

## Seven major prophetic signs of the Second Coming



There are seven major prophetic signs of the Second Coming, and currently all of them are in some stage of fulfillment. As in years past, I'll list the seven with their primary biblical references and offer commentary from current events.

### 1. Israel Will Be In The Land ... Ezekiel 36:8-12, 37:21

Speaking to the Land God said,

"You, O mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for they will soon come home. I am concerned for you and will look on you with favor; you will be plowed and sown, and I will multiply the number of people upon you, even the whole house of Israel. The towns will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. I will increase the number of men and animals upon you, and they will be fruitful and become numerous. I will settle people on you as in the past and will make you prosper more than before. Then you will know that I am the LORD. I will cause people, my people Israel, to walk upon you. They will possess you, and you will be their inheritance; you will never again deprive them of their children."

And to the people,

"This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land."

Although Ezekiel wrote these words while the Israelites were in Babylon, they were not fulfilled in the nation's return from exile there. Like Isaiah before him (**Isaiah 11:11**) Ezekiel was speaking of the second and final return. Therefore in 1948, when Israel took its place among the nations of the world again for the first time in nearly 2000 years, students of prophecy recognized the fulfillment of the primary sign that the end of the age was upon us. Jesus said that some from the generation being born when this happened would still be alive when He returns (**Matt. 24:34**). Both **Psalms 90:10** and **Isaiah 23:15** hint that an average Biblical life span is about 70 years. Since 63 years have passed since Israel became a nation again after being absent for nearly 1900 years, students of prophecy have cause to believe that the end of the age is upon us.

### 2. Jerusalem Will Be In Jewish Hands... Luke 21:24

They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The Lord prophesied that the reunification of Jerusalem as a Jewish City would be a sign that foreign (gentile) influence over His land, and indeed the world, was coming to an end (**Luke 21:24**). Fulfillment of this prophecy began in 1967, and scholars saw it as another major sign that the End of the Age had begun. The almost world wide effort to take the city apart again is in essence a battle of wills. Nearly every Israeli leader has stood firmly on a pledge to keep Jerusalem united forever as Israel's capital, but the unbelieving leaders of the world are just as resolutely determined to divide it.

The Lord said that at the End of the Age He will make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling, an immovable rock for all nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves. (**Zechariah 12:2-3**) This past year much of the talk against Israel has been focused on Jerusalem. American leaders, traditionally some of Israel's most loyal allies, have publicly called East Jerusalem occupied territory and demanded that no more Jewish homes be built there. They've even tried to halt construction in undisputed neighborhoods. Through out the year the European Union has pushed for an official declaration dividing Jerusalem to make way for a future Palestinian State to have part of the city as its capital. A significant number of countries have been working with the Palestinians to force UN recognition of a Palestinian state in the Promised Land, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Behind all this of course is a spiritual battle of massive proportions. While there's no doubt as to the outcome, the battle continues to be a fierce one.

I've come to believe that Jerusalem won't really be free of Gentile 'trampling' until the Lord returns. Daniel's prophecy that Gentile

Dominion would not end until the Lord establishes His kingdom (**Daniel 2:36-45**), Zechariah's prophecy of the city being captured and divided just before the Lord's return (**Zech. 14:2**), and John's observations in **Rev. 11:1-2** of the gentiles trampling the outer court of the Temple during the Great Tribulation all confirm this. But even so, the fact that Jerusalem is back in Jewish hands is another big sign that the End is coming soon.

### **3. A Moslem Coalition Armed And Led By Russia Will Attack The Holy Land... Ezek. 38:2-6**

?Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; prophesy against him. This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. I will turn you around, put hooks in your jaws and bring you out with your whole army?your horses, your horsemen fully armed, and a great horde with large and small shields, all of them brandishing their swords. Persia, Cush and Put will be with them, all with shields and helmets, also Gomer with all its troops, and Beth Togarmah from the far north with all its troops?the many nations with you.?

Numerous historical references make it plain that Magog stands for modern Russia, and the other countries named here form a coalition based on their common religion, Islam. (Today Russia is 30% Moslem and growing.) Among them are Iran, several North African countries, Eastern European countries along the Danube, and the Turkic nations of Asia Minor. A quick look at a world map will reveal that these areas are home to some of the most radical Islamic groups. (For a detailed explanation of the modern nations to which these Biblical names refer, read [?An In Depth Look At The Modern Equivalent To Biblical Names in Ezek.38?](#))

The Russians are already a major supplier of arms for the Moslem coalition, just as Ezekiel prophesied, and will be drawn into joining in this battle by God Himself. Russia's barely disguised policy of becoming the major outside force in the Middle East is playing right into the Lord's hands. Russia has moved part of its Black Sea fleet, including its only aircraft carrier, into the Eastern Mediterranean off the coast of Syria and has recently deployed shore to ship and anti-aircraft missile batteries in Syria as well. Russia and Iran are well into the implementation of a \$50 billion deal to provide Iran with nuclear power. The 10 reactors called for in the deal are supposedly for electrical power generation, but most western leaders are convinced they'll be used to build bombs, too. Some experts had claimed that Iran would become a nuclear power this past year, but despite the extensive damage caused by the mysterious Stuxnet computer virus and several unexplained explosions, experts still think a bomb is possible in less than a year. Israel and the US have both vowed to prevent that ever happening and after a period of vacillation the language coming out of Washington at year end seems to be getting tougher again. In fact, CBS News has predicted the US will attack Iran sometime in 2012.

The major obstacle to an early fulfillment of this prophecy is the reference to its occurrence at a time when Israel is ?a peaceful and unsuspecting people? (**Ezekiel 38:11**). This certainly is not the case today, but **Psalms 83** and **Isaiah 17** are yet-to-be-fulfilled prophecies that appear to involve all of Israel's next door neighbors in another unsuccessful attempt to wipe the Jewish nation off the map. The psalmist pleads with the Lord to intervene and defeat Israel's attackers. A victory by Israel would explain why none of them are named in Ezekiel's list of antagonists, although you'd expect them to near the top of the list. It would also explain how Israel could be living in a perceived state of safety as **Ezekiel 38:11** requires. Three of Israel's neighbors, Syria, Hamas and Hizbollah, are still making frantic preparations for war, insisting there will be one very soon. Not surprisingly, these preparations are being bought and paid for by Iran. Through out 2011 experts on both sides publicly announced their conclusions that war is imminent, but at year's end it hasn't happened yet although at least one intelligence service is predicting a very high likelihood in the first half of January.

But two other pre-requisites for Ezekiel's battle are clearly being met. In past studies I've shown that Turkey will be on the Moslem side in Ezekiel's battle, but for years Turkey has enjoyed a strong relationship with Israel. That all began to change in 2010 and has continued in 2011. Turkey's Prime minister Erdogan believes Turkey's destiny is to rebuild the Ottoman Empire into the new Middle Eastern powerhouse. He's getting cozy with Iran and Syria to accomplish this. From all outward appearances Turkey has landed solidly in the camp of the Moslem coalition.

Till now Israel really hasn't had any wealth to speak of, but recent oil and gas discoveries, said to be worth billions of dollars, could create the wealth necessary to make Israel an attractive target for attack. Just recently geologists have revised their predictions of the potential gas reserves sharply upward. This could fulfill the prophecy of **Ezekiel 38:13** that Russia will be looking for plunder. There could be enough natural gas to supply Israel's needs for more than 100 years while turning the country from a net importer to a net exporter. Russia is already looking for ways to get involved in bringing this gas to market, and according to Ezekiel they'll go to war in what will turn out to be a failed attempt to do so.

I believe the removal of the US as Israel's powerful ally is also necessary to pave the way for Ezekiel's battle, because I don't think the Moslem coalition will attack until they're sure the US won't retaliate. Any one of several scenarios currently being played out could accomplish this, especially since our national policy toward Israel is not what it once was. A double dip recession could turn

the nation inward again and cause us to lose interest in defending Israel. Further decline of the dollar on world markets could even render us financially unable to do so. The threat or actual occurrence of a major terrorist attack could cause us to stand down. And finally, the Rapture of the Church could deprive the US of the ability to respond. Any one of these would mean serious trouble for the US and all of them have a better than average probability of coming to pass in the year ahead. In summary, it's a becoming a whole lot easier to see the US abandoning its commitment to Israel.

When the time is right, having recently taken His church to Heaven, the Lord will use this battle to orchestrate His reconciliation with Israel, and on its heels the anti Christ will emerge with a peace plan that includes a Jewish Temple. So once this battle takes place, end times prophecy will really go on fast forward.

#### **4. The Ancient Roman Empire Will Re-Emerge As A Political Force... Rev 17:9-10**

?This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for a little while.?

This one is a little obscure if you don't know your history. When John was writing this, about 95AD, there had been five great world powers; Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece. All were conquered and absorbed. The current power was Rome, which was never really conquered and will re-emerge at the end of the age, according to **Daniel 9:26**. **Daniel 2:36-45** describes Gentile Dominion from Daniel's time forward (Egypt and Assyria had already fallen) in the form of a giant statue representing the four remaining Kingdoms. Babylon was the head of gold. Persia was the chest and arms of silver. Greece was the belly and thighs of bronze, followed by the two appearances of Rome, two legs of iron (Biblical Rome) and two feet of iron mixed with clay (the revived Roman Empire). Read it carefully and you'll find some interesting things in the description of the two feet upon which the statue stands. In the first place iron and clay don't mix. We can imagine sticky clay serving as glue that holds pieces of iron together, but the language describes a clay that's made of dust and already baked, hard and brittle like shards of pottery. You can't make random pieces of iron and pottery adhere.

The two iron legs of the statue describe the two divisions of the Roman Empire of Biblical times, Western and Eastern. Today the territory of the Western division is occupied by Europe, while the Eastern territory holds the Islamic countries of the Middle East. They're the two feet of iron mixed with clay, and both have their problems.

As of this writing the Western division is said to be on the ropes due to economic problems. Some predict these problems will prompt a major re-configuration of the Western leg in 2012 as the weak economies are cast adrift to avoid bringing down the stronger ones. Experts also wonder if the combined defeats spoken of in **Psalms 83** and **Ezekiel 38-39** will render the Eastern leg incapable of being part of the World Empire of the End Times. But Daniel had both the statue's feet in view in chapter 2 so both divisions of the Roman Empire have to be present at the End of the Age. The coming year will almost certainly bring some eye-popping changes to our understanding of what this End Times Empire will look like.

#### **5. The World Will Embrace A Single Religion... Rev 13:8**

All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast?all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

Make no mistake about it. Islam is the major religious force in the world today and the goal is nothing less than world domination, by any means necessary. It's the world's fastest growing religion and is second only to Christianity in number of adherents. Already nearly one out of every four inhabitants of the world is Moslem, and like most Christians and Jews they don't really know what they believe or why. I'm no prophet, but as I look into the future, it's much easier for me to see Islam riding its current wave of momentum to fill the void left by the departure of the Church than it is to imagine some watered down mix of apostate Christianity and New Age Mysticism doing so.

Much has been written recently about al Mahdi, a figure out of Moslem prophecies who bears a striking resemblance to Christian prophecies of the anti-Christ. For example, both show a leader coming on the scene during a time of great turmoil on Earth. Both depict him as man of peace who will have a seven year reign, head up a one world religion and one world government, and claim supernatural origins. Both prophecies culminate in a battle between good and evil that brings about Earth's final judgment. It's as if they're pointing to the same person. The difference is that in Islam he's a good guy, while the Bible calls him evil.

Take this charismatic political and religious leader with his supernatural power, add the widely held but incorrect belief that God and Allah are the same, and that Islam is a religion of peace, and then subtract the spirit of discernment that will disappear with the Church and you can see how he could be the straw that a world on the brink of disaster grasps for survival.

#### **6. The World Will Accept A Single Government... Rev 13:3**

The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.

The last US presidential election showed how quickly a fearful and disillusioned people will get behind someone who promises to

change things. When you look at the shape of the world it doesn't take much to imagine circumstances getting to a point where the whole world will agree to follow a leader who will promise to bring order out of chaos. Whether it's Global Warming (now called Climate Change), the decline of the US dollar, the collapse of Europe, or war in the Middle East, the one solution everyone is talking about is some form of one world government. With the things that already threaten world stability getting worse by the day, how much more frantic will people be after millions of their neighbors suddenly disappear in the rapture without warning or explanation, and there's been a nuclear exchange that brings destruction from Europe through the Middle East and into Russia? All it will take is a leader who can persuade people he can fix things to bring this prophecy to fulfillment. By many accounts, this leader is standing in the wings awaiting his cue.

#### **7. Babylon Will Re-Emerge As A Prominent City In World Affairs... Rev 18:2-3**

With a mighty voice he shouted: "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird. For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries."

You may not know it, but Babylon is being made ready to accept its destiny as a city of power in the end times. It's just a ceremonial city right now, but 20 years ago nobody even knew it existed at all. One of the shocks of Gulf War 1 was the discovery of Babylon standing there on the banks of the Euphrates River again. Today there's a concerted effort underway to complete what Saddam Hussein began and return Babylon to world prominence. The government of Iraq has decided that making Babylon an international tourist destination is in the country's best interest, and the US is sponsoring a feasibility study to see how this can be accomplished. Because of Babylon's current lack of importance in the world, some students of prophecy search for an allegorical fulfillment of its destruction described in **Rev. 18**, and of course many see the USA or some American city as a logical candidate. But remember, even though in **Revelation 17:9** John describes "mystery Babylon" as seated on seven hills, a prophecy in **Zechariah 5:5-11** shows it being moved "to the plains of Shinar" a reference to ancient Mesopotamia called Iraq today. We can't switch from literal to allegorical interpretations of Scripture without clear direction, and where Babylon is concerned no such direction exists. In fact the opposite is true. Almost from the beginning, the Bible has been a tale of two cities. Jerusalem is the city of God while Babylon has always been the city of man. Both disappeared from the world stage for many centuries, but when Jerusalem came back it was to its original location. The Bible says the same will be true of Babylon.

#### **Birth Pains ... Matt. 24:6-8**

You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.

Experts say the big things to watch for in 2012 will be the actions of nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom. The first of these will likely take place in the Middle East and will center around Syria. Following its success in Libya, Qatar has formed a multi-national rapid deployment force of Sunni Moslem fighters for the purpose of aiding Syrian anti-Government forces to topple Pres. Assad's regime. The first contingent has already been assembled in Turkey, near the Syrian border. Many of these fighters are from Libya and Iraq and are backed by Saudi Arabia and Turkey, with the US as a silent partner. The possibility of this spilling over into Lebanon and Israel is thought to be very high and could bring the fulfillment of **Psalms 83** and **Isaiah 17** early in 2012.

There will also be big problems in the EU if the more stable countries try to expel those whose financial instability would otherwise threaten to bring the whole Union down. World financial leaders have warned that Europe's failure to resolve these difficulties will plunge the whole world back into an even worse recession than the one we've supposedly just come out of. Predictions are being made of widespread civil unrest as the consequence of failure. These same observers consider a workable solution to be unlikely and say that 2012 could very well begin the world's time of payback for years of overspending.

Food prices have retreated somewhat from their all time highs of last year, but experts warn us not to relax. The price of food will continue to be volatile and in the poorer countries will still consume more than 45% of household income. Already 1 out of every 6 people in the world goes to bed hungry every night. Experts have said it would only take one or two years of poor crop production to bring a serious famine to the world. Many are concluding that 2011 was a bad year and 2012 won't be any better.

Earthquakes are now an everyday occurrence. During 2011 there was a 5.0 or higher earthquake somewhere in the world just about every day with the most expensive one in history (\$235 billion) being the 9.0 quake in Japan.

The Lord said these birth pangs would be the early warning signs of the approaching End of the Age, so I have included the above examples to confirm my belief that we're very close to our last days on Earth. The consensus from the professionals seems to be that things aren't going to get better any time soon and could likely get much worse by the middle of 2012. That may be true for the world, but we're told to walk by faith not by sight (**2 Cor. 5:7**) because our citizenship is in Heaven and we eagerly await a Savior

from there, the Lord Jesus Christ (**Phil. 3:20**). When we see these things begin to take place we're to stand up and lift up our heads because our redemption is drawing near (**Luke 21:28**). These promises have never been more true than they will be in 2012. Happy New Year! May all the Lord's blessings be yours. 12-31-11

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