Signs of the Times

(Sermon Notes)  By Wray Zehrung  9/19/2015

Matthew 16:1  Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven.

Matthew 16:2  He answered and said to them, “When it is evening you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red’;

Matthew 16:3  and in the morning, ‘It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.

Matthew 24:1  Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

Matthew 24:2  And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

Matthew 24:3  Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

Matthew 24:4  And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you.

Matthew 24:5  For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.

Matthew 24:6  And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. [Luke 21:9 ...the end will not come immediately]

Matthew 24:33  So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!

Matthew 24:34  Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

Matthew 24:7  For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

Matthew 24:8  All these are the beginning of sorrows.

The First Four Seals

Revelation 6:1  Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.”

Revelation 6:2  And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

Revelation 6:3  When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come and see.”

Revelation 6:4  Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.

Revelation 6:5  When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.
Revelation 6:6  And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.”

Revelation 6:7  When He opened the **fourth seal**, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see.”

Revelation 6:8  So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.

These things we see around us. Expect them to continue and grow in intensity where it will be even more obvious to those that are watching and have an eye to see.

Now we come to what has not happened yet, BUT if we are watching the Signs of the Times we see developing:

**Great Tribulation / Fifth Seal**

Revelation 6:9  When He opened the **fifth seal**, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

Revelation 6:10  And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

Revelation 6:11  Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

Matthew 24:9  “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.

**Physical and Spiritual Israel affected**

Luke 21:12  But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake.

This is brought about by the beast power

**Revival of the Holy Roman Empire / The Beast Power**

“Beast” can refer to the system of government or the leader of that system. The Bible shows that it will be a Germanic leader of a United States of Europe. Prophecy reveals that Satan will give power to the beast in what will be the tenth and final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire. This leader will exalt himself above every god and he will gather kings and their armies to fight Christ at His return.

Daniel 2, 7, 8 Revelation 13, 17

Can refer to both the man and the bloc

**Political Power**

Ten leaders will unite with him, giving their national sovereignty over to this ruler for a short time.
Economic Power

Ezekiel 27

Military Power

Revelation 13:4  So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”

Rise of Charismatic Leader

Looking for this type, like Hitler

Religious Power

The Beast ruler will form a partnership with the prophesied False Prophet, the leader of the great false church system known as Babylon the Great (Revelation 17)

False Prophet

Office of the pope

Just before the return of Christ, a religious power will rise under the influence of Satan while at the same time pretending to speak on behalf of Christ. He will perform “great signs”

2 Thessalonians 2:9  The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

2 Thessalonians 2:10  and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

2 Thessalonians 2:11  And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,

2 Thessalonians 2:12  that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

He won’t be the only one:

Matthew 24:11  Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

This work will be against Christ or “Anti-christ” and say that we do not have to keep the commandments of God.

Downfall of Israel and Judah

Israel

Archaeology, history and the Holy Scriptures have long shown that the United States and the British Commonwealth nations belong to the modern descendants of the ancient house of Israel. Prophecy foretells of the imminent downfall of this modern “house of Israel”, unless they turn to God and repent.
Judah

This refers to the modern day country and people of Israel who come from the southern kingdom of ancient Israel. This is not to be confused in the Bible with the Israelites who descend from the northern tribes and have since been scattered across Europe and the rest of the world.

Prophecy Regarding Their Captivity

Isaiah warned of captivity for the houses of Israel and Judah in the past, and those events occurred, so he speaks of a future captivity for the modern houses of Israel and Judah. Note this sobering prophecy given in Isaiah 11:11-12:

**Isaiah 11:11** It shall come to pass in that day that the LORD shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left, From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush, From Elam and Shinar [Babylon], From Hamath and the islands of the sea.

**Isaiah 11:12** He will set up a banner for the nations, And will assemble the outcasts of Israel [which never happened], And gather together the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth.

“In that Day” refers to a time just prior to the return of Jesus Christ.

We are all familiar with how God freed the Jews from Babylon and allowed them to return to the Promised Land. The house of Israel, though, never returned. When Christ comes back to this earth, He will set His hand not only to free Judah the second time, but also modern Israel, as well, from captivity.

Since we are talking about a second time; Israel being gathered which they never were after they dispersed when their captors, the Assyrians, were taken over by the Babylonians; and because Judah is retrieved from the four corners which also wasn’t the case in their first recovery; and because Isaiah puts the prophecy “in that day” – we see that this has to point to a future time.

Notice how Isaiah 11:16 emphasizes where most of the captives will be held: “There will be a highway for the remnant of His people Who will be left from Assyria [modern day Germany which is why they are a focus of our attention now], As it was for Israel In the day that he came up from the land of Egypt.”

**Deuteronomy 28 / Leviticus 26**

God had laid down the choice to these people in the days of Moses, long before they were divided into two nations. Notice it in Leviticus 26:

[God had made a COVENANT with the Israelites involving the Sabbath (Exodus 31:12-17). The Sabbath was a SIGN by which the True GOD would be identified and one by which they were to be identified as HIS PEOPLE.]

**Leviticus 26:1** ‘You shall not make idols for yourselves; neither a carved image nor a sacred pillar shall you rear up for yourselves; nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land, to bow down to it; for I am the LORD your God.

**Leviticus 26:2** You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD.

In offering the following promises for obedience, or punishments for rebellion, in this key prophecy, only the TWO Commandments were mentioned — those against idolatry and Sabbath breaking.

Of course idolatry is putting anything before God and in that sense breaking any of the commandments of God is idolatry.

**Leviticus 26:3** ‘If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them,
"IF you walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them …” God promised abundant production and wealth, national peace, and national dominance that would have led to world dominance (verses 3-13).

But, said God (verses 14-33), if they refused to obey those Commandments, They would suffer sickness and disease, lose all prosperity for considerable amount of time, be invaded, conquered, and driven from their land as slaves to their enemies’ lands.

**Deuteronomy 28:15** “But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:

Produce and the animals of the land – drought (it is God that gives rain in due season)

Sickness and disease – no healing and cures

Pestilence and plagues

Our efforts to produce and be successful will be fruitless

Stranger within our borders – will take our property, subjugate us financially

Finally War and Occupation

We will see these thing proceed the captivity of Israel and Judah

**Why?**

**Deuteronomy 28:45** “Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you.

**Christian Living**

“In the last days perilous times will come” and men will attest to this by the characteristics listed in **2 Timothy 3:2-7** as well as in other places. As they shun the Bible “lawlessness will abound” as prophesied in **Matthew 24:12**.

**Physical Israel**

**2 Timothy 3:1** But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

**2 Timothy 3:2** For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

**2 Timothy 3:3** unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,

**2 Timothy 3:4** traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

**2 Timothy 3:5** having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

**2 Timothy 3:6** For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,

**2 Timothy 3:7** always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.
Spiritual Israel

Matthew 24:12  And because lawlessness will abound, the love [agape] of many will grow cold.

Parallels the world

It won’t all be a walk in the park for the Beast power

King of the North vs King of the South (duality)

Daniel 11:40  And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.

This prophecy had a fulfillment when Ethiopia sent an army against Italian forces in Eritrea killing and imprisoning most of them. 40 years later, Mussolini came through the air, over land and across seas and overran Ethiopia with more than 100,000 soldiers.

Knowing that prophecy can be dual, it necessitates that we vigilantly watch for a King of the South to come on the scene again.

Psalm 83 it Begins in Cooperation

A confederation of now Muslim nations; not necessarily the King of the South

Psalm 83:4  They have said, “Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more.”

Psalm 83:5  For they have consulted together with one consent; They form a confederacy against You:

Psalm 83:6  The tents of Edom [Turkey] and the Ishmaelites [Saudi-Arabia]; Moab [part of Jordan and the western part of Iraq] and the Hagrites [mainly Syria];

Psalm 83:7  Gebal [Lebanon], Ammon [Jordan and the PLO], and Amalek [the PLO]; Philistia [Palestinians from the Gaza Strip] with the inhabitants of Tyre [end-time Babylonian System / Beast power];

Psalm 83:8  Assyria [Germany] also has joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot [Jordan; Moab and Ammon]. Selah

Problems Follow

Daniel 11:40  “At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.

Attack: [KJV: push , gore, butt with the horns]

Daniel 8:4  I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great.

Overwhelm: connotation flood in other versions

Daniel 11:41  He shall also enter the Glorious Land [Jerusalem], and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon. [these were listed in Psalm 83 so there could be a correlation]
Daniel 11:42  He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

Daniel 11:43  He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.

I say this so that we watch how things are coming together, because some of these things will happen when it’s too late for us to do something about it, for instance:

**North and Eastern forces attacked and counterattack**

How will major nations of the East—like Russia, China, India, etc view this?

Daniel 11:44  But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.

This is the direction of these Asiatic countries from Jerusalem.

**Fifth Trumpet / First Woe**

John describing technology 2,000 years ahead of him.

Revelation 9:1  Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.

Revelation 9:2  And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit.

Revelation 17:8  The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Revelation 9:3  Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Revelation 9:4  They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

Revelation 9:5  And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months.

Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man.

Revelation 9:6  In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.

Revelation 9:7  The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men.

Revelation 9:8  They had hair like women’s hair, and their teeth were like lions’ teeth.

Revelation 9:9  And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle.

Revelation 9:10  They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months.

Revelation 9:11  And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

Revelation 9:12  One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.
Sixth Trumpet / Second Woe

This is the retaliation by the 200 million man army against the beast power

**Revelation 9:13** Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

**Revelation 9:14** saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.”

**Revelation 9:15** So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind.

**Revelation 9:16** Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.

**Revelation 9:17** And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone.

**Revelation 9:18** By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths.

**Revelation 9:19** For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm.

**Revelation 9:20** But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.

**Revelation 9:21** And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries

Conclusion

How are we to wait?

**Hebrews 9:28** so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Anticipation and expectation,

**Matthew 24:42** Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

**Matthew 24:43** But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

**Matthew 24:44** Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

How much of the world is waiting for him right at this moment? The Mormons, Hagee, Cahn, etc? This is a sure sign that He is not coming!

**Matthew 24:45** “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?

**Matthew 24:46** Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

End: Our Crown