Are You Ready for the Return of Jesus ?

 (What are the sings of His Coming ?)

When would you like Jesus to return? Today?- Tomorrow? Next Week? Next month?

Most people have no idea of when He will return to earth or when He will come for His Church. The Lord must be sad because He gives us so many signs.

As Christians we are to be looking for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. That means we should be living our lives in a holy manner. Everything we do should revolve around our spiritual lives. In other words, we should ask ourselves -Is this what Jesus would do?

Now there are some outstanding events that we should be aware of concerning the Lord’s return to earth– and that’s what we will look at today.---

The end time events center around the nation of Israel. The scriptures tell us exactly what will happen and when it will happen.

**1. The Signs for the Nation of Israel. -Matt 24: 3-14**

v-3-The disciples are asking Jesus when what is the sign that you are coming back and when will the world end?--notice Jesus is sitting-( when the Jewish Rabi would sit- it meant this was official teaching-this is where we get the term 'the chair'- or the chairman of the board, the official who leads.)

And Jesus answers them, 'you're going to hear of wars and rumors wars, nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes and these will be like birth pains. -(in other words- like a woman's birth pains start out they are small at first but then as her labor progresses- so do the pains intensify and they get larger, and larger and larger and then finally she gives birth.)

The wars through history have increased and intensified from sticks and rocks to bows and arrows to guns and bullets to bombs. Then to atomic bombs that can take out large cities then to even larger nuclear bombs and we even now have poisonous gases that can wipe out a society. And if we're not careful we can actually eradicate the population of the world.

**=(I would say this sign has been completed**.)

v-9 "you will be handed over and persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of Me."

-(I believe the holocaust where 6,000,000 Jews were exterminated fulfilled this sign. And every country at the time hated the Jews.

v-11 False prophets will arise-(they will deny that Jesus is the Messiah.)

**=(We have seen along with the nation Israel that these signs have been completed**).

The text then goes on to describe events of the Tribulation Period.

v-14 Then you will see the Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to the whole world- (this will be preached in the seven year period preceding the Kingdom, the second return of the Lord Jesus to His people the Jews.)

v-15 goes to say 'when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation, spoken of through the prophet Daniel, then let those in Judea flee." -(get out of town, this person standing there is the Antichrist, which will happen in the middle half of the tribulation period.)

 Now as far as these things occurring--Jesus also lets us know who will go into this Tribulation Period. Jesus gives another sign.

**v-32** "Now learn the lesson of the Fig Tree, as soon as it's twigs get tender and it's leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened."

-(the Fig Tree is the symbol for the Nation of Israel and the Lord is saying when this dormant tree starts to blossom the people who see it will also see these previous events, the Tribulation Period. Most all End Time scholars believe that when Israel became a nation in 1948 that was the blossoming of the Fig Tree. And the generation that was born to see that day will be the ones to see the Tribulation Period.)

A vary current sign is the present status of the Nation Israel.

 **Zechariah 14**

**2. The Lord prepares His people for His return. Zech 14: 1-5-**

**v-2- says** “I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it”

-(here is a prophecy for the end times, that Israel will be in Jerusalem and all the nations will gather to fight against her.)

Now we've seen that she became a nation in 1948 and that's when she gathered back into the land. but how did it happen?

Remember Israel in 70 AD was scattered into all the nations. She was overrun by Rome who destroyed the Temple. Israel remained out of her land until 1948 as we have already seen. This fulfilled the prophecy the Lord gave in **Leviticus 26: 33-34.** -( The Lord says He would **scatter them into the land of their enemies** and their own land would be laid waste and in ruins and it would rest and enjoy the Sabbath rests all the time it lies desolate because the Jews did not did give the land it’s Sabbaticals the rest every 7th year.)

The purpose of the Sabbath Day and the Sabbaticals every 7th year was not to relax and watch T.V., it was to rest from the routine of work. -(in other words to take one day of the week and change our focus to the Lord and honor Him. This was not to be another day for man, remember man’s number is 6, six days were to be for Him but the Lord is to be given the 7th **day. We are not to take that day for ourselves because then we would have all 7 days and the Lord would have none.)**

But notice another prophecy that has been fulfilled.

 **Ezekial 11:17** He said, “I will gather you from the nations and bring you back from the countries where you have been scattered and I will give you back the land of Israel again.”

**This goes along with another prophecy the Lord gave them.**

**Lev 26: 40-42 says "** that if they would confess their sins and return to Him and pay for their sins then He will remember the covenant He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and will give them the promised land.” -(the promise given to Abraham was that the Jews would inherit all the promised land and that as of today has not happened but is going to happen in the period right after the seven year Tribulation Period.)

**Zechariah 14:3 says** “then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations.”

-(so let's get the picture, He scatters the Jews into the land of their enemies because they didn’t obey Him and He lets the land rest for almost 2,000 years and then He brings them back into their land to get prepared for His return and giving them all their promised land that He promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.)

**But 1st-** He is going to bring all these nations against her in war and if she confesses her sins and turns to Him, then He will fight all these nations Himself and return to His people.

Today every nation is against Israel except the U.S. And so today the nation of Israel is under the gravest threat she has faced since she became a nation in 1948. The threat of war is on every side of her. And it's obvious we are approaching a prophetic crises.

Her two closest alleys in the Middle East, Egypt and Turkey, are turning against her. Last week the people in Egypt, inspired by the Muslim Brotherhood who is for the annihilation of Israel, ransacked and burned the Israeli Embassy.

Turkey has been an ally as well, but last year they were instrumental in trying to run Israel's blockade of the Gaza strip, and 8 people were killed by Israeli commandos. And because Israel would not apologize for those killings, Turkey last week expelled the Israeli Ambassador and have threatened to quit all trading with Israel.

The Turkey prime minister, Mr. Erdogan, last week visited Egypt and informed the world that it will be sending another Turkey armada into the blockade, and this time with three warships. They are once again daring Israel to stop them.

The PLO is going to the United Nations General Assembly and are requesting recognition of statehood with their boundaries being Israel's 1967 borders.

The Muslim Brotherhood along with other Muslim organizations are planning an ambush of Israel's borders, which of course will cost many lives.

Israel is being backed into a corner where she will have to protect herself. Whether it be from the Turkey warships, Egypt breaking the treaty and allowing Hamas to invade Israel, the Arab nations siding with the PLO and trying to enforce their statehood, or Hezbollah attacking from the north, or Iran hitting her with nuclear missiles.

Now we know the Tribulation Period starts out with a Peace Treaty, a Pseudo Peace which will only last a couple of years, but for a Peace Treaty to be initialized, there has to be a cause. I think we might be seeing the beginnings of a confrontation or quite possible a war.

**v-4-& 5 says** “On that day His feet will stand on the Mt. Of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and it will split in two from the east to the west, forming a great valley which will provide an escape for the Jews.”

-(the Mt. of Olives is thehighest pointin the region–itlooks over Mt. Moriah where the temple used to sit. This was the where the Lord departed into heaven at His Ascension and this is where He will return**.**

So Zechariah sees the Lord bringing Israel back into the land, surrounding her with enemies, the Lord fighting against them and returning to earth.

**3. Signs of the Times---II Timothy 3: 1-5**

It says there will be terrible time in the last days. Terrible for society as a whole.

-(If you know the history of the United States, you know we have had the best of times as a nation. Mostly because God has blessed us because we've honored the Lord but we've turned away from the Lord and consequently we are now experiencing the birth pains that we've been talking about and they are getting worse and not only for our nation but for the whole world.

 1st -we are experiencing a financial disaster. Our country has fell into a debt situation that it may never recover. It owes over 14 trillion dollars.

The national average of unemployment is 9.1-and in some areas it is 25.0.

The real estate market is already n the deepest depression in modern history and it's getting worse. Values here have dropped 40% to 60% . Foreclosures are at their highest levels in history and Wall St. says we haven't seen the worst of it.

The money supply of the U.S. Government is at a low, in fact Apple Corp. is said to have 31 Billion more than the Government.

The 10 largest banks are being sued by the U.S. Government to repay billions of dollars that Fannie Mae and Freddy Mac have purchased from them. This is causing great concern as to their staying afloat. They all still have billions of dollars of troubled real estate loans that are in foreclosure.

Bank of America is in real trouble. They are selling their assets trying to raise money and they are going to lay off 30,000 people and that may not work.

The European Union is even is worse shape. Italy is trying to raise money, they are ready for bankruptcy. Spain, Portugal, Ireland, and Greece are all ready to collapse. Greece has already borrowed billions of dollars and now they are wanting more and the E.U. is going to have to give it to them. or it might collapse the whole European economy and could affect the U.S. as well.

 **4. Signs for the Church. I Thess 4:16-5:11**

We've seen the signs given to Israel concerning their part in the end days and now we're looking at the signs for the Church. This particular text is describing what we call the Rapture of the church where we will be caught up into the presence of God, which happens before that great seven year period we call the Tribulation Period.

Notice 5:5 "while the people are saying 'peace and safety destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape."

--(this is saying what Matt 24:8 said, that things will continue to accelerate like labor pains").

5:4 says "but you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the darkness. "-(it's saying 'we belong to Jesus, we have been given the light, we should be aware of the day and we should not be caught unaware.)

If you are a Christian, the verses noted in the above text should encourage you that the Lord loves you. Jesus died for you and if you have accepted Him as your Savior, He is letting you know that His plan for His Church, (those people who believe in Jesus Christ), is to deliver it from the day of wrath, (the Tribulation Period). The Lord gave us signs when these events would take place so that we would be ready for the Rapture.

Are you ready? Jesus is coming soon!