000 languages (used by 98% of the world's population). Wycliffe plans to have it translated in every language by 2040.
- D. **Salvation of Israel**: Messianic (Jewish) congregations in Israel are seeing more Jewish people come to Jesus than any time since the first century. There are over 120 Messianic congregations in Israel totaling over 10,000 believers. This is an increase of over 500% in the last 10 years.  
<sup>39</sup> ***You shall see Me no more till you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord" (Mt 23:39)***  
<sup>26</sup> ***All Israel will be saved, as it is written... (Rom. 11:26)***
- E. **Bridal identity**: John connected Jesus' return to the Church worldwide understanding her bridal identity. This is occurring in a global way for the first time in history (Rev 22:17; Mt. 25:1-13).  
<sup>17</sup> ***The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" (Rev. 22:17)***
- F. **Global prayer movement**: Jesus connected the timing of His return in Lk. 17 to night and day prayer in Lk. 18. Isaiah prophesied of 24/7 prayer ministries continuing until Jesus' Coming (Isa. 62:6-7) and energized by those who have a bridal identity (Isa. 62:4-5). The recent surge of 24/7 prayer with many stadium prayer events occurring worldwide is a sign of the times. The Spirit is raising up a end-time prayer movement (Rev. 22:17; 5:8; 8:4; Lk. 18:7-8; Mt. 25:1-13; Isa. 62:6-7; 24:14-16; 25:9; 26:8-9; 27:2-5, 13; 30:18-19; 42:10-13; 43:26; 51:11; 52:8; Joel 2:12-17, 32; Jer. 31:7; Mic. 5:3-4; Zeph. 2:1-3; Ps. 102:17-20; 122:6; Zech. 12:10).  
<sup>7</sup> ***Shall God not avenge (bring justice) His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? 8...He will avenge them speedily (Tribulation). When the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith (agreement in prayer) on the earth? (Lk. 18:7-8)***  
<sup>4</sup> ***You shall be called Hephzibah...for the LORD delights in you...5 As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. 6 I have set watchmen (intercessors) on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night...7 and give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. (Isa. 62:4-7)***

- G. **Global worship movement** (Isa. 42:10-13): Jesus is coming back in context to the greatest worship movement in history. The current explosion of worship and music combined with intercession is a sign of the times. Isaiah prophesied of the prominence of singing in the End Times (over 100 verses). See Isa. 5:1-7; 6:3; 9:3; 12:1-6; 14:3-27; 24:14-16; 25:1; 26:1-6; 27:2-5, 13; 29:19; 30:29-30; 35:1-10; 38:19-20; 42:10-17; 43:21; 44:23; 48:20-21; 49:13; 51:3, 11; 52:8-10; 54:1; 55:12; 56:7-8; 60:18; 61:3, 7-11; 62:6-7, 9; 63:7; 65:13-14; 66:10-14, 21.
- H. **End-time outpouring of the Spirit**: all believers will receive prophetic dreams and visions (Joel 2:28-31). The number of Pentecostal/Charismatic believers has exploded from approximately 1 million in 1900 to over 500 million today. The greatest prophetic moment is yet to come (Acts 2:17; Jer. 31:9; 23:20; Dan. 11:33-35; Isa. 26:9; Rev. 11:3-6; 18:20; Mt. 17:11; Mal. 4:6).  
<sup>17</sup> *I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy... (Acts 2:17)*
- I. **Unparalleled understanding of End-Time prophecy**: (Jer. 23:20; 30:24; Dan. 11:33; 12:10): an angel told Daniel that information about the end-of-the-age was sealed in his day to be unveiled at the time of the end (Dan. 12:4, 9-10). This speaks of an unsealing of revelation regarding the time of the end. John wrote of 7 thunders prophecies that were concealed until the end (Rev. 10).  
<sup>20</sup> *The anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly. (Jer. 23:20)*
- J. **Global youth focus in the Kingdom**: Malachi predicted a unique time in which the fathers of the faith would turn their heart to love and serve the younger generation. This includes a massive turning of the heart of the Church to the fatherless (orphans, human trafficking victims). At this same time an entire generation of youth would turn their hearts to the fathers. This prophesied time frame was knit to the release of the “spirit and power of Elijah” just before Jesus’ coming.  
<sup>5</sup> *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children... (Mal. 4:5-6)*

## VIII. NEGATIVE SPIRITUAL TRENDS INDICATING THE GENERATION JESUS RETURNS

- A. **Scoffers and mockers**: Peter highlighted we first of all we should brace ourselves to be mocked.  
<sup>3</sup> *Knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" (2 Pet. 3:3-4)*
- B. **Harlot Babylon worldwide religion**: (Rev. 17:2-6): the Harlot Babylon religion of toleration will be a counterfeit justice movement that claims to answer injustice by meeting humanitarian needs.
- C. **Falling away from the faith**: (Mt. 24:9-13; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3). Many churches today deny Scripture as infallible and therefore, as the moral plumb line.
- D. **Persecution against believers**: will be unique in the generation in which the Lord returns (Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:24; 11:33-35; 12:7, 10; Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9, 14; 9:21; 11:7; 13:7, 15; 16:5-7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; Mt. 10:21-22, 28; 24:9; Lk. 12:4-7; 21:16-19). The number of martyrs over 1900 years was nearly 25 million. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there have been almost 50 million martyrs.

IX. LAWLESSNESS: DAYS OF NOAH (VIOLENCE) & THE DAYS OF LOT (IMMORALITY)

A. **Lawlessness will abound**: sin will reach its fullest expression (Mt. 24:12; Rev. 14:18).

<sup>12</sup> ***Because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. (Mt. 24:12)***

<sup>23</sup> ***In the latter time...when the transgressors have reached their fullness... (Dan. 8:23)***

<sup>21</sup> ***They did not repent of their murders...sorceries...sexual immorality or thefts. (Rev. 9:21)***

1. **Murder**: as the primary sin on earth (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:13-14; 9:21; 13:7, 10; 16:6; 17:6)

2. **Sorceries**: occult and demon worship will fill the earth (Rev. 13:3-4, 8, 12-15; 14:11)

3. **Immorality**: demon-energized perversion (Rev. 9:20-21; 16:13; 17:2; 18:3; 19:2)

4. **Theft**: legislation and persecution motivated by theft (i.e., the Nazi's anti-Semitism)

B. **The days of Noah: VIOLENCE** (Mt. 24:37; Gen. 6:11-13; 2 Tim. 3); great violence will be seen in terrorist acts, race riots, wars in the streets, increasing murder rates worldwide.

<sup>12</sup> ***God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. 13 God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them... (Gen. 6:12-13)***

1. **Abortion**: nearly 50 million abortions worldwide each year or 1/4 of all pregnancies (over 100,000 per day). Over 1.5 million babies are aborted per year (4,000 per day) in the US.

2. **Breakdown of the family**: the divorce rate is exploding worldwide (in the US it is 50%) and brother shall betray brother even to death (Mk 13:12).

C. **The days of Lot: IMMORALITY** (Lk. 17:28-30; Gen. 19:1-28); immorality will greatly increase in the End-Times (Rev. 9:21; 14:8; 17:1-4; 18:2-4, 9-10; 19:2; 21:8). This is seen in many ways.

1. **Human trafficking**: over 80% of the human trafficking victims are forced into the rapidly growing sex trade that generates over \$40 billion per year. Biblical prophecy declares that slavery would be a predominant sin in the End-Times (Rev. 18:13; Joel 3:3). There are currently 35 million slaves on the earth. It is growing nearly 5 million per year.

2. **Pornography**: nearly \$100 billion is spent each year on pornography worldwide. There are nearly 5 million pornographic websites on the internet with over 500 million pages containing pornography. In every second of every day over 30,000 internet users view pornography. These numbers are rapidly increasing worldwide.

3. **Homosexuality**: is sweeping across the world as nations are accepting homosexuality in clergy and marriage. Paul prophesied that marriage would be outlawed in some places.

<sup>1</sup> ***The Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits...3 forbidding to marry... (1 Tim. 4:1-3)***

## X. GLOBALIZATION AND TECHNOLOGY TRENDS INDICATING THE END-TIMES

- A. **Globalization**: an alarming and observable trend is globalization and the manner in which finances, commerce, communication, religion, and geopolitics will converge from a nation-based context to a more globally unified expression (Rev 17-18). There will be one-world technology, economics, political cooperation, travel and info. Nations and religions will pool resources.
- B. **Knowledge and travel** (Dan. 12:4): Daniel prophesied of a remarkable increase of knowledge (communication) and travel (transportation) as many “run to and fro” to obtain it.  
**<sup>4</sup> Seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro (unprecedented travel), and knowledge shall increase (information age). (Dan. 12:4)**
1. Global tourism will generate \$8 trillion in 2009 and \$15 trillion by the year 2020.
  2. The collective sum of all printed knowledge is doubling every four years. Knowledge of biological science is doubling every 6 months. Over 80% of all the scientists who have ever lived are alive today. Every minute they add 2,000 pages to our scientific knowledge. Over 500,000 new books are published every year.
- C. **Instant communication**: satellite transmission with robotics, laser technology and instant global communication with microchip technology will facilitate a cashless society, etc. (Rev. 13:13-18).  
**<sup>9</sup> Those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see (through media) their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. (Rev. 11:9)**
- D. **Internet technology**: has allowed knowledge to increase in an unprecedented way. The mark of the Beast imbedded chip technology has a one-world economic system with a cashless society  
**<sup>16</sup> He causes all...to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the Beast... (Rev. 13:16-17)**
- E. The enforcing of the mark of the Beast worldwide (Rev. 13:16-18) implies the existence of modern technology, a cashless society and a one-world economic system. Today’s new imbedded chip technology makes all of this possible for the first time in history. A computer chip can be implanted just beneath the skin of the hand and easily read by a scanning device. The procedure is available today by receiving a VeriChip which is an implantable microchip the size of a grain of rice. It only costs \$200 and only takes 10 seconds to inject it by a needle.
- F. Many are pushing for global currency with one universal language of commerce with microchips encased in plastic smart cards thus, making a global cashless society possible for the first time.

## **XI. POLITICAL SIGNS OR EVENTS PERTAINING TO THE NATION OF ISRAEL**

- A. In Scripture, Israel is the reference point in discerning God's prophetic timetable for the end-time drama. Israel has always been the primary timing indicator for God's prophetic calendar. The entire end-time drama in Scripture is given in context to events related to Israel.
- B. Many end-time prophecies related to Israel are closely linked to each other and overlap. They include Israel being in the land with control of Jerusalem, worshipping in a rebuilt Temple in context to OT animal sacrifice, Sabbath laws and speaking the Hebrew language. They highlight Israel being in the center of world controversy amid anti-Semitism with a restored military.
- C. The re-establishing of the state of Israel and gaining control over the city of Jerusalem fulfills many prophecies (Dan. 9:24, 27; Joel 3:2, 12; Zech. 12:3; 14:2; Lk. 21:24). On May 1948, Israel became a nation in one day and gained control of Jerusalem in the Six Day War in June 1967.
- <sup>8</sup> *In the latter years you (Gog) will come into the land of those (Israel) 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)*
- <sup>8</sup> *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)*
- <sup>6</sup> *In that day...Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place. (Zech. 12:6)*
- D. A stunning and unique sign of the generation in which the Lord returns is the prophesied rebirth of the nation of Israel. The most striking event in Biblical prophecy is the return of Jews to their ancient homeland and the formation of the state of Israel. No end-time sign is more dramatic or convincing than Israel becoming a nation. Israel was scattered to the nations from her land in AD 70. For first time in 2,000 years, there is now an Israeli government in control of Jerusalem.
- E. The Temple on Mount Zion has not existed since it was destroyed in AD 70. The Temple sign is at the very heart of the key prophetic signs regarding the nation of Israel.
1. Rebuilt Temple with sacrifices according to the laws of Moses (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). The Abomination of Desolation (worldwide Antichrist worship system) cannot occur without a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem. Today, there is a strong new movement in Israel to rebuild the Temple.
  2. The re-establishment of the Sabbath in the social and civil law is a sign (Mt. 24:15-20).  
<sup>15</sup> *When you see the abomination of desolation...<sup>16</sup> then let those who are in Judea flee... <sup>20</sup> Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. (Mt. 24:15-20)*

- F. The re-establishment of the **Hebrew language**. No nation in history has ever maintained its national language without a homeland for more than one generation. For Israel to re-establish an ancient language after 2,000 years is unprecedented in history.
- <sup>9</sup> **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)**
- G. Jerusalem as **center of world politics and controversy**. The OT prophets foretold of Jerusalem being the primary focus of the whole earth in the End Times (Zech. 12:3; 14:1-3; Joel 3:2, 12; Zeph. 3:8; Lk. 21:20-24). Jerusalem is quickly becoming the center focus of world attention.
- <sup>1</sup> **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)**
- H. The restoration of a military in Israel in the End Times is a sign (Zech. 10:5; 12:6-9).
- I. Anti-Semitism will increase worldwide. Jesus requires that the Church stand with Israel. Ezekiel prophesied of a significant increase of Arab hostility against Israel (Ezek. 35:1-15; Joel 3:1-7).

## XII. POLITICAL SIGNS OF THE TIMES FOCUSED ON OTHER NATIONS

- A. **World peace and safety**: the Antichrist will offer his solutions to the turmoil in the nations that is seen in the beginning of birth pangs (Mt. 24:4-8). The last 7 years begins when the Antichrist confirms a covenant with many nations bringing world peace that lasts 3½ years (1 Thes. 5:3; Dan. 9:27). The Antichrist will first be revealed as a ***man of peace*** who brings **world peace**.
- <sup>3</sup> **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)**
- B. **Global government**: emergence of a global coalition based in a Middle East-European superstate (revived Roman Empire) with a 10-nation confederation under the Antichrist's authority (Dan. 2:41-42; 7:7, 20, 24; 9:26-27; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16). This one-world governmental coalition will lead the world into the Armageddon Campaign. This will be the largest political, military, economic, religious power in history (Dan. 2; 7; Ezek. 38; Rev. 13; 17). There is a growing globalization quickly moving towards a one-world governmental cooperation.
- C. A worldwide cooperation in policies and economics will be necessary for the legislation seen in Rev. 13:14-17. These systems must be refined before the Antichrist unveils his true evil self. A majority of the nations will operate in deep cooperation with the Antichrist in their policies, which will concern economics, technology, security, military, etc.
- D. The most challenging issues facing the nations are international in nature including ***global warming***, the ***global war on terror*** and the ***global financial crisis***. The tension in the financial crisis is that we have global financial markets without global rule of law. The growing crisis in these three issues is changing the political atmosphere so "global governance" is a more attractive option to finding global solutions.

- E. **Rebuilding city of Babylon:** in Iraq (50 miles south of Baghdad). Babylon will be restored and used as one of the headquarters for the Antichrist. It will function as the center of the worldwide demonic religious and economic networks (Rev. 17-18). As Jerusalem suddenly came out of the ashes to be rebuilt, so Babylon (in Iraq) will also be rebuilt suddenly. The prophecies in Jer. 50-51 that Babylon would be suddenly destroyed forever have not yet happened.
- F. **The rise of Asia:** with world leadership (China, Korea, Japan, India) with military forces in the East powerful enough to trouble the Antichrist's mighty empire (Dan. 11:44; Rev 16:12).

**XIII. SUMMARY: THESE TRENDS MUST ALL HAPPEN IN THE SAME GENERATION**

- A. **Watch for:** the emergence of a worldwide economic system.
- B. **Watch for:** globalization in the United Nations calling for the political identity of a new World Order to minimize national boundaries and establish one currency, military, political process, etc.
- C. **Watch for:** a distress in the nations that leads to a counterfeit worldwide peace and safety
- D. **Watch for:** the emergence of worldwide religious network of toleration and syncretism with great wealth that hates true Christianity (salvation only in Jesus and the infallibility of Scripture)
- E. **Watch for:** the rebuilding of the city of Babylon in Iraq as the center of the Harlot religion
- F. **Watch for:** Israel to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem and reestablish animal sacrifice
- G. **Watch for:** anti-Semitism to grow rapidly on a worldwide scale
- H. **Watch for:** the emergence of a European Superstate (Europe/Middle East) in the area of the ancient Roman Empire that leads to a worldwide power base with a 10-nation confederation
- I. **Watch for:** for one man to rise up from obscurity (as a regional political leader) with unusual diplomacy who initially works with a 3-nation coalition. He will lead a ten-nation confederation (Superstate) and confirm a peace treaty with Israel and the Middle East bringing peace.
- J. **Watch for:** the rise of the kings of the East as an Asian confederacy of nations
- K. **Watch for:** a significant increased Arab hostility towards Israel
- L. **Watch for:** the emergence of oil rich Islamic nations in alliance with a global leader (Antichrist)
- M. **Watch for:** the stage being set for the Armageddon Campaign as all nations gather against Israel

#### **XIV. FIRST PROPHETIC TIME FRAME: BEGINNING OF THE BIRTH PANGS TRENDS**

- A. The beginning of birth pangs is intense enough to warrant paralleling it to woman within hours of her hard labor. She is immobilized from doing business as usual. These birth pangs will create many-faceted crises unparalleled in history. If they are not distinctly discernable then they are not prophetic signs. Solving the problems resulting from them will require extreme measures. The birth pangs are social conflicts and ecological disturbances.
- B. **War:** an unprecedented escalation of war has occurred in the twentieth century making it the bloodiest time in history (over 100 million people killed). Since World War II, over 150 major wars have occurred with a death toll of over 25 million. Since the Berlin Wall fell (Nov. 1989), conflicts have forced 50 million people from their homes worldwide. There were over 70 wars in 1995 (double from 1989).
- C. **Ethnic conflict:** civil disorder and racism. The Greek word for nation in Mt. 24:7 is *ethnos* which translates ethnic or tribe. Nation against nation is "ethnic group against ethnic group". The ethnic wars in Cambodia, Albania, Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo and Sudan along with Stalin's purges, and China's Cultural Revolution have caused the number murdered by their own people to exceed the deaths caused by wars outside their borders (totaling over 150 million deaths). The militant Islamic leaders have especially targeted Israel, the USA and the European Union.
- D. **Famine:** nearly a billion people worldwide world suffer from malnutrition. Over 25,000 people die every day worldwide from hunger related causes. Nearly 5 million die of starvation every year. Water shortages have reduced the global food supply by 10 percent. The population is growing yet its agricultural capabilities are diminishing. Over 500 million people do not have enough drinking water. The numbers increase to 2 billion by 2025 (greatest famine in history).
- E. **Pestilences (disease):** the rise of diseases such as tuberculosis, the Avian bird flu, pneumonia, meningitis, are becoming unstoppable as some are becoming more resistant to inoculations. The nations of the former Soviet Union are developing genetically engineered viruses and bacteria that cannot be stopped by antibiotics. Terrorists threaten to use smallpox because many today (even in the USA) do not have a vaccination against it. Epidemics of typhoid and diphtheria have afflicted areas of India and Russia. Deadly new strains of malaria, tuberculosis and cholera are becoming resistant to all known antibiotics and are killing millions. Diseases are growing in an unprecedented way globally especially viral killers like AIDS and Ebola. There are nearly 35 million people living with AIDS (2007). More than 25 million have died from AIDS since 1981. Africa has over 11 millions AIDS orphans. Six million people a year are getting infected.
- F. **Weather:** Global warming is melting the ice caps, raising the water level, and eroding our shorelines. We are experiencing record levels of floods, fires, hurricanes, volcanoes, and other natural disasters; and meteorologists warn that changes in global weather patterns mean that we will have hotter, more turbulent weather for the next 100 years or so. Four out of five of the costliest natural disasters of the past 40 years have occurred since 1989, including hurricanes Andrew and Hugo. The most costly earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados and floods are happening.