

# Prophecy in Perspective

Dr. Scott Gregory Downing  
An Email Newsletter

## **Our Times** - Prophecy in current events

### **Intimidation of Jews on The Rise In Ukraine**

Recent reports of Russian invasion and occupation of certain parts of Ukraine have brought a rise of threats against the Jewish population there. A few weeks ago, during the Jewish Passover season, I commented on my blog about the ramifications of these threats against Ukrainian Jews. Many had good reason to believe they were going to be required to register with the authorities. In this article, I took the history of the Jews, God's chosen people, into consideration as I analyzed current threats against them in Ukraine in the last few weeks.

About 500 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, the ancient empire of Persia extended from India in the east down to Ethiopia, or Northern Sudan in the south. Persia's northern border extended well into present day Turkey. Persia was a vast empire. Wicked Haman, a descendant of the anti-Semitic nation of the Amalekites, who had become a high official in Persia, developed an evil scheme to destroy all of the Jews under the rule of that empire. Esther, the Jewish queen of the Persian king, Ahasuerus, was used by God to intercede with the King for her people and, through her courage and God's providential working, God delivered millions of Jews from certain destruction.

This supernatural deliverance of Israel from their enemies has been repeated many times over the centuries. While many cruelties have been perpetrated upon the Jews throughout history, as for example through the Nazis of World War II, yet God has preserved His people supernaturally. Remember how, out of the atrocities of the German death camps, God re-established Israel once again as a Nation in 1948. Many Jews are back in their land, once again speaking Hebrew, and many of them are watching for the Messiah!

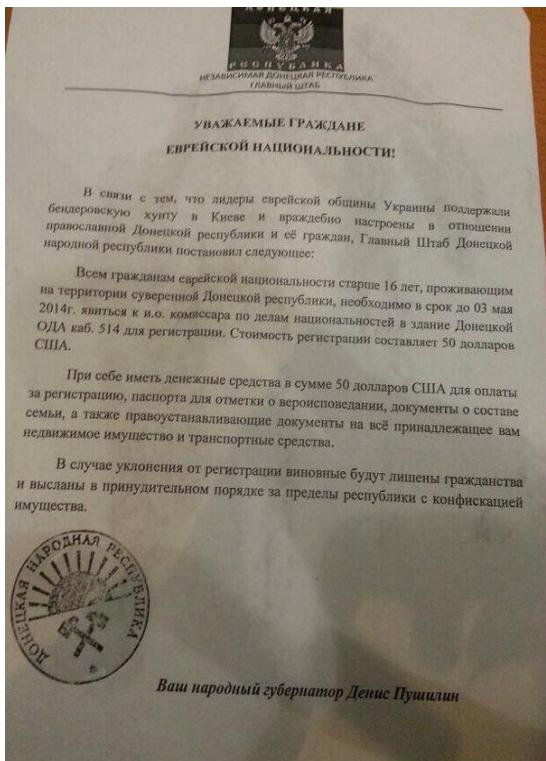


Jewish men at a synagogue in Donetsk, Eastern Ukraine. REUTERS

As the latter days unfold, we are to expect a rise in global anti-Semitism. This is because Satan hates the Jews. He will one day raise up his special man, the Antichrist, to seek the total annihilation of the Jews and of Israel from the face of the earth.

In preparation for this attempt by the future Antichrist in the Great Tribulation Period, the world now witnesses Israel's Islamic enemies seeking to kill as many Jews as possible through terrorist activities against

Israel and the United States. During the Passover season in April, we began hearing of the latest effort to scare Jews in Ukraine into registering with the Russian controlled government or face the confiscation of their property. *Ynetnews.com* reported as follows:



Leaflet distributed in Donetsk, Ukraine to Jews ordering them to register

"A leaflet distributed in Donetsk, Ukraine calling for all Jews over 16 years old to register as Jews marred the Jewish community's Passover festivities Monday (Passover eve), replacing them with feelings of concern.

The leaflet demanded the city's Jews supply a detailed list of all the property they own, or else have their citizenship revoked, face deportation and see their assets confiscated.

Donetsk, a Ukraine province with 4.3 million people – 10 percent of Ukraine's population – and 17,000 Jews, is home to much of the country's heavy industry, and is thus the biggest prize of the eastern regions where pro-Russian separatists have captured government buildings in the past week.

The leaflet, signed by Chairman of Donetsk's temporary government Denis Pushilin, was distributed to Jews near the Donetsk synagogue and later in other areas of the city where pro-Russians activists have declared Donetsk as an independent "people's republic", defying an ultimatum from Kiev to surrender.

There is some question as to the source of these leaflets, but, there is little doubt that Russian President Putin is well aware of this situation and has approved of it."

It is interesting to note that these leaflets were distributed on the eve of Passover. Passover, next to Creation itself, is the most significant celebration for Israel. It is the very heart of who they are in their relation to their Almighty Covenant God. Passover commemorates the God of Israel in His covenant and redemptive love for His people when they were captives in Egypt. He instructed them to place the blood of a sacrificial and unblemished lamb on the door posts of their houses. The death angel whom God sent to destroy the first-born in Egypt was going to *pass over* all the houses where he saw the blood. God kept Israel from death. Then God brought Israel out of Egypt by dividing the Red Sea so the Jews could walk across on the dry sea bed in mighty victory. The same Red Sea that divided for the Jews to escape Egypt was also used by God to destroy the Egyptian army who pursued them! The Jews have celebrated this miraculous event ever since!

More currently, the anti-Semitic threats continue to escalate in Ukraine. As the Russians seek to gain a firmer foothold over the Ukraine, growing numbers of Jews in that region are desiring to leave the country and flee to Israel. This continues to show the accuracy of the prophetic Scriptures which show how Jewish immigration to their ancient homeland of Israel will increase dramatically in the latter days. An article in the *Blaze* shows the great rise in concern among Ukrainian Jews leading many to conclude that they should flee to Israel.

An Israeli newspaper is reporting that 70% of Ukraine's Jewish community is now considering emigrating to Israel and that many are "flooding" the Israeli consulate to secure immigration visas in order to flee the country.

This follows reports earlier this week that Jewish leaders in Odessa have put together an evacuation plan should anti-Semitic displays in the embattled Eastern European country escalate.

Rabbi Avraham Wolf, who has served as chief rabbi of Odessa and southern Ukraine for 22 years, told the *Yedioth Ahronoth Daily* that the emigration demand is unprecedented.

"We experienced years of starvation and wars, and in all of those years I haven't heard so much talk about making aliyah [moving to Israel] as I do now," he said.

"It's a phenomenon the likes of which we haven't seen since the massive immigration from the Soviet Union in the early 90s. For several months now that the economy here is being crushed and the sense of security is at the lowest level it could get," Rabbi Wolf said... While the violence currently gripping Odessa is centered on Russian-Ukrainian rivalries, the Jewish community is concerned about being eventually targeted in light of Ukraine's extensive history of anti-Semitism.

Since the unrest began in Ukraine, there have been reports of anti-Jewish incidents including the fire-bombing of a synagogue, the defacement of a Holocaust memorial and the distribution of leaflets ordering Jews to register their religion, their property and to pay a fine, a document that was later characterized as a provocation.

Over the weekend, 19 Jews from Ukraine landed in Israel with the intent to stay.

Daria Granovsky, a 23-year-old Jewish woman who arrived in Israel on Sunday said, "There has not been much violence yet where I live in Kiev, but the troubles are getting worse and worse every day and you could sense it was coming our way." "Anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi groups were already on the rise in The Ukraine even before the current political crisis erupted, and many Jews no longer feel safe there and are preparing to leave for Israel," the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem posted on its website.

The group says it has "over recent decades" helped some 42,000 Jews move to Israel from Ukraine, including those who arrived on Sunday. The Jewish Agency which provides services to Jews wishing to move to Israel reported last week that 777 new immigrants had arrived in Israel from Ukraine since the beginning of this year, a 142% increase compared with the same time period last year. Those fleeing Odessa in particular increased three-fold, the Jewish Agency noted on its blog, while 200 additional immigrants have registered in Ukraine for flights to Israel this month. (*The Blaze*, "Ukrainian Jews Reportedly 'Flooding' Israeli Consulate to Get Out of Country," May 7, 2014)



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Pro-Russian soldiers on a tank in eastern Ukraine where leaflets ordering Jews to register has added to tensions

## Neglect Of Support For Prophecy And Israel Among Christian Ministries

Many Scriptures assure us that God will reassemble the Jews and restore them to their land in the latter days. (Isaiah 27:12; 43:5-7; Jeremiah 12:15; Ezekiel 20:42, 28:25-26). So many today are willfully disregarding or re-interpreting these prophecies through Replacement Theology. Do they arrogantly believe that the Church, especially through the work of their own particular ministries are actually a replacement for God's work in Israel? Growing numbers of preachers and teachers ignore the prophetic Scriptures about the coming of the Lord and of God's amazing work in Israel today. I believe Satan is behind this deceptive neglect of Bible prophecy in preaching today. Worldly philosophy and morality as well as the social-gospel is becoming the focus of the latter day church in America!

Satan is seeking to intimidate Christian ministries to keep them away from prophecy. He is being successful! Today we hear much about people who go to heaven and back, but little or nothing about the coming of the Lord from heaven! The devil will encourage thousands to gather to these shallow preachers and ministries to keep these false teachers off the prophecy track. There are still those, however, who will support the Jews, and still seek to strengthen Israel, and to even testify strongly about the coming of the Lord! Strong support for Israel is needed today! Preachers and ministries should repent of their willful neglect of the Cross of Christ and the coming of the Lord to rapture the Church. Revelation 12 speaks of a coming time, after the rapture of the Church, when Satan will go out in great wrath on the earth in the latter days to destroy Israel and the Jews with one last diabolical pogrom. It is important that we not neglect warning of these coming days!

## Earthquakes And Diseases On The Rise!

As a further indication of the Lord's imminent return, it is intriguing how many earthquakes there have been around the world in recent days. On April 18, there were reports of a 7.2 earthquake in Mexico City, also, there was a quake in Los Angeles, California, and Tokyo experienced a 4.7 earthquake recently. Also a 5.1 quake hit southern Iran. A small quake, a 2.7, hit Mount Vernon, Ill. Also, a strong earthquake struck off the Solomon Islands. A 6.0-magnitude quake was recorded in recent weeks at 6:13 p.m. Hawaii time 76 miles west-southwest of Lata, Solomon Islands at a depth of 6.2 miles, according to the U.S. Geological Survey." More earthquakes have been reported yesterday, May 9 in Chile, near Santa Cruz, an earthquake of magnitude 5 struck southern Pakistan injuring 70 and killing one. Also, the same day, the Philippines experienced an earthquake just off the coast. (*Rapture Ready News*) Reports of new diseases are also on the rise. For example, a new strain of the Ebola virus has been reported in Guinea and is already taking lives. The Ebola "is a virus that kills 9 out of 10 people it infects, and for which there is no treatment or vaccine, meaning the only way to stop it spreading is through prevention." (*Medical News Today*, April 2, 2014)



The Ebola virus kills 9 out of 10 people it infects, and there is no treatment or vaccine

The Lord Jesus Christ predicted that there would come an obvious time in the world when "***nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. and there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.***" (*Matthew 24:7*) People who glibly respond that these things have always happened do

not understand the movement of history and are showing their willful ignorance of Biblical and prophetic history.

What we see now in Ukraine, in Crimea, and what is going to happen in other countries on which Russia sets its sights, is very likely in preparation for Russia's future attack on Israel. This assault on the Jewish nation will occur along with the help of Iran and other Muslim nations. The prophecies of Ezekiel predicts this attack. (Ezekiel 38-39)

### **Israel's Enemies And The Latter Days**

Ezekiel begins his prophecy with an incredible vision of the power, presence and providence of God over His people Israel as well as over all the nations. (Ezekiel 1) The central chapters of Ezekiel deal with the horrible love affair that the world has with the occult and false religions. The latter part of Ezekiel describes the latter days when Russia and the Islamic nations will attack Israel, while some countries, like the U.S., will passively look on. Ezekiel shows how God will intervene at the right time and destroy these attacking armies. (Ezekiel 38-39) Additionally, the book of Daniel (9-12), gives great insight as to how the Antichrist will rise to power after this Russian attack and supernatural defeat! Ezekiel, in the closing chapters of his book of prophecies, describes the amazing beauty and proportions of the Millennial Temple and the new expanded borders of Israel at the return of Jesus Christ to the earth! (Ezekiel 40-48)

Many mock at the teaching that Jesus is coming back! Peter predicted this mocking attitude in his second letter. He said that this mocking attitude will be the result of "**scoffers who will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming?'**" (2 Peter 3:3-4) Especially disturbing to me, even more unsettling than these anti-Semitic measures in the Ukraine, is the reality that current well-known preachers are deliberately avoiding the subject of Bible prophecy and of coming judgment! Yet the fervent preaching of the Lord's coming will always result in believers who are strong in faith and who will be active witnesses for Jesus. Preaching on the coming of the Lord will produce Christians who are actively walking in truth and holiness until the Lord comes to rapture the Church. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Peter 3:14-18).

This recent outbreak of anti-Semitism in Ukraine is an encouragement for us to be all the more prepared for the Lord's soon return. The rise of global anti-Semitism is why we should take seriously the Bible's command to watch for the Lord's coming. Jesus said that we do not know when He will return, that is, as far as the day or the hour. Jesus said: "**Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.**" (Matthew 25:13) This keeps the devil in the dark where he belongs. But all Christians are to watch for Him! As we watch Israel and how the world grows in its hatred for the Jew, we can be all the more assured that we are in the last days!

Jesus will return first to rapture His Church suddenly and without warning to heaven. Then the Great Tribulation will come upon the earth! This will be a horrible time that you can escape if you have trusted in Jesus Christ as your Savior. "**Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.**" (Matthew 24:44)

## **The Church Today** - The Christian's Walk in the Latter days

### **America, On Borrowed Time!**

America's top leadership from the President on down have given the green light to aborting unborn children by the thousands and to those who want to redefine the biblical definition of marriage. We have watched in almost total unbelief as an out of control federal government has hidden truth about Islamic Terrorism in the Benghazi cover-up and denied religious freedom through the recent IRS scandal. Also, we have witnessed how America's military chaplains have been given their "marching orders" never to use the name Jesus Christ in their prayers and definitely not to communicate the very truth that Jesus taught: ***"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)*** So deeply has the spirit of unbelief permeated our American culture that even the recently released movie, "The Son of God" deletes from the mouth of the actor that plays Jesus the second half of that verse!

#### **The Example of the Drifting American Church**

Today, following the trends of American unbelief and compromise toward God, most big name Christian publishers in America resist publishing books on biblical prophecy, or to deal in any real way with the problem of sin in America and in the American Church. This is because a new form of "Evangelicalism" and new type of Evangelical leadership is being systematically and effectively promoted in American Christianity. This new type of Christian leadership is light on the use of Scripture in preaching and publications. Generally this new Evangelical leadership approach views teaching on issues relating to the Second Coming as a waste of time.

Satan is busy today corrupting the seed of the Word by deceiving the sowers of the Word. Often, this new Evangelical leadership methodology even uses a new form of biblical interpretation (hermeneutics) called "*preunderstanding*." This is a new way to approach the interpretation of the Bible that seeks to make the Scripture say what the speaker thinks it should say, not necessarily what it actually does say. Among this new type of evangelical leadership today is a growing anti-Israel, pro social-gospel sentiment. Many are supporters of the so-called Two-State Solution in Israel which is a slap in the face of God who declared His unconditional covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3!

#### **The Example of the Half-Hearted American Christian**

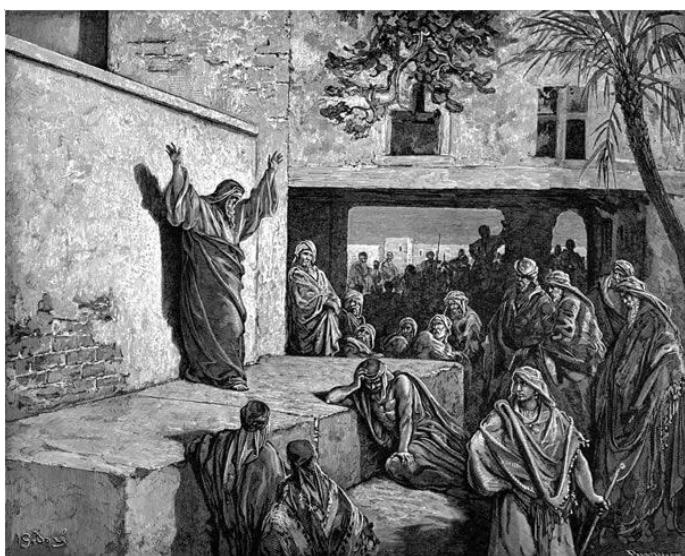
Satan not only hinders the sower, and corrupts the seed of the Word, but he is also busy "impoverishing the soil." (Bounds, Guide to Spiritual Warfare, p. 34) Therefore, I believe that America is on borrowed time! Everywhere we see crosses being taken down. But this is permitted to happen outwardly only because the cross and God have already been removed from the hearts of supposed Christian citizens in America who elect liberal and pro-abortion politicians and who praise the unbiblical and compromising teachings of many of Americas false prophets! I speak of the preachers who are mainly interested in acceptance and popularity. These Christian leaders have systematically and successfully kept the American Christian distracted from understanding the times (2 Chronicles 12:32) through their "purpose driven," psycho-theological and shallow slogans. Many have willingly bought into their theologically shallow form of Christian faith. This is happening while Satan has infiltrated the land through the promotion of the most rank forms of moral laxity and deviancy. (Romans 1:24-32) This digression of moral conviction has heavily influenced the direction of elections in the land. People are placing deniers of God's Word into places of leadership because of what they will give them. These are liberal and often Marxist/Atheistic leaders who have been given the most powerful political seats of government as well as the denominational seats of Christian/religious leadership, media and publishing houses.

## The Example Of The Social-Gospel Over The Saving-Gospel

One clear indication that this has happened is the avoidance of prophetic preaching and writing that has evidenced itself in America for the past 30 years. There is far more interest in teaching on leadership self-affirmation, self-promotion than there is in teaching about how to truly walk righteously in the world while we look for the coming of Christ. The doctrine of the coming of the Lord is to be kept before believers in these latter days to encourage us to deny "**ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.**" (*Titus 2:12*) Pastors across America, through neglect of the doctrine of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, are more concerned with helping people feel ok about living in this present world and working to improve it, than in exhorting them to discern sin and to live pure and separated lives before God. They are fearful of confronting those who want the culture to redefine marriage or to not condemn promiscuous life-styles. Further, in the American Church today, there are growing numbers who will be very spiritual and demonstrative in worship yet will happily cast a vote for Political leaders that are the most virulent supporters of abortion and immoral lifestyles!

It seems that the days of sound teaching and sound and courageous believers are for the most part gone in America! The love of God for lost sinners is often not being spoken of in truth. Many are re-focusing their preaching on correcting social ills over preaching the gospel of salvation. Often this re-focus arises through believing that Jesus only died for a limited number and God will get them saved one way or another, so we should work in more practical ways to "help people." Yet, Jesus commanded His Church to "**preach the gospel to every creature.**" (*Mark 16:16*) God's specific will is to "**have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**" (*1 Timothy 2:4*)

This change in the Church's assigned purpose, is to a more "purpose driven" emphasis as defined by man's social-gospel. What used to be commonly known as sin is now viewed as enlightened and liberated behavior. What used to be spoken of in America's pulpits and church class rooms as evil is now promoted as good, and that which was preached as good is now viewed as evil! Satan has certainly deceived today's smooth talking prophets and has put lies into their mouths. (2 Kings 22:22) The prophets of the Old Testament clearly warned any nation that a curse would come through such reversal of moral and theological truth: "**Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!**" (*Isaiah 5:20*) The words of E. M. Bounds will help us put this social-gospel over God's saving-gospel approach to ministry into perspective:



Micah exhorts Israel to repent of their sins (Micah 4)

To save society is a kind of religious fad to which much enterprising church work is committed...The phrase 'to save the world' has a pompous sound. It seems right for the church to apply itself to bettering the temporal surroundings of the individual and improving his sanitary conditions, to lessen the bad smells that greet his nose, to diminish the bacteria in his water, and to put granite in the pavement for him to walk on instead of wood or brick. All this sounds fine and agrees well with a material age. It becomes practical in operation and provides obvious, imposing results. But does this agree with the sublime dignity and essential aim of the church (which is to preach the gospel)? (E. M. Bonds, Guide to Spiritual Warfare, p. 53)

Amazingly, E. M. Bounds, who seems to have his finger upon the pulse of the current evangelical church actually discerned these trends over one hundred years ago when he first wrote these words of warning. He certainly attributed this as apostasy in the latter day church. He warned that this approach of allowing Satan and man to direct the ministry and methodology of the Church rather than the Scripture and the Holy Spirit will result in Christ no longer being in the church. There would then be: "no crucifixion of self, no crucifixion of the world, no second coming of Christ, no eternal judgment, no everlasting hell, no eternal heaven. Nothing is left that reminds us of God because everything reeks of man." (pp. 49-50)

### **The Example of Nineveh**

When Jonah went to Nineveh to warn them of impending doom for their sins, they repented. God spared them for another century. But they went back to sin and God destroyed them. America was founded upon the moral, governmental, judicial and ethical principles of the Bible as well as the wise teachings of men who definitely were not anti-biblical. These were men and some amazing women and many people of different races and national and cultural backgrounds, from Plymouth to the Revolution and the Constitutional Convention and beyond, who stood together to affirm the truth that there is a God to Whom we are accountable. Again, those raised up by God in the settling and founding of America were people who were highly motivated by a desire for freedom to worship the one true God and to serve Him without fear of molestation by an atheistic and overreaching government. They were men (and women) who were wise in applying the precepts of the Bible to the founding of a great nation under God.

In these days of trial, growing governmental tyranny and rising ecclesiastical compromise and apostasy, we need to remember what Jesus said to His faithful servants who anticipated His soon return: ***"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over His household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when He comes, will find so doing (being faithful to the Master's truth). Assuredly, I say to you that He will make him ruler over all His goods." (Matthew 24:45-47)*** Some are pointing to the four blood moons which astronomers predict will come in 2014-2015. We hear preachers say that this means that something is about to happen! The fact is, the Word of God has been showing us through prophecy for centuries what we should look for in the latter days as signs. We can affirm based on the Word of God that something is about to happen! God does not look lightly on Americas' sins and a time of reckoning is indeed at hand! We can be certain that God has deposited plenty of dependable and understandable Biblical prophecies that make the reality of impending judgment on America undeniable. Americas' sins are signs enough for us to know that judgment is coming to this nation. And unless we listen to the prophets of the Bible and repent as a nation, judgment will continue and will end in the complete demise of America.

A growing anti-Semitic attitude within the American Evangelical Church indicates that we are indeed living on borrowed time as a nation. Now is the time to trust in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and to take a stand for truth in a time of rampant compromise. I believe that all of the indicators of the soon coming of the Lord show that the rapture of His true Church is at hand.

### **The Example of the Genuine American Christian**

What should be the Christian's attitude in these latter days? We should not be intimidated by the powers of evil because we already have the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:37-39) According to A.W. Tozer:

The days when the Christian should meekly apologize is over. He (or she) can get the world's attention not by trying to please, but by boldly declaring the truth of divine revelation. He can make himself heard not by compromise, but by taking the affirmative and sturdily declaring, "Thus saith the LORD" (Exodus 4:22).

Whatever the world does in the years ahead, and whatever happens among mankind, true Christians have no cause for worry. They are safe forever by a covenant of blood and are dearer to God than the apple of His eyes. No night can be dark enough to put out their light, no fire hot enough to burn them, no flood severe enough to drown them on their journey. The winds and waves are their friends and the stars in their courses fight for them. God is at their right hand, and they shall not be moved.

Let us then face tomorrow with praise and song; let us live in a state of perpetual worship. For are we not kept by the power of God 'unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time?' (1 Peter 1:5) And the "last time" may be nearer than we think. (Tozer, A.W., This World: Playground or Battleground?, p. 9)

If only Christians, preachers, and government leaders would take the clear warnings of the prophecies of the Scriptures and apply them to our day as they were intended. I pray that they will and that God's people will love, serve and watch for the Lord again, as the Bible teaches that we should, and take seriously the Words of the Lord:

***"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."***

***(Revelation 22:12)***

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