

Remnant Life Church
July 19, 2015
The Signs of the Times
Matthew 16:1-4

- The phrase “sign of the times” is a familiar one
 - Petula Clark – 1966 – “It’s a sign of the times that your love for me is getting so much stronger”
 - Everyone texting is a “sign of the times” because of the change of technology
 - In other words the sign of the times always point to or coincides with change in our world
 - There are signs are foretelling of the coming of Jesus
 - (Rom 8:22-23) Paul writes of the groaning of creation longing for the return of Jesus
 - It will be a physical return
 - Not the third time as some claim that the Holy Spirit of Pentecost was Jesus
 - Jesus also referenced the sign of the times
 - In Matthew 16 Jesus is dealing with the Pharisees and Sadducees
 - He says that their priorities and their focus is all wrong (again!)
 - They know when a storm is coming but not the savior of the world
 - He says that only an adulterous generation (sinful or without God) would need a miraculous sign
 - + They were forsaking faith for the natural
 - + They would only know God if they could confirm it themselves
 - Jesus told them that the only sign they would get would be the sign of Jonah
 - + A reference to his three days in the earth just like Jonah’s three days in the fish (Matt 12:40)
 - + Today it is much easier for people to interpret weather than for them to interpret the spiritual signs that are coming up all around us – even in the church
 - Four spiritual signs that have occurred that are pointing us to the coming of Jesus:
1. The Formation and Regathering of Israel
 - Nebuchadnezzar II captured and destroyed Jerusalem in 586 BC taking the people into exile
 - In 70 BC the Roman General Titus captured Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple
 - The people scattered and for over 2000 years they were all around the globe with no home of their own
 - In 1948 the UN declared Israel a nation unto itself free from the British/Palestinian rule it had been under
 - + From that time on Israeli Jews have been returning to their homeland even though there continues to be dispute over the land itself
 - The Bible told us that this would happen:
 - The prophet Amos 9:14-15 - ...and I will bring my people Israel back from exile. They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine;

they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them," says the LORD your God

- Then Jesus said, *"Truly I tell you, this generation (ethnos) will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened."* (Luke 21:32)
 - + Jesus as not speaking of a period of time (generation) but a people (ethnos) who would survive though until the end.
- The survival of the Jews is a miracle of history and time
 - + Many people groups have been exterminated down through the centuries
 - + Know any Moabites? Perrizites? Edomites, Ammonites or Philistines?
 - + We read about them all in the Bible and throughout history but they are gone now
 - + But not the chosen people of God even though nations and leaders have tried to exterminate them for thousands of years
 - + About the size of New Jersey we hear about them in the news almost every day – why?
 - + **Duet 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.*

2. The Spread of Militant Islam

- This is not a call for hatred but a need to be aware of those who desire war and the spread of terror
 - Regardless of what we are told of their political beliefs or goals all Islamic nations share one thing in common: their hatred of Israel
 - + Our president just announced that an agreement has been put in place with Iran regarding nuclear arms
 - + part of the agreement is the lifting of economic sanctions which will allow more freedom of trade
 - Mahmoud Ah-mah-din-ashad – former president of Iran in 2005 said, "Israel is a disgraceful blot that should be wiped off the face of the earth."
 - The Bible says that all nations will attack Israel in the end times
 - + **Ezek 38:15-16** - *You will come from your place in the far north, you and many nations with you, all of them riding on horses, a great horde, a mighty army. You will advance against my people Israel like a cloud that covers the land. In days to come, Gog, I will bring you against my land, so that the nations may know me when I am proved holy through you before their eyes.*
 - + John writes of his vision in **Rev 9:16** - *The number of the mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand. I heard their number.*
 - + That total number is 200 million
 - + Written at a time when the entire population of the world was 180 million
 - Make no mistake Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world
 - + There are more mosques than churches in Britain
 - + Four times as many Muslims pray on Friday than Christians who go to church on Sunday
 - + There are now estimated to be well over 3 million Muslims living in America
 - = That is more than there are Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Assemblies of God

= The concern should not just be the number but the plan to quietly institute the Muslim culture and sharia laws into American life

= Their goal is to create a Muslim majority in every phase of our lives from politics, to education, to religion, to our day-to-day freedom

- Shamim Siddiqi is an author committed to the spread of Islam and considered to be a moderate Muslim who has written a book entitled “The Need to Convert Americans to Islam”
- “I see Wahaj implementation of the sharia in the United States approaching fast. I have a vision in America, Muslims owning property all over, Muslim businesses, factories, halal meat, supermarkets, all these buildings owned by Muslims. Can you see the vision? Can you see the Newark International Airport and a John Kennedy Airport and LaGuardia having Muslim fleets of planes, Muslim pilots? Can you see our trucks rolling down the highways, Muslim names. Can you imagine walking down the streets of Teaneck, [New Jersey]: three Muslim high schools, five Muslim junior-high schools, fifteen public schools? Can you see the vision, can you see young women walking down the street of Newark, New Jersey, with long flowing hijab and long dresses? Can you see the vision of an area of no crime, controlled by the Muslims?”
- This is not a time to be afraid; bury your head in the sand; or become violent
- It is the responsibility of every Christian to speak the truth in love – the truth of God’s Word

3. The Present and Coming Structure of a Global Government

- The Bible speaks of the Antichrist who will have authority over all the world; it also speaks of the 10 horns who are the kings who will give full control over to him (Rev. 13:7; 17:13)
 - Technology today makes the one-world global government and economy a very real possibility
 - Rev 13 says that everyone will need a mark on their hand or forehead to buy and sell goods – are we that far away from that now?
 - Technology is not of the devil but the advancements we have made are making Rev 13 now possible
 - American Airlines makes the statement on their flights – “Thank you for flying AA, a member of the one-world alliance”

4. The Gospel is Being Preached All Over the World

- Jesus said, “*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*” (Matt 24:14)
 - Again, nations is not about boundaries, but every people-group (ethnos) with unique languages and cultures; the same word used to describe the people of Israel; God’s people
 - So let me give you some hope and encouragement that also point to the coming of Jesus (James C. Denison, Ph.D., is a former mega-church pastor and now a subject matter expert on cultural and contemporary issues based in Dallas, Tx)
 - + Every day 32,000 people will accept Christ in Africa

- + Every day 25,000 people will accept Christ in China
- + Every day 17,000 people will accept Christ in Latin America
- + Every day (only) 6,000 people are coming to Christ in America and Europe
- What is happening in the Muslim community
 - + More are coming to know Jesus now than any time in history
 - + They are reporting that every day 16,000 Muslim's convert and 6 million a year are converting
 - + May be inflated numbers but there is no question that there is concern
- Missions organizations tell us that there are approximately 6000 known ethno-linguistic groups in the world
 - Jesus wants every one of these to have heard His Gospel
 - As they do it is one of the most powerful sign of the times that Jesus is coming soon
- What is our posture today?
 - Not our physical posture but our spiritual one
 - Are we, like the Pharisees, only content with what we can see and understand or do we have the faith to believe and anticipate that Jesus will be coming soon?
 - Several weeks ago I preached that our time is not our own
 - We don't know how much we have, how much those in our lives have, or how much we have as a church until Jesus returns
 - What are you doing with that time?