

“Signs of the Time”

Sermon Notes

- **Many failed to read the signs of Christ's first coming, and woe to us if we fail to read the signs of his second coming (vv.54-56)**

Twelve Literal Fulfillments of Old Testament Messianic Prophecy:

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| 1. Seed of Abraham | Genesis 12:3; Matthew 1:1; Galatians 3:8, 16 |
| 2. Born of a Virgin | Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22-23 |
| 3. Born in Bethlehem | Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:3-6 |
| 4. Massacre of Infants | Jeremiah 31:5; Matthew 2:17-18 |
| 5. Anointed by the Spirit | Isaiah 61:1-2a; Luke 4:17-21 |
| 6. Miraculous Works | Isaiah 29:18; Matthew 11:2-6 |
| 7. Betrayal by a Friend | Psalms 41:9; John 13:18-19 |
| 8. Hands & Feet Pierced | Psalms 22:16; John 19:23 |
| 9. No Broken Bones | Exodus 12:46; John 19:36 |
| 10. Garments Divided | Psalms 22:18; John 19:23-24 |
| 11. Buried with the Rich | Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60 |
| 12. Resurrection | Psalms 16:8-10; Acts 2:24-28 |

The Literal Fulfillment of Old Testament Prophecy Concerning the Return of the Jewish People in Unbelief to Their Land:

- *Ezekiel 36:22-24
- *Ezekiel 37:1-14; 38:25-29
- *Isaiah 11:11-12
- *Zephaniah 2:1-2

- *What was the expectation of this through church history*
- *What does this mean for us in our day? (Luke 12:40)*

MEFC Community Group Study Questions
For the Week of April 15th – 21st

Getting Started

1. Article 4 of the EFCA Statement of Faith explicitly refers to Jesus as “Israel's promised Messiah”. This is a precious truth too frequently overlooked in the 21st century church. Why do we make this clear connection (i.e. the Jewishness of Jesus) a part of our creed in the EFCA?

Digging Deeper

2. As early as the second century, there have been those in the church who have held to a *replacement* theology to describe the relationship between Israel and the church (also known as “supercessionism”, “inclusion” or “fulfillment” theology). Though it's been described in different ways, the basic idea is the church *replaces* or supersedes ethnic Israel as the people of God. Is this an issue you've thought much about? What do you think? Does the church replace Israel as the people of God? Why or why not?

Open Your Bible to Romans 11:1-36...

3. In Romans 9-11, Paul is dealing with what appears to be a significant problem...though Jesus is indeed Israel's promised Messiah (see Romans 1:3; 9:4-5) he has been almost universally rejected by the Jewish people (Romans 10:17-21). If Israel has rejected their Messiah, has God rejected them? How does Paul answer this question in Romans 11:1-6?

4. So the Bible clearly teaches that “there is a remnant, chosen by grace” among ethnic Israel (Romans 11:5). But what about in the future (whether from Paul's 1st century perspective or ours in the 21st)? Does God have any long-term designs on the Jewish people for salvation? How does Paul answer this question in Romans 11:11-16?

5. Stunningly, Israel's failure to embrace Jesus as their Messiah now becomes an opportunity for Gentiles (even to this day) to lay hold of him by grace through faith (Romans 11:12). So, how ought we (assuming most all of us are non-Jewish, Gentiles) to conceive of our position with reference to Jews? What sort of temptation does Paul describe for us in Romans 11:17-21?

6. Let's do some I.D. work on this horticultural portrait Paul paints in Romans 11:17-21. **1st** – who is the “nourishing root of the olive tree” (Romans 11:17)? If you're not quite sure, compare this with the words of our Lord in John 15:1-8. **2nd** – who are the “branches” (mentioned four times in Romans 11:17-21)? Again, compare this with Christ's language to his (Jewish – *hint, hint!*) disciples in John 15:1-8. **3rd** – who is the “wild olive shoot” (see Romans 11:13, 17-22).

Assuming (again) that most of us working this study are not believing *Jews* but rather believing *Gentiles*, how does your role in this picture make you feel? Perhaps you've never considered yourself an anti-Semite, but have you ever fallen into the temptation Paul describes in Romans 11:19-19? If we ever begin to develop arrogance toward the Jewish people, what would the Apostle Paul want to remind us of according to Romans 11:20-22?

7. Finally, far from anything remotely resembling a *replacement* theology here in Romans 11, what we find is rather a *restoration* theology. Take a look at Romans 11:23-32. Not only do these verses teach a future massive conversion of the Jewish people (i.e. repentance and faith in their Messiah) but other New Testament texts explicitly speak of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. Take some time to hunt down Matthew 19:28; Luke 13:35; 21:24 and Acts 1:6-8 and 3:21. Discuss your findings together.

What do you think? Has God abandoned his covenant with Israel? We might answer that question with another: *Have the sun, moon, stars and sea abandoned their fixed order (Jeremiah 31:35-36)?* Why is it good news for Gentile Christians that God has not replaced Israel with the church (Romans 11:21)?