

Are We Witnessing the Greatest End-Times Miracle of God?

Next week, on May 14, we will celebrate the 71st year of Israel as an independent nation.

The rebirth of Israel after almost 2,000 years stands as an amazing fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Numerous Scriptures refer to an end-time role for the nation of Israel. Even the date of Israel's formation can be calculated from the Scripture in Revelation 11: 1, 2 which speaks of a "42-month" or 1260-year "Age of the Gentiles" to be measured from the time the Temple Mount was lost to unbelievers. From the time the Dome of the Rock was constructed on the Temple Mount, A.D. 687, until 1947, the year the U.N. voted to establish Israel, exactly 1260 years had passed.

Some thought that Jesus would return within a generation of the formation of Israel based on Luke 21:32, where Jesus said that this generation would not pass away before His prophecy of the end had happened. After the Second Coming did not happen on the 40th anniversary in 1988, some stretched the biblical idea of a 40-year generation to 70 years. Now that 70 years has passed, it may be good to remember that a major theme of Luke 21 was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, which began when the gates were shut against Roman general Titus on Passover of A.D. 70, exactly 40 years on the Jewish calendar after Jesus was crucified.

Let us also remember that for the Advent of Christ, the nation of Israel was reborn at the time of the Maccabees in 165 B.C., 160 years before Jesus was born and 190 years before His ministry began. A similar period for the Second Coming would span the years 2108 to 2138. Better still it is best to

remember that no one knows the day or hour of Christ's return.

The survival of Israel against overwhelming forces is one of the greatest modern miracles of God. Israel has fought wars in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973, and has emerged victorious every time. She has fought many smaller engagements and has endured sustained terrorist activities. The hand of God has been evident, as described by the prophet Zechariah, who speaks of Jerusalem as an "immovable rock" and a "cup that sends the surrounding peoples reeling" (Zech. 12:2-3, NIV).

Today Israel is still surrounded by its enemies. Hamas, Hezbollah, ISIS, Al Queda and Iran are sworn to Israel's destruction. As of now Israel's enemies are fighting among themselves, but the Islamists are still pushing for an end to their peace with Israel. For those who subscribe to a historical interpretation of Revelation, the situation is described in Rev 9:1-11, the fifth trumpet, as a 150-year war between Israel and the Arabs. We can expect not peace, but another 79 years of warfare in the Middle East.

The end will come after Israel is defeated by the Antichrist (Zech. 14:2 and Rev. 11:7). But Jerusalem will rebel against the Antichrist, and he will gather the nations to fight at Armageddon (Megiddo, in Israel) (Rev. 16:16). Then, when all seems lost, Christ will return to the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4 and Acts 1:11, 12) and destroy His enemies (Zech. 14:3 and Rev. 19:19-21). Only then will peace come to the Middle East and the world (Zech. 14:9 and Rev. 20:1-6).

Nevertheless, we must continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. When they have peace, so will we. {eo}

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