

Another Middle East War End Time Events!

Fred R. Coulter—July 15, 2006

This last week we were confronted another war in the Middle East. As many of the commentators have mentioned, it's like *déjà vu* 1982. Israel invades Lebanon and goes after Hamas and Hezbollah, only this time it's much more complicated because the United States has troops in Iraq.

- What is it going to be with the whole Middle East?
- What's going to happen?
- How is it going to take place?

Every time there's a war in the Middle East:

- we had the 1948 war
- we had the 1967 war
- we had the 1982-3 war
- now one in 2006

How many times has the prime ministers of the Palestinians and the Jews gotten together—after they've been bribed with more money—to shake hands and 'now we have peace; we're on the road to peace'? *That's what they always say!*

1-Thess. 5—we know that this is talking about the return of Christ—we understand that—but here's a principle that is always applicable out of this verse. We will see this over and over again. Before Hezbollah was voted in to take control of the Palestinians, instead of Hamas, they were saying that we're nudging closer and closer to peace. Israel pulled out of Gaza, was ready to give up the West Bank, and Hezbollah comes in and takes over and just starts shooting hundreds of mortars, missiles and rockets everyday against Israel.

1-Thessalonians 5:3: "For when they say, 'Peace and security'..." This is a principle anytime you say peace and safety.

"...then sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail *comes* upon a woman who is with child; and they shall by no means escape" (v 3).

We know that's talking about the Day of the Lord overall. We also know that in the end-time there is going to come a time when they will say, "...Peace and safety/security..."

How does this latest war—it is war—fit into it? *We know that it's going to push us closer to the end!* But let's also understand that prophecy is *not speeding up. Prophecy is always on time!* It's only our perception of it, because every time we have the Arab/Israeli war we always say that 'the end is near.'

Well, they're saying that with this, but what is this going to do? There are some political things that we need to understand that we haven't understood before. Let me read some of the comments that I've gotten off the news and so forth, then we'll try and bring you up to date on it.

Article #1 {no source cited}

Escalation of the War Ripple Through the Middle East

The United States is really in a terrible precarious position in Iraq, because our troops are there. Endorsing what Israel does puts it in the minds of the Arabs that the Jews and Americans are trying to conquer the Arabs. This is the propaganda that's going out.

Other more moderate Arabs say no, that's not what they're trying to do. They're trying to get rid of all of the radical elements of Islam and terrorists, and they're trying to bring us to a point where we can function as a normal nation. None of the nations of Islam are very normal nations, knowing the background of them.

Let's remind ourselves of the background of Ishmael and Esau. Let's see what God says. Ishmael was the brother of Isaac, and yet, they're two different people, two different nations and so forth.

Gen. 16 is when Hagar was first put out and was wandering in the wilderness; she's the mother of Ishmael. Remember, Abraham was the father of Ishmael, and one of the biggest problems here, as well as with Esau and Jacob is that these brothers— Ishmael and Esau—were not recipients of *the promise*.

So, at the heart and core of what's going on with the Muslims and the western world is the family feud between Ishmael and Isaac, and Esau and Jacob. Especially after Isaac was born, you talk about living in a house divided, and feminine spite and jealousy, maneuvering and all that sort of thing going right on within tent next door to tent. So, Hagar was kicked out!

Genesis 16:7: "And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain on the way to Shur. And he said, 'Hagar, Sarai's maidservant, where did you come from? And where will you go?' And she said, 'I flee from the presence of my mistress Sarai.' And the angel of the LORD said to her, 'Return to your mistress and submit yourself under her hands'" (vs 7-9).

That's a tough order, because she looked at Sarah as: Well, all these years you've been married and you couldn't conceive and one night I was with your husband and BINGO! here is Ishmael. That was tough!

Verse 10: "And the angel of the LORD said to her, 'I will multiply your seed exceedingly, so that they shall not be numbered for multitude.' And the angel of the LORD said to her, 'Behold, you are with child... [right after she became pregnant] ...and shall bear a son. And you shall call his name Ishmael because the LORD has heard your affliction'" (vs 10-11).

Verse 12 is about the Arabs. All Arabs today are not from Ishmael, they are intermixed with Esau. The Arabs and Esau are spread all over the Middle East. They are not in the same national borders that they were when we talk about the things in the Bible today. So, when we look at what is a nation, we are looking at a people that are in different nations of the world today.

Verse 12: "And he will be a wild man...." Whenever you see some of those wild riots in the Middle East, know where it comes from. It's part of their nature.

"...His hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him. And he shall live in the presence of all his brothers" (v 12)—showing that its dispersed.

You can read about the princes and sultans of the descendants of Ishmael, and then later Esau. Now let's look at the nature and the inheritance of Esau. When Rebekah found out that she was pregnant with twins, God said that 'there are two nations in your womb,' which gives us a clue to something very important. God can create a race and a nation of people anytime He desires regardless of the parents; that's what He did with Esau.

Jacob was to receive *the blessing* and Esau was born first, but Jacob had hold of the heel of Esau as he came out of the womb showing that he would prevail. Esau being firstborn was to receive the blessing.

Let's look at the difference. Think about if you just gave birth and here is one man white, smooth skin and another one red and hairy all over. That's what it says.

Genesis 25:25: "And the first came out red, like a hairy garment all over. And they called his name Esau. And after that his brother came out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel. And his name was called Jacob. And Isaac was sixty years old when she [Rebekah] bore them. And the boys grew. And Esau was a skilled hunter..." (vs 25-27).

These summaries leave out a lot of details, what went on in their lives. Then you have the vision between father and mother. Isaac loved Esau and Rebekah loved Jacob. Then you have family conspiracies in it. All of those things are in there, which add to today's problems.

"...Esau was a skilled hunter, a man of the field. And Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of *his* venison. But Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob boiled soup. And Esau came from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, 'I beg you, let me eat of the red, this red *soup*, for I am faint.' Therefore, his name was called Edom" (vs 27-30)—meaning *red*.

Jacob being very shrewd... Think of all the shrewd businessmen that have come from the seed of Jacob. A lot of them: the Jews, very shrewd; leading bankers of the world and leading stock traders of the world. Then you have Ephraim and Manasseh who were merchantmen and always have been. So, Jacob say, 'I'll make you—Esau—a deal:

Verse 31: "And Jacob said, 'Sell me your birthright today.'.... [it was already prophesied that he would have it] ...And Esau said, 'Behold, I *am* at the point of dying...'" (vs 31-32).

We don't know how exhausted he was. Maybe he was out there hunting for a couple of weeks or so and couldn't get anything and was staggering back really famished.

"...and what *profit shall* this birthright be to me?" And Jacob said, 'Swear to me this day.' And he swore to him, and he sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and soup of lentils. And he ate and drank, and rose up and went his way. Thus did Esau despise *his* birthright" (vs 32-34).

God worked it out so that viewed from a human point of view, what was done was treachery, not looking at from the point of view of God. Mother and the son Esau hated 'conspired against father and me.' This is really trickery!

Why did God do it this way? Because there's a deceitful streak in Israel, going back to Abraham who lied about Sarah being his sister. So, Isaac lied about Rebekah. There is this deceitful streak.

Rebekah says to Isaac, 'You've got to get the birthright, because Isaac is going to bless them today. I'll fix up a meal and you take the skin of the goats and put it on the back of your neck.' *That's how hairy Esau was!*

'Wear your brother's clothes, which smells like the outdoors. I'll fix up this venison so it tastes just like what Esau did, and you go in and say that you're Esau, because today he's going to give the

blessing and you've got to get that blessing.'

This deceitful streak also shows a lack of trust in God. This has helped setup the bitterness, the jealousy and the hatred, which exists to this day.

Isaac couldn't see and he said, 'Are you really Esau, my son?' *Yes, I am!* Isaac felt the back of Jacob's neck and said, 'Yeah, you're Esau but your voice sure enough sounds like Jacob.' Then Isaac gave the blessing, and his brother comes in and there's only one blessing left.

Just as soon as Jacob left with the blessing... You can only give them once, so once it's gone, *it's gone!* After giving the blessing to Jacob, Isaac said to Esau:

Genesis 27:32 "And his father Isaac said to him, 'Who *are* you?' And he said, 'I *am* your son, your firstborn Esau.' Then Isaac trembled greatly, and said, 'Who then *was* the one who has hunted deer and brought *it* to me—and I have eaten it all before you came, and have blessed him? Yea, he shall be blessed!'" (vs 32-33). *It was an official time to bless!*

Verse 34: "And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceedingly bitter cry, and said to his father, 'Bless me, even me also, O my father!' And he said, 'Your brother came with deceit, and **has taken away your blessing**'" (vs 34-35). This is the source of the hatred.

God also said that Esau, as well as Ishmael would always be *under* Jacob. We'll see where this come to an end.

Verse 36: And *Esau* said, 'Is he not rightly called Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times—he took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.' And he said, 'Have you not reserved a blessing for me?' And Isaac answered and said to Esau, 'Behold, I have made him your lord, and all his brethren I have given him for servants....'" (vs 36-37).

Isn't that the way it is down through history? The Arabs, Esauites and Edomites always end up under Jacob. Just take, for example, the oil in Saudi Arabia: it was discovered and produced by the British and the Americans. The official company that produces all the oil is Aramco, an American-Arab company. We'll see the politics of this just a little bit later.

As strange as this relationship may seem, there are times when they come together to work together even though they hate each other, and that's what we see in the world today.

"...And with grain and wine I have sustained him. And what shall I do now to you, my son?' And Esau said to his father, 'Have you but one

blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, my father.' And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said to him, 'Behold, your dwelling shall be far from the fatness of the earth and far from the dew of heaven from above. And you shall live by your sword and shall serve your brother. But it shall come to pass that when you shall have the dominion, you shall break his yoke from off your neck'" (vs 37-40).

That has not happened, yet! That's what we are seeing taking place right here. Judah and Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh—are in the process of taming these wild radical descendants of Esau and Ishmael.

They will tame them for a while; they'll work together for a while. We're going to see an astounding political statement in just a little bit that shows how this is going to fall.

Verse 41: "And Esau **hated** Jacob..." *That hatred runs to this day!* Jacob had 12 sons. The three primary sons that deal with Esau and Ishmael are the ones who receive the birthright promise—Ephraim and Manasseh—and then the rulership promise to Judah. That's what's happening today.

Then Esau swore that he would kill Jacob! Now, let's look at what we have today. Let's see the prophecy of the Jews in the Middle East today and what they should have. The Jews tried to re-conquer all of the area—as much of it as they could—that belonged to Israel originally when God took them into the land. But in the end-time God has not determined that they would have that. That's another source of the great conflict that's going on. They've gone beyond what God prophesied that they should have. So, they have all the problems and difficulties of the terrorists with all of this hatred, adamant, mindless insane hatred toward each other. There's almost as much hatred of the Palestinians by the Jews as the Palestinians toward the Jews.

Zephaniah 2:4: "For Gaza shall be forsaken..." Does that sound familiar? Where did all of this latest conflict start? *By the kidnapping of a soldier right outside of Gaza! After the Jews gave Gaza back to the Palestinians!* The Palestinians are the Philistines today.

"...and Ashkelon a desolation. They shall drive out Ashdod at noonday, and Ekron shall be rooted up" (v 4). Those are all along the southern coast of what is called Israel today.

Verse 5: "Woe *to* the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of the Cherethites! The Word of the LORD is against you, Canaan, the land of the Philistines: 'I will destroy you, so that no inhabitant survives.'" When will that finally happen? *Obviously, at the return of Christ!*

Verse 6: And the seacoast will be pastures, meadows of shepherds, and folds for flocks.... [which also refers to people] ...And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed on them....” (vs 6-7).

The most peaceful place in Israel is on the coastline where Tel Aviv is, which is in the area of the coast that God gave to the remnant of the Jews. You have Tel Aviv, Haifa and right along the northern part of the Mediterranean Sea of the borderline of Israel; that’s what this is talking about.

“...In the houses of Ashkelon they shall lie down in the evening, for the LORD their God shall visit them and return them from their exile” (v 7). That’s what God gave to them in that area.

How was this world escalated? Not only did the Jews send their troops into Gaza—and they’re making a desolation out of it—it’s going to be a wasteland. The area where the Palestinians are, they are knocking out the leadership of Hezbollah, and not so much Hamas, because Hamas wants to deal with the Jews.

That provoked what’s going on in Lebanon. What we have here is quite a thing that’s developing. Let me read some reports and I think you’re going to be surprised by one of the reports. It’s talking about the escalation that took place after they had the seizing of the soldier; they kidnapped two more up in northern Israel, and they’re getting ready to send them over to Iran. Can you imagine what’s going to happen if they go to Iran. They will display them publicly. Bombs are going to drop in Tehran, Iran, guaranteed!

Article #2 {no source cited}

The ceasing of the soldiers and Israel’s response have sparked the most troubling crisis for Israel and its neighbors in more than a decade.

Israel’s sharp escalation coupled with the compromising rhetoric from all three sides...

We’re going to exterminate you. No, we’re going to endure to the end and still rise up, though we’re few, and we’re going to get you.

...and leaves little room for the violence to subside. Those tensions could spill over into everything from U.S. efforts to curb Iran’s nuclear program, it’s desire for democratic changes in Syria, and even stability in Iraq.

So, everything is at stake right now. But what I see is a major shift in the political alliance of the Arabs themselves. So, the escalation goes on; it’s a full-blown attack.

Article #3: Christian Science Monitor, July 14, 2006

Israel wants to show Hezbollah that they are not going to play the game according to their rules. “We will dictate the rules.” Israel is now changing the balance of the power in the area.”

That’s what they want. They are not going sit there and lob over a hundred rockets everyday, killing the Jews and having no response back. They know and understand the nature of the people; so that’s what they want to do.

Hezbollah and Al Qaeda: Al Qaeda has been pretty well decimated. We need to understand something about Al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden. He was a Sunni Arab. Hezbollah are Shiite Muslims. They see Al Qaeda very weakened, because they’ve gotten so many of them around the world, cut off all their funding and everything. Osama Bin Laden is virtually helpless.

Not all the people of Iran are Muslims. But the Muslims there are Shiites. So, we have an area-wide struggle for power. The United States is in Iraq setting up a government, though it will be dominated by the Shiites, who don’t want to be under the power of the Shiites in Iran.

Iran has been supplying Hezbollah and Hamas with arms, munitions, money and so forth. So, they are the real power behind this latest thing that is going.

What I’m going to read to you is really startling concerning the Sunni and Shiite division of power. When Sadam Hussein was in power, the Sunnis had control over the Shiites. Of course, this sparked a lot of tension. The Shiites in Iraq now see a chance to the run the country, but they want to be separate from Iran. Here you’ve got this who positioning going on with the Americans caught in the middle of it.

Article #4: A press release from Jetta, Saudi Arabia, capital of Saudi Arabia,;

Saudi Arabia, weary about the escalating tensions in the Middle East...

Directly off the Arab news; this is not some interpretation of a westerner.

Following Israel’s attack of Lebanon and Palestine called for saner councils to prevail. An official source said that Saudi Arabia is always been an avid believer in the rights of nations subjected to occupation to resist it in all its shapes and forms, according to the Saudi press.

The nation has the right to reject the occupation's illegal procedures that aim at erasing the nation's identity and altering ground realities.

This has been the basis of the kingdom's stand with regard to the legal Palestinian resistance to military occupation. This has always been the kingdom's firm stand with the Lebanese resistance until the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon.

The source added that the kingdom wanted to clearly state that there must be a differentiation between legal resistance and unaccountable ventures committed by elements within the state, without referring to legal state authority or consulting and coordinating with the Arab countries.

Their actions thus expose all Arab nations to grave danger and their achievements to destruction.

The kingdom sees that the time has come for these elements to solely bear full responsibility for such irresponsible actions and the task of ending the crisis that they have triggered should fall singularly upon them.

What they are saying is that the Sunnis in Arabia are saying to the Shiites of Hezbollah, 'We don't want any part of what you have done, and you are reaping the results of what you have started.'

That is a major shift, because Saudi Arabia, I'm sure, looks at it geopolitically this way: If Iran controls Iraq and Hezbollah controls up there, they're going to come and get all of the Sunnis down here in Saudi Arabia and take over.

Now there's a major split that has happened within the Arab community toward getting rid of the radicalism in such a way that it hasn't been before with the onset of this thing.

So, Hezbollah is now the leading terrorist organization of the world. That's why the United States is going to let Israel do what it's going to do to get rid of Hezbollah and with tacit Arab agreement, howbeit with public condemnation.

This is not going to get out of hand to become a world war, but we'll look at some very interesting prophecies in just a minute.

Continuing Article #2 {no source cited}

There is great doubt that Israel can achieve this very ambitious goal, because Hezbollah is a very strong Lebanese player with a strong foothold in southern Lebanon and the capital.

That's why, as I heard discussed on the radio, that this is going to change the whole structure in the Middle East and is going to end up toning down the terrorist thing. Israel is coming after Hezbollah wherever they are. They just destroyed the headquarters of Hezbollah in southern Beirut. They cut off their re-supply of weapons from Iran. They have 1,000 of these missiles, and they've also said that it's like a WWII army against the 21st century army.

They are destined to lose. It is not yet time for them to break the yoke. I think what we're going to see is a decimation of Hezbollah. The Jews are going to try and kill as many as possible. It will last for a short while. If Iran gets more involved in it, then Israel is going to bomb Tehran and probably go after their nuclear situation there.

Even in discussing this, they see a shift away from the Sunnis having the power of the terrorists to the Shiites having the power of terrorists through Hezbollah.

It's going to be quite a situation! Let's look at some other prophecies. In Psa. 83, we're reading about the nations then, but the nations today are configured a little differently, so we will have to look at them as descendants of these people.

Notice that there are ten distinct nations against Judah, though it's called Israel here.

Psalm 83:1: "Keep not silent, O God; do not be quiet, and do not be still, O God, for lo, Your enemies are in an uproar; and those who hate You have lifted up their head" (vs 1-2).

- they hate Christianity
- they hate Judaism
- they hate the people

Verse 3: "They take crafty counsel against Your people, and plot together against Your hidden ones. They have said, 'Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation... [that could only refer to the Jews in Palestine, or what they call Israel today] ...so that the name Israel may be remembered no more'" (vs 3-4).

That's what they want to also do with America and Britain, so it includes all. All of these are distinctly against the Jews, and also secondarily against Ephraim and Manasseh being America and Britain today.

Verse 5: "For with one heart they have plotted together; they have made a covenant against You. The tabernacles of Edom... Esau] ...and the Ishmaelites... [the two we have just talked about] ...of Moab, and the Hagrites... [the Syrians] ...Geba, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines

with the people of Tyre; and Assyria...” (vs 5-8).

These Assyrians are probably not the Germans today, but those that are up in the northwestern corner of Iraq, and they are some of the most skilled and vicious warriors in the world. If they get into the mix of this, and the Turks get into the mix of this, this is going to be really a wild mess.

“...has joined with them; they have helped the children of Lot. Selah” (v 8). There you have it! These are the people that constitute what’s going on in the Middle East today.

Zech. 12 tells us exactly where we are, and this is exactly what has happened down through history. This is prophecy for our day today. As we go through here, let’s ask how far will this war go? In the discussion I heard on the radio about a private independent intelligence service worldwide. Being who he is, he probably has inside contacts to the CIA, the Mossad, the KGB and other spy agencies of the world. He talked about the shift of power of terrorists from the Sunni Bin Laden to the Mahrajene of Iran and the Hezbollahites of Lebanon and Palestine.

The Jews know that they can control it enough so that the other powers are not going to intervene yet. Isn’t it interesting that for the first time in the history of the world—beginning in 1948—the nations of the world are involved with Jerusalem. Wasn’t it the United Nations that approved the state of Israel. Who was the first country to recognize Israel? *The United States!* In 1948, as soon as it was declared by the UN, Harry Truman said, ‘We recognize the State of Israel. With that in mind, bringing the whole history of it up to date, God says:

Zechariah 12:2: “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people all around...”

- Isn’t that what has happened in every Arab-Israeli war?
- What did they do to the vaunted Egyptians in the Sinai? *They came along and destroyed every single tank that the Egyptians had out there!*

It was almost like sitting ducks! Same way when they had to go into Jordan, and in Lebanon in 1982. All the nations get together.

“...when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem” (v 2).

God gave Judah the coastline (Zep. 2), and here He gave them part of Jerusalem. But the Jews in their eagerness went out and got Gaza, the West Bank and they wanted to go over and take what is called Jordan today, because that used to be Israel,

east of the Jordan River. They wanted to go even further up into the area where the Golan Heights is and go beyond that.

So, they went beyond what God wanted them to, and they have down through the years all of these fights and things over the land and the people, and so forth. I think God worked it out with the Jews to whittle it down to give Gaza away and to give up the West Bank to try and make peace, but Hezbollah won’t let them do it.

Verse 3: And in that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people....”

- Does that affect us today?
- Does it affect the whole world today?
- *Of course! We’re talking about it today!*

“...All who burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the nations of the earth be gathered together against it” (v 3). Eventually that’s going to happen! In gathering *all* nations together”

- Where is the Battle of Armageddon being fought? *Just north of Jerusalem!*
- Where is Christ and the saints going to return? *To Jerusalem!*

Verse 4: “In that day,’ says the LORD, ‘I will strike every horse with terror, and his rider with madness.... [whatever vehicle we have today] ...And I will open My eyes upon the house of Judah...”

God is saying He’s going to have mercy on them. That’s going to happen because we’re going to see that this conflict is going to bring about a greater peace, saving for the end. It’s going to come up again. There will be a temporary peace. Just like we read in the beginning, when they say, ‘Peace! Peace! Then sudden destruction will come upon them.’

“...and will strike every horse of the people with blindness” (v 4). Whenever the Jews go to war they slaughter more of the enemy than the enemy slaughters of them. That’s part of it, but also in this—it’s very interesting how this works—God uses these people to correct Judah, and when they’re corrected God turns around and uses the Jews to correct the enemy. *This is what we’re seeing happening today!*

Verse 5: “And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, ‘The people of Jerusalem *shall be* my strength in the LORD of hosts their God.’ In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood...” (vs 5-6). That’s the leaders of Judah. What are they doing today?

- they are wise
- they have been planning

- they have been understanding all of these things that are going on
- they see Iran as the enemy working through Hezbollah
- they see Iran with nuclear weapons and rockets that could reach Jerusalem

You really have to understand how small the geographical area of Israel is in the Middle East; basically the Jews.

“...and like a torch of fire among the sheaves...” (v 6). Watch the reports of battle and see the bombings, the fire and the devastation, fulfilling these prophecies.

“...And they shall devour all the people all around, on the right hand and on the left hand. And Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her place, even in Jerusalem” (v 6).

Then we come to what God wants to do; He’s leading up to dealing with the Jews directly: v 7: “The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first...”

As I discussed with a Jew one time: It won’t be any minister from the Church being the two witnesses. It’s got to be the governor of Judea and the high priest (Zech. 3-4) at the temple that’s going to be built.

“...so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the people of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah. In that day the LORD shall defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And it shall be, he who is feeble among them at that day *shall be* like David; and the house of David *shall be* like God, like the angel of the LORD before them” (vs 7-8).

That tells you the power that they’re going to have. Every time they get into a war, isn’t that they way it happens? Then they pull back!

Verse 9: “And it shall be in that day *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.” See sermons for the Feast of Trumpets to see how that’s going to be.

Verse 10: “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the people of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication....”

Remember that God repents repentance. So, there is a day that repentance is going to be granted. We’ll see when that will take place.

“...And they shall look upon Me...” (v 10). They’re going to understand that Jesus Christ *is* the Messiah!

“...whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only *son*, and

shall be in bitterness over Him, as the bitterness over the firstborn. In that day shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadad Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families who remain, every family apart and their wives apart” (vs 10-14).

There’s going to come a time of national repentance for the Jews. But it won’t be accomplished by ‘Christian’ preachers. Let’s see what it says about the coming high priest. The temple will be built where the Spring of Gihon is, which is a key, key thing in the rebuilding of the temple.

The temple site today is not where the Mosque of Omar is. That’s where Fort Antonia was. The temple site is 600 yards to the south of that. Under that is the Spring of Gihon, which gave water for all of the ceremonies and have a lot of bloody sacrifices. You’ve got to wash the blood and get rid of it, cleaning it up on a daily basis.

I will just have to say that I suspect that when God causes the Spring of Gihon to start running again, the Jews are going to take that as a sign from God, *because the Jews seek a sign!* When they see the Spring of Gihon coming back to its full running water that’s necessary to run a temple, they’re going to say that that’s where the temple ought to be. There are more and more Jews coming to see that bit-by-bit. We can authenticate that from this point of view:

Jesus said of the temple that there would ‘not be one stone left upon another.’ If you look at the area where the Mosque of Omar is, there are stones upon another stone. That can’t be the temple site. So, when the Spring of Gihon starts to run, the Jews, I believe, are going to have all the main parts of the temple already prefabricated and ready to go.

They have all the priest garments, all the Levite garments. They have the cups, the incense shovels, burners and the altar of incense ready to go. They need to build the altar for burnt offerings and so forth. I believe it’s going to happen with this event:

Zechariah 3:1: “And He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.”

God has got to lift—just like He does everyone who comes to Him in repentance—out of the clutches of Satan. Here’s where He’s going to lift

the Jews out of the clutches of Satan:

Verse 2: “And the LORD said to Satan, ‘May the LORD rebuke you, Satan! May even the LORD Who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you!...’”

This is God’s supernatural intervention of the coming high priest in Jerusalem, to convert him and make him one of the two witnesses!

“...Is this not a brand plucked out of the fire?’ Now, Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And He answered and spoke to those who stood before him, saying, ‘Take the filthy garments from off him.’ And to him He said, ‘Behold, I have caused your iniquity to pass from you, and I will clothe you with ceremonial robes.’” (vs 2-4). ***That is conversion!***

Verse 5: “And I said, ‘Let them set a clean miter on his head.’ And they set a clean miter on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by. And the angel of the LORD charged Joshua, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My charge, then you shall also judge My house, and shall also keep My courts, and I will give you places to walk among these who stand by. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your fellows who sit before you; for they *are* men wondered at... [this is going to be an astonishing event that’s going to take place] ...for behold, I will bring forth My Servant the **Branch!**”’” (vs 5-8)—***Christ!***

This is going to be just before the return of Jesus Christ. How long before? *We don’t know!* Is this going to start some three and a half or four years before the Tribulation begins? *I don’t know exactly how to plug it in with the charts we have on Revelation, but it has to occur before then!*

Verse 9: “For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua... [the high priest] ...On one stone *are* seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave its engraving upon it,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.’”

So, ***God is going to perform a miracle among the Jews!*** It’s not going to be evangelical preaching. It’s not going to be ministers from the Church of God. God is going to deal with the Jews directly.

Verse 10: “In that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, “you shall call, each man to his neighbor, to sit under the vine and under the fig tree.””

Then we have Zerubbabel, the governor. We’ve talked about the governors of Judea, and this talks about the building of the temple.

Zechariah 4:6: “Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, ‘This is the Word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying...’”—who was the governor.

We have this parallel all the time. We have the *king and the high priest* or the *judge and the high priest*. Now here we have the governor.

“...‘Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts. ‘Who *are* you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel *you shall become* a plain; and he shall bring forth the head stone with shoutings, “Grace! Grace unto it!”’” (vs 6-7).

You tie that in with Zech. 12 where the *spirit of grace* and the *spirit of supplication* and the *spirit of repentance* that’s going to come. What do the Jews always look to? *The governor and the high priest, or the chief rabbi!*

Verse 8: “And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house. His hands shall also finish it.’...” (vs 8-9).

We don’t know how long it’s going to take to build that. Plug in the book of Haggai about the rebuilding of the temple; there’s a lot of it there, too.

“...‘For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven are the eyes of the LORD...’” (v 10). Zech. 3:9 talks about the seven eyes. So, this shows the Spirit of God involved in doing it.

“...which run to and fro through the whole earth” (v 10). Don’t you think that the seven eyes of God are out there watching this war, and the angels of God, also, even causing a lot of it to be done? *Yes, indeed!*

Where is this going to lead to, and this is important to understand. {note sermons on *the Two Witnesses and Elijah* available at truthofgod.org} the Elijah at the end-time is going to be the man who is going to be the baptizing agent for the Jews. Just like John the Baptist was, who was called ‘Elijah.’

Verse 11: “And I answered and said to him, ‘What *are* these two olive trees on the right side of the lampstand and on its left side?’ And I answered again and said to him, ‘What *are* the two olive branches beside the two golden pipes, emptying the golden oil out of themselves?’” (vs 11-12). *The oil is a type of God’s Spirit!*

Verse 13: “And he answered me and said, ‘Do you not know what these *are*?’ And I said, ‘No, my lord.’ And he said, ‘**These are the two anointed ones who stand by the LORD of the whole earth.**’” (vs 13-14)—***the governor and the high priest!***

Zechariah 6:9 continues on and adds to Zech. 3 concerning the high priest: “And the Word of the LORD came to me saying, ‘Take from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, from the exiles... [captivity,

and the Jews have come out of captivity, and Josiah during the days of Haggai is a type of the high priest that is coming] ...who have come from Babylon; and in that same day you go and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. And take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. And speak to him, saying, "Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, saying, 'Behold the Man whose name is The BRANCH [Christ]! And He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the LORD.'" (vs 9-12). This is a type of Christ coming back to the earth sitting upon His throne.

Verse 14: "And the crowns shall be for a memorial in the temple of the LORD to Helem and to Tobijah and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah. And the ones who are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD. 'And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. And *this* shall come to pass, if you will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God'" (vs 14-15).

There have been many theories on the two witnesses. The best one is what's in the Bible.

Revelation 11:1: "Then *the angel* gave me a measuring rod like a staff, saying, 'Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. But leave out the court that is within the temple *area*, and do not measure it because it has been given *up* to the Gentiles; and they shall trample upon the Holy city for forty-two months. And **I will give power to My two witnesses**, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. **These are the two olive trees...** [Zech. 4:12]...**and the two lampstands...**" (vs 1-4).

This is where confusion comes in interpretation. The seven candlesticks and lampstands of Rev. 1 have nothing to do with the two Lampstands that are here. We have always assumed that it had, and therefore assumed that it was someone from the Church. At this point, these will be the greatest lights in the world for Christ, because they will be the two witnesses. We will see why they are the two olive trees, because they will be filled with the power of God, and the two candlesticks, because they are going to show the power of God.

"...that stand before the God of the earth" (v 4). Go back and read:

Zechariah 4:14: "...**These are the two anointed ones who stand by the LORD of the whole earth.**" Notice the exact wording there. Here's the power they're going to have:

Revelation 11:5: "And if anyone attempts to harm them, fire will go out of their mouths and

devour their enemies. For if anyone attempts to harm them, he must be killed in this manner." *That's talking about the two witnesses!*

Now we're ready to come back to the book of Zechariah again. Here's what's going to come out of it; the end result of all of this. What's happening today is setting the stage for this to be put in place, and out of all of this is going to come the Millennium and Zech. 8 tells us about it.

Zechariah 8:1: "And the Word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "I was jealous for Zion *with* great jealousy, and I was jealous for her *with* great fury.'" Thus says the LORD, 'I have returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem... [when Christ and the saints are on the earth] ...and Jerusalem shall be called **a city of Truth...**" (vs 1-3).

Compare that with Rev. 11:8. What is Jerusalem called today before God's intervention to bring salvation to the Jews.

Revelation 11:8: "And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, **which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt**, where also our Lord was crucified."

So, you can say today that Jerusalem is the city of lies, hatred, evil and all of those things are there. Now Zech. 8 says that the end run is that it's going to be called "...the city of Truth..." Why? *Because Christ and the saints will be dwelling there! Quite a different thing!*

Zechariah 8:3: "...and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy mountain." Tie that in with the things that we know of Isa. 2 that 'the mountain of the Lord of hosts shall be exalted above the mountains, and many nations shall flow to it and say, *come let us go to the house of the Lord.*'

Verse 4: "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'There shall yet be old men and old women sitting in the streets of Jerusalem, and *each* man *with* his staff in his hand because of their great age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.' Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, will it *not* also be marvelous in My eyes?' says the LORD of hosts. Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Behold, I will save My people from the east country, and from the west country'" (vs 4-7). *This the return of the Jews and all of Israel to a greater Israel in that day!*

Verse 8: "And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And they shall be My people, and I will be their God, in Truth and in righteousness.' Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Let your hands be strong, you who hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, that

in the day the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts is laid, **the temple is to be built**" (vs 8-9).

That's when these things are going to start happening. What this is doing right now, with these things happening in the Middle East, is leading to this very thing. Where is this ultimately going to lead? There are many other prophecies that have to be accomplished first, but Jerusalem is going to be that 'stone of stumbling' and trembling to all nations. God is going to bring all nations for the grand finale at the end. He gives this warning, and it's not quite there, yet, but it's getting close. We've seen different waves of this happen from time to time. So, this is the grand finally here:

Luke 21:20: "But when you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, then know that her desolation has drawn near."

Let's see when that desolation is going to take place. It's not yet! How much time we have left, we don't know! But I think there's a whole lot more time than we suspect, because a whole lot of things have to first be done in prophecy, as we have seen.

Daniel 11:40: "And at the time of the end, the King of the South shall push at him...."

Guess what Saudi Arabia called for after issuing this statement in condemnation of Hezbollah? *Let's have an emergency meeting of the Arab League in Egypt!* So, they're probably going to say, 'Let's stop all this fighting! Why don't we become civilized people for a while? Why don't we enjoy the wealth as Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait are? Enjoy the wealth that God has given us with the oil instead of tearing apart the whole world. Why should we have the whole world against us?'

I think that's how it's going to come about. I think there are many Arab nations secretly hoping that Israel will just slaughter Hezbollah to nothing so that they can have some peace. It's got to be in order for there to be a King of the South, which will have all the Arab nations at least in some kind of loose association. They want to have an all-Islamic—from the Atlantic over to Pakistan and India—Arab economic and banking community. A regional thing, and out of that will come the King of the South. There's no apparent King of the South at this time. And the King of the North shall come against him. There's no apparent King of the North.

So, all of those developments have to happen so that this current war is going to help pave the way for that to occur, in order for there to be some kind of reasonable peace for a while in the Middle East. That's tough to come by, to tame all those people who are 'the sword against every man' and wild by nature. But they can do it!

"...And the King of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind with chariots and with horsemen and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries and shall overflow and sweep through" (v 40)—just like they've always done; they come done and conquer Egypt first, always, because it's the easiest place to come.

Verse 41: "...But these shall escape out of his hand: Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.... [east of Palestine] ...And he shall stretch out his hand also upon the countries. And the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt. And the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall alarm him. Then he will go forth with great fury to destroy and to utterly annihilate many" (vs 41-44). *That is the beginning of the Great Tribulation!* That is when Jerusalem is surrounded by armies.

Luke 21:20: "But when you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, then know that her desolation has drawn near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains... [just like they did in the past] ...and let those within her go out, and let not those in the countries come into her" (vs 20-21).

If you've got a planned trip to the Holy Land you might reconsider. I know that I'm not planning to go there!

Verse 22: "For these are *the* days of vengeance, so that all things that have been written may be accomplished." We read part of them and a summary of some of them.

Verse 23: "But woe to those who are with child and those who are giving suck in those days! For there shall be great distress upon the land and wrath upon this people."

To understand how that will be, when you're watching the news, look at all of the refugees who are having to flee the war, bombs, destruction and fire. Think about if you were there, how would you get food? How would you get water? How would you even have a place to live?

I don't know how it is with you, but if I'm out of my bed so long, I get down right angst. Sometimes when I go to bed, I've thought about all of those people—in whatever war it is—who are killed, slaughter, running and fleeing for their lives; not knowing from where they're going to get their next meal or drink of water, or where they're going to sleep. Just trying to escape and not knowing if there's some wild man around the corner with a sword and ready to lop off your head and take whatever you have, because whatever you have is more than he has.

Verse 24: “And they shall fall by *the* edge of *the* sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by *the* Gentiles, until *the* times of *the* Gentiles be fulfilled.” That’s what the King of the North is going to do.

Verse 25: “And there shall be signs in *the* sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress and anxiety among *the* nations, *the* seas roaring with rolling surges.” How about a few more tsunamis?

Verse 26: “Men dying of heart attacks from fear...” There are going to be massive heart attacks, because the health of the people is so poor that when all of this suddenly comes upon them and there’s a big surge of adrenalin into the system, it can’t take it and they’re going to have heart attacks.

“...and dread of the things that are coming on the whole world; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with great power and glory.... [this is setting the stage for this]: ...But when these things begin to take place... [it goes back to the beginning; we are seeing and it has been since 1948 building and building] ...look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (vs 26-28).

Verse 29: “Then He spoke a parable to them: ‘Observe the fig tree, and all the trees. When they have already begun to bud, *and* you look *at* them, you yourselves know that summer is near” (vs 29-30). Isn’t it interesting that all these things happen in the summer and early fall?

Verse 31: “In the same way also, when you see these things coming to pass, know that the Kingdom of God is near. Truly I say to you, *there is* no way that this generation shall pass away until all *these things* have taken place.... [it’s going to happen] ...Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away” (vs 31-33).

Whether people believe in Jesus Christ or not, it’s going to happen just like He said! Then He gives a warning to us:

Verse 34: “Watch yourselves, lest your hearts be preoccupied with high living and drinking and *the* cares of *this* life, and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare it shall come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth” (vs 34-35).

God is going to entrap every one of them in their lives, and Satan in His lives. It’s going to culminate in Armageddon and the return of Christ and the saints.

Verse 36—here’s what we’re to do: “Watch, therefore, *and* **pray at all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things...**” You’re going to escape one of several ways:

1. come to the end of your life and you’re in the grave
2. taken to a place of safety; not all will
3. protected wherever you are by the miracles of God

Just like some of the Jews survived some of the terrible things that have happened to them down through history in all the things that they have gone through.

“...that shall come to pass, and **to stand before the Son of man**’ (v 36)—that’s the resurrection!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Thessalonians 5:3
- 2) Genesis 16:7-12
- 3) Genesis 25:25-34
- 4) Genesis 27:32-41
- 5) Zephaniah 2:4-7
- 6) Psalm 83:1-8
- 7) Zechariah 12:2-14
- 8) Zechariah 3:1-10
- 9) Zechariah 4:6-14
- 10) Zechariah 6:9-15
- 11) Revelation 11:1-4
- 12) Zechariah 4:14
- 13) Revelation 11:5
- 14) Zechariah 8:1-3
- 15) Revelation 11:8
- 16) Zechariah 8:3-9
- 17) Luke 21:20
- 18) Daniel 11:40-44
- 19) Luke 21:20-36

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Revelation 1

Also referenced: Sermon: *The Two Witnesses and Elijah*

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