

Prophecy in Perspective

Dr. Scott Gregory Downing
An Email Newsletter

Our Times - Prophecy in current events

AN EASY PEACE, A PRELUDE TO WAR

It is interesting to me how easily Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State, was able to broker a cease fire recently between Hamas and Israel through her meeting with Egyptian President Morsi. Yet this is not a real peace. It is only a lull which gives Hamas time to re-arm. I believe that the Obama administration's not holding Al-Qaeda accountable for the murder of our Ambassador and three others at Benghazi, has bought some credit with the Muslim Brotherhood. They, in turn, probably pressured Hamas to stop firing rockets into Israel. But this temporary peace will come at a high price for Israel. These events in our day do not surprise us. They have been predicted by Daniel who wrote concerning Israel: **"Unto the end, wars and desolations are determined (for Israel) the end will come with a flood, and war and its miseries are decreed from that time to the very end"**(Daniel 9:26,TLT). Israel, for all their toughness, are vulnerable to someone offering peace. The Antichrist will offer peace, but it will be a false peace.

The Prophet Daniel wrote predictions of how, in the latter days, Israel would be easily persuaded into a seven year peace treaty which would almost lead to their complete destruction through the Antichrist. Daniel wrote: **"And he** ('the prince that shall come,' the Antichrist) **shall confirm the covenant with many** (with Israel), **for one week** (seven years), **and in the midst of the week** (after three and one half years) **he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate** (he will defile the temple and its worship)." Pray for Israel's genuine discernment and real peace in the days ahead as they look for the return of the true Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

UN, MODERN DAY TOWER OF BABEL, GRANTS STATEHOOD TO PALESTINE

The nations of our day are playing right along with the devil's plan to form a global government and global religion. (Revelation 17 & 18) The United Nations, who have shown themselves to be consistent adversaries of Israel, have recently granted recognition of statehood to Palestine. Here is a portion of a well written overview of this recent vote from the *Seattle Times*:



Abbas appealing for Palestinian Statehood
at UN

The United Nations voted overwhelmingly Thursday to recognize a Palestinian state, a victory decades in the making for the Palestinians after years of occupation and war. It was a sharp rebuke for Israel and the United States. A Palestinian flag was quickly unfurled on the floor of the General Assembly, behind the Palestinian delegation, as the final vote was cast.

In an extraordinary lineup of international support, more than two-thirds of the world body's 193 member states approved the resolution upgrading the Palestinians to a nonmember observer state. It passed 138-9, with 41 abstentions. The historic vote came 65 years to the day after the U.N.

General Assembly voted in 1947 to recognize a state in Palestine, with the jubilant revelers then Jews. The Palestinians rejected that partition plan, and decades of tension and violence have followed.

The United States and Israel immediately criticized the vote.

"Today's unfortunate and counterproductive resolution places further obstacles in the path of peace," U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice said. "Today's grand pronouncements will soon fade and the Palestinian people will wake up tomorrow and find that little about their lives has changed save that the prospects of a durable peace have only receded."

Calling the vote "meaningless," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Abbas of spreading "mendacious propaganda" against Israel in a speech he rejected as "defamatory and venomous." "The resolution in the U.N. today won't change anything on the ground," Netanyahu said. "It won't advance the establishment of a Palestinian state, but rather, put it further off."

The vote grants Abbas an overwhelming international endorsement for his key position: establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and east Jerusalem; the territories captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war. With Netanyahu opposed to a pullback to the 1967 lines, this should strengthen Abbas' hand if peace talks resume. The U.N. action also could help Abbas restore some of his standing, which has been eroded by years of standstill in peace efforts.

His rival, the Hamas militant group, deeply entrenched in Gaza, has seen its popularity rise after it responded with a barrage of rocket fire to an Israeli offensive earlier this month on targets linked to the militants. In a departure from its previous opposition, Hamas, which rules Gaza and refuses to recognize Israel, said it wouldn't interfere with the U.N. bid for statehood, and its supporters joined some of the celebrations Thursday. With its newly enhanced status, the Palestinians can now gain access to U.N. agencies and international bodies, most significantly the International Criminal Court, which could become a springboard for going after Israel for alleged war crimes or its ongoing settlement building on war-won land...

The vote grants the Palestinians the same status at the U.N. as the Vatican, and they will keep their seat next to the Holy See in the assembly chamber." (Edith M. Lederer, *Seattle Times*, "UN Vote Recognizes State of Palestine; US objects", Sat. Dec. 1, 2012)

For the attentive student of Bible prophecy, these developments are very instructive, and should help us to discern the times. The seating of a newly recognized state of Palestine, sworn enemy of the existence of the state of Israel, seated in the UN next to the Roman Catholic Church, which applauded this vote, bring the picture of the woman riding the beast, **"with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication..."** in Revelation 17:1-5 into clearer focus. The threat to Israel's existence has grown exponentially with this vote as it greatly legitimizes the call for groups like Hamas, Hezbollah and other anti-Semitic nations, like Iran and Russia, to call for the attack and destruction of Israel and the Jews.

ISRAEL, GOD'S CHOSEN PLACE AND PEOPLE

The Bible reminds us over and over that God has established Israel as His chosen nation on the earth. Yet, there is a rapid globalization of government taking place today. We are seeing this today in the current efforts of the UN. Unfortunately these efforts are often assisted, overtly or covertly, by the leadership of the United States. Let's look at what the Bible says about how God views Israel, from Ps 132:13-18:

"For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: 'This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation, And her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There I will make the horn of David grow; I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed. His enemies I will clothe with shame, But upon Himself His crown shall flourish.'"

PROPHECIES ON GAZA

"For GAZA shall be forsaken, and Ashkalon a desolation, they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up...The word of the Lord is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant "(Zephaniah 4:2).

With recent conflicts between Israel and their enemies in Gaza in the news lately, it is important to know that Gaza is mentioned in Bible prophecy. I believe the same toxic spiritual hatred for God and for God's people, Israel, that existed in that land in ancient times is still there in Canaan and Gaza.

Gaza, a stronghold for Israel's Philistine enemies in the days of the O.T., is threatening Israel today. When we hear the word "Palestinian", we would not be far off to think of the ancient Philistines. We have seen how Hamas and the Palestinians in Gaza have been launching rockets into Israel by the hundreds. These have been smuggled in from Iran through the Sudan and Egypt. Two weeks ago, Israel was preparing to take action by amassing troops and armaments along the border of Israel and Gaza with the intent to invade if rocket attacks did not stop. Until the ceasefire, Israel showed that they were going to take independent action against Hamas for these attacks. Since the incident at Benghazi, and the murder of four Americans there, the Obama administration has not clearly addressed or decisively answered these attacks against the U.S. by Al-Qaeda terrorists. It is likely that this lack of decisive action has emboldened Israel's enemies to attack them.

With the re-election of Mr. Obama, the message seems to be clear both to Israel and their sworn enemies that America's stance toward the state of Israel over the next four years will continue to be weak, vague, and inconsistent. Therefore, I believe, Israel will continue to take more overt and immediate action against the threat of their enemies in the days ahead.

ISRAEL'S FUTURE LEADER FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

The prophet Daniel clearly warns us of the manifestation and nature of the future Antichrist. In Daniel 8:23-26 he will appear after the rapture of the church. By the time the Antichrist is revealed, preparations for the one world government and one world church will have been well under way. This is what we are probably seeing today.

"And in the latter time of their kingdom, When the transgressors have reached their fullness, A king shall arise, Having fierce features, Who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; He shall destroy fearfully, And shall prosper and thrive; He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without human means. And the vision of the evenings and mornings Which was told is true; Therefore seal up the vision, For it refers to many days in the future" (Daniel 8:23-26)

THE CONVERSION OF A KING

King Nebuchadnezzar thought that he was a god, until God humbled him. But after his humbling he said:

"How great are His signs, And how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And His dominion is from generation to generation."

"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down" (Daniel 4:3,37).

God calls all people to come to know His Son, Jesus Christ, as their personal Savior. Therefore, any king, or political leaders, such as mayors, governors, senators, congressmen or presidents, can be converted to Christ. This is the basic way that we should be praying for our leaders, first, that they get saved, and then to serve with biblical wisdom.

AS CHRISTIANS, WE ARE NOT TO LOOK TO MAN FOR DELIVERANCE, BUT TO GOD ALONE!

Throughout the Bible, God warns against putting hope in man. ***"Some trust in horses and some in chariots, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God" (Psalm 20:7).***

We need to understand that America has a political and economic problem because America has a spiritual problem. Our hope is in the coming of the Lord, first to rapture us to heaven, then to "soften up" the earth to prepare it for a heavenly invasion of the Lord from heaven with his armies, among His armies will be His church. He is the hope of the earth and of the nations. Human leaders will only disappoint. They will do good only as it will advance God's plan and by God's power, but they will always be inclined to compromise the truth in order to advance man's own agenda.

David said in Psalm 4:6-8, ***"there be many that say, who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou has put gladness in our heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased."*** Then there is God's perfect peace that enables us to rest in Him awaiting His perfect timing: ***"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep, for thou lord only makest me dwell in safety."***

Idolatry always begins with the pride of man and a dependency on man over God. It is a rejection of God and is bound to come under God's judgment. Throughout the Bible, God warns against putting hope in man. ***"Some trust in horses and some in chariots, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God" (Psalm 20:7).*** Even now many people are being spiritually prepared to call some future world leader god and to worship him as god. Paul wrote to warn believers that the future Antichrist would arise in a time when there was a wide-spread departure from biblical truth and how they would be ready to worship a man as god: ***"Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God"(2Thessalonians 2:4).***

MANY PEOPLE EXALTING OBAMA AS THOUGH DESCRIBING A GOD

President Obama has the unique distinction of being the first American President publically and repeatedly to be called god. The following are just a few of the many quotes one can find referring to our newly re-elected President, Barack Obama, in god-like terms:

"He ventured forth to bring light to the world the anointed ones pilgrimage to the holy land is a miracle in action-and a blessing to all his faithful followers." (by Gerard Baker, *Times*, UK, July 25, 2008)

"I'll do whatever he says to do. I'll collect paper cups off the ground to make his pathway clear." (Halle Berry, actress)

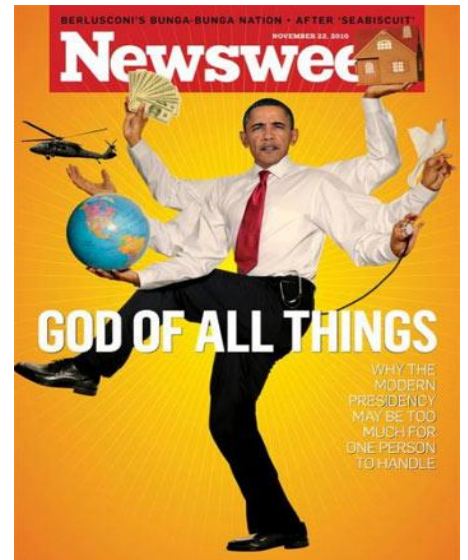
(The election of Barak Obama is) "A quantum leap in American consciousness." (Deepak Chopra, popular New Age teacher)

"Obama has the capacity to summon heroic forces from the spiritual depths of ordinary citizens and to unleash there from a symphonic chorus of unique creative acts whose common purposes is to tame the soul and alleviate the great challenges facing mankind." (Gerald Campbell, journalist)

"We're here to evolve to a higher plane...he is an evolved leader...[he]has an ear for eloquence and a tongue dipped in the Unvarnished Truth." (Oprah Winfrey, talk show hostess)

During an awards show on Soultrain, comedian Jamie Foxx said: "It's like church over here. It's like church in here. First of all, give an honor to God and our lord and savior Barack Obama, Barack Obama."

Foxx responded to critics of his statement by saying he "was just being silly! I am a comic!"



Yet the Scripture says: ***"So is the man that deceives his neighbor, and says, Am I not jesting? (Proverbs 26:19)***

"Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, 'Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city.' But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting" (Genesis 19:14).

To refer to any man as being a god is blasphemy against the one true God of the Bible. Sin will cause people to be blind to lies and they will not be able to discern blasphemy and to stand against it. Many celebrities only have to say, "I was just entertaining," or "I was just making a joke." Many will support a leader if he is entertaining or is supported by those who entertain for a living. They will support those who can make them feel good or laugh, or who will give them gifts. Often they will turn a "blind eye" to the evils of that leader so long as their job is secure or their benefits keep coming. Many leaders have overthrown nations and murdered millions in the name of "justice," and even taken away the citizenship of certain "dangerous" groups with the help of a willfully ignorant public who were hardened against the suffering of others by their own selfish desire just to "go along to get along."

A key indicator of the latter day apostasy will be an increase in this kind of selfishness (2 Timothy 3:1). Godless kings and political leaders know how to exploit this greed to increase their own power. This will certainly be the method of the future Antichrist.

It is important that President Obama clearly call out those who are using language reserved for describing divinity in reference to himself. Any leader, Democrat, Republican, whatever ethnic background, age or gender will be held accountable by God if they willingly receive praise from man as though they are a god.

The dire consequence of receiving praise that is reserved only to God is graphically illustrated in Acts 12:22 where king Herod presumed to receive divine praise and adoration from those who heard his speech: ***"And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man."*** The horrible result is graphically recorded: ***"And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."*** Praise God for His mercy and the space He often gives today for repentance. Yet the time is short! God has said: ***"I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8)***

The Church Today - Doctrine and Prophecy

SOME SAY THAT JESUS WILL NOT COME BACK FOR A LONG TIME!!

As students of Bible prophecy, we do not need to fall for the devil's oldest device to keep Christians from watching for the soon return of the Lord. The Bible wonderfully and plainly explains the time frame of the Lord's coming. In 2 Peter 3:8 we are encouraged ***"not to be ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."*** From God's perspective, then it has only been two days, and barely the beginning of the third day since the Lord went back to heaven. The Lord desires many to get saved during the intervening time which is one reason why He raised up the church to witness for Jesus Christ until He returns. In 2 Peter 3:9, ***"God is not slack concerning His coming, but is long suffering, not willing that any should perish."*** In Ps 90:4 we read, ***"for a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."*** (see: Heb13:8; 2 Pet 3:8; Rev 22:20; Is 44:6).

Our calling as believers in Jesus Christ is to ***"turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God. And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1:9-10).***

A SOCIAL JUSTICE GOSPEL WILL CAUSE THE CHURCH TO LOSE ITS POWER

Here is a well worded warning to the Church from almost a century ago as written by Clarence Larkin regarding the shift in ministry from leading people to salvation through Jesus Christ to a "social justice" gospel of saving society:

The purpose of the gospel in this dispensation is not to save society, but to save the individual members that are to compose the ***"Body of Christ"--The Church***. The great mistake the Church has made is in appropriating to herself, in this Dispensation, the promises of earthly conquest and glory which belong exclusively to Israel in the Millennial, or "Kingdom Age." As soon as the Church enters into an alliance with the world, and seeks the help of Parliaments, Congresses, Legislatures, Federations and Reform Societies, largely made up of ungodly men and women, she loses her spiritual power and becomes helpless as a redeeming force." (Dispensational Truth, by Clarence Larkin, p.78)

SPIRITUAL ATTACKS STILL HAPPEN

The Bible predicts that there will be a vast increase of demonic activity in the latter days (1 Timothy 4:1f). These spirits are capable of oppressing and opposing believers that give the devil ground in their lives (Ephesians 4:27). These spirits can bring a sense of despair, depression, and hopelessness. This is why we need always to seek the Lord for comfort and for actual defeat of our spiritual enemies. Psalm 143 is a guide to our warfare to stand in determined opposition against assailing powers of darkness that are swarming in these days. In verses 3 and 4, David speaks of how the enemy has persecuted his soul and has smitten his life down to the ground; at times, the enemy can even make us feel that life itself is without purpose and without hope, ***"he hath made me to dwell in darkness as those that have been long dead."*** And also ***"therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me, my heart within me is desolate"(Psalm 143:4).***

Today, as there is much that we can point to in the world and in America that is wrong and that is even evil, we can get a sense of despair. But remember that the enemy of your souls has been given much ground in this land. Therefore it is important that you turn your focus upon the Lord Jesus Christ who is alive from the dead and who gave us His authority over all the enemy. Jesus promised: ***"Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you"(Luke10:19).***

Seek the Lord in confident prayer, as David: ***"I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth for thee as in a thirsty land. Hear me speedily...cause me...deliver me...teach me...lead me...teach me...quicken me..."(Psalm 143:6-11).***

It is vital that, as Christians we do not put our trust in "horses and chariots" (Psalm 20:7) but in the living God. He alone will overcome the enemy, Satan, and all of his demons. There is nothing that is too hard for the Lord (Jeremiah 32:27). It is one of Jesus' many precious promises to us that, He will live in us and empower us, so long as we trust in Him to do this (John 14:16-17).

You can "turn your eyes upon Jesus," as the old hymn says, in heartfelt and believing prayer. While we see many who say they believe in the Lord compromising and supporting wickedness in the land, we should not let that discourage us from fleeing to the Lord and seeking Him with all of our hearts. ***"Come unto me all you who are weak and heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).***

So, today, ***"Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His Might, put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles (schemes) of the devil!" (Ephesians 6:10f)***

JUST SAY: "MERRY CHRISTMAS!" SUCH A SIMPLE WAY TO WITNESS FOR CHRIST!

Many companies are forbidding their employees from saying "Merry Christmas," but, instead have to say "Happy Holidays." This is a part of the aggressive attack that we are seeing in America today against the Lord Jesus Christ. In many places, nativity scenes which have been set up for years are being ordered taken down. Truly, the devil is at war with Christ, and Satan has many helpers. But you can do a very simple thing at the stores when you do your Christmas shopping, simply and courteously respond to "Happy Holidays" with a cheerful "Merry Christmas." Let this be one simple way that you can witness for Jesus Christ right there in Macy's, or Target, or wherever, the true purpose and meaning of Christmas. Pray that it will be used by the Lord to embolden other Christians in the line behind you, and to encourage or convict the employees. Jesus was born into the darkness of this world! He invaded the world with His Light! Let's do the same! Jesus said: ***"In the same way, let your light shine before people in such a way that they will see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).***



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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 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.)