

Prophecy in Perspective

Dr. Scott Gregory Downing
An Email Newsletter

Our Times - *Prophecy in current events*

Are You Watching For the Lord?

The United States is experiencing the worst drought in 70 years. Our Spiritual state has never been more lackadaisical and confused. Our political leadership from the President down, through rejection of the Word of God, have further cast off our country like a ship from safe harbor into dangerous waters where we are likely to be run aground, much like the fate of the *Costa Concordia*. World events should lead us, more than ever to get familiar with the clear pronouncements of Bible prophecy concerning the last days. What did the Lord say about times like these? In Matthew 24, He taught His disciples the early signs of the latter days which would signal His return.



"For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." (5)

False Christs: Today it is nearly impossible to find a place where cults do not have an increasingly prominent place in the public eye. We hear of celebrities and reality show participants who are Buddhists, Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons. We are also witnessing a great sympathy arising for so called "evangelical" Christians who are taking one of three unscriptural courses regarding the homosexual issue: They are either promoting these relationships as normal and legitimate, or second they express an unhelpful and compromising sympathy which actually avoids renouncing it as sin, or, they are themselves "coming out of the closet." All of these trends should be regarded by Bible believing Christians as among the "signs of the times," and as clear indicators of His soon and sudden return for His church.

"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." (6-8)

Wars and rumors of wars: There is an alarming rise of world famines, pestilence and earthquakes, along with phenomenal weather events in the United States as of late. Further, we all should be very focused upon the events currently unfolding in and around Syria. The war there is growing and does not show any signs of letting up soon. It has been believed for a long time that Iraq used Syria to deposit their weapons of mass destruction years ago. They now have incredible amounts of many types of the most horrible chemical weapons imaginable. We have also known that the leaders of Iran would like nothing more than to get into a war with Israel.

Israel has warned that if these chemical weapons get into the hands of the terrorists and launched against Israel, then Israel might retaliate, or even preempt such an attack. Israel has and never will take the "nuclear option" off the table. Isaiah 17:1 predicts that Damascus, the oldest city in the world and the capital of Syria, will be suddenly destroyed. Isaiah predicts this in 17:1 of his book: ***"The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap."*** I believe, along with many other students of prophecy, that this event will probably happen before the rapture. Key to understanding this timing is found in the prophecy of Ezekiel 38. This predicts the great attack of nations against Israel which precedes Armageddon and which probably causes the beginning of Daniel's 70th week. The nation of Syria is not mentioned among the many enemies that will attack Israel in this battle, so it may be assumed that Damascus will be destroyed before this battle takes place.

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another... And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." (9-10,12)

Rise of Violence: Many may ask: "What is happening when someone goes into a theater and just shoots as many people as he can?" Is there any prophetic significance? I believe there is a great deal of importance in these events and occurrences as related to Bible prophecy. The Bible is very clear that as the time of the coming of the Lord approaches, things will **not** get better and better. We will **not** see a general improvement of society, but, instead a general and increasingly violent moral and spiritual decent into the realm of darkness



and depravity. The growing consensus in the latter day world is that things would be much better if those Bible believing Christians weren't around to hinder our global emancipation from the intolerance of out-dated moral restraints. With Iran's involvement in a recent bombing of an Israeli bus in Bulgaria, the tensions continue to heighten toward war. The Jerusalem Post stated that "Netanyahu blames Iran for the bombing near Burgas airport. He vows to act "forcefully" against Tehran-backed terror on targets abroad." ("The Jerusalem Post," Friday, July 27, 2012)

Habakkuk, records God's perspective on the increase of evil which He witnesses everyday: ***"Why do You make me see iniquity, And cause me to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; Strife exists and contention arises." (Habakkuk 1:3, NASB)*** When Chick-Fil-A, for example, speaks out in support of traditional, biblically defined marriage, all of the powers of ***"this present darkness," (Ephesians 6:12)*** rise up to stop it. We have seen how the mayors of Boston and San Francisco have threatened to keep Chick-Fil-A from building more restaurants in their cities because of their stand on true marriage as taught in the Bible. We need to stand with them and many others in the world today who are being bold for the faith. Isaiah 59:15 speaks to our times as well as the evil of his own day when he writes how those who will stand for God's truth will be victimized: ***"Yes, truth is gone, and anyone who renounces evil is attacked. The LORD looked and was displeased to find there was no justice." (NLT)*** Paul stated how the latter days would bring growing pre-occupation with the interests of self. He writes these ominous words that fit our days exactly:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without

natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Timothy 3:1-4).

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (42)

Watch therefore: We are to expect the kinds of random acts of violence we are seeing today, to a great extent, because of the denial of man being created in the image of God, which is being taught to millions of children in this country and has been taught for almost a century. Most of Our political leaders barely mention God at all. Abortion mills continue to kill the unborn at a rate of over 4,500 per day in the US alone. Preachers are not even mentioning the coming of the Lord because they are so focused on the success of their ministries that they are missing the more important and urgent teachings from the Word of God about sin, repentance, holiness, and the reality of spiritual warfare in the world today.

Along with the predictions of the increase of violence in the latter days are the clear statements in the Bible that explain why it is happening. How can a young man walk into a theater and randomly shoot to kill people he does not even know? Over a long period of time, he and people like him have been lied to by evil spirits. This explanation does not fit well with our humanistic psycho analytical mind set. While there are mental diseases that can help to induce such behavior as this, we cannot overlook the clear teaching of the Bible which warns us: ***"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils"(1Timothy 4:1).***

Never forget that the enemy of our souls, Satan, hates mankind and seeks his complete destruction. Evil powers *can*, and I believe *are*, speaking to the minds of those in rebellion against God. These spirits are able to convince some that the right course of action is to commit immorality, steal, hurt, even kill. While these horrible works of the flesh result from personal choices, you can be sure that they are constantly influenced and instigated by the devil himself. 1 John 3:8 says: ***"the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil."***

Pastors are not doing their congregations any favors by oversimplifying or dismissing the threat that demonic powers have against Christians and churches, as well as the lost. Our victory depends greatly on our right understanding of the menacing and malevolent nature of these highly organized and purposeful forces of darkness. The Bible instructs the wise believer to war against these powers and to stand firm against the advancement of their wicked purposes (Ephesians 6:10-18). The Scripture promise that the devil will be overthrown is a comfort to us today who walk in the present authority of the crucified, and resurrected Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:18). Isaiah said in 27:1 of his book: ***"In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."***



Today, in these latter days, watch for the coming of the Lord, by a holy walk that is completely yielded to the Lord. We, as believers need to repent and renounce the devil and his works by repenting of, and renouncing sin. We need to cleans our lives from the corruption of the flesh by practicing and believing the things that

God has taught us in His Word. This means in a practical sense that we should fill our minds with the Word of God. We, with our families, should seek out and sit under sound Bible teaching, and seek to worship the Lord in Spirit and truth (John 4:24).

Personally, you need to take stands for God and His truth in the way that you vote, how you behave at work, with your family and among your friends. Let the world know where you stand! Even give a testimony of support for other believers who are taking a stand, such as Chick-Fil-A, by eating at their restaurants, and supporting their businesses. As you watch for the coming of the Lord, be a shining light in the growing darkness, with a joyful and loving testimony that will always win out in a rebellious world, and which the Lord will use to draw the lost to Himself.

Prophecy in Perspective, Copyright, vol. no. 32 - July 28, 2012

*(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 book, "Good News From a Far Country", a study in the book of Daniel [\$15]; "Becoming Mighty in Spirit...through Revelation's Prophecies" [\$10]; or his latest book, "Becoming Mighty in Spirit...through Developing a Prophetic Walk...A Study in the lives and ministries of Elijah and Elisha" [\$10] by contacting him.)*