



Prophecy in Perspective

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An Email Newsletter

Our Times - Prophecy in current events

Continuing to follow trends in the Middle East as they concern Israel, I was just re-reading Numbers this week and was amazed to see how pertinent the prophecies of Balaam are to Israel's present day conflicts with her enemies. You may recall how the King of Moab, Balak, attempted to hire the prophet Balaam to curse Israel (Numbers 23-25). Let's look at some of these prophecies of Balaam and see how they speak to the situation in the Middle East today.

Balak, the king of Moab was threatened by Israel. Israel camped in the plains of Moab. This made the Moabites very nervous because the people of Israel were so numerous. Numbers 22:3 says that "Moab was in dread of the sons of Israel." So Balak, plotted to destroy them. To do this, he sought the help of a prophet of God whose name was Balaam. King Balak showed Balaam the encamped nation of Israel from different locations. He asked Balaam repeatedly to pronounce a curse on Israel. When Balaam asked God to tell him what he should say in response to Balak's requests, the Lord, "put a word in Balaam's mouth and said, 'Return to Balak, and you shall speak thus.'" (Numbers 23:5) Here is what God spoke to the heathen king of Moab which was a part of what today is Jordan:

"How shall I curse, whom God has not cursed? And how can I denounce, whom the Lord has not denounced? As I see him (Israel) from the top of the rocks, And I look at him from the hills; Behold, a people who dwells apart, and shall not be reckoned among the nations..." (Numbers 23:8-9)

Balaam was only a half-hearted prophet for hire. Yet God spoke truth through him to Balak and to all the nations that would have designs against Israel. When God first called out Abraham, and when the Lord preserved Israel through their Egyptian bondage, and as He brought them out from there victoriously, the Lord of Hosts demonstrated that He meant what He said. He will protect His people, the Jews. Let the nations beware how they treat Israel! The Lord has methods of paying back the mistreatment of the Jews in ways that may not be readily apparent to the masses or to the administrations that happen to be in power. But to the wise, the discerning and the humble, the judgments are clear. It is our responsibility as believers in Jesus Christ to sound the warning to those who are speaking and acting unwisely toward America's friend and ally, the nation of Israel. This is clear from additional words which God spoke through the prophecies of Balaam. I believe it would be good for us to familiarize ourselves with God's unchangeable declarations regarding Israel through the prophecies of Balaam:

Then he took up his discourse and said, "Arise, O Balak, and hear; Give ear to me, O son of Zippor! God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, hat He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? Behold, I have received a command to bless; When He has blessed, then I cannot revoke it.

He has not observed misfortune in Jacob; Nor has He seen trouble in Israel; The LORD his God is with him, And the shout of a king is among them. God brings them out of Egypt, He is for them like the horns of the wild ox. For there is no omen against Jacob, Nor is there any divination against Israel; At the proper time it shall be said to Jacob And to Israel, what God has done! Behold, a people rises like a lioness, And as a lion it lifts itself; It will not lie down until it devours the prey, And drinks the blood of the slain." (Numbers 23:18-24)

We may be sure that God will never go back on His Word for Israel, nor for believers in Jesus Christ! While many plan and plot against the Lord and His Anointed (Psalm 2:2), the Lord assures us: **"I will not break off My lovingkindness from him (Israel)...Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. His descendants shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established forever..." (Psalm 89:35-37)**

Yet we are receiving word that the Palestinians have officially decided to seek statehood status for themselves this September from the United Nations which will be based on the pre-1967 borders. This will push Jordan's territory well into the nation of Israel. This

will almost certainly result in all out war. Interestingly, the ancient enemies of Israel: Moab, Ammon, and Edom were all a part of what is now the nation of Jordan. The Lord will honor the person, church, and nation that will support Israel and Bible based ministries to Israel. We note an article from *Israel Today* magazine which states:

While UN General Assembly votes are not legally binding, the Palestinian resolution is expected to be adopted by such an overwhelming majority as to cause serious problems for Israel. The resolution calls for recognition of a Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 armistice lines, which would put all of Judea and Samaria and the eastern half of Jerusalem in Arab hands. **Mahmoud Abbas reminded Obama that he, too, called on Israel to make peace based on the pre-1967 lines. As such, Abbas insisted the White House has no reason to oppose the Palestinian statehood bid. (Israel Today, Monday, June 27, 2011)**



Mahmoud Abbas, "Israel Today" Magazine



Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu
(NBC News Interview)

Please Pray for Prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to stand firm against international pressure as well as pressure from his own people to give in to demands to compromise on Israel's borders as well as to ease up on his resistance to Palestinian statehood. God is able to fulfill His Word to preserve Israel, but He definitely utilizes the earnest prayers of the saints to realize His will on the earth. (Matthew 6:10)

Upward Call - How to walk in view of Prophecy

What should be our attitude today in view of world events shaping up the way they are? I believe we should spend a great deal of time in intercessory prayer and systematic Bible study. We should seek to walk as the new creations that we are, living holy before God, and pleasant and loving before people. We need to keep our lives as pure as possible, uncomplicated by wrong and unforgiving attitudes. We should seek to be faithful to lead the lost to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Our walk and talk should reflect our belief in the truth that Jesus Christ is returning at any moment to take us home to be with Him. Many Christians believe they are better witnesses for Christ if they act like the world and do the things that the world does. Yet, God honors our separation from the world's parties, entertainment, drinking, and moral compromises. John tells us: **"Do not love the world or the things that are in the world." (1 John 5:15)** And Paul encourages us in 1 Thessalonians 5:6, **"Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober."** He also tells us in Ephesians 5:15-16, **"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."** A great example of this kind of walk is that of Enoch, of whom the Bible says: "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."

The Church Today - Doctrine and Prophecy Today

The Bible says that "in the latter days, perilous times will come: **"For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud..." (2 Timothy 3:1f)** In this latter day, a covetous spirit tends to focus more on who and how many are gathered in worship instead of on God Whom we are called together to adore. Genuine worship will come only through a genuine heart for God. And the more selfless the individual believer, the more God-focused will be the worshipful and humble praise of the gathered saints. Instead, as predicted by the Bible, we see among growing numbers of the clergy today more emphasis on leadership **"as being Lords over those entrusted"** to them rather than on being pastors who **"shepherd the flock of God... being examples to the flock"** in transparency and truth. (1 Peter 5:2-3)

The Bible further predicts an increasingly deteriorating commitment to truth in the churches: **"But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (2 Timothy 3:14)** With these and many other prophetic warnings before us we should not be surprised at the development of what has been aptly termed: **Chrislam**. Chrislam is a term that describes a trend that seeks in various ways to combine the teachings of Christianity with those of Islam. Rick Warren, whose teachings have become increasingly suspect over the years is certainly promoting this mindset. One source states that Warren "addressed the convention of the Islamic Society of North America. Warren Stated that Muslims and Christians must work together to combat stereotypes, promote peace and freedom, and solve global problems. (nowtheendbegins.com, newsletter) In a speech to Muslims, Warren stated: "Before we shake your hand in responding to your letter, we ask forgiveness of the All-Merciful One and of the Muslim community around the world." (as quoted from NTEB, <http://www.nowtheendbegins.com/blog/?p=1366>) On June 26, 2011, many

churches in America participated in ecumenical services promoting ties between Christianity and Islam. They incorporated readings from both the Bible and the Quran. (see: faithshared.org)

Notice Warren's free, and I consider blasphemous, use of the Quranic name for God, "All-Merciful One." This is the Islamic god that, according to the Quran, does not even have a son and that considers the doctrine of the Trinity blasphemous! Did God send Jesus to establish the Church or Islam? Certainly not both! Joshua said:

"And if it seems evil to **you** to serve the LORD, **choose for yourselves this day** whom **you** will serve, whether the gods which **your** fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land **you** dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:15)

The Quran denies that Jesus is the Son of God. It also denies that Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose again from the dead. The Quran also teaches that it is virtuous to hope for the destruction of the Jews and all who deny the religion of Islam. By favorably including readings from the Quran these churches are denying the Lord Jesus Christ! Pray for the pastors of these churches either to get right with God or get out of the ministry! Peter writes about these when he said: "...**having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!**" (2 Timothy 3:5)

As Christians we are called to walk in truth (3 John 1:4). Yet many are being too casual about Jesus Christ. The world takes Him lightly. We who have been bought by His blood should never take Jesus lightly or be casual about Him before others. In 2 Corinthians 6:14 Paul admonishes the believers in that church with the words: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." We do this when we compromise in our hearts and actions with sin, fleshly activities, and with unbiblical convictions. Paul then asks five questions about the commitment of the Corinthian Christians that we should ask ourselves as the Church living in the latter days:

1. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? As Christians, we are declared righteous by God when we trust in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. He is righteous and so are we! But, do our actions and attitudes always reflect this mighty change in us through the indwelling life of the mighty Christ? This mighty indwelling life is a righteous life which comes about when the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the Body of Christ and sets us apart to allow Him to live His life in and through us day by day and moment by moment. There is no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness! The world needs to see Christians who set forth Jesus Christ as Holy!

2. What communion hath light with darkness? The result of being declared the righteousness of God in Christ is true communion. This is the unity of Christ in me and I in Christ along with the unity of each member of the Body of Christ with Him and with one another. We are not one with the world, however. We do not need to be accepted by the world. We are called to be honest and transparent before God, and the Church, and the world. But we should not make it our goal to seek the approval of the world. This is the great Christ-denying error of the ecumenical and emerging church today.

3. What concord hath Christ with Belial? Belial is Satan as the destroyer. This is the only time this word is used for the Devil in the New Testament. I believe that the greatest threat today comes from the destroyer, Belial himself and those who are committed to serve him. Behind all false religions and cults, immorality, and violence in the world today, is the hard work of those who are praying to and serving Satan. We believers in Christ should not have concord, or friendship, with the devil either directly or through theological or moral compromise.

4. What part hath he that believeth with an infidel? An infidel is a determined unbeliever in Jesus Christ. (The Muslims have taken this Biblical reference to a determined unbeliever in Jesus Christ and re-defined it to mean an unbeliever in Mohammed and worthy of death.) Jesus taught and ministered to those who were lost. He distinctly came to search out and save the lost. (Luke 15:4) He loved the lost (John 3:16) and so should we! This love for the lost involved Jesus' spending time with unbelievers. Yet, Jesus never included them or spoke of them as saved unless or until they believed in Him. He did not go to them for advice as to how to carry out His ministry. The infidel, however, is a determined unbeliever who will be bold to influence the Church to become more like himself. Large and popular ministries are being built by following the lead of the infidels in adopting their corporate models and worldly methods. This has resulted in man usurping the authority of Jesus Christ in the Churches. (see A.W. Tozer, "Waning Authority of Christ in The Church"). This distinction and separation between believers and infidels is important for the church today. The ecumenical, emergent, and post-evangelical/post-modern approaches to ministry we are seeing today blur the distinction between the lost and the saved, Scripture and the world. Jesus never blurred that distinction and neither should we!

5. What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? Idols are anything that "**exalts itself against the knowledge of God**" (2 Corinthians 10:5). Paul tells us that we should not have any agreement as the "**temple of God**," the church, with any religious or philosophical "**stronghold**" of untruth or Biblical compromise. Instead we are to use "**the weapons of our warfare**," which are

"mighty in God for pulling down strongholds." Our calling is to cast **"down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ..."** (1 Corinthians 10:3-5). John closes his wonderful and convicting letter of 1 John with the words: **"Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen!"**

Then Paul assures us of the blessings which come through Biblical separation: **"for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."** (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)



Ecumenical service (faithshared.org)

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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.)