

Jewish Signs of Jesus' Return

Sane and Sensible Perspectives on the Last Days

It is a mark of God's faithfulness that He never forgets, but always fulfills, His promises and His purposes. Long before Jesus came to earth, God chose the Jewish people to be in a unique covenant relationship with Himself. This was certainly intended for their benefit, but also for ours: Ultimately the long-awaited Savior would come to them, then through them to us. Guess what? He is getting things ready to do it again!

Unprecedented Jewish Signs

The Jewish people were chosen to be a sign, a pointer to the invisible reality of God and His otherwise inscrutable ways. Not just a sign, but also a reality—the visible expression of God's life and saving love in the world. Out of the very life of Israel has come everlasting life through their Messiah and ours. Jesus will forever be a Jewish man. He is fully God, but in His humanity, He was and remains Jewish.

They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and **from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ** who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.
Romans 9:4-5 ESV

For many benighted centuries these first-chosen ones seemed, perhaps even to themselves at times, to be a warning sign: "At all costs avoid God's disfavor!" Tevye in "The Fiddler on the Roof," joked half-seriously, "I know, I know. We are Your chosen people. But, once in a while, can't You choose someone else?" In the world's eyes, their light was buried under bushel baskets of misunderstanding, suspicion and prejudice that we heaped upon them. All this is changing, changing so suddenly and dramatically that it is breath-taking to behold.



The Jewish people *in one generation* have gone from being obscure and despised on the fringes of every country, to being in command of one of the most dynamic nations in the world. Their scientists have garnered a preponderance of Nobel

Prizes out of all proportion to their numbers. They are world-class leaders in technology and medicine as well as science. Their economy consistently outperforms that of their beleaguered neighbors. Yet, all of this pales in comparison to role the Lord has chosen for them in the Last Days. The Returning King of the Earth will set up His throne and rule from Jerusalem in the heart of a restored Israel!

Naturally enough, with that kind of future intended, the signs associated with modern Israel are, perhaps, the greatest evidence the Lord can give us of His preparations to return soon.



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1) The Re-gathering of the Jews

The return of Jews to the land promised by God is a modern miracle. It also set the End Times clock in motion. The Lord promised the land to Abraham and his descendants forever. Every Christian knows this. Less well known is the sheer number of prophecies in the Old Testament which foretold a vast dispersal of the Jews following the loss of their homeland—that, and the subsequent work of the Lord which would restore them. Always, this restoration was couched in terms of “the latter days.” Jesus proclaimed the same things.

They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, **until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.** Luke 21:24 ESV

How were the Jews scattered? And why? The Roman Empire was the agent both of Israel's destruction and the Jewish dispersal. If you asked them, they would have said the nation was ungovernable. The First Jewish War began as a revolt. The Romans crushed it in typically brutal manner with the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple (70 AD). The Second Revolt of Judea (132-135 AD) was the last straw. In putting down the rebellion led by Bar Kokhba, the Romans razed Jerusalem, desecrated the Temple mount and raised a Roman city in its place. Jews of Judea were either killed, exiled or sold into slavery. The centuries-long diaspora had begun. This, too, was prophesied by a despondent Jesus:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, **your house is left to you desolate.**" Matthew 23:37-38

A Slow Then Sudden Return

For well over a millennium and a half, Jews of the Diaspora prayed with yearning hearts to see a return to the land. No doubt the nearly universal persecution they experienced compounded their anguish at being outcasts and wanderers. Even so, they proved reluctant to leave the relative “security” of the ghetto for an uncertain future. Theodore Hertzl, the founder of modern Zionism, correctly read the signs of antisemitism in the late 1800s. He called for European Jews to return to the Land, but the response was a trickle. Europe was civilized and safe. Far too few realized that the Zionists were the prophesied “fishers.” The Nazi “hunters” came afterward.

But 'As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.' For **I will bring them back to their own land** that I gave to their fathers. "Behold, I am sending for **many fishers**, declares the LORD, and they shall catch them. And **afterward I will send for many hunters**, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks. Jeremiah 16:15-16 ESV

In the aftermath of the Holocaust and World War, the Zionist movement, led by David Ben-Gurion, grew ever more determined to regain Israel for the Jews. Even the Allied powers knew about the death camps, yet refused to bomb the rail lines leading to them. If the Jews were to survive in such a hostile world, they vowed they would never go meekly to the slaughter again, as so many had in the gas chambers. Many lost all faith that they could count on God. They

could only count on themselves. Sadly, just when Israel was reborn, their ancient faith lay in grave (for all but the Orthodox). To this day the majority of Israelis are adamantly secular, even if avowedly ethnic, in their outlook and allegiance.

Of course, the Lord has plans for a far fuller restoration than land. They have an ancient spiritual inheritance He intends to renew. For now, the Jews are in their Holy Land once again. That is—in itself—a massive sign of the Last Days!

2) The Restoration of the Hebrew Language

Of all the stupendous, amazing signs of His Return that the Lord gives through His first chosen people, this one probably has the least impact on geo-political events. But it is no less dazzling. When in the full course of human events has a once-dead language ever been successfully brought back to life? To be sure, Latin and Greek are still taught, but outside the walls of the Vatican Latin is never spoken. And the Greek of Greece is not the original tongue so eloquently written by Paul. Even the English of Shakespeare is practically a closed book to his linguistic descendants. In recent times, the Irish Republic launched a heroic attempt to bring back ancient Gaelic. It failed.

Yet, Israel speaks Biblical Hebrew once again. Let that sink in. They not only speak Hebrew—a language kept alive solely for religious study and ritual as Latin and Greek were. They speak it in pure form! This is even more remarkable when we recall the centuries, no millennia, of dis-use and misuse. The Hebrew kept alive by the Yeshivas (schools) inevitably suffered in isolation. In Jerusalem for instance, the people spoke Yiddish, French or Arabic, not Hebrew. When Hebrew was required for intercommunication it was a form of Medieval Hebrew, an outmoded and degraded version of the Biblical original. God had promised something far better.

"For at that time **I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech**, that all of them may call upon the name of the LORD and serve him with one accord." Zephaniah 3:9 ESV

A Very Determined Hero

The Lord used a resourceful man from Eastern Europe to accomplish this modern resurrection. Born Eliezer Perelman in Lithuania in 1858, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda caught the Zionist vision and emigrated to the Holy Land. He worked tirelessly to create a thoroughly modern Hebrew dictionary and to promote Hebrew as the language of instruction in schools. Sensing that this could never accomplish the goal, he and his wife, Deborah Jonas came up with a bold plan. Speaking only Hebrew in the home and isolating their family life from the outside, they brought up their son, Ben-Zion, as the first native speaking Hebrew child in almost two thousand years.

Now, *sabras* (native born Israelis) all speak Biblical Hebrew in a "pure" form, just as their God had promised so many years ago through His prophet Zephaniah. For those who have grown up with the reality of modern Israel this may seem inconsequential—expected as a matter of course that a nation would speak its ethnic tongue. Students of history and of prophecy, however, can see it for the astonishing miracle that it is. And move the minute hand on the Last Days clock just that much closer to the midnight hour...

3) The Restoration of the Jewish Nation

The nation of Israel was twice ruthlessly destroyed by the Romans—partially in 70-72 AD and completely in 130 AD. For almost two thousand years, the forlorn dream of Jews in exile from the land was to return to the land as sojourners. But few would have believed national restoration was possible. Then, first by the Zionist movement beginning in the late 19th century and later by Nazi persecution the Jewish people began returning to the Land. The lineage of the priesthood is identified and available to be restored and many of the furnishings for a rebuilt temple have already been prepared, making the restoration of temple worship in Jerusalem a real possibility—apart from the political chaos that such a move would launch.

"Before she was in labor she gave birth; before her pain came upon her she delivered a son. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? **Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment?** For as soon as Zion was in labor she brought forth her children." Isaiah 66:7-8 ESV

Then say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. And **I will make them one nation in the land**, on the mountains of Israel. Ezekiel 37:21 ESV

The day that the British Mandate for Palestine expired, Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, declared independence. With the vote of the United Nations in its favor, Israel was reborn in a single day—May 14, 1948—just as the Lord prophesied through Isaiah. To top it off, Isaiah's exact words were fulfilled. Israel as a nation was "brought forth" and immediately afterward the "labor pains" of war began. The surrounding Islamic nations of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia all declared war the same day that Israel became a nation recognized by the world's governing authority.



4) The Restoration of National Unity

Another marvel about the founding of Israel is one we might easily take for granted. The nation that emerged in 1948 was a united whole, a single nation. Well, that's normal isn't it? To this day, nations arise with a united purpose; only later might they splinter and divide. Indeed, division is exactly what happened to the nation of Israel under its third king, Solomon's son Rehoboam. A disgruntled Jeroboam led the Northern Kingdom into rebellion against Judah and Benjamin in the south. That heart-breaking division remained right through the final destruction of Israel and the deportation of the ten northern tribes by Assyria in 722 BC.

When modern Israel declared its independence in 1948 no trace of that former division remained. Centuries of persecution during the Diaspora (dispersal) united the Jewish people with a shared dream of national restoration: "Next year in Jerusalem!" to be sure, political and religious differences of opinion abound, many with vehement intensity, but a common bond continues to hold the nation together. That common bond may have more to do with "us against the world"—the nations which seek their destruction—than with a shared faith in their national God. Nevertheless, this marvel of a united Israel was exactly predicted by Ezekiel over 2500 years ago.



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Then say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. 22 And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, **and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms.** Ezekiel 37:21-22 ESV

5) Jerusalem and Israel in World Politics

Only a hundred and fifty years ago, who would have thought that Jerusalem could ever again have a role to play in world politics? Who could have conceived that it would become the very epi-center of global politics, a fault line setting the nations of the world in an uproar? The answer, of course, is no one except (perhaps) students of Bible prophecy. Even they must have been scratching their heads. Certainly, as shrew an observer as Mark Twain didn't see it coming *at all*. Writing of his 1867 visit to the Holy Land, Twain marveled with undisguised scorn at the "romantic" accounts bandied about by religious tourists.

To find the sort of solitude to make one dreary come to Galilee for that... these unpeopled deserts, these rusty mounds of barrenness, that never, never, never do shake the glare from their harsh outlines... that melancholy ruin of Capernaum, this stupid village of Tiberias, slumbering under its six funereal palms... we never saw a human being on the whole route [to Tabor]. Mark Twain, "The Innocents Abroad"

Twain was hardly alone in his assessment. Others saw it too. Ten years earlier (in 1857) the British Consul in Palestine reported that the entire land was largely uninhabited, that its greatest need was repopulation. As late as 1895, French author Pierre Loti described a dismal scene: "As elsewhere, as everywhere in Palestine, city and palaces have returned to the dust... This melancholy of abandonment, weights on all of the Holy Land" (Joan Peters, "From Time Immemorial" p 161). These men would be shocked and astonished by present events we largely take for granted. Their writings preserve for us an undeniable record of how stunningly and swiftly an Invisible Hand has overthrown the old order. Exactly as it was prophesied!

The oracle of the word of the Lord concerning Israel: Thus declares the Lord, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the spirit of man within him: "Behold, **I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding peoples.** The siege of Jerusalem will also be against Judah. On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will gather against it. Zechariah 12:1-4 ESV

A Continuing War Against the Jews

The mandate from heaven to regather the Jews and restore their nation flew in the face of newly discovered Saudi oil. All the leading nations of the world—especially in their covert operations—conspired against Israel's formation, including the United States. This sordid story has been masterfully chronicled by John Loftus and Mark Aarons in their book, "The Secret War Against the Jews." Reading it, one is amazed that the Zionists were able to pull it off in the face of such intense international opposition. Indeed, only a great God could foretell it and accomplish it!

The average post war citizen in the US and Europe wanted the Jews to have their homeland for the sake of the Holocaust. Nevertheless, powerful people in their governments were willing to



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sell out the Zionists to gain favor with the Saudis. As a matter of historic record, the first Saudi king, Ibn Saud, intensely hated Jews and vigorously resisted all efforts to restore them to their land. The deadly infection of hatred spread throughout Islam. Hence, from the 1930s on, a witches' brew of antisemitism, Arab oil and terrorist violence has turned Jerusalem into a "cup of staggering." Israel's emergence and survival are truly miraculous.

Positioned to See Him

This miraculous Jewish sign is all the more compelling because Zechariah linked it to the ultimate realization by the Jews that Jesus is their Messiah. This Jewish nation, surrounded by enemies and at the center of world events, would see "him whom they have pierced." Present day Israel will see Jesus return and "weep bitterly" to behold that He is the Messiah they rejected. This prophecy is a highly focused sign of the nearness of our Lord's Return. Israel not only had to be reborn for this to take place—for them to be in position to "look on" Him. It also had to become "a cup of staggering." We are there!

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, **when they look on me**, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and **weep bitterly over him**, as one weeps over a firstborn." Zechariah 12:10 ESV

6) The Conversion of the Jews

Previous centuries have seen forced Jewish converts to Christianity who practiced their Jewish faith secretly and willing, believing converts who were then assimilated into Gentile Christianity. The rise of Messianic Jews (Jews who retain their Jewish heritage and identity when coming to faith in Christ) in the past few decades marks a shift towards the end of the age of the Gentiles. For more on this see "[Gospel Signs of Jesus' Return](#)."

This Story Is Not Over

Many more prophecies regarding the Jews remain to be fulfilled. And they will be. Tragically, however, not all the future events will be as positive as those which have already occurred. Unbridled persecution, catastrophic wars, and massive relocations are yet to come. By the time we see those signs, the last of the Last Days will be mercifully close indeed. We have been given these so that we can know—know with an absolute certainty—that we have already entered days the prophets foresaw. The days immediately before Messiah's Return.

Two More Unprecedented Signs

[Gospel Signs](#) Jesus gave us this sign, but Peter explained it. He wrote in 2 Peter 3:1-9 that the Father is in no hurry to bring things to a quick close because He doesn't want anyone to be perish, but all to come to repentance. For that to happen the gospel has to be preached to all the world. That day is coming at us like a freight train...

[Global Signs](#) When the Bible was being written the "world" to its authors was no larger than the Mediterranean basin and outlying provinces, mostly under Roman control. Before the entire world could be organized into anything like the unified whole pictured in the Book of Revelation,



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it first had to be explored, then subdued. When these signs were given, they were unthinkable possibilities; now they are everyday realities. Well, almost all...

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