



Prophecy in Perspective

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An Email Newsletter

Our Times - Prophecy in current events

The Bible predicts a time when the nations will attack Israel in a great battle called Armageddon. (Revelation 16:16) Students of prophecy should understand that the events that the Bible predicts will unfold by Divine direction. The circumstances that we see occurring today are preparing the world for these events. We may see events of today as the unfolding of God's prophetic plan. I believe we are seeing things happening and unfolding today that are very likely the foreshadowing of things to come!

Isaiah is a fascinating book of prophecy that all believers should read these days. Many passages deal with historical and spiritual events and conditions in ancient Israel. Many passages also refer, directly or indirectly to the unfolding conditions of the latter days. Israel has always been threatened with destruction through all of biblical history. Isaiah deals with these times through warnings to the Jews in his days, but also to the Jews of the latter days. Along with warnings also comes great promises for God's people. The following passage from Isaiah shows that God will strongly judge any who attack or rob from Israel:

*Woe to the multitude of many people
Who make a noise like the roar of the seas,
And to the rushing of nations
That make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!
The nations will rush like the rushing of many waters;
But God will rebuke them and they will flee far away,
And be chased like the chaff of the mountains before the wind,
Like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.
Then behold, at eventide, trouble!
And before the morning, he is no more.
This is the portion of those who plunder us,
And the lot of those who rob us. (Isaiah 17:12-14)*

Many nations have sought through the centuries to "plunder" or to "rob" Israel and the Jewish people of what God has given them. In these latter days it seems really important for political leaders, like President Obama and the leaders of Iran to demonstrate preferential treatment toward Israel's enemies. In the case of Obama, the effort is much more subtle, and with Iran more overt. These represent two extremes among the nations which give little or no support to the existence and defense of the tiny State of Israel. Yet all these nations are aiding in the preparation of the latter day attack upon Israel at Armageddon. This is because they have rejected the true God, the Lord Jesus Christ and they have rejected those who are committed to serve and honor the God of the Bible. A case in point of the more subtle approach to robbing Israel is shown in the following article from World News Daily:

TROUBLE IN THE HOLY LAND

'Secret Obama Plan' Forfeits Temple Mount to Palestinians Formula for Israel-Arab Talks Leaked to WND

The Obama administration has quietly presented a plan in which the Palestinian Authority and Jordan will receive sovereignty over the Temple Mount while Israel will retain the land below the Western Wall, according to a senior PA negotiator speaking to WND.

The Temple Mount is the holiest site in Judaism.

The proposed plan is part of the basis for U.S.-brokered talks that are set to resume in Washington next week after Secretary of State John Kerry announced that both Israel and PA President Mahmoud Abbas have agreed to open negotiations aimed at creating a Palestinian state.

Israel has not agreed to the U.S. plan over the Temple Mount, with details still open for discussion, stated the PA negotiator.

The negotiator, who is one of the main Palestinian figures leading the Arab side of the talks, further divulged Kerry's proposed outline for a Palestinian state as presented orally to Israel and the PA.

He said Jordan has been invited to play a key role in the discussions surrounding both the Temple Mount and Jerusalem while it will be the PA, with some Jordanian assistance, that would ultimately receive control of some of those areas.



WND was first to report in 2007 that Jordan had been quietly purchasing real estate surrounding the Temple Mount in Jerusalem hoping to gain more control over the area accessing the holy site, according to Palestinian and Israeli officials.

Meanwhile, regarding the rest of Jerusalem, Kerry's plan is to rehash what is known as the Clinton parameters. That formula, pushed by President Bill Clinton during the Camp David talks in 2000, called for Jewish areas of Jerusalem to remain Israeli while the Palestinians would get sovereignty over neighborhoods that are largely Arab. Most Arab sections are located in eastern Jerusalem.

WND previously reported the Palestinians are building illegally in Jewish-owned areas of Jerusalem, resulting in Arab majorities in some neighborhoods.

For the strategic Jordan Valley, Obama's proposal calls for international forces to maintain security control along with unarmed Palestinian police forces, the PA negotiator said. Israel will retain security posts in some strategic areas of the Jordan Valley, according to the leaked plan.

When it comes to the West Bank, which borders Jerusalem and is within rocket range of Israel's main population centers, Israel is expected to evacuate about 90 percent of its Jewish communities currently located in the territory, as outlined in Kerry's plan.

Israel would retain strategic security posts along with the West Bank's main blocs, Maale Adumin, Ariel and Gush Etzion. In return, Obama is calling for an exchange of territory with the Palestinians in other locations

inside Israel, with discussion being open for the Palestinians to possibly receive land in the Israeli Negev in the country's south.

The PA negotiator further said Israel rejected a Palestinian request that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agree not to place the final peace plan up for referendum in the Knesset.

Indeed, Netanyahu announced today any plan must receive final approval in a national poll.

"I am committed to two objectives that must guide the result ... if there will be a result. And if there will be a result, it will be put to a national referendum," he said at the start of the cabinet meeting.

"Negotiations with the Palestinians will not be easy, but we are entering them with integrity, honesty and hope," Netanyahu added.

The PA negotiator, meanwhile, said Netanyahu agreed that as a gesture to restart talks, Israel will enact a temporary freeze on all Jewish construction in the West Bank outside the main settlement blocs. According to Israeli sources, such a freeze has largely already been in place for several months now anyway.

The negotiator warned that one of the toughest issues centers on control of water, with Kerry already reaching out to Turkey about the prospect of selling water at a cheaper rate to a future Palestinian state.

It is frightening how close this plan sounds to today's church replacement theology that essentially teaches that the church gets God's blessings and Israel and the Jews get God's curses. Many through the centuries have attempted to persecute the Jews both subtly and overtly through horrible persecutions. They have been denied their lands, their possessions, and in the case of the Nazi persecutions, they were denied their lives by the millions. But the same spirit of Antichrist that has always been the enemy of Israel is now directing the evil hearts of many political and religious leaders to hinder and overthrow support for God's people, the Jews and Israel. It is sad to see that at this time, America is seeking to rob Israel of their temple mount!

Upward Call - How to walk in view of Prophecy

What comfort the Scriptures bring to us as we read the amazing promises of God to believers who grieve. Paul wrote under the direction and inspiration of the Holy Spirit of promises and prophecies concerning the coming of the Lord for believers both living and dead. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 he said:

"But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus."

There is great ignorance as to the specifics of the coming of the Lord to rapture His Church to heaven. But the Bible has revealed this great truth in detail! Notice that Paul assures Christians that they do not need to ***"sorrow as other who have no hope."*** For those who are sad because of the passing of a loved one who knew Jesus as Savior, they can know that ***"even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus."*** When Jesus descends in the clouds, He will bring the souls of those who went to be with Him in death. This means that those who have already died before the coming of Jesus are alive and conscience in heaven right now! In verses 15-16, Paul further assures us about those who have died in the Lord:

"For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first."

Apparently the Lord had made the truth of the rapture of the Church clearly known to Paul, ***"by the word of the Lord."*** Jesus will actually ***"descend from heaven."*** He will call out for the dead bodies of believers to rise from their graves. Notice, "and the dead in ***Christ will rise first.***" There will be a sudden resurrection of millions from their graves who will be instantly changed to have glorified bodies who will be united with their souls which Jesus will bring back with Him. I

believe that the graves will be opened at this time, just as Jesus' tomb was opened at His resurrection. This will be a testimony to the world that something supernatural has happened! After the righteous dead are raised, at the next instant...

"Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."

In 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, Paul describes this amazing and instantaneous change of both the resurrected and living Church saints. The Scriptures indicate that this event can occur at any time! Notice that the dead will be caught up into the air first, then we ***"who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."*** This will be the first phase of the return of the Lord. Jesus, will not come to the earth at the rapture. He will descend into the upper atmosphere of the earth, to receive and to take us to heaven to the place He has prepared for us in His Father's house. (John 14:1-7) Notice the words: ***"to meet the Lord in the air."***

The news of the rapture is a great comfort to Christians. But this event will produce complete confusion on the earth for those who are left behind! The Antichrist will be revealed after the rapture. (2 Thessalonians 2:7-8) He almost certainly will capitalize on the chaos the nations will be experiencing after the rapture event. The great tribulation, also known as Daniels 70th week, will begin soon after the rapture. Paul next assures us:

"And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."

Our hope is a heavenly hope because we will be with the Lord Jesus Christ forever. Yet, in the unfolding of His plan for the earth, we know that we will return with Him back to the earth at the closing days of the great tribulation period. Revelation 19:14 speaks of ***"the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."*** These robes of white indicate that the church is being described as they return in triumph to the earth with the Lord. (Revelation 19:8; 17:14) Therefore, we will always accompany the Lord wherever He goes and in whatever He does. Paul then exhorts Christians to ***"comfort one another with these words."*** What words? The words pertaining to the coming of the Lord for His beloved bride, the Church. The Church for whom Christ will come consists of you and me, and all believers who have died in faith, or are living during this Age of Grace, otherwise known as the Church Age.

Unfortunately, there are relatively few Christians and churches who even realize that the rapture of the Church is coming. This ignorance of the rapture keeps millions of Christians from looking forward to heaven and to eternity hereafter. Most seem satisfied to live just for today, just to keep their lives and ministries going as though there will never be any change. (2 Peter 3:4) It is good to realize that the coming of the Lord for His church is God's clear way of saying that He will not leave us here to be subject to the diabolical rule of the Antichrist. But the period of his cruel reign will be the time when we will be getting acquainted with the glories, the angels, the saints, and especially the Lord of heaven! Will that be true of you? Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? Perhaps it will be just a short while until the Lord descends with a shout to receive you and me up into glory! Meanwhile we are instructed to watch!

Jesus said, ***"And, what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch."*** (Mark 13:35-37)

This is our incentive to be active and dynamic Christians witnessing and serving our Lord daily, pressing on until we hear that ***"upward call of God in Christ Jesus"*** (Phil 3:14) and then are taken home to be with the Lord Jesus Christ forever!

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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 name and 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.)