

What is the World Coming To?

A SIGN outside a church read: ‘This is God’s World – What on Earth are you doing?’

Well what on earth is humankind doing? There seems to be nothing on earth which will unite us.

- ◆ United Kingdom – divided;
- ◆ United States of America – divided;
- ◆ United Europe – divided;
- ◆ United Nations – divided.

Also, most significantly, the Middle East is torn apart.

Bible Prophecies are Alive

Old Testament prophecies, which seemed to many people to be dormant, have come alive.

We can read in Daniel 2:28–45 about this multi-metalled image, which was dreamt about by a Babylonian king. The dream predicted how one world empire would follow another, until the end of human government had come.

We can now see how Babylon was succeeded by other empires (Persia, Greece and Rome) until, at last, the world was divided into a mixture of strong and weak nations – the feet of the image being a precarious mix of iron and clay, that would not stick together.

Quite unexpectedly, a stone, cut out of a mountain without hands, is hurled at the image, which is felled and ground to powder, and the stone grows to fill the whole earth.



This represents Jesus setting up God's Kingdom. As we look at the divided world today, we cannot fail to recognise this is the time of 'divided nations' represented by those iron and clay feet.

There are divisions between and within nations. The world is in a very unstable condition, both politically and economically. The world economy is precarious. Any political tremor can cause markets to fluctuate wildly. Currencies which once looked steady are volatile. Uncertainty is everywhere. The image is ready to fall. Jesus will soon come back.

The World Will Change

But though all human systems will be removed and there will be massive upheaval, we should be looking through all that with hope. Prophecy indicates that the reign of Christ is also about to begin. The world will never be the same again.

There will be a great time of restoration and stable peace. What is most important is that you and I could be there, fully involved in creating the new world order. What a prospect that is! The prophets tell us that the Lord will come with all his saints to deliver Israel and help establish the new world order.

Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. And in that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east... And all the saints with you (Zechariah 14:3-5).

The Sign of Israel

The nation of Israel has always been a sign that God will keep His promises, and never more so than today. Its very existence is evidence of God fulfilling His plans.

One hundred years ago the First World War was coming to an end. This desperate war had affected many countries but heralded especially dramatic changes in the Middle East. Britain believed at that time that control of the Middle East was the 'back door' to defeating Germany in Europe. On 11th December 1917, General Allenby had liberated and then literally walked into Jerusalem.

Just one month earlier, on November 2nd, the British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour had written this in a letter:

"His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of that object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

This summed up Britain's attitude towards Palestine (as Israel was then named). Britain was given a mandate to govern Israel, right up until November 1947, when the United Nations adopted 'Resolution 181' to partition the land between Jews and Arabs.



So, in 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed. After centuries of non-existence, the nation of Israel was alive and back in its own land.

The City of Jerusalem

In June 1967, the Israelis fought what came to be known as the Six Day War. It resulted in a resounding victory over their neighbouring Arab enemies, and the city of Jerusalem came back into Jewish hands for the first time in 1900 years.

This was a remarkable event by any standards. However, Bible readers found it especially exciting, at last fulfilling words spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ. For, speaking to the Jews of what was going to happen in 70 AD, Jesus said,

For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 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 (Luke 21:23–24).

With the taking of Jerusalem it would seem that the times of the Gentiles had run their course.

However, we should think about the fulfilment of all that Jesus said rather than just this one sentence. Jesus says that these events would show the nearness of the kingdom of God.

When you see these things happening, know that the Kingdom of God is near (v31).

This means the return of Jesus Christ to bring the judgements of God and to begin his reign of peace over all the earth. Although the signs are that this time is near, we cannot know exactly when that day will be, for Jesus said:

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but my Father only (Matthew 24:36).

Are We Ready?

World events and anniversaries are interesting and instructive. Events in the Middle East often relate directly to Bible prophecy.

However, the question we should ask ourselves is whether we are ready – watching and waiting and obedient – for when Jesus comes back.

Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man (Luke 21:36).

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