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The Reason We Know Christ is Coming Soon



By Steven J. Hogan

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The single biggest reason we know Jesus Christ is coming soon is that the Jewish people have been gathering back to their land, just as God promised over 2500 years ago. That the Jews have been returning to their land for the past 140 years is an amazing work of God, one of the greatest modern-day miracles, and the strongest evidence we have that we are now living in the end-times. As Christians we need to know this, for the rapture of the church is the 1st thing to occur at Christ's coming.

The story of the Jewish people began about 4000 years ago with Abraham, the father of the Jews. The birth of the nation of Israel took place in Egypt where, in a 430-year time span, they grew from 75 people to about 2 million. Led by Moses, they escaped that devilish Pharaoh, took a forty-year journey through the desert, and with Joshua as their leader entered the land of Canaan. Not only had God promised them this land (Gen. 13:14-15), but also salvation (Jer. 31:31-34), and a

King (2 Sam. 7:12-16). Sadly, for most of the next 800 years, the nation failed to fear and love their Maker, *“the living God and everlasting King”* (Jer. 10:10) and therefore, kept sinning against Him. During that time, God exhibited great patience, but finally He punished them, with many dying of famine and the sword, and others being exiled.

Yet, for their sake and His sake, God promised that a remnant of Jews would return to their land in 70 years, which is just what happened (Jer. 25:12). Led by Ezra, Nehemiah, and others, thousands of Jewish people came back to Israel and again began to worship the one true God. But for many it was short lived, for it did not take long before their faith faded, and their worship turned into a worthless, ritualistic religion. Yet God was faithful, and kept His most important promise (Micah 5:2), for He sent His Son to earth to be the Savior – *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son…”* John 3:16

For 33 years, Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, lived a perfect life, loving, teaching, and healing tens of thousands. Finally, He died on a cross to satisfy His Father’s wrath and pay for people’s sins, and was then raised from the dead. After commissioning His apostles to go and make disciples, He ascended into heaven (Matt. 28:19-20). But most Jews were proud and rejected Jesus, refusing to repent of their sins and believe in Him as their Lord and Savior. For their grievous sin, God rejected them and again drove them out of their land. Luke 19:41-44

Luke 21:20-24 summarizes how God punished them: “*When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near… there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people… they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot…”* History soberly gives us many distressing stories of the Jews being greatly persecuted throughout the centuries. But Luke tells us that this would be come to an end, for we read *“… until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”*

God was determined to fulfill His promises to His people about receiving land, a King, and salvation. In fact, He had already told them He would gather them again. Jer. 32:37, Ezek. 36:24-28, Hosea 3:4-5, Amos 9:14-15, Micah 4:6-7, Zech. 8:7-8, Zeph. 3:14-20 all prophesy the gathering of the Jewish people back to their land so that God's plans for them would be fulfilled. For those who say this gathering took place after the Babylonian captivity, you need only know that His promises to them about the land, the King, and salvation were not all fulfilled at that time. Not only that, but Isaiah 11:11 tells us, *"The Lord will again recover the second time with His hand the remnant of His people… will gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."*

The prophecy that best sums up God's regathering plans for the Jews is Jer. 31:10 – *"Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare in the coastlands afar off, and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd keeps His flock.'"* Three keys words stand out – *"scattered"*, *"gather"*, and *"keep."* The *scattering* began around 70 AD and continued up to 1880. Since then, God has been *gathering* them back to their land so that there are now close to 6.7 million Jews in Israel. In our lifetimes, we have truly been witnessing one of God's greatest miracles. What is also astounding is that the Jewish people have been returning to their land with their identity, language, religion, and culture still intact. The *"keep"* part of Jer. 31:10, that the Lord will *"keep him as a shepherd keeps His flock,"* is both a physical and spiritual keeping and has not yet taken place, but it will, and it won't be long from now. And it relates to the salvation of a remnant of Jews at the end of Daniel's 70th week. Dan. 9:24

This brings us to the New Testament and to prophecy passages for the Jews, and right away you see that God placed them next to prophecy passages for the church. You cannot overstate the importance of these prophecies for the Jews and the Christians sitting next to each other in the text. God wants Christians to see that His end-time's work with the church is in conjunction with His end-times' work with the Jews, that His last-days' work with the Jews coincides with the final years of the

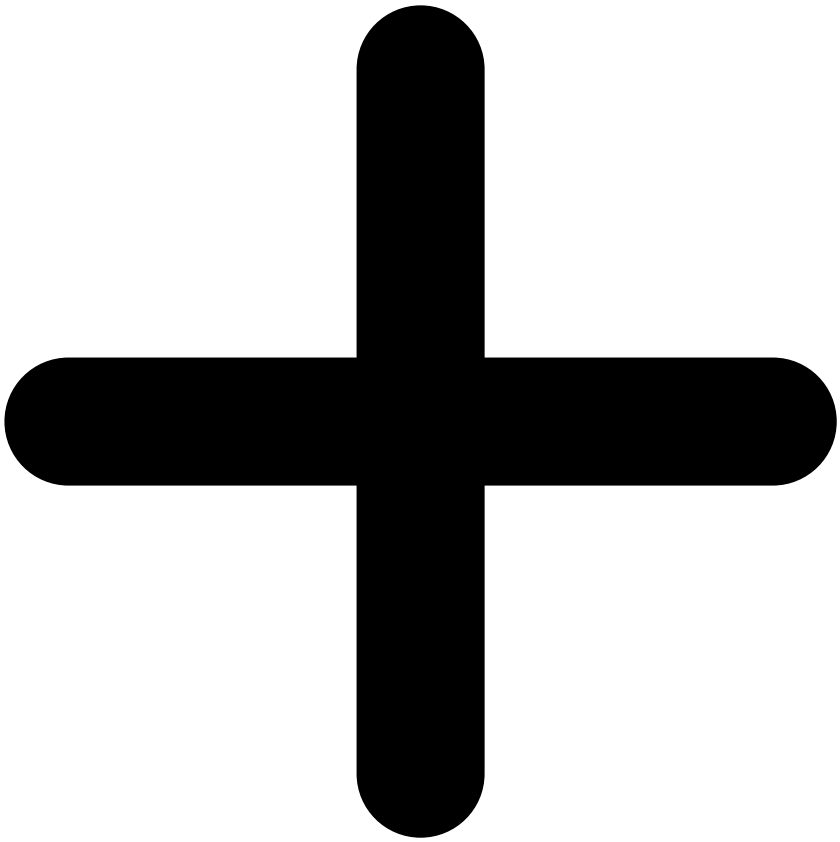
church age.

What specifically do we learn? From Matt. 24:9-22, we read about the abomination of desolation in Jerusalem, and great tribulation afflicting both Jews and Christians. From Luke 21:24-32, we see that the times of the Gentiles will come to an end, that the church will be redeemed (raptured), and that Jesus will set up His kingdom for the Jews and the church. From 2 Thess. 2:1-4, we learn that the wicked Antichrist will proudly declare himself to be God in the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, after which Christ returns to gather the church. From Rom. 11 we find out that a remnant of Jews will be grafted in, be saved, this taking place once the fulness of the Gentiles has come in, and once this church age is over (Rom. 11:25-26). From Rev. 7 we discover that 144,000 Jews will be sealed just before the church is raptured. Indeed, God is fulfilling His end-time plans for both Jews and Christians at this time in history, leading to the soon coming of Christ. I hope you realize how extremely blessed you are to be part of what God is now doing on planet earth.

To know how God wants you to respond to this, note the first part of Jer. 31:10: *“Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare in the coastlands…”* The clear instruction is for the nations, including Christians, to hear this prophetic word, believe it, and declare it to the world. Since this prophecy is now being fulfilled, shouldn’t we excitedly be telling people that God is presently carrying out His plans for the Jews, and this is all leading up to Christ’s second coming for the church and the Jews? Yes, yes, yes!!!

The #1 sign to the church, the signal to all believers everywhere that we are now in the end-times is this single fact that the Jewish people have returned to their land. O Christian, be greatly encouraged and filled with joy, for the Jews are back in their land and the birth pains are taking place, which means Christ is coming soon to rapture the church, pour out His wrath, save a Jewish remnant, and set up His kingdom on earth, a glorious kingdom for both Jewish and Gentile believers. Psalm 37:11, Matthew 5:3

P.S. All Christians need to understand God’s historical and present working with the Jewish people, for it relates directly to His plans for the church. To learn more, I encourage you to read *“A Short Summary of God’s Working With the Jews,”* and *“Unfinished Business.”*



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