



Prophecy in Perspective

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An Email Newsletter

Our Times - *Prophecy in current events*

What a privilege to live in a day when we are actually witnessing the exciting fulfillment of Bible prophecy. The Word of God foretells coming events, some of which are wonderful and others are downright scary! For example, while the Scriptures predict "**earthquakes in divers places**" (Matthew 24:7) we are astounded at the increase of geologic upheavals seen today in volcanic activity in both Chile and Australia which are grounding flights in the Southern Hemisphere.

One of the wonderful prophecies that can peak our sense of joy of the Lord's future presence in Jerusalem foretells of "living waters" that "shall go out from Jerusalem," "half" to the east into the Dead Sea and "half" to the west into the Mediterranean Sea. (Zechariah 14:8) Interestingly, there is a recent report of the discovery of the largest underground river ever found under Jerusalem. Could the Lord be reminding us how He is truly our "living water" and that He will be faithful to supply the needs of His people? Jesus says to us today: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink...out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (John 7:37-38)

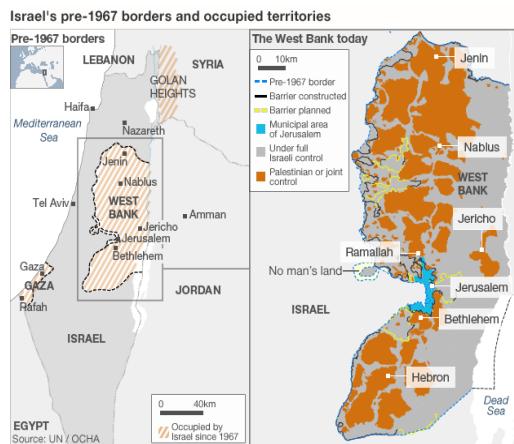
And as our main focus for this issue of *Prophecy in Perspective* let's look at how Jeremiah 30:37 encourages Israel, and should be an encouragement to all Christians, that God will one day restore the Jews to their homeland when it states: "**Behold, I will gather them out of all countries where I have driven them in My anger, in My fury, and in great wrath; I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely.**" We have witnessed the miraculous and steady return of the Jews to their land since the re-birth of the nation of Israel in 1948 by a UN declaration.

Unfortunately, this was one of only a few times when the UN made a positive declaration concerning the nation of Israel. Today, however, is an entirely different story. It is very likely that, come this September, the UN will declare Palestine a separate and independent state based on the pre-1967 borders. This will effectively shrink Israel down to a size that will be for all practical purposes indefensible against her enemies that have sworn to bring about the tiny nation's total destruction.

Through a little investigation we discover that Palestinian leadership, heavily influenced by terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah, for the past two years, have been actively seeking the support of the members of the UN Security Council to recommend an affirmative vote on Palestinian statehood by UN member nations when they convene this September. Now we can better understand why President Obama stated on May 19, 2011 that he believes Israel should be willing to return to their pre-1967 borders if peace negotiations are to continue. It sounds as though he is laying down an ultimatum to Israel which could also double as cover for him if the U.S. does not block the upcoming UN vote in September. It will appear to be Israel's own fault if peace does not happen.

In an article by the BBC we see that plans are well under way for the fiat declaration of the statehood of Palestine by the UN. And where the United States will stand in this decision is highly in question. The BBC report, as of last update at the time of this writing, at 5:00 pm ET, June 16, 2011 reads as follows: (also see the map)

Late last year, Palestinian officials began pursuing a new diplomatic strategy: asking individual countries to recognize a Palestinian state within 1967 borders. Now they want the UN to do the same. This would entitle them to full member state representation at the UN, where the Palestine Liberation Organization currently has only observer status. ***It could also have political implications allowing Palestinians greater access to international courts where they could possibly launch legal action to challenge the occupation of territory by Israel. (bold italicized added)***



The 15-member UN Security Council needs to recommend statehood to the General Assembly. If it does, then a vote on membership by its 192 members could take place on 20 September. Approval requires a two-thirds majority- or 128 votes. Currently 116 countries are said to recognize Palestine but the Palestinians hope they would gain the support of up to 150.



Palestinians believe over two-thirds of the General Assembly would recognize their statehood.

The US is the main obstacle to a General Assembly vote because it has veto power as a permanent Security Council member. In February, the US vetoed a resolution, which was co-sponsored by 130 countries, condemning Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories as an obstacle to peace. This time around, the Palestinians are hoping to persuade the US to at least abstain. (From, BBC Mobile, News Middle East, "Q&A: Palestinian Statehood Bid at the UN" June 16, 2011)

If Palestinian statehood is affirmed, it will mean that the United States, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council will have either abstained or voted in favor of recommending its passage. I believe, if this is granted, the likelihood of war in the region will rise dramatically. The prospects for the nations that choose to provoke Israel to fight will find themselves in a desperate situation. It is predicted in Ps 83 that nations will attack Israel which will bring about their own destruction. Other prophecies indicate that more battles against Israel will follow. These will result in the destruction of the attacking Muslim and Communist nations. Yet while these wars are prophesied, it would be unfortunate for the U.S. unwittingly to become complicit with Israel's enemies in setting up the situation where these wars would take place. **As I have stated, I believe that the greatest prospects for peace in the region is for America to take a clear position in favor of Israel's sovereignty to keep its existing borders and to be able to defend them.**

We should watch with great interest to see if President Obama will firmly stand with Israel. Christians should intercede for him and pray that he will humbly seek God's Word and wisdom in all of his dealings with Israel. I believe that this could lead to his fully and truly trusting in Israel's Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, as his personal Savior. As of this writing, Mr. Obama still supports the Palestinian position of Israel's returning to its pre-1967 borders. This position has ominous implications for Israel's defensibility and ultimately their very existence. Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has admirably defended his nation's right to maintain these borders in the interest of Israel's self-defense. (See *Prophecy in Perspective* Newsletter for 6-3-11)

In view of the clear teachings of prophetic Scripture, there is only one direction for the U. S. to take regarding her policies toward Israel and regarding any real effort to seek the peace of the region: That is a policy of full and

unqualified support for the nation of Israel to decide all of its affairs. The days of the United States being a neutral umpire trying to settle disputes between Israel and his enemies are long past, and should be! I believe America has incurred many retributive and disciplinary judgments for our misguided and egotistical attempts to persuade Israel to give up its land. God deeded this land, all of it, to Abraham in His unconditional covenant with him and his descendants, the Jews. God declared to Abraham: ***"Go forth...to the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse..." (Genesis 11:3)***

Therefore, our stand as a nation needs to be strong, resolute and consistent if God is going to be merciful to the U.S. I believe other nations will follow America's lead if we take such a stand. Again, the most effective way to achieve any lasting peace in the mid-east is for all the nations who are plotting against Israel to see that the United States fully supports Israel and their right of existence, self-governance, and self-defense.

Upward Call- Our walk in view of prophecy

Jesus wanted us to understand the general times and trends which would signal His return. The key is to keep our eyes on Israel. Bible Prophecy focuses on the Jew and the nation of Israel. Jesus **first** gave us a warning as to events surrounding the re-establishment of Israel as a nation and, second of general world wide-corruption and upheaval of the creation.

First, in Matthew 24:32-34, Jesus distinctly said that we should ***"learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; even so you too, when you (referring to future believers, and Israel) recognize these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. Truly I say to you, this generation ("race," or, the Jewish people alive at the time of the "fig leaves" becoming tender) will not pass away until all these things take place."*** I believe that these words refer to our own day when Israel is re-gathering as a nation and many Jews are expecting the Messiah to come soon!

Second, in Matthew 24: 37-39 Jesus warned that His return will be ***"just like the days of Noah..."*** What was happening in the world in Noah's day? There was growing corruption of humanity and upheaval in the creation! Things degenerated in the days leading up to the great flood to such a horrible state of sin and demonic rebellion that the Bible says in Genesis 6: 5-7, ***"Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thought of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart..."*** And so the Lord determined to destroy the earth with a flood.

Are we witnessing demonic wickedness on the earth today at unprecedented levels? I believe we are! While most are seeking to put together a new world order by human effort we are to know that only the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ will bring true world peace. Our Lord cautioned us to watch for these things and He desires us to understand the times and for us to walk in such a way before the world that the lost will take notice of the Lord living in and through us. As we lift up the Lord in our lives and testimony, the Lord will draw the lost to Himself in these latter days (John 12:32).

The Church Today - Doctrine and prophecy today

The year 1948 was significant in that it was the year of the re-birth of Israel. Yet, 1948 was also the year of the birth of the Ecumenical Movement and the World Council of Churches. I believe this was the official start of the global church of the latter days predicted in Revelation 17. It is interesting to me that these two happened the same year: the re-birth of Israel, and the birth of the ecumenical global church. There is no coincidence here, because the false church has been one of the biggest persecutors of the Jews for centuries. And she is persecuting Israel today. The ecumenical church, as represented by the WCC today habitually sides with Israel's enemies. They are generally, pro-choice, anti-traditional marriage and family, pro-Palestinian, pro-global government. They reject the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture, the need for salvation through faith, and the existence of hell.

In Revelation 17:1 we read of a ***"great harlot"*** that ***"sits upon many waters."*** Here is the description of apostate Christendom. It looks churchly and sounds religious, but at heart it is full of corruption spiritually, morally and politically. In verse 2 we see that this is a **global church**, because the harlot "sits upon many waters," (verse 1), and ***"with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."*** This speaks of the global influence and power of this latter day false church. In verse 3 we read the description of the ecumenical and false church as that of a ***"woman (sitting) upon a scarlet colored beast full***

of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." This indicates that the Antichrist will help empower the global church, at least until he destroys the Harlot when he is through using her (Revelation 17:16). I believe the spirit of Antichrist is already at work in "mystery" form behind the rise of the ecumenical church. This global false church, plainly pictured in the WCC is the religious Babylon of the latter days. Therefore she is called descriptively: "**Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth.**"(verses 4-5)

We can recall how the original purpose of Nimrod, in attempting to establish Babylon, recorded in Genesis 11, was to gather all people under one great religious and political kingdom with the tower of Babel as the symbol.

Interestingly, the European Union's symbol today is the unfinished tower with the slogan: "Europe, many tongues, one voice." The rebellious spirit of Babel has continued through the centuries! It has always sought to compromise and confuse truth. Here is what A.W. Tozer writes about this global church, also known as the Ecumenical Movement:

The seventeenth chapter of Revelation tells about that great mystery the Babylonian, the great mother of harlots, the abomination of the earth. ***This harlot has children.*** She not only is a harlot but ***she is the mother of other harlots***, and ***these harlots are nothing else than apostate churches*** claiming the name of the Lord but not living the truth of the Lord.



I am not a good enough prophet to know what direction things are going to take. But I do know that I hear strange things in evangelical circles these days. I hear people ***rethinking*** things. We are ***rethinking inspiration***; we are ***rethinking the deity of Christ***; we are ***rethinking sin***; we are ***rethinking morals*** and trying to equate it with what they call morays, or habits and customs, of certain cultures. We have gone to anthropology and have learned that what is a sin in one country is not necessarily so in another and, therefore, we Christians have to accept whatever is there. ***We are rethinking things.*** We are even ***rethinking whether God created the heavens and the earth, and man after His own image.***

The evangelicals are now rethinking things that evangelicals took for granted a generation ago. So I do not know what direction we are going to go from here. But I believe ***we ought to obey the Word of God and withdraw from all that deny it in any fashion.*** (Reclaiming Christianity, A.W. Tozer, pp. 69-70)

We see through Scripture that God always keeps Israel and the Church distinct. God has a purpose for Israel and a purpose for the Church. The true Church will be raptured off the earth when Jesus comes in the clouds (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). This can happen any day or any hour. Israel will be left on the earth with the Gentiles to go through the Great Tribulation. After the rapture, the Devil will be in a better position to destroy Israel with no resistance from the Holy Spirit empowered true Church. He is laying the ground work today through corrupted church organizations like the WCC. I believe he is getting the false church that will be left after the rapture ready to use as a tool to persecute the Jews. Remember, Israel had their re-birth in 1948, and the false ecumenical church had, in a very real way, its birth in the start of the World Council of Churches, also in 1948. Coincidence? I do not think so.

So, as true believers and members of the one true, blood bought, Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, let's stay vigilant, virtuous and victorious, through Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit, a Holy sanctification and separation from all that is false. Let's be about the business of leading people to salvation in Christ through preaching the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). Finally, let's surrender to the Lord and maintain a full commitment to witness for Jesus Christ through every area of our lives. Setting forth the truth of His cross, resurrection, and coming, may we do what He commanded when He said: "***Occupy until I come!***" (Luke 19:13)

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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. Also, you can purchase his latest book, "Good News From a Far Country", a study in the book of Daniel [\$15] by contacting him.)