

Prophecy in Perspective

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An Email Newsletter

Our Times - Prophecy in current events

The Dangers of Independence from God

We find harsh but sobering words to Israel through the prophet Isaiah in chapter one of that book. Israel was acting independently of God and had rebelled against Him. Does Isaiah chapter one prophetically describe Israel today? As with any people who forget God, there are consequences that will devastate the country. Sad to say that this is the general situation with Israel today. The solution is for Israel to return to God. But Isaiah said: **"My people do not consider." (Isaiah 1:3)** As a nation, Israel does not consider that the problems they are having with their enemies, at root, are not political or military, but spiritual. I believe God is trying to get the attention of His beloved people. Isaiah put the finger on the real problem with Israel's spiritual rebellion and lethargy in his day, which seems all the more true today, with the question: **"Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it" (Isaiah 1:5-6)**. God lovingly but firmly warns His people that their only hope is in their returning to their Creator. This is a message that America disparately needs to hear and heed today: **"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord..."** (Psalm 33:12)

The tendency among US Jews today is to be generally liberal in philosophy and contrary to conservative frames of mind. Consequently, US Jews tend to be ardent supporters of leftist leaders such as President Obama. Perhaps their fear of fascism as many Jews suffered under Hitler has made most of them generally leery of supporting anyone on the right. Yet, this tendency to support left leaning politicians seems to come into stark conflict with their deep concern for the existence and security of Israel. US Jews therefore tend to become embarrassed when President Obama publicly quarrels with the government of Israel. His apparent immaturity and proneness to get angry when not getting his way, is a real problem for Israel, because they are so dependent on America's consistent support for their safety and security. There is here a real double mindedness on the part of US Jews. They have supported a man who is inclined to publically "quarrel" with Israel. The awkwardness of this problem for US Jews really became noticeable when studying the results of a recent poll which sought to find out how US Jews react to President Obama's quarreling with the government of Israel, namely, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu:

Although 83% of respondents support US involvement in peace process, 56% would oppose such activity if it leads to quarrels with Israeli government.

Most Jews in America would **not support** the US playing an active role in the Arab-Israeli conflict **if it meant publicly disagreeing with Israel**, according to a poll conducted for J Street.

The survey of 800 adult American Jews, conducted between July 7 and 12 and released on Thursday, showed that although 83 percent of respondents supported, in general, US active involvement in resolving the conflict, **56% would oppose such activity if it would lead to public quarrels with the Israeli government** (The Jerusalem Post International, Survey of US Jews by Jeremy Sharon, 7-25-11).

Though the Jews would like to avoid the embarrassment of a public quarrel, it seems to me that there is a deeper message. That is: the unwavering support of US Jews for president Obama leaves them in an extremely awkward and dangerous position condoning a President **who is not truly serious about the defense of Israel**. Therefore, US Jews need seriously to ask: "Can we continue to endorse a President whose position regarding Israel's government is consistently and publically adversarial in approach?" And, further they should ask a corollary question: "Won't Obama's public distain for the security policies of Israel as well as disrespect for Prime Minister Netanyahu only serve to embolden Israel's enemies to continue attacking with missiles and other forms of terrorism? Christians should pray that US Jews will seriously consider asking realistic questions such as these as they think about the security and survival of their beloved nation of Israel.



(Photo by Reuters, Jerusalem Post)

Will the US Jews awaken to the reality that they cannot truly support both a leftist President and also hope to keep America solidly behind a strong and stable Israel? The evaluation of Israel from the prophet Isaiah and our evaluation of the present liberal tendencies of God's chosen people, the Jews, seem fearfully consistent today. And it is unlikely to change. Contemporary

Judaism's liberal approach to God and politics will continue to result in a real double mindedness in their political positions that could well make Israel more vulnerable than ever. Supporting American leftist Presidents and political leaders will better embolden Israel's enemies to gain a greater foothold in their efforts to disrupt and destroy God's chosen nation. After all, Daniel predicts how Israel will enter into a covenant with a future ruler, the "**Prince that shall come,**" who will be called the Antichrist. (Daniel 9:26; 1 John 2:18)

It is unfortunate but also sobering to realize that the Jews themselves will be among the major supporters of the future world leader in his opening days (Daniel 9:27). He will diplomatically but deceptively broker a seven year peace for the embattled little nation of Israel. We, as Christians need to pray for the Jews in these days and to offer support in every practical way. We pray that God will awaken them spiritually and lead them to support only those leaders whose policies toward Israel are consistent with Jewish hopes for Israel's safety and prosperity.

Conservatism and Depravity

If anyone believes that conservatism and Christianity always go together, recent events should remind them that all the descendants of Adam are lost and totally depraved. Only those who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior are Christians. Growing Christians will, I believe, eventually move more and more into conservatism regarding issues concerning God, family, and country. We have been horrified by the news of the bombing and shootings in Norway carried out by a demonized young man by the name of Anders Behring Breivik. While the world is reeling at the unbelievable crimes of mass murder carried out by Breivik in killing over seventy people, mostly children, we are also being subjected somewhat subliminally to the systematic philosophies of his 1,500 page manifesto. As his philosophies come out we might, at first glance, believe him to be more of a conservative and traditional in his views on important issues. I believe this has led liberal news outlets to quickly jump on this story and tout Breivik as a fundamentalist Christian. But, of course Andes Breivik was nowhere near being a Christian when he committed those horrible murders. But I sincerely believe an unclean spirit did deceive him and drive him, with his full cooperation, to carry out this satanic plan. I also believe that as in the case of mass murderer Charles Manson, and present day Mahmud Ahmadinejad of Iran, and a score of others, Breivik's desire was to spark a massive and violent revolution that would culminate in the arising of a new world leader, and new social order.

An article from the Jerusalem Post notes that Breivik, in this manifesto: "mentions Israel 359 times and "Jews" 324 times, Breivik lays out his worldview, which includes an extreme, bizarre and rambling screed of Islamophobia, far-right Zionism and venomous attacks on Marxism and multi-culturalism." (The Jerusalem Post, by Ben Hartman, 7-24-11). Again, to the undiscerning, Breivik sounds a bit like a conservative, but he is neither a true conservative, nor a Christian. Breivik is a demonized perpetrator of unspeakable violence and an arch deceiver! His plan is to provoke a global revolution to set up his own brand of world rule. He dressed as a police officer so the unsuspecting members of a youth group, many of whom were the children of members of Norway's Labor Party, would trust him. Then he proceeded to kill as many of them as he could. Breivik and the many who will come after him, is an imposture, who like the future one "whose coming is after the working of Satan," (2 Thessalonians 2:9) after the spirit of a Hitler, a Stalin, a Chairman Mao, and an Ahmadinejad, will pose as a savior only to get into a position better to destroy the innocent.

Breivik's photo shows a picture of one who could easily pass for a model posing for the cover of Gentleman's Quarterly. By this we are easily reminded of how the Antichrist, in the latter days, will be an extremely appealing figure. Some will say that Breivik's actions will repulse rather than attract people to his cause. But we should be very cautious in drawing hasty conclusions about how people will react to this true antichrist figure. The Beast of the latter days will be extremely deceptive and attractive. Much like Adolf Hitler, the initial actions of the Antichrist will certainly be troubling to many. In fact, Hitler, who was initially jailed for his actions, eventually openly stated that some of the things people would hear concerning the actions of the Nazis would disturb them, yet he assured people that these actions were necessary. After he secured the high position of Germany's Chancellor, He required all to swear a public oath of absolute allegiance to himself. Over time, the troubling acts of the Nazis were accepted by many who listened to and read the accompanying philosophical teachings, such as those found in Hitler's book, Mein Kampf (My Struggle). In the case of Breivik, through his 1,500 page manifesto, he, like Hitler, may well be lionized by growing numbers as a revolutionary hero. Many will say: "I do not believe in his actions, but I agree with his philosophy," etc. In reality, because of growing iniquity, the love of many is growing cold. (Matthew 24:12) Yet there will also be some who will agree with his actions and try to "copycat" them. This is what Breivik and all terrorists are hoping for. There is little doubt but that he will help prepare the way for the ultimate deceiver, the Antichrist. While Breivik, like so many before him, desires to use violence to instigate a world revolution, we may be sure that any movement that has an evil beginning, if successful, will bring about an evil result.



Adolf Hitler, the newly appointed chancellor, greets German president Paul von Hindenburg, Germany, January 30, 1933. (United States Memorial Holocaust Museum)

The Holy Spirit warned believers of "**seducing spirits**" which will arise in the "**latter times.**" These spirits will lie and affect people in such a way as to cause them to have their "**conscience seared with a hot iron.**" (**1 Timothy 4:1-2**) Today, in a world that is going on without God, people are becoming susceptible to these seducing spirits. These spirits use violence, shock and trauma to gain a foothold and then a stronghold. Through the power of "**the god of this world (Satan, they)...blind the minds of them which believe not** (**2 Corinthians 3:5**)."
The more depraved the mind, the more the enemy can control the mind.

Again, some have called Breivik a fundamentalist Christian. This, of course is meant to bash Christians. While, as I have said, it may appear, at first glance, that some of his views vaguely resemble the conservative viewpoint; Yet, remember that we must "**prove all things; hold fast to that which is good**" (**1 Thessalonians 5:21**). The prophecies about the demonic teachers and philosophers of the latter days tell us that these people cannot be believed because they will be "**speaking lies in hypocrisy.**" (**1 Timothy 4:2**). We should keep this in mind when evaluating candidates for public office as well as for Christian leaders.

The Bible tells us that Satan even "**transforms himself into an angel of light (1 Corinthians 11:14)**" He can give any kind of political speech which will promote either "left" or "right wing" leanings. He can sound balanced, or he can sound extreme, depending on what he is trying to accomplish. Remember, the devil is a deceiver! His demons are deceiving spirits (1 Timothy 4:1).

By comparison, in Jesus' day, the Sadducees were the political and religious liberals, and the Pharisees were the conservatives. The Zealots were the extreme nationalists. But, as a whole, all three groups rejected Jesus Christ as the Son of God. All three either sought to use Jesus to their own selfish ends or to kill him. Breivik, though writing that he is pro-Israel and anti-muslim, murdered innocent people just like the Muslim terrorists he says he hates. He is a case study of Jesus' words in Matthew 24:11 and 12, "**And may false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many, and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.**" Though Breivik apparently never claimed to be a *Christian*, we should not be surprised even if someone like him does claim to be a Christian, because Jesus was clear that "**many shall come in my name,...and shall deceive many**" (**Matthew 24:5**.)

The reality is that these murders will only serve to further unify those whom Breivik claims to be fighting against. Though he claims to want to weaken Israel's enemies, he has only further empowered them. He has succeeded in raising them to an influential "victim's" status. Here is a frightening quote regarding Breivik's writings:

Breivik sneers at those who would spare the lives of women, and in an especially chilling instruction writes, "once you decide to strike, it is better to kill too many than not enough, or you risk reducing the desired ideological impact of the strike. Explain what you have done [in an announcement distributed prior to operation] and make certain that everyone understands that we, the free peoples of Europe, are going to strike again and again." (Jerusalem Post, by Ben Hartman, 7-24-11)

Yet, attacking unwary and innocent by-standers, office workers, and women and children is a favorite tactic of many evil individuals or groups, like radical Islam, because they are blinded by demonic hatred. We may be sure the devil delights in murdering and terrorizing, and he will use any

group he can to do so. These type actions give Satan a greater foothold in people and society. Murder and terror will be the Antichrist's motive and mission in the Great Tribulation. Initially, the antichrist will even act as a good friend to Israel as he signs a covenant with them that will ensure a seven year long peace (Daniel 9:27). But, because he will be a liar, his actions will intentionally have exactly the opposite effect. Instead of protecting Israel, he will actually position himself to destroy them and through the mark of the Beast, will secure the sworn allegiance of many millions to help him murder God's chosen people (Revelation 12 & 13). Remember, the devil is an equal opportunity liar, thief and murderer. Murder, coldness and heartlessness, is a distinctive mark of the enemy and of those who are possessed by his spirit. This is how we may distinguish between the work of Satan and the work of God, by hearing the words of Jesus who said: ***The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. (But) I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)*** We should be careful, therefore, to give all glory to the Lord Jesus Christ in times like these knowing that it was "**For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8).**"



Anders Behring Breivik (The Jerusalem Post)

Upward Call - How to walk in view of Prophecy

Does a rise in violence indicate that we are in the Last Days? Yes! Jesus stated that: "**But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be (Matthew 24:37).**" What were those days like back in Noah's time? Genesis 6:5 tells us: "**Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**" Genesis 6:11 shows us the result of a world that has departed from God: "**The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.**"

In Noah's day, society thrived on violence. So, Noah preached against it with messages on the righteousness of God, and coming judgment (2 Peter 2:5). These are not the kind of messages that we are hearing from American pulpits today! Violence and immorality are big money today. Conversely, sermons that are soft on sin and big on self affirmation are in big demand. The wickedness of the world and the saving power of Jesus Christ through His cross and resurrection are not being addressed from our pulpits today is any real measure! Violence, and its cohort, immorality, are the result when individuals surrender their convictions about God and live according to the world, the flesh and the devil (1 John 2:16). Today, everywhere in America, God is replaced by man and man's lust for things and power. We see this in our goals in family, law, education, politics, finance and religion. So called Christian denominations and preachers are giving into the spirit of the age and advancing the church's departure from the authority of Jesus Christ in the churches and from the biblical Faith.

The order of the latter day apostasy seems to be something like this: **First**, remove God from public life; **Second**, iniquity abounds with growing approval; **Third**, the love of many grows cold; **Forth**, violence increases; **Fifth**, violence grows more pandemic while unrest increases, through the predicted rise of "**wars and rumors of wars,**" as well as increasing upheavals in nature (Matthew 24:6-7); **Sixth**, the world begins to clamor for a savior, someone who can bring global unity, global plenty, and global peace.

In times such as these we should look for the coming of the Lord to rapture the church to heaven (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). The Scriptures tell us that then the Antichrist will arise from the world scene. He will be touted as a great man of peace. God will send "**strong delusion (2 Thessalonians 2:11)**" which will influence people to believe the great lie of the Beast. In promoting world unity and peace, he will, through his false prophet require everyone to wear a mark (Revelation 13:11-18).

Thus we can see an incentive for radical groups and individuals to be violent. In their twisted logic, influenced by "**spiritual wickedness**" (Ephesians 6:12), they hope their violence will spark an uprising and clamoring for someone to deliver them much as we see in the book of judges. The days of the Judges were characterized by the words: "**In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes (Judges 17:6; 21:25)**." We need sound Bible teaching today that will fearlessly address and dispel the lies we are hearing from the many antichrists today (1 John 12:18) In these latter days, many are looking and waiting for someone to arise who will have ideas that they can identify with (Matthew 24:11). They will, like the future Antichrist, "**be speaking great things and blasphemies (Revelation 13:5)**" in such ways as will win the admiration of millions, convincingly promoting a new age of peace and change.

The Church today-Doctrine and Prophecy Today

The believer today should realize more than ever that we have an enemy who hates us, who wants to deceive and discourage us. Our enemy wants to subtly get us out of having a daily holy walk and into a worldly walk and talk. But Peter exhorts us with these words: "**be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8)**." We need in these latter days, in anticipation of the coming of the Lord, to cultivate an intimate devotional relationship with the Lord every day. We need to keep consistent company with other Bible believers, and avoid compromising Christians who will dampen our passion for Christ and hunger for His Word. We need to seek to honor Jesus Christ by our witness of Him to others at every opportunity. We should intercede through prayer for those who are weak in the faith and for the lost. We should be bold in our prayers for God to remove from positions of influence in the church and in the leadership of this nation those who are operating independently of the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. One day, we will then hear the blessed words of our Lord when he shall say to you and to me: "**Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make the ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord (Matthew 25:21)**."

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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.)