

Family Night Special Feature Study What in the World is Going On?
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What in the World is Going On Study Schedule			
WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	SUMMARY
ONE	January 14	The Israel Connection	Israel is God's time piece for prophecy. Keep your eyes on this country & watch prophecy unfold before your very eyes.

The Bible plainly states that we cannot know the specific time, day and hour, of the Lord's return. Yet Scripture also makes it clear that as Christians we should not be caught off guard because there will be signs of the times that we will be able to recognize and discern knowing the second coming of Christ is near. Reflect on these passages about the Return of Christ.

Matthew 25:13 – Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

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.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-6 – For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.

Hebrews 10:25 – Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Questions to Consider

- *What do these passages say about the Lord's return?*
 - *Focus Specifically on what it says to Christians*
 - *Focus Specifically on what it says to non-Christians*
- *Why is it so important for us to understand the signs and times around us according to Scripture?*

The Six Categories of Prophecy

It is a fact that there were over 300 Bible prophecies about the first coming of Christ and there are over three times that many with regard to His second coming. With all of these Bible prophecies to read and understand where do you begin and better yet what are the prophecies that are going on right now during our lifetimes.

In order to help us understand prophecy in a more clear manner it helps if we break these prophetic clues into six major categories. These six categories will help us connect signs in our modern times to scriptural references if we know what we are looking for.

Category #1 – The Signs of Nature

Luke 21:11 – There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

This category is often the most ignored category even by Christians because people state that there have always been natural disasters. We must understand the right perspective with this category and remind ourselves that Christ declared in the end of days that the natural disasters would occur like birth pains (Mt. 24:8). This we clearly see in our culture and time.

Category #2 – The Signs of Society

2 Timothy 3:1-4 – But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God...

Turn on the evening news and you see this prophecy coming to reality right before our very eyes. It is a fact that people in the end of days will become more in love with themselves, hunger for money and wealth, and have an insatiable thirst for pleasure.

Category #3 – The Spiritual Signs

2 Timothy 4:3-4 – For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

This category provides us with more signs than any other category, most of them negative signs. Some of these signs will be a rise of false christs, cults, heresy, apostasy, and persecution. Another category that we see coming to fulfillment before our very eyes.

Category #4 – The Signs of World Politics

Matthew 24:6-7 – You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.

This category gives us a glimpse into future events regarding the geopolitical process where we see the rise of the Antichrist and his ultimate world power. The Roman empire is declared to become a super power which occurred after WWII with the formation of the European Union.

Category #5 – The Signs of Technology

Luke 21:26 – Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

This category is one that I find most interesting because of my love for science and technology yet it is also very frightening to see what technology has developed into. This category gives rise to the

development of nuclear weapons which could destroy entire countries fulfilling the great prophecy in which 1/3 of the earth will be burned and 1/2 of humanity will be killed (Rev. 6-8).

Category #6 – The Signs of Israel

Zechariah 12:3 – On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves.

We find ourselves come to the last category which we focus the bulk of our time upon. This category is truly the most important of all the signs that we see in our days and they relate so much to us.

Understanding the Role of Israel in Prophecy

If we truly want to bring clarity to our hearts and minds and understand Bible prophecy then we must begin with casting our attention on the prophecies that surround the nation of Israel. These prophecies are crucial to recognizing the signs of the Lord's return.

The Nation of Israel is God's Timepiece for Prophecy

Reflect on this statement and respond. **Why would this be an accurate statement?** If we truly want to understand if Bible prophecy is being fulfilled in our modern times then all eyes must be focused on the nation of Israel.



One hundred years ago there was not a single shred of evidence that Bible prophecy was being fulfilled in our lifetime yet that all began to change on November 2, 1917. It was this date that the **Balfour Declaration** was issued by the British government after WWI. The purpose of this declaration was to create a homeland for the Jewish people within the territory of Palestine. The land that would come to be known as the nation of Israel was then created for the Jewish people.

The land that was dedicated to the Jewish people would eventually give rise to the first and most prominent of Biblical prophecies to be fulfilled in our lifetime. It would also signal a snowball effect of numerous Bible prophecy that would be fulfilled within the next 60 years after the birth of Israel as a nation.

Many people would not consider the nation of Israel to be that important of a country and they most certainly would not have even been too concerned with it becoming a nation on May, 14, 1948. Yet for Christians just as much as Jews this was a monumental day in history and the signal of the beginning of the end. When the nation of Israel declared their independence as a nation and the birth of their country, it was more important than most people would have ever realized in the world.

The First Sign – Israel Becomes a Nation

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JERUSALEM SUNDAY, MAY 14, 1948

STATE OF ISRAEL IS BORN

The first independent Jewish State in 19 centuries was born in Tel Aviv as the British Mandate over Palestine came to an end at midnight on Friday, and it was immediately subjected to the test of fire. As "Molotov's Yarn" (State of Israel) was proclaimed, the battle for Jerusalem raged, with most of the city falling to the Jews. At the same time, President Truman announced that the United States would accord recognition to the new State. A few hours later, Palestine was invaded by Moslem armies from the south, east and north, and Tel Aviv was riddled from the air. On Friday the United Nations Special Assembly adjourned after adopting a resolution to appoint a mediator but without taking any action on the Partition Resolution of November 29.

Yesterday the battle for the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv road was still under way, and two Arab villages were taken. In the north, Acre town was captured, and the Jewish Army consolidated its positions in Western Galilee.

Most Crowded Hours in Palestine's History
Between Thursday night and this morning Palestine went through what by all standards must be among the most crowded hours in its history.

For the Jewish population there was the anguish over the fate of the few hundred Hagdalah men and women in the Mitzpote line of settlements near Hebron. Their surrender to a fully equipped superior foreign force desperately in need of a victory was a foregone conclusion. What could not be known with no communication since Thursday morning was whether and to what extent the Red Cross and the Truce Comands would secure civilized conditions for prisoners and wounded, and proper respect for the dead. Doubtful on some of these anxious questions have now been received.

On Friday afternoon, from Tel Aviv Jewish settlements in Acre, came the reported announcement of the Jewish State, and its official naming as such, "Molotov's Yarn" - State of Israel, by member states of the UN.

In the afternoon, Jerusalem

JEWIS TAKE OVER SECURITY ZONES
The battle for Jerusalem, which began when the British forces withdrew on Friday morning, continued all day Friday and yesterday. The trouble of maintaining fire and explosives of mortar shells were still being heard in the early hours of this morning.

Explosions were heard in the night when the Arab representatives refused to accept the UN plan.

On Friday morning, Jewish forces entered the Russian Compound and zone of the UN, and the buildings remained from Jews last year.

This operation was almost completed, but beyond the

Egyptian Air Force Spitfires Bomb Tel Aviv; One Shot Down
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U.S. RECOGNIZES JEWISH STATE
WASHINGTON, Sunday. -The minutes about the termination of the British Mandate on Friday, the White House released a formal statement by President Truman that the U.S. Government intended to recognize the Provisional Jewish State.

The U.S. is also considering lifting the same embargo but it is not known whether it will apply only to the entire Middle East, or the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Jewish Provisional Government.

The White House press secretary, Mr. Charles Ross, said on Sunday that the reaction so far to the recognition had been

Proclamation by Head Of Government
The creation of "Molotov Yarn", the State of Israel, was proclaimed as midnight on Friday by Mr. David Ben Gurion, until then Chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive and now head of the State's Provisional Council of Government.

The first act of the Council of Government, as announced by the head, was to abolish all institutions of the British Mandate, particularly the Palestine Police, and to transfer all powers and responsibilities to the new State.

In the declaration of independence, Mr. Ben Gurion called on the Arabs of Palestine to reject peace, asserting that they had no right to full representation in all governmental organs of the State.

Mr. Ben Gurion predicted the declaration with a review of the history of the Jewish people and the Land of Israel and of their efforts to restore which began



David Ben-Gurion, Prime Minister

The prophecy of Isaiah was written 740 years before the birth of Christ and it signaled the first and most prominent of fulfilled prophecies of our time, the birth of the nation of Israel. Israel just celebrated her 60th anniversary and in this short amount of time this nation has grown to over 7 million people and has become a true political powerhouse among the world nations.

Isaiah 11:11-12 – In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the sea. He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.

Isaiah 66:7-8 – Before she goes into labor, she gives birth; before the pains come upon her, she delivers a son. Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children.

Questions to Consider

- What do we see in these verses about God's promise for the nation of Israel and the world?
- Why does God use the nation of Israel as His timepiece for prophecy?

The Covenant of Abraham

We turn on the news and we see more about the nation of Israel than any other country. We must wonder why this small little nation, no bigger than the state of Rhode Island is so important to the world and most importantly to God? The answer to this question lies in the covenant that God made with Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-3 – The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

What does God promise Abraham in this passage of Scripture? How does that involve the nation of Israel?

God made several promises to Abraham in this one statement and we see through the genealogy that this promise is also true for the nation of Israel, the descendants of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob and Esau. Jacob would later become known as Israel from which the twelve tribes of Israel would come from as we look at his twelve sons. Now look at these promises made to Abraham and his descendants.

Four Promises from God

Promise #1 – God Will Bless Abraham

Deuteronomy 7:6 – For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

Promise #2 – God Will Make Abraham and His Descendants into a Great Nation

Genesis 17:7-8 – I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God."

Promise #3 – God Will Make Abraham a Blessing to Many

Isaiah 66:10 – "Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her."

Promise #4 – God Will Bless those who Bless Israel and Curse those who Curse Her

- *What do these promises mean for the nation of Israel today? Do they still apply? Why or why not?*

The final comment that we need to make with regard to the nation of Israel during this study comes to us as we reflect upon the words quoted in Ezekiel 36:24-28. Read these words carefully and respond to the questions that follow.

Ezekiel 36:24-28 – "For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God.

Question to Consider

- *What does the Lord promise in this text with regard to the nation of Israel?*
- *What does this tell us about what lies ahead for the future of this country?*

Conclusion

As we draw out time to an end for this study, we must ask ourselves a few compelling questions about this very topic. As we ask these questions we must be ready to respond with willing and faithful hearts to God's prompting.

- *If the end times are approaching then, what does the knowledge of the signs and times around us compel you to do?*
- *What are the next steps for you after going through this study?*

Appendix A

50 Bible Prophecies to Look for Today	
1) Increasing instability of nature. (Matthew 24:7 & Luke 21:11)	26) Increasing pestilence. (Luke 21:11)
2) Increasing lawlessness and violence. (Matthew 24:12)	27) Computer technology. (Revelation 13:7)
3) Increasing immorality. (Matthew 24:37)	28) Television. (Revelation 11:8-9)
4) Increasing materialism. (2 Timothy 3:2)	29) Satellite technology. (Revelation 11:8-9)
5) Increasing Hedonism. (2 Timothy 3:4)	30) Virtual reality. (Revelation 13:14-15)
6) Increasing influence of Humanism. (2 Timothy 3:2)	31) Unification of Europe. (Daniel 2 and 7)
7) Depraved entertainment. (2 Timothy 3:4)	32) Far Eastern military powers. (Revelation 9:16 & 16:12)
8) Calling evil good and good evil. (2 Timothy 3:3 & Isaiah 5:20)	33) Movement toward world government. (Daniel 7:23-26)
9) Increasing use of drugs. (2 Timothy 3:3)	34) Regathering of the Jews. (Isaiah 11:10-12)
10) Increasing blasphemy. (2 Timothy 3:2)	35) Re-establishment of Israel. (Isaiah 66:7-8)
11) Increasing paganism. (2 Timothy 3:1-4)	36) Reclamation of the land of Israel. (Ezekiel 36:34-35)
12) Increasing despair. (2 Timothy 3:1)	37) Revival of Biblical Hebrew. (Zephaniah 3:6)
13) Signs in the heavens. (Luke 21:11, 25)	38) Re-occupation of Jerusalem. (Luke 21:24)
14) Increasing knowledge. (Daniel 12:4)	39) Resurgence of the Israeli military. (Zechariah 12:6)
15) Increasing travel. (Daniel 12:4)	40) Re-focusing of world politics on Israel. (Zechariah 12:3)
16) The explosion of cults. (Matthew 24:11)	41) Russian threat to Israel. (Ezekiel 38 and 39)
17) The proliferation of false	42) Arab threat to Israel.

christs. (Matthew 24:5)	(Ezekiel 35 and 36)
18) Increasing apostasy in the Church. (2 Timothy 4:3-5)	43) Denial of the Second Coming. (2 Peter 3:3-4)
19) Increasing attacks on Jesus. (Romans 1:18-19)	44) Denial of creation by God. (Romans 1:18-22)
20) Increasing attacks on the Bible. (Romans 1:18-19)	45) Outpouring of the Holy Spirit. (Joel 2:28-29)
21) Increasing persecution of Christians. (Matthew 24:9)	46) Translation of the Bible into many languages. (Matthew 24:14)
22) Increasing occultism. (1 Timothy 4:1)	47) Preaching of the Gospel worldwide. (Matthew 24:14)
23) Wars and rumors of wars. (Matthew 24:6)	48) The revival of Messianic Judaism. (Romans 9:27)
24) Weapons of mass destruction. (Luke 21:26)	49) The revival of Davidic praise worship. (Amos 9:11)
25) Increasing famine. (Luke 21:11)	50) The understanding of Bible prophecy. (Daniel 12:8-9)

