

Prophecy in Perspective

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An Email Newsletter

Our Times - *Prophecy in current events*

Does Israel Have a Chance Against Iran?

Jesus told His disciples that there would come a time when there would be many wars. Jesus gave a clear warning that this would be the case in the latter days. He did not give us this information for us to simply know it. I believe He told us these details of the future so that we could understand the times. And, by understanding the times, we would better know the times are drawing near for Jesus' return to rapture His Church. He also gave these warnings for the Jews and the world to understand, if they would simply read and listen to the prophetic facts from the Bible, that the Great Tribulation of global destruction and turmoil is coming. Jesus clearly said:

"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:3-8).



Notice Jesus' wonderful and comforting encouragement, "***see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass.***" Yet we see many things happening today that tell us that the Lord's return is rapidly nearing. While this is great news, it also means much bad news because of the prediction by our Lord that troubles will rapidly increase as the coming of the Lord draws near.

It looks very much like Israel is left with no alternative to the existential threat of Iran than to take some type of military action to destroy the Iranian nuclear facilities on their own. Many of the "experts" doubt that Israel can carry out such a mission. But when we remember the many battles that Israel has fought in Old Testament times, as well as in more recent times, we can be sure of three things: **First**, the Almighty God of Israel will arise and scatter His enemies (Psalms 68:1-2). **Second**, the Lord supernaturally gives battle-field wisdom to Israel to show them how to overcome their enemies in battle. Israel's defeat of Jericho is one example of this (Joshua 10:30). **Third**, the Lord also knows how to strike fear and confusion in the ranks of Israel's enemies so as to ensure victory (1 Chronicles 14:14-16).

Some believe Israel will be attacked by Syria even before Iran does. There is a prediction in Isaiah 17 that foretells the destruction of Damascus. In verse 1 the statement is clear: ***"Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap."*** The city of Damascus has been in continuous existence since ancient times. It would be reasonable to assume that Syria's president Assad might try to attack Israel before he is removed from power. Hafez El Assad is a strong ally of Iran's Shiite leadership. He is supportive of arming Hamas in the Gaza to harass Israel with rockets, and of Hezbollah in Lebanon, one of Israel's



enemies to the North. Assad thinks nothing of killing his own people to maintain his power. It would not be surprising if, as a diversionary measure, he attacks Israel. Again, according to the Bible, Damascus, the capital city of Syria will be completely destroyed. This kind of sudden and thorough destruction might suggest Israel's use of a nuclear missile to stop such an existential threat as Syria would certainly be in such a scenario. Obtaining dominance of Syrian air space and possibly air bases from which to launch sorties into Iran would be one way Israel could carry out its efforts at protecting itself from Iran which has clearly stated their intentions to destroy Israel.

Recent Tornado Outbreak: Related to U. S. Stand on Israel?

Additionally, I believe the Lord is giving clear warnings that He is displeased with nations that take an adversarial position against Israel. I further believe that any nation that is compromising in their support of Israel, as the United States has been, especially under the present Obama Administration, will experience dire consequences.

We have all been amazed and shocked recently at the tornados, and extreme weather conditions that the U.S. has experienced. These have come at the same time that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu was to meet with President Obama. I know that unbelievers and skeptics will mock the connection that is being made here. Yet, many lives have been lost, and entire towns wrecked, and the timing cannot be denied. Liberal commentators have been quick to condemn God for this destruction. But God is not to blame. Man's pride, and rejection of the clear Word of God, is to blame.

God has clearly shown us that there are consequences to distancing ourselves from a solid stand with Israel in the face of their being threatened with total destruction by their enemies. We saw similar weather activity last year at just the time when President Obama declared that Israel should return to her 1967 borders. Prime Minister Netanyahu met with the President at that time. The reception of Israel's P. M. on the part of our President was far less than warm. Recently these new outbreaks of tornados in Tennessee, Alabama and elsewhere were timed to demonstrate that God's hedge of protection is literally being pushed away by the prideful actions of our Government leadership toward Israel. We clearly see that great winds can be an indication of Satanic activity, as in the case of Job 1:18-19. There we read:

"While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" (NKJV)

In previous issues of *Prophecy in Perspective*, I have documented the rise of earthquake and weather activity and pinpointed the significance of both the timing and the locations of these occurrences. We have seen over and over again, as we can see now, that God's protection is being removed either by God sovereignly allowing

it, as in the case of Job, or by man, by rebellion, pushing away God's protection to depend upon his own pride. Can this explain the loss of the innocent lives of families including children? Yes. Often, in the Bible we see how the devil can, not only by activating natural upheavals of winds and earthquakes, but also by moving upon men to do evil.

An example of this was when many innocent children died in Bethlehem at the order of Herod who sought to slay the Christ child. Innocent people do suffer because of the unrighteous decisions of others. The Bible is filled with warnings about this, especially with regards to a nation's treatment of Israel (Genesis 12; Psalm 2). We live in a country that is presently killing more than 4,000 of our own children today through the infanticide of abortion, and partial-birth abortion. We are certainly in need of revival in our churches. We need to pray for our President and all government leaders that God will give them wisdom. Our compromising in our stand with Israel is having great consequences upon our land, and upon the world, even if these consequences are unknown, or unintended by those in leadership. So we in the Church need to be faithful to pray for them. As well as to pray for the upcoming presidential elections, that God will lead us in our vote. Our nation is being warned. Will we listen? So far, as a nation, we are not. But God did promise that:

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

The Church Today - Doctrine and Prophecy Today

Franklin Graham's Wise Assessment

In an interview with MSNBC's "Morning Joe," an article from Newsmax reports, "The Rev. Franklin Graham says President Barack Obama has 'given Islam a pass.' Including ignoring atrocities against Christians in the Muslim world--so much so that the evangelist says he cannot 'categorically' say Obama is not a Muslim." I believe Rev. Graham is relating what many in the fundamental-evangelical community have been voicing for a long time.

Continuing the interview, Graham continued: "Under Islamic law, under Shariah law, Islam sees him as a son of Islam, because his father was a Muslim, his grandfather was a Muslim, his great grandfather was a Muslim...So under Islamic law the Muslim world sees President Obama as a Muslim, as a son of Islam. That's just the way it works. That's the way they see him."



Then asked whether he believes Obama is "categorically not a Muslim," Graham said, "I can't say categorically because Islam has gotten a free pass under Obama."

Well said, Franklin Graham!

I believe Jesus' words apply well here as in any situation where we wonder what someone really believes: ***"Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16).***

How Bible Prophecy Influences Us

The Bible has many practical way that the Study of prophecy should influence us to walk in a way that is consistent with our "Blessed Hope" of the coming of the Lord for us.

First, prophecy encourages us to Stand for truth: Daniel 31:32 says, "But the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits." Ephesians 6:14 says, "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth!" And 2 Timothy 2:3 says, "you therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

Second, prophecy encourages us to Speak the truth: Daniel 31:33 says, "And those of the people who understand shall instruct many." 2 Timothy 2:1 says, "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

Third, prophecy encourages us to Serve according to truth: Prophecy is to *motivate* and *convict* us to *serve* the Lord Jesus Christ. Prophecy is not given for us simply to know information but to convict us and to better equip us to serve the Lord in practical ways. Let me suggest three practical ways prophecy encourages us to serve: Prophecy helps us in our conviction in the faith: 1 John 2:20 says, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." Then also, prophecy helps us in our consecration of faith: 2 Peter 3:17-18, "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen." And, finally, prophecy helps us in our continuation in the faith: Hebrews 10:35-39, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man drawback, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

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(Note: If you would like to interact with Dr. Downing concerning this newsletter, views, etc. you can "blog" with him at prophecyinperspective.com. If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter at no charge, please send your email address to: sgdowning@bellsouth.net. Also, you can purchase his latest book, "Good News From a Far Country", a study in the book of Daniel [515] by contacting him.)