



Prophecy in Perspective

Dr. Scott Gregory Downing
An Email Newsletter

Our Times - *Prophecy in current events*

After the recent elections we should not be surprised at the direction that our country is taking. Two types of prophecies of the latter days help us to understand these distressing trends. The **first type of prophecy** predicts an increasing selfishness of many who will be looking out for what they can get out of others, whether it is the church or government. A key section of Scripture on this is found in 2 Timothy 3. This selfishness has been encouraged by the secular progressives. It is little confronted by Christians and preachers in general. This spirit of selfishness and self-focus has resulted in our day in the disintegration of the family, the redefinition of marriage, huge personal and national debt and growing anti-Christian bias in American culture. The **second type of prophecy** predicts a gradual re-aligning of the nations toward the formation of a global government that will one day be headed up by the Antichrist.

The strategy here is for leftist political progressives to work to weaken strong and biblically founded nations, like the United States, in order to bring them into greater dependency with the nations of Europe. Part of this strategy is, through education, to remove any and all reference to God and of the Lord Jesus Christ in schools and universities, and to instill in young people a secular-humanist and evolutionist world-view that sees man, as the only answer to the world's problems. The liberal media is all too willing to help the progressive and humanistic agenda in America by selective reporting. Prophetic sections in the book of Daniel, chapters 2 and 7, as well as in the book of Revelation, chapters 13, 17 and 18 help us to see how this trend toward greed and self-focus in our day is the very preparation for the re-aligning of the nations that God warns us about through His prophetic Word, that will form a global government. This government will be headed up by the future Antichrist.

In these days, there is no time for discouragement or the slightest bit of disengagement from battling for God's truth in America, the nations of the world, or the Church. There is still much work to be done in making Jesus Christ known to a lost world. These are reasons for Christians to stay true to God's Word and to be as informed as possible about world events and spiritual trends. This will help us to understand what God is doing in the world. If we are knowledgeable about God's prophetic Word and about how events are sizing up in the world then we will know how to pray and what ministries we should get involved with and support in these latter days. Our understanding of the times will help us to know what God is doing as the Lord Jesus Christ prepares to return for His church at the rapture. The Lord is also preparing the world for His return to the earth after the great tribulation, to set up His millennial kingdom headquartered in the temple in Jerusalem. Great things are still in store, so we need to continue to fulfill what Jesus said: "***Occupy until I come***" (*Luke 19:13*).

A case in point of how countries are attempting to re-align for the overthrow of God's chosen nation of Israel is found in the recent developments in the biblical region of ancient Ethiopia, which is known today as Northern Sudan. Modern Ethiopia has a great representation of Jews and Christians and is pro-Israel. We

should pray for them and support ministries that are working in these areas. However, Northern Sudan, which is ancient biblical Ethiopia, or Cush, is another story. While we should certainly pray for believers there as well, we need to understand that this country is pro-Islamic and pro-Iranian. This is the area to which the Bible refers as one of the pro-Islamic nations that will align with Russia in the latter days to attack and to attempt to destroy Israel. A recent article in the *Jerusalem Post* describes what Northern Sudan, and its second largest city, Khartoum, is up to these days:

'Khartoum allowing Iran to establish Red Sea base'

By JOANNA PARASZCZUK
12/11/2012 04:43

Sudanese rebel groups say Khartoum reaching secret agreement with Tehran to establish an Iranian military base.



PHOTO: DAVOOD POORSEHAT/REUTERS

Sudanese opposition groups accused Khartoum this week of reaching a secret agreement with Tehran to establish an Iranian military base on the Red Sea. Anti-government newspaper *Hurriyat Sudan* cited an unnamed opposition source on Monday as saying that the Sudanese government had struck a deal with Iran for building a base on the Sudanese coast.

Meanwhile, Sudanese rebel group The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) said on Sunday that Sudan's President Omar Bashir has reached a "very advanced" arrangement with Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to establish a naval base either in Port Sudan or elsewhere on the Red Sea, according to the Sudanese anti-government news outlet Al Rakoba. The accusations came after two Iranian naval vessels, the 1,400-ton frigate *Jamaran* and the 4,700-ton support ship *Bushehr*, docked in Port Sudan on Saturday morning.

Mahjoub Hussein, a spokesman for the Justice and Equality Movement, said that the visit of the Iranian warships, the second in recent months, was not intended as a message to Israel but rather to test regional opinion regarding the establishment of an Iranian military base. According to reports in the Sudanese press, Sudan's army spokesperson Colonel Al- Sawarmi Khalid Sa'ad said on Friday that the visit by the Iranian military vessels is part of a "military exchange" with Iran. The ships are scheduled to stay for three days, during which they will be open for view by the public.

Iran has continued to push an aggressive naval strategy, which includes expanding its weapons systems and warships – including the *Jamaran*, a domestically-produced Mowj-class guided missile frigate first launched at Bandar Abbas in 2010. The ship combines anti-submarine assets, including a close-in anti-submarine torpedo system as well as surface-to-surface and surface-to-air assets. The Iranian Navy has also extended its reach throughout the Strait of Hormuz, the Bab el-Mandeb strait in the Red Sea, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Malacca.

By extending its naval presence as far as Sudan and the Red Sea, Iran would gain several advantages, including in regards to combating Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden but also in gaining control over the Red Sea shipping route, part of the channel through which Iran ships arms to the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip. An Iranian naval presence in Port Sudan would also upset Iran's Sunni rival Saudi Arabia, located just across the Red Sea. For its part, Sudan has long courted deeper ties with Iran, with whom it signed a military cooperation agreement in March 2008.

Bashir has made several visits to Iran, the last in August when Tehran hosted the summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Bashir has held onto power for 23 years following a bloodless coup in 1999, but is increasingly under threat, as Sudan struggles to overcome a \$38 billion debt, particularly after the secession of oil-rich South Sudan last year and the renewal of US economic sanctions last month. Last month, Khartoum said it foiled a coup against Bashir masterminded by the former head of intelligence, Salah Gosh. Meanwhile, Sudan's army, overstretched as it fights insurgents in its South Kordofan and Blue Nile border regions, has been accused of looking to Iran for military assistance.



In March, anti-government rebels accused Iran of sending members of its IRGC to boost government forces. Tehran denied the claims. While Bashir is keen to show the world his

country is moving closer to Tehran, there are rifts within Sudan's ruling National Congress Party about the risks posed by the country's bilateral ties with the Islamic Republic.

In November, Sudan's Foreign Minister, Ali Karti, criticized the government for allowing Iranian warships to dock in Port Sudan, saying that he had not been consulted over the matter. Iran previously dispatched warships to Port Sudan at the end of October, days after Khartoum accused Israel of carrying out an air strike against a munitions factory in the Sudanese capital. Jerusalem has neither confirmed nor denied striking the Yarmouk complex but officials have repeated accusations that Sudan and Iran are coordinating to smuggle arms to the Gaza Strip via Egypt.

In response to the air strike, Bashir threatened to work toward acquiring “advanced weaponry” to counter “repeated Israeli attacks.” Echoing Tehran’s terminology and rhetoric, the Sudanese leader said that Israel was “the Zionist enemy and Israel will remain the enemy,” Sudanese news sources reported. On Monday, opposition sources in Sudan again accused Khartoum of turning Sudan into an arena for Israel’s conflict with Iran.

Sudanese opposition group JEM also noted that the Iranian military vessels’ visit to Port Sudan risked upsetting the country’s delicate relationship with Gulf states, on whom it relies for aid. Karti has also said that Arab Gulf states are not happy about Khartoum’s ties with Tehran, and could deny aid.

Do these developments indicate a preparation for the battle of Gog and Magog predicted by the prophet Ezekiel? We are certainly witnessing an interesting aligning and agreement between the nations that will be involved in that future multi-nation attack on Israel. Look at what Ezekiel wrote over 2500 years ago about this:

“Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, (Russia) Meshech (Moscow), and Tubal (Tublusk, Russia). I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. Persia (Iran), Ethiopia (Northern Sudan), and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer (region of Turkey) and all its troops; the house of Togarmah (Turkey) from the far north and all its troops—many people are with you.

Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them. After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely. You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you. (Ezekiel 38:1-9)

There may be a future brief battle previous to that of Gog and Magog which might result in Israel's destroying the Syrian capital city of Damascus (Isaiah 17:1). This may enable Israel to "**dwell safely**" and thus be a more tempting and vulnerable target for Russia and her Muslim allies. "Persia," again, which is modern day Iran, is aligning with "Ethiopia," which is also known by the KJV of the Bible as "Cush." Remember, this is modern day Northern Sudan.

Interestingly, this port which Khartoum agreed to make available to Iran will be strategically located on the Red Sea. God's Word is truly amazing and up to date! We know that Russia plays a big role in the unfolding of events in the Middle East these days. Russia has been an anti-Semitic, anti-Christian, and anti-Christ power-player in the Middle East for generations. The Bible predicts here through Ezekiel that Russia will lead a coalition of Israel's greatest and most hateful nations against God's chosen nation. But God will intervene, overthrow and destroy them (Ezekiel 38:18-33). Many believe this battle, and God's defeat of the Islamic nations will clear the way for the rise of latter-day Rome as predicted by Daniel (7:7-8; 23-25) and Revelation (13:1-4; 17:11-18). It could be that this battle of Gog and Magog could happen either before or just after the rapture of the Church. Actually, there is no prophecy that needs to be fulfilled for the rapture of the Church to occur as the Lord's coming for us is always possible at any moment (Matthew 25:13). But, I believe the preparations are certainly under way for the predicted end days scenario to unfold in God's perfect timing.

The United Nations seeks to Undo God's Covenant with Abraham

The recent vote by the UN to begin the process of full recognition of Palestine as a distinct nation or state is an attempt to effectively reverse what the Bible states is God's will for the descendants Abraham to possess that land. This will of God is forever stated and sealed in God's sovereign and unconditional Covenant with Abraham. The United Nations is attempting to replace the rule of God over the earth and to weaken God's influence on the nations. In Psalm 2 we read how the "**kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed saying, Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords from us**" (*Psalm 2:2-3*).

In Genesis 12:1-3, God covenanted with Abraham to give him the land which is called Palestine, or, then, "Canaan." God had called Abraham out of Ur, which was the land of Babylon and led him distinctly into the land of Canaan and gave him that land forever. This covenant was eternal and non-negotiable. Not even Abraham could have refused it and asked for another location. It was God's intention to redeem the world through His Son, Jesus Christ as a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He would send His Son to the earth and He would die outside the city of Jerusalem for the sins of the entire world. It was necessary for God to establish a place on the earth geographically for His redemptive program to be fulfilled. God called Abraham and gave the land to him in preparation for God to fulfill His redemptive plan for Christ to come the first time to die and to rise again, and then to come a second time to rule the earth in absolute victory over Satan and all of God's enemies. Look at what God said to Abraham:

Now the Lord had said to Abram:

***"Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."* (Genesis 12:1-3)**

Here God sovereignly declares to Abraham that He will give to him and to his descendants the land, the seed, and the blessing. This covenant has tremendous eschatological importance as it promises the "seed," to come Who is the Lord Jesus Christ through Whom will come the blessing of salvation to the believer as well as glorification through His cross, resurrection, ascension over all earthly powers and His coming again to rule the earth from Israel. Man did not give this land to Abraham and to his descendants, the Jews. God did!

In 1948, the U.N. did not create a state of Israel, but they only recognized the fact that Israel belongs on that land. Now, in 2012, the U.N. seeks to change that fact, and is in reality seeking to reverse it. The Palestinian terrorist organization, Hamas, is a sworn enemy of Israel and, as a people in general, the "Palestinians," desire the destruction of Israel. They have the same goal as the ancient Canaanites when Abraham and his descendants first occupied that land, the hate of Israel and all things Jewish, and the stated goal of destroying them as a nation.

Yet, clearly, God made no covenant with the "Palestinians," only with Israel. So, God's blessings on the Palestinians as a people will come, not from the U.N., but through their relating to Israel in positive, respectful and constructive ways. This will be true for any nation. God said: ***"I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you"* (Genesis 12:13).** There are then four things that the enemies of Israel are seeking to take from the hands of the Living God and His people Israel: 1) **Their Place**, that is the land of Israel; 2) **The People**, by seeking to destroy all the Jews from the land and to take it over; 3) **The Promise**, by delegitimizing Israel, they also delegitimize the Son of God and His death, resurrection, authority over the earth as well as Jesus' purpose to return and reign from Jerusalem and a restored Israel; 4) **The Perpetuity**, that is, the eternal existence of Believing Israel, the Church and all the saints of God in the presence of God forever and ever.

The Church Today - Doctrine and Prophecy

Believers should awaken to the fact that the world is preparing for a coming great battle over Israel at Armageddon. The Church in America is woefully uninformed of the storms that are on the horizon of the earth's future. Christians and ministries need to know the part the Lord will's for them to play. We are called to make Christ known to those enslaved to Godless leftist political leadership and false religions. What we see developing in Russia, the Muslim countries, Europe, and Asia is what is developing in America today! But the spirit of self-focus that is predicted for the latter days has put the Church in America to sleep. Little wonder why there is little spiritual depth among Christians today.



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Believers should be aware that the recent earthquakes off the coast of Japan and in China may indicate that the Lord is shaking up the ***"kings from the East."*** These kings of the east, with tremendous military forces are scheduled, in perhaps the not too distant future, to cross over the Euphrates after it is dried up (Revelation 16:12). This will be at the end of the tribulation. These will predominately consist of Chinese troops, although other Eastern/Asian nations will be involved. They will be on their way to the

valley of Megiddo, to make a final effort to overthrow the nation of Israel. This will be an army two hundred million strong (Revelation 9:16; 16:12-16). Since the Bible predicts the rising of the Kings from the East to come with amazing military force against Israel in the latter days then we would expect them to be in preparation now.

Interestingly, sources state that the Chinese are even now studying how to defeat the United States in a war which they fully expect they will have to fight within the next thirty years. The Chinese have developed nuclear ballistic submarines. They have just completed their first aircraft carrier and landed their premier J-15 fighter jet on it for the first time.

They have state of the art fighter jets, and an ICBM called the CS4 that is highly accurate and is known to have an effective range of up to 4,000 miles. Over the last ten years, the Russians and Chinese, have formed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), otherwise known as the "Shanghai Pact." Here is an example of some of what this Russian/Chinese Pact organization has been up to in recent years:



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Shanghai Pact Struts World Stage

by Martin Sieff, UPI Senior News Analyst
Washington (UPI) Jun 19, 2006

The SCO groups Russia and China - two of the world's three top nuclear powers - with the four former Soviet Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The SCO, by contrast, has already succeeded in bringing Russia and China together in military coordination far closer than they ever were during the Cold War.

Even before the famous Sino-Soviet split went public in 1958, the Soviets and the Chinese communists never held any major military exercises together. But since the founding of the SCO, Russia and China have held three sets of joint military exercises. The most important one was in August 2005 on and around the Shandung peninsula of northwest China. At least 10,000 troops from both nations, including naval forces, air forces and amphibious formations, practiced problems of landing against a hostile defended shore. The exercises were somewhat misleadingly labeled anti-terrorist exercises. But the most likely target of such amphibious landings by China would be the offshore island of Taiwan, which is supported by the United States and whose total independence is fiercely opposed by Beijing.



Russian President Vladimir Putin (R) welcoming Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad during their bilateral meeting in Shanghai, 15 June 2006, after the session of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a security grouping anchored by Russia and China, which has styled itself as a counterweight to US global dominance. Chinese authorities threw a massive security curtain around the country's largest city Shanghai, before a regional meeting that includes Russia and Iran.

Photo courtesy of Alexander Nemenov and AFP.

It is very difficult not to notice an obvious and seemingly deliberate plan unfolding to coalesce these nations, that otherwise might be the bitterest of enemies, for a common purpose. As time goes by, we will likely see these nations grow more overt in their threats toward Israel. For now, Russia is content to let the Muslim nations, as surrogates, such as Iran, and groups, such as Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, and others rage against and threaten Israel. But, no doubt, Russia is influencing many of the aggressive strategies of these anti-Israel Muslim terrorist groups and nations.

For now, China is trading with Israel and appears to be on positive diplomatic terms with them. China is positive toward the U.S. as well, that is, so long as we are borrowing huge amounts of money from them. Bible prophecy shows that this attitude will change. As tensions rise between the United States and China over their aggressive manipulation of their currency affecting trade with America, and as the U.S. grows ever deeper in debt to them, we will not be surprised to see military threats toward us grow as well. I believe there is evidence that the long range missile launches and nuclear tests in North Korea are supported in some measure, and timed with the approval of China. North Korea would be a handy tool in the hands of the Chinese to test particular countries like South Korea, Japan, Australia and the U.S. to get certain calibrations as to which levels of threat would be tolerated and which levels would draw some form of retaliation. And, if so, what type of retaliation?

China, is lead by a Godless, Communist government and is a persecutor of the unregistered church consisting of an estimated 40,000,000 or more Christians. It has harshly enforced a horrific one child policy through forced abortions. This has caused a disproportional rise in male births, since the traditional preference is for boys. The male birth rate is something around 120 boys for every 100 girls born. It is estimated that over 300 million abortions have happened since the one child policy was enacted in 1980, with 70 per cent of these consisting of the abortion of females. The disproportion of gender balance resulting in a vastly higher population of males will easily be translated into millions of troops for the last days Asian armies from the East. Jesus Christ and His truth is greatly needed in China. Prophecy will be fulfilled in and through this nation's continued rebellion against God. The preparations for the last battle of Armageddon and the horrific part the "kings of the east" will play appear to be well under way today. Look at two key passages from Revelation 9:13-16 and 16:12-16:



A man checks a destroyed house following an earthquake which hit Luozhe town in Yiliang county in southwest China's Yunnan province Saturday, Sept. 8, 2012. (AP Photo)

"Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, 'Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.' So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them" (Revelation 9:13-16).

"Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 'Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.' And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon" (Revelation 16:12-16).

Pray for the believers in China, and the lost that can still come to Christ as the Word of God is preached in spite of threats from their Godless government. The earthquakes near Japan and many of the earthquakes and tremors happening in China are God's warnings that His Word is true! God's prophecies will be fulfilled to the letter. One day, God will lead the vast armies of China and other Asian nations to their doom at Armageddon, yet there will be vast numbers before that who will be rescued from Satan's lies by the blood of the Lamb. Jesus is coming whether the Chinese government recognizes it or not (Psalm 2). One day, all Godless and rebellious nations will experience what Jesus predicted in Luke 21:25-27,

"There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

Upward Call - How to walk in view of Prophecy

There is much discussion these days as to what is true worship. Worship has suffered a great deal in the American Church today at the hands of its own friends. Many ministries, in the interest of "reaching people," have bought into worship and ministry methods that would rate more as entertainment than as honest and true worship. A.W. Tozer has written about unacceptable Worship:

The stark, tragic fact is that the efforts of many people to worship are unacceptable to God. Without an infusion of the Holy Spirit there can be no true worship. This is serious. It is hard for me to rest peacefully at night knowing that millions of cultured, religious people are merely carrying on church traditions and religious customs and they are not actually reaching God at all. (Whatever Happened to Worship?, p. 46)

We have the breezy, self-confident Christians with little affinity for Christ and His cross. We have the joy-bell boys that can bounce out there and look as much like a game show host as possible. Yet, are they doing it for Jesus' sake?! The hypocrites! They're not doing it for Jesus' sake at all; they are doing it in their own carnal flesh and are using the church as a theater because they haven't yet reached the place where the legitimate theater would take them. (Sermon, "Complete Surrender," Chicago) (See, Tozer on Worship and Entertainment, Compiled by James L. Snyder, Wing Spread Publishers)

Let's pray for real, biblical and godly worship, as well as expository preaching for these days. This, along with real holy living and witnessing for the Lord will be blessed by God as we watch for His coming!

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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.)