

# Israel: The Key to End of the Age

By Mike Taylor

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“Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: as soon as its twigs get tender and its 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.”

Look at the world around us. Are not the signs of the soon return of our Lord and Savior, not displayed according to God’s Holy Word on the condition of this world? What are those signs? Let’s list just a few:

1. The moral decay of this world, The USA is the last nation to expound godly principles. Unfortunately its star is fading as the last great hope of the world. It was likened unto a shining city on a hill, but moral decay will bring her to the pit.
2. The death of 50 million individuals upon the altar of convenience through abortion, or a whole generation in our nation alone, not counting international. This is synonymous with passing the children through the fires of Molech in land of Canaan and ancient Israel. A practice God says He loathes.
3. The decay of the foundation of the nation, the family. Homosexuality, same sex marriage, civil unions, and adoption of children into these families, and whole generation void of the teachings of the Word of God that’s found in your Bible.
4. The push recently for a one-world government based on climate change? Who really buys this scientific junk? Catholicism: wanting all religions to unite (one world religion)?
5. The removal by legislation of God from all aspects of legal and civil proceedings, from our schools, from our courts, and from our lives.
6. The removal of our basic freedoms in the USA and a socialist agenda to match Europe and the rest of the world.

These are just a few, and we could name many more of the symptoms of a world ripe for judgment and the return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

## **THE RETURN OF CHRIST IS IMMINENT**

As Christians we should be cultivating fruit worthy of repentance, as we see the possible end of days approaching. We should be aware of our surroundings, as Christ commanded us “to watch.” We are to be prepared for what could be coming on the earth very soon. We should be living like He will come today, and He just might.

Just think of the world that we may be living in. Even worse than what we are witnessing right now and it’s hard to imagine. The symptoms of the end of the age are piling up quickly, but as the old saying goes, “You ain’t seen nuttin’ yet!”

Jesus warns in Matthew 24:24: “For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

We see that happening today, in our news, on our TV sets and publications. Obviously, unless you are well grounded in the Word of God and sound doctrine, a person could be deceived when counterfeit miracles are performed and will lead the person away from the truth. If a true Christian hides the Word of

God in his heart and his mind, no manner of lies that mimic God's truth will fool the redeemed child of God. But we must stay close to God by His Holy Spirit and grounded in His Word. That's a warning from our God and Savior. (Matthew 24:24)

But what should we be doing as Christians in these last days of the closing Age?

Titus 2.11-14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

And at the same time Jesus Christ gave us a command found in Luke 21.36: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

Jesus commands us to be watchful, alert, studying to "show thyself approved" (2 Timothy 2:15) and not neglectful, sticking our heads in the sand and trying to blend into this world. This should be, for each of us, a time of joyous anticipation of the soon return of our King, our Savior, and our Redeemer. Not a time to be fearful, but sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a dying world.

### **ISRAEL'S REBIRTH, AN ENDTIME EVENT**

Jesus gave us hints in the Word of God to the time of the signs of His return. Let us look at Matthew 24.32-33:

"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: as soon as its twigs get tender and its 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 have often pondered what Jesus was saying concerning the fig tree. What do you think? Let's look at examples in the Bible where the fig tree was used, as in these scripture passages to prove a point.

#### **Matthew 21:18-20:**

"In the morning, as Jesus was returning to Jerusalem, he was hungry, and he noticed a fig tree beside the road. He went over to see if there were any figs on it, but there were only leaves. Then he said to it, 'may you never bear fruit again!' And immediately the fig tree withered up. The disciples were amazed when they saw this and asked, 'How did the fig tree wither so quickly?'"

At first glance, it appears that Jesus was upset and disappointed because He was hungry and no figs were found, but was that all He meant? Jesus knew when He went to the fig tree that He would find no figs, as it was not their season. Jesus never did or said anything that did not have a deeper meaning. Figs are symbols of the nation of Israel and its faith, or the lack thereof. Israel was like the fig tree with full leaves. It looked righteous, and looks like it was following Jehovah, but produced no fruit of righteousness, faith, or obedience.

In other places in the Bible, Israel is compared to either a fig tree or an olive tree. Let's go to Jeremiah chapter 24:

24.1: "The LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king

of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon.

24:2 “One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe: and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad.”

24:3 “Then said the LORD unto me, ‘What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil.’”

24.4-5: “Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good.”

The people of Israel are compared to figs here, both good and evil in the mentioned verses above.

When Jesus cursed the fig tree, He symbolically and prophetically placed a curse on Israel for their unbelief. The reason for the curse is straightforward. The fig tree, (Israel) failed to bear fruit (faith) even though its leaves indicate it was in season (the appointed time for the coming of the Messiah). Due to its lack of fruit, the fig tree withered. Likewise, Israel’s lack of faith when presented with her Messiah led to the eventual destruction of the Jewish Temple at the hands of the Romans in AD 70. For 2000 years, the nation of Israel ceased to exist and its people persecuted and cursed. They were sent into exile and dispersed into all the other nations. And Israel was no more.

Let’s look at another parable concerning the fig tree, Jesus speaking:

In Luke 13.6-9: “He spake also this parable; a certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none; cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well, and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.”

For three years, Jesus spread His message throughout Israel performing miracles, exhibiting unprecedented knowledge of the Scriptures, and offering ample evidence of His claim to be the long awaited Messiah. Yet despite three years of testimony, Israel refused to believe in the One whom God had sent.

But God in His mercy will give Israel another chance very soon and the dung He speaks of will be intense persecution, so He may refine them as silver in a hot fire, until He can see His image in them. (Malachi 3:3). The coming Tribulation is a time of God’s wrath and judgment on the earth, and for refining Israel, as she has had 4000 years with God trying to teach and reach her. A question to you: Is it meant for God’s church to be caught up between God’s wrath, and judgment of the earth and refining Israel in the fire? We will answer that in a moment.

### **ISRAEL IS THE KEY**

Everyone knows that Israel became a nation again after almost 2000 years of not being a nation. Never, I repeat, NEVER in the history of mankind, has a fallen nation resurrected to become that nation again, except Israel. Israel is compared to a flowering fig tree and putting on new growth in yet another parable found in Luke chapter 21, starting in verse 29:

21:29-30 “And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.”

21:31 “So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.”

21:32 “Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.”

21:33 “Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.”

21:36 “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

This whole 21st chapter is pregnant with meaning. I see Jesus putting the order in reverse and the fig tree is stated last, when time wise, it would have been stated first. But I would like to key on the word “generation” in verse 32. What is a generation? Many people have tried to develop a timeline for the return of our Lord. The Jehovah Witnesses have been doing that since the late 1800s and failed. You and I can't do that. But when does a generation start? Speculation had it that a generation started in 1948. Makes sense, as there are numerous illustrations found in your Bible that shows God deals with people in lots of 40 years, before judgment is passed. But is that applicable here?

1. So Jesus would return in 1988, as a generation was theorized to be those 40 years...as previously mentioned. Did not happen.

2. They reasoned further, that a generation started when Jerusalem became the capital of Israel again in 1967, so 2007 was calculated to be the time of His return. Wrong again. Those dates have come and gone. Symptoms of the end time are piling up even faster, as time goes on and we're still here.

I believe here that God is speaking of the life span of those born around this time, as some will be alive to witness His coming. The Bible speaks of that generation being 70 years, 80 years by strength. (Psalm 90:10).

The whole point of the parables about the fig tree is that the fig tree is Israel. It's been six decades plus since Israel was once again declared a nation against all worldly odds. In Matthew 24, again, Jesus promises that the generation which witnesses the birth of Israel as a nation again, will not die off until the end of the age comes to pass...What is the end of the age? The return of Jesus Christ the Lord and King and Ruler of this world for a 1000-year reign. A lot of you reading this article were born in the 1950s or earlier, right along side the people who were born in Israel during this time of Israel being gathered and becoming a nation. I was born in 1951, so it is possible that I will see my Lord coming in the clouds for His elect before Tribulation starts and so will you.

Given the Bible's impeccable track record, we have every reason to expect the soon return of our Lord to this earth and a wise person will prepare accordingly.

But of this time, Jesus, God of the Old and New Testament gave us comforting words to show us that we have nothing to fear. Let's ponder on a few scriptures that speak of this comfort and our hope in Christ Jesus and answers my question, will the church be caught between the wrath of God and refining Israel? :

Let's go to 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18, but after we read it, I will go to Isaiah 26:19-21. After we have read these two passages, if you put them side by side and look at each verse, you will see that Isaiah in the Old Testament states in different words the same thought pattern that Paul expressed in 1 Thessalonians:

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

**Now compare these verses with Isaiah:**

“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over past. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”

Just as God protected His people during the Passover in Egypt, by the sign of the blood over their doors, God in His wrath will pass over us because of the blood of His Son and remove us to where He is. In the first part of verse 20 in Isaiah 26, the prophet speaks of chambers and shutting thy doors about thee. And about hiding till He passes by. What does it mean? I believe it is explained in John 14, when Jesus said:

14:1 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”

14:2 “In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”

14:3 “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

**Again in Revelation 3:10, when He speaks to the church in Philadelphia:**

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”

Until He comes again, He tells us how to be ready and not be found wanting:

1 Thessalonians 5:1-10, Paul writes under the guidance of the Holy Spirit:

V1. “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.”

V2. “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.”

V3. “For when they shall say, peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”

V4. “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.”

V5. “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.”

V6. “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”

V7. “For they that sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.”

V8. “But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”

V9-10 “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.”

I have heard sermon after sermon dealing with these Scriptures and you could go into great detail of doctrinal teachings of their meaning, but without rambling on the subject and just letting the Words of the living God speak for itself, we can read these verses and see that in the first three chapters of Revelation, that God is dealing with His church. Then taking all the other Scriptures that I have quoted, supports that God will remove us from His coming wrath and move us out of the way, as many examples shown in the Word of God. These examples show God’s people being removed before His Wrath is unleashed. When will that be? Many have tried to speculate the Lord’s return just as the Jehovah Witnesses have done to their error.

We don’t know for sure, not with any certainty, as Jesus told us. Only the Father knows the exact date and the exact hour, BUT we know the season. And my brethren, we are living in the last days of that season. Are you prepared and waiting for His blessed return? Have you put on the likeness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Have you put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:11-18) seeking to endure to the end? If not, I believe it’s time to get prepared based on the clear instruction of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This is Pastor Mike Taylor, praying God’s mercy on all who seek Him. If you have troubles, need counseling, prayer, or just a listening ear, email me at [realteam1999@sbcglobal.net](mailto:realteam1999@sbcglobal.net), or visit me online for more biblical commentary at [www.churchofgod-usa.org](http://www.churchofgod-usa.org). God bless ‘till we meet at Jesus’ feet.

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