

Why is The Middle East Burning?

Garrick Augustus

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Most Christians are aware that prophecy speaks of difficult days ahead for our world in general, and for the Middle East in particular, but Seventh-day Adventists, the world's renowned prophecy scholars have absolutely nothing to say on these end-time events in the greater Levant. These events are omnipresent in the news casts of our day, and are crafted from the web of truth which is also very abundant on the pages of Bible prophecy. This is a serious question: *Why is the Middle East*



Burning? And further, why are the United States of America and the United Nations so deeply entrenched in Middle Eastern political and military affairs? President Obama's signature theme for his candidacy to the Oval Office was to shut down these wars (in Iraq and Afghanistan)! Yet, even on his second term, Obama is still fighting wars in the Middle East, many more wars than he found there when he took the Presidential Oath of office. At a quick glance, we see America embroiled in fighting battles on several fronts in the land of Abraham's posterity. American forces are currently fighting wars in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, as well as providing military aid to Nigeria and Libya while we have an eye single to the glory of Israel. This does not include our obligations to protecting NATO, and the Pacific-rim countries, such as South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines, and etc. Mr. Obama has sought to extricate the US military from the Middle East, and has actually shut down the Iraqi War, dubbed "America's longest war," yet his gun-shy approach has not stopped the US from being embroiled in an increasingly wider military conflict.

Among many Bible Scholars today who see a future for the Abrahamic covenant promises, reigns confusion as to the Israel in question. They are looking at the political institution which gained independence in 1948, as the promised prophetic seed which will inherit the land, whereas YHWH is looking at the spiritual kingdom, made up of Abraham's seed, by virtue of the new birth in Y'shuah (Gal. 3: 29), for only they will make up the restored house of Israel—the pre-millennial kingdom of glory. That political institution will be demolished and give way to the purified church of God, beginning first with the 144,000 "first fruits," (Rev. 14: 1), and swelling to the ends of the earth, with the gospel's final harvest—the "great multitude," (Rev. 7: 9) of *second fruits*. So, when you read from my pen, the restored kingdom of Abraham, it does not include the political state which is there today. Because of this confusion, the Evangelical community has been the world's largest financier of Israel's sovereignty and right to the Holy Land, for it plays into their scenario of end-time events and *rapture theory*, which holds that the 144,000 Jews will take the gospel to the world during the great tribulation, while the Christian church is *raptured* away to heaven, freed from the horrors of this most severe time of earth's history—the great tribulation! But this is a false hope, and has no likeness of truth to it.

I wish I could tell you all that I know concerning the prophetic declarations of these military missions in the Middle East, and how they will end, but that will require a much longer document. This much is clear, however: The world is on the brink of a stupendous crisis, and we are standing on the epic-center of some global cataclysm, with ground-zero set for Jerusalem—Israel. It is most interesting to see the current events in association with the Signs of the Times—another lunar eclipse (blood moon) on a holy day, the feast of Unleavened Bread (Feast of Passover) on April 4th, while our denomination is pandering to the demands of radical feminism, and flirting with the question of gender neutrality.

My friends, the churches are asleep, and you must be jolted to your feet, lets you sleep the sleep of death! Open your eyes, pause and think of the lateness of the hour and the signs fulfilling all around us. I pray that we get our spiritual houses in order and keep them in order, for *the Judgment of the Living* draweth nigh. The Holy Spirit is today calling for a spiritual revival and reformation to take place in all our lives; this is the most necessary and urgent of all our needs. But as long as we are hearing “smooth sermons,” crying “peace and safety,” when our houses are on fire, we will be like the foolish virgins walking with empty lamps, groping in darkness, yet thinking we are walking in light, only to be left in astonishment as to the *unexpected* event, and the *unexpected* delay, which will occur, and thus be unprepared for the master’s sudden coming to His temple to purify the sons of Levi!

Long ago the message of Ezekiel 9 was delivered to our denomination, but the messenger was rebuffed and lied against by the men of our General Conference, even suggesting that his followers would one day go about and slay Adventists who do not adhere to his message—*The Shepherd’s Rod*. This is a savage lie, which has been believed by Adventists the world over, yet there is not one shred of evidence to this farce. But it served the aims of the church leaders to shelter the flock from the supposed error. But today, with the advent of the Internet, his writings are available on-line, and the false statements cannot be ascertained, yet the world holds his followers guilty of erroneous doctrines. Ask yourself if you’ve ever heard the message concerning the Judgment upon the living preached from our churches. Just as much as there was a message for the judgment which opened in 1844—the judgment of the dead, there is likewise a message concerning judgment upon the living, while they are alive. To this the Bible has not been silent: “1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall *suddenly come to his temple*, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. 2 But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: 3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and *he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver*, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.” Mal. 3: 1-3.

Concerning the unexpected event experienced by the ten virgins, Why will there be a delay? The delay is occasioned because Christians in general and Seventh-day Adventists in particular, have frowned upon the prophecies of Israel’s restoration to future glory in the latter days of this earth’s history. I am not speaking of the political state of Israel with capital city in Tel-Aviv, but of the restored Israel—the purified church of God—with capital city in Jerusalem’s Mt. Zion. So while many Adventists are looking for the Mark of the Beast and Christ’s second coming as the next major events in history and prophecy, they have been oblivious to the covenant promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which must all be fulfilled *prior to Christ’s Second Coming*, for YHWH *must* be true to His Words. Take for example these passages which have never been fulfilled, yet must be, if the Spirit of Prophecy in these prophets was indeed the Holy “Spirit of Truth.”

- “4 And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, *Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls* for the multitude of men and cattle therein: 5 For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her...10 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and *I will dwell in the midst of thee*, saith the LORD. 11 And many nations shall be *joined* to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: *and I will dwell in the midst of thee*, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee. 12 And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion *in the holy land*, and shall choose Jerusalem again.” Zech. 2: 4, 5; 10-13
- “7 Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even **the time of Jacob’s trouble**; but he shall be saved out of it. 8 For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: 9 But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. 10 Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and **Jacob shall return**, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and *none shall make him afraid*...18 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, *I will bring again the captivity of Jacob’s tents*, and have mercy on his dwellingplaces; and *the city shall be builded upon her own heap*, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. 19 And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.” Jer. 30: 7-10; 18, 19.
- “1 But **in the last days** it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. 2 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for **the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.**” Micah 4: 1, 2.

So yes, the Middle East must needs burn, for the time of Jacob’s birth draweth nigh. Look around you and see the rising tide of immorality, the decadence of the Churches, the apathy of society, the disregard for human life, the rise of global terrorism, the growing political and military tensions in our world, the apostasy in Adventism, the rise of the Papacy’s international dominance in settling or easing political and regional conflicts (if not global instabilities), the legalization of homosexuality, Russia’s land-grab of territories in Ukraine and Soviet Georgia, the rise of Boko-Haram, the rise of ISIL (ISIS), the Russian aggression across Europe and Western governments, the warlike temperament of North Korea, the threat of Nuclear War with the United States and Russia, the political and military shadowing of Iran and the certain anti-nuclear bomb reaction from Israel, the threat of another major Islamic war with Israel, this time not just they against Hamas, but a war with Israel and all their surrounding Muslim enemies, and the list goes on...

What do these all have in common? Simply this: the cause of this tension and global instability is Israel, political Israel, and in time the enemies of Israel and the United States will react to rid the Zionist State from the face of the earth! The United States, of course, will *never* stand by and watch Israel sink into oblivion, and therein lies the hottest battle the world will have ever experienced up till then—this will be World War 3!

Lest you think this is hype and speculation, be aware that all the major militaries of our world have already drawn up their battle plans for this war, and are today assessing their threat levels, as well as the capabilities of their perceived enemies. Russia, for example has been taunting the Western NATO allied countries to assess their strengths and weaknesses, from stealth attack submarines to stealth fighter bombers, they have been seeking out the weaknesses in their enemies' military defenses so when the real war begins they know the points of greatest vulnerabilities. Think not that these fake bombing missions carried out by Russia, the blowing up of model ships the size of a modern US aircraft carrier, by Iran, the military upgrades and land grabbing being conducted by China, the resurgence of Soviet-era military tactics and the brokering of new deals with old partners, are all for naught. These are strategic and tactical maneuvers engendered to gain battlefield advantage when the real war begins. Today we see only the resurgence of the cold war, but this time around the fuse will be ignited, and there will be blood, a lot of blood! It is at this time that the US and her allies will be humbled by our eternal God, YHWH, because of her pride, and repudiation of the principle on which she was founded—the principle of religious *liberty*, and will instead become a persecutor of the brethren—the Torah keepers, and a restrictor of liberty to all, except the lawless. Then shall the righteous pray these words: "It is time for thee, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law [thy TORAH]." Ps. 119: 126.

The year 2015 will be a most historic year in the history of Christianity, for in the United States, two historic speeches will have been delivered to a joint house of Congress: Benjamin Netanyahu (March 3rd, 2015) and Pope Francis (September 24th, 2015). The pope's speech will convene on the eve of the Feast of Tabernacles (FOT) this year, sandwiched between the Day of Atonement. During the FOT there will be another total lunar eclipse (blood moon), on September 28th, the opening day to the festival. Netanyahu's speech was followed by the feast of Purim, in memory of the Jews' fight for deliverance, after queen Esther had obtained legal protection from Haman's evil plot of exterminating the Jewish people. It was also followed by a solar eclipse, March 20th, the Vernal Equinox and the opening of the biblical "new year," as well as the day of the first astronomical "new moon," to kick off the year. It is from this new moon (March 21st) that the entire annual calendar is populated with YHWH's divinely appointed times (annual solemn feasts).

Acknowledging the gravity of the challenge faced, here is an excerpt from Benjamin Netanyahu's speech:

"Don't be fooled. The battle between Iran and ISIS doesn't turn Iran into a friend of America. Iran and ISIS are competing for the crown of militant Islam. One calls itself the Islamic Republic. The other calls itself the Islamic State. Both want to impose a militant Islamic empire first on the region and then on the entire world...

"We must always remember -- I'll say it one more time -- **the greatest dangers facing our world is the marriage of militant Islam with nuclear weapons.** To defeat ISIS and let Iran get nuclear weapons would be to win the battle, but lose the war. We can't let that happen...A region where small skirmishes can trigger big wars would turn into a nuclear tinderbox.

"Ladies and gentlemen, history has placed us at a fateful crossroads. We must now choose between two paths. One path leads to a bad deal that will at best curtail Iran's nuclear ambitions for a while, but it will inexorably lead to a nuclear-armed Iran whose unbridled aggression will inevitably lead to war...But I can

guarantee you this, the days when the Jewish people remained passive in the face of genocidal enemies, those days are over.”¹

My friends, Netanyahu is correct, there will be a war in the Middle East. But he too is not aware that the days of Israel’s political existence are numbered. He is not aware that YHWH has promised a restoration of Abraham’s seed in righteousness, and not the Zionist state he now leads. He is not aware that like ancient Babylon, national (political) Israel has been placed in the divine balance and found wanting! Heaven’s message to the Zionist state of Israel today is simply this: Repent and accept Y’shuah’s righteousness, that you may be hid in the day of His anger:

“12 Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger forever. 13 Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD. 14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: 15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall *feed you with knowledge and understanding*. 16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more. 17 At that time they shall *call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD*; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart. 18 In those days *the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel*, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers. 19 But I said, how shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? And I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.” Jer. 3: 12-18.

So our God is clear, there must be national repentance on Israel’s part, if any of the current Jews will ever inherit Zion at the time when “*the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel*, and they shall come together out of the land of the north [modern Babylon] to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.” (V. 18)

To Christians, on the other hand, the divine challenge is equally compelling: “Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD’S anger.” Zeph. 2: 3.

The Middle East is burning because the everlasting YHWH is about to empty the land of all its unworthy occupants, and give it to those whose right it is, those who do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with their God. “18 Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. 19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. 20 Thou wilt *perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham*, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.” Micah 7: 18-20.

¹ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2015/03/03/full-text-netanyahus-address-to-congress/>

The “truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham...sworn...from days of old,” are still pregnant in God’s mind today, and will be realized before heaven and earth pass away, for His promises are that sure and secure. Not one jot or one tittle shall in anywise pass from his Word till all be fulfilled.

Today, we see the Middle East as a center of war and global tensions, but it won’t be that way for much longer, for the empties will come and empty the land of its unholy occupants, both Jew and Gentile, Christian and Muslim, and the “remnant” who are obedient to YHWH’s statutes, judgments and commandments will become the rightful beneficiaries. What a glorious day that will be!

Adventism and Conditional Prophecies

The Seventh-day Adventist denomination developed a principle of prophetic interpretation called “conditional prophecies” in an effort to explain away some apparently unfulfilled prophecies made by Ellen G. White, as well as to forestall any discussion on the latter-day relevance of the Abrahamic promises ever being fulfilled. This position is taken in an apologetic effort of saving God from embarrassment. Now here is how this conditional notion is pitched:

“The Scriptures teach that **all** of the prophecies, covenants, promises, and threats found in the Scriptures are conditional whether or not a condition is stated; their fulfillment is contingent upon man's response to God's commands. Promises of blessing cannot be fulfilled to a disobedient nation or individual, and prophecies of punishment will not be fulfilled against the repentant. This principle is clearly stated in Jeremiah 18:7-10.”²

Observe carefully that the theologians correctly concluded “that all of the prophecies...in the Scriptures are conditional,” and not just the ones made to national Israel. Yet these same scholars in the very next breath reverse themselves, by restricting God from honoring His word at a later time through a people whom have met the conditions of the promise, thereby making God true and all men liars.

“Because the Jews rejected the Promiser, they lost the promises; because they rejected the King, they lost the kingdom. This is clearly stated in the allegorical parable of Israel's history in Matthew 21:33-43. According to verse 43, *the kingdom of God was to be taken from the Jews and given to another 'nation'—namely, the Christian church* (1 Peter 2:9; Rev. 1:6). Christ also foretold in two other parables the rejection of the Jewish nation as His people (Matt. 8:11, 12; 22:1-14). “Your house,” Christ said, “is left unto you desolate” (chap. 23:38), and Paul said that God's wrath had finally come upon them (1 Thess. 2:16). Thus *the promises to the Jews were nullified* by their own apostasy.”³

Doesn’t it strike you as very wrong for YHWH, given his character, to have “*taken*” the Abrahamic kingdom “*from the Jews and given to another 'nation'—namely, the Christian church,*” and spitefully deny the church of the blessings of promises on its original terms? If indeed Christ’s words have any validity, they do affirm the truth that “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and *given* to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” Matt. 21: 43. The “giving” of the kingdom to an obedient nation, does not change the conditions of the promise, nor the expected reward. However in Adventist

² MINISTRY Magazine, AUGUST/1986, p. 16.; http://docs.adventistarchives.org/docs/MIN/MIN19860801-V59-08_B.pdf#view=fit

³ Ibid. p. 17

eschatology, both the terms of the promise and the reward for obedience are changed! One could hardly be truthful and call this the “giving” of the original kingdom to another people. The truth is clear, “the Christian church” cannot be rewarded with anything short of “the kingdom” which was originally promised! Adventists will *never* acknowledge this fact, and so prefer to teach that the Christian church will reap the benefits promised to the seed of Abraham in the New Earth, instead of on this earth, although the Bible clearly states that it will be fulfilled “in the days of these kings,” (Dan. 2: 44)—“in the latter days.” (Dan. 2: 28).

In the face of dozens of bible prophecies concerning the restoration of the seed of Abraham in the Holy Land, the Adventist church would insist that, “Many of the promises made to Israel in the Old Testament are appropriated by the Christian church in the New and will be fulfilled only in the age to come.”⁴

In 1904 Theodore Herzl, the Father of Zionism, envisioned that the area of the Zionist utopia, or Jewish State, will extend “From the Brook of Egypt to the Euphrates”⁵ river in Iraq. This view he held on the strength of YHWH’s promise to Abraham, declaring: “In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, unto thy seed have I given this land, *from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.*” Gen. 15: 18.

Holding the same hopes of the divine covenant with Abraham in mind, Rabbi Fischmann, a prominent member of *the Jewish Agency for Palestine*, declared in his testimony to the U.N. Special Committee of Enquiry on July 9th, 1947: “The Promised Land extends from the River of Egypt up to the Euphrates, it includes parts of Syria and Lebanon.” This is a deeply held view by all Zionists, that in the fullness of time, they will eventually inherit all the territorial boundaries of the land promised to Abraham. They are wrong though, and will fail in their aspirations, for were it simply dependent on His gathering the seed of Abraham into the Holy Land, the Almighty would have duly granted them accesses to its expanse, instead of allowing circumstances to drive them off its sacred precincts, to become fugitives and wanderers over the face of the earth. Only when YHWH has a people who are sanctified through obedience to His Torah, and who accepts the atoning sacrifice of His Son, will these promises be realized, and not till then.

Totally ignorant of this fact, and thinking that on account of the Jews’ rejection of Christ, YHWH has rejected His covenant with Abraham, Seventh-day Adventists have taken the position that these prophecies will *never* be fulfilled on this side of eternity, but will only be realized in a sort of *spiritual way* in the New Earth. The church holds that those promises were “conditional,” and because the Jews broke their part of the covenant, God cannot keep his part either, even with a different people! What they fail to realize is that this covenant was made with an oath by the throne of YHWH, and that all of His promises, every one of them, are *conditional* on our obedience. Ask yourself if on account of Christ’s death on the cross, you are no longer obligated to obeying God’s law; or whether Christ’s promise of taking the Church to heaven (John 14: 1-3) is conditional on Christian’s obedience to His Word. If your answer is yes, and it should be, then you have just solved the theologically imposed constraint on the prophecies of the Kingdom, in which SDA theologians place the *spin* of conditionality. Regarding the surety of all God’s promises, here are a few Bible passages to ponder:

⁴ MINISTRY Magazine, August 1986, p. 17.

⁵ Theodore Herzl, 1904, Complete Diaries, Vol. II. p. 711.

“For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.” (Rom. 11: 29). The New Living Translation renders this verse thusly: “For God's gifts and his call can never be withdrawn.” And the NIV, chimes in with “God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.” In other words, God cannot simply call back His words and revoke His promises, rather, they must prosper and unambiguously execute His divine purpose for which He sent them: “10 For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 **so shall my word be** that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and *shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.*” (Isa. 55: 10, 11, ESV).

The answer is clear, those who suggest the notion of “conditional prophecies” know not the Scriptures nor the power of YHWH, for he *never changes*, or reverses himself, except in instances where humans have turned to him in repentance and obedience. In other words, God repents from doing good to a people when they are in rebellion against His will, and in like manner, he repents from doing them evil, when they repent and are in obedience with His Torah. The examples of the antediluvians and the Ninivites are sufficient to establish this fact. Further, YHWH reserves the right to destroy the apostates to His law, and fulfill His word through a nation or people who will obey his Word, and live in harmony with His perfect will. As to His promises to Abraham, however, the Bible is extremely clear:

“13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could *swear by no greater*, he sware by himself, 14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise *the immutability of his counsel*, confirmed it by an oath: 18 That by two immutable things, in which **it was impossible for God to lie**, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” Heb. 6: 13-16.

Do you now see the futility of pitting God against His immutable promises? It is a humanistic attempt to explain away His “sure words” of prophecy, but as verily as it is impossible for Him to change and recall his words, thereby making them *empty*, in like manner it is equally impossible for these theologians to be correct in their survey of His Holy Word, and must all repent and be humbled by the Holy Spirit of Prophecy, the divine Agent Who guides us into all truth.

Adventism’s False Predictions Concerning the Jews’ Return to Palestine

During the final days of Germany’s official launch of World War Two, the Adventist theologians around the world were contemplating many movements in eschatological prophecies, and thus placed heavy emphasis on the Jews’ desire to return to Palestine and establish a nation state—the goal of Zionism. Based on their interpretation (replacement theology), they saw no value in this notion, neither did they see Biblical support for it, so they made the following bold prophetic proclamation:

“Some few of this once-favored people will receive the Jesus whom their forefathers rejected and slew; but, as a people, they have long since ceased to have any significance. For the same reason, **Palestine will never become the home of the Jews; there would be no purpose in it.**”⁶

⁶ *Signs of The Times*, November 7, 1939, p. 7, Col. 1, paragraph 3; Document Title: *Are the JEWS God’s People? Does He plan to Give them Palestine After the War?*

These words would prove themselves false in less than a decade, before the entire world! Why? Because on May 14th, 1948 the State of Israel was born and declared an independent nation! Eternally etched in the passage of time, is the historical reality, that Israel is today a nation, much to the chagrin of Adventist Bible Scholars! Here is indisputable historical fact which exposes a major flaw in Adventist eschatological interpretation of Bible prophecy: "On 14 May 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel and the 1948 Palestine war entered its second phase with the intervention of the Arab state armies and the beginning of the 1948 Arab–Israeli War."⁷

What calculus were the SDA theologians using to arrive at their very erroneous conclusion? Clearly not the Scriptures, instead, they relied on a statement from Ellen G. White, which was discussing the Zionist Utopia state in the middle to late 19th century, and used her writings to countermand the abundance of Scriptures pointing to a latter-day restoration of the seed of Abraham in the Promised Land. Here is the overworked statement, which many Adventists today are too ashamed even to read, let alone endorse:

"Then I was pointed to some who are in the great error of believing that it is their duty to go to Old Jerusalem, and think they have a work to do there before the Lord comes. Such a view is calculated to take the mind and interest from the present work of the Lord, under the message of the third angel; for those who think that they are yet to go to Jerusalem will have their minds there, and their means will be withheld from the cause of present truth to get themselves and others there. I saw that such a mission would accomplish no real good, that it would take a long while to make a very few of the Jews believe even in the first advent of Christ, much more to believe in His second advent. I saw that Satan had greatly deceived some in this thing and that souls all around them in this land could be helped by them and led to keep the commandments of God, but they were leaving them to perish. I also saw that **Old Jerusalem never would be built up**; and that Satan was doing his utmost to lead the minds of the children of the Lord into these things now, in the gathering time, to keep them from throwing their whole interest into the present work of the Lord, and to cause them to neglect the necessary preparation for the day of the Lord."⁸

This statement would turn out as one of the most embarrassing, in the collection of Mrs. White's writings, not because she made a false prediction, but because this statement, originally written one hundred years before Israel's declaration of independence, was wrested to mean that God was finished with his promises to Abraham, on account of the Jew's rejection of Y'shuah the Messiah. The SDA theologians, placed all their confidence in these two paragraphs, and ignored the dozens of scripture passages on the truth of the pre-millennial kingdom of glory, and have had to write a seventeen-page apologetic entitled "The Gathering of Israel,"⁹ to sanitize them in the face of sharp critics.

Having trapped themselves in falsehood, the Adventist theologians and apologists are now teaching a new spin on the same passage they've used to debunk the return of the Jews to Palestine. It truly

⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1948_Arab%E2%80%93Israeli_War

⁸ Ellen G. White, 1850, Early Writings, pp. 75-76.

⁹ Julia Neuffer, *The Gathering of Israel; A Historical Study of Early Writings*, pp. 74-76, Former Assistant Book Editor Review and Herald Publishing Association; <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/gather.html>

Special Note: No date is given for the publishing of this booklet, but it is clear that it was written well after the 1948 embarrassment, and as *early* as 1968, the most recent citation in the foot notes, and many years *after* Israel's declaration of Independence. Clearly though, it was printed before 1983, when it was "reprinted" by the Biblical Research Institute of SDA's.

causes the reader to scratch his or her head for consistency. Note their new position on that statement: “How did *Ellen White's* readers understand this statement? That there was no light in the popular ‘age-to-come’ teaching, that *there is no Biblical significance in the Jews' returning to Palestine*, that Jerusalem will never be rebuilt *in a future millennial period*. She was not talking about a possible political rebuilding of Jerusalem but of a prophetically significant rebuilding of Old Jerusalem.”¹⁰

This statement was written at the earliest, in 1999, for 1998 is the most recent citation given in its footnotes, but clearly it was written a distant future to the booklet by Julia Neuffer—*The Gathering of Israel*, and still farther future to the denomination’s pre-World War II prophetic pronouncement in 1939. So let’s see “how have Ellen White’s readers,” the SDA Church leaders have understood this passage in *Early Writings*:

SDA Church Leaders in 1939

“For the same reason, **Palestine will never become the home of the Jews**; there would be no purpose in it.”¹¹

SDA Church Leaders in 1999

“**She was not talking about a possible political rebuilding of Jerusalem** but of a prophetically significant rebuilding of Old Jerusalem.”¹²

So when it suits their purpose the Adventist theologians teach that Palestine will never become the *political* home of the Jews, and when a few years have washed over they reverse themselves and teach that Ellen White was not talking about a “political” rebuilding of earthly Jerusalem. Is this honest scholarship? I wonder!

Here are the world’s greatest Bible scholars on display again, this time the editor of the *Adventist Review*, an official organ of the Organization, pronounced: “The 1948 establishment of the State of Israel, an outgrowth of the Nazi Holocaust in which 6 million Jews were killed, is viewed by Adventists as a **political**, not a prophetic event.”¹³ I know of no rise and fall of nations in Daniel 2, for example, which were purely prophetic and not political. The theologians are playing mind games on account of their colossal failed prediction regarding the return of the Jews to Palestine, a declaration they’d love to withdraw today.

But with the denomination’s evangelists seeking to take the gospel to the whole world, they cannot escape the question of Israel, and so begins the theological shuffle. In an interview with the *Adventist Review*, “Israel Field president Elofer agrees that handling the question of so-called ‘replacement theology’ is a delicate one: ‘Today it is not rare that Jews come to me and ask me, ‘*What does your church believe about Israel?* Have they been rejected and replaced by the church or not?’ *If we say the traditional answer to this question, we have no chance to be listened to in Israel.*”¹⁴

Which “traditional answer” is the evangelist warning Adventists to guard against? That traditional answer I’ve documented above, see p. 6 of this article, notes 2 and 3. Do you see the challenge our

¹⁰ <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/faq-unus.html>; *Comments Regarding Unusual Statements Found In Ellen G. White's Writings*

¹¹ Signs of The Times, November 7, 1939, p. 7.

¹² <http://www.whiteestate.org/issues/faq-unus.html>

¹³ <http://archives.adventistreview.org/article/1456/archives/issue-2007-1531/how-should-christians-view-israel>

¹⁴ <http://archives.adventistreview.org/article/1456/archives/issue-2007-1531/how-should-christians-view-israel>

“replacement theology” has created for witnessing the love of YHWH to this population? Even the field evangelist is cautioning that we use what amounts to deception, in providing a *winning* answer to the Jewish inquirer! Yet, it does not have to be this way, we can simply recant our erroneous posture and teach the truth as it is Y’shuah, that God has not cast away Israel:

“20 Well; because of unbelief they [the Jews] were broken off, and thou [Gentile—the Church] standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise **thou also shalt be cut off**. 23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for **God is able to graff them in again**. 24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: *how much more* shall these, which be the natural branches, be *grafted into their own olive tree*? 25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **until** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. 28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.” (Romans 11: 20-31).

In that same article discussed above, the Adventist Israeli Field President lamented at the challenge our theology has caused his ministry: “Elofer asks believers to keep an open mind about today’s Israel: ‘We would like our Adventist brethren to cease to see Israel as the ‘black sheep’ of the Middle East,’ he told the Review. ‘Maybe it is not the case in the United States, but recently a survey has been done in all the European countries, asking the question ‘Who is the biggest threat for the peace of the world?’ The majority of the people answered ‘Israel,’ not Iran, not terrorism, not [Osama] bin Laden, but Israel. This answer demonstrates a very high level of anti-Semitism, because rationally Israel is threatening no one, just defending [itself] against dozens of Muslim countries around who would like to see only one thing, its destruction,’ Elofer said.”¹⁵

How did Adventists develop this anti-Semitic bias? They inherited it through wrong theology, Here is Edson White, Ellen White’s son, in his own words: “We also read that ‘Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.’ Luke 21:24. Jerusalem has never again come into the possession of the Jews, and *will not* until ‘the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.’ This will be *when the work of the gospel is finished*.”¹⁶

During the 1974 Autumn Council of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, Dr. Herbert E. Douglass presented his studies on “The Unique Contribution of Adventist Eschatology,” in which he announced, “Adventists do not see theological importance in the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948 or the annexation of Old Jerusalem in 1967.”¹⁷ A few years later, in his book *The End* Dr. Douglass,

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ James Edson White, 1898, *The Coming King*, p. 98; Also at: <http://www.adventistalert.com/times/times.htm>

¹⁷ Dr. Herbert E. Douglass, 1974, NAD Autumn Council Lecture Series: *The Unique Contribution of Adventist Eschatology*, p. 6.

in an official theological posture, further stated, "Although Seventh-day Adventists are pre-millennialists, *they do not see prophetic importance* in the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948, or the annexation of Old Jerusalem in 1967."¹⁸

Following the SDA theologians, we would be totally confused, for they can't make up their minds if 1948 is significant in the life of Israel and Jerusalem, of whether it marked a **prophetic** fulfillment of Christ's prediction of that city, or if it purely just a **political** accident!

It is a well-known fact that "*The 20th Century Bible Studies*" is one of the evangelistic tools used by the Seventh-day Adventist church to gain converts. (Here it is used with success at the Wesley Chapel SDA Church in Dade City, FL: <http://wesleychapel22.adventistchurchconnect.org/article/7/20th-century-bible-studies>.) It represents the teachings of the Church in regard to interpretations of Bible prophecy and doctrines on biblical eschatology. In Lesson -5 of this prophecy manual, entitled - "Time Running Out" – Christ's prophecy of Luke 21:24 is featured and, wonder of wonders, it is declared to have met its *prophetic* fulfillment with a *political* outcome, in our day! Here in plain language is a snippet from that lesson. Question-3: "**How long did Christ say that Jerusalem would be trodden down?** (Verse 24) Old Jerusalem and the temple site has been occupied largely by the Gentile nations until 1967 when the Jews took possession of it in a 'lightning victory.' This portion of Christ's *prophecy* was fulfilled in our day!"¹⁹

So in one breath the theologians told us that 1948 was not a fulfillment of prophecy, only a *political* event, yet in another breath they say that modern Jerusalem with the Jews in it met a *prophetic* fulfillment in 1967, an event which depended on the prophetic event of May 14, 1948.

At a time when the stakes for failure could not be higher, given the near universal persecution of the modern Jews, Victor Houteff, the bane of Adventist theologians, guided by the Holy Spirit of Prophecy, went press on April 3, 1943, and made this statement: "Through it [Zech. 1: 20, 21] all we see in Zechariah's prophecy a prediction that one day Gentile nations would be engaged in rebuilding the Israelitish kingdom *in Palestine* that was once destroyed. We see also that there is to be a world war in which Gentiles outside of Palestine and the Gentiles within will be involved. In that war God's people, Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem, are to be delivered and made free and the kingdom will be rebuilt. *That is as plain as anything I have ever seen.*"²⁰

After stating that the Palestinian cause "is as plain as anything" he had ever seen in the Scriptures, and calling the current "Jews," in reality "Gentiles," Mr. Houteff raised the bar even higher, only *seventeen months prior to Israel's declaration of independence*, through his rightly dividing the word of truth, and declared the following time-tested truth, while commenting on Zephaniah chapter two:

"Verses 1,2,4,5—'Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you. For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up. Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea coast, the nation of the Cherethites! The

¹⁸ Dr. Herbert E. Douglass, 1979, *The End*, p. 48.

¹⁹ The Twentieth Century Bible Course, Lesson No. 5, p. 2; Chapter Title "*Time Running Out*"

²⁰ Victor. T. Houteff, 1943, *The Symbolic Code*, Vol. 13, Nos. 1, 2, p. 6; Sermon Title: *WORLD CONDITIONS WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE DELIVERED*

Word of the Lord is against you; O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.'

"The fourth verse definitely implies that the 'nation' is to gather together in the cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Ekron, in the land of the Philistines, in the land of Canaan *in Palestine*: - In view of the fact that this scripture is now being unfolded, and also the fact that there is but one people, one nation (the descendants, of the ancient scribes, priests, and Pharisees who rejected the Lord and who have not even to this day accepted Him, that are hardly desired anywhere in the world) that is now doing all she can to *gather together in Palestine*—in view of all this, *the present-day Jews* are that undesired nation. Upon her, therefore, the Lord's anger is to fall if she continues to deny Christ. Yes, **the universally hated Jew is the only nation that has been scattered throughout the Gentile world, and is the only one that is now gathering together in Palestine.**

"Moreover, in these verses, two truths stand out clearly: (1) that in vain the Jews seek to establish themselves in the Promised Land; (2) that we who are bearing the message of the great and dreadful day of the Lord are counselled to seek meekness and righteousness, for thus only shall we 'be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.' That is, merely bear[ing] knowledge of the message will not save us, there should be corresponding deeds with it.

"Let us now connect verse 3 with verses 6 and 7, the verses that are applicable to the people of God, the meek. Verses 3, 6, 7: 'Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought His judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger. And the sea coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks. And the coast shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah; they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening: for the Lord their God shall visit them, and turn away their captivity. '

"Now, the fact that the Lord is to destroy all the inhabitants in the land of the Philistines (verse 5), and at the same time make it dwellings for 'shepherds, and folds for flocks,' shows that He is first to drive out of the land all the wicked, all those who are not seeking meekness, then He is to set up the 'house of Judah' in it.

"Verse 8—'I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached My people, and magnified themselves against their border.' Not only the unbelieving Jews, but also the unbelieving Arabs who resist the meek, are to be swept away from the land.

"Verse 9—'Therefore as I live, saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles, and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation: the residue of My people shall spoil them, and the remnant of My people shall possess them.'²¹

Now let's assess: Mr. Houteff correctly predicted the restoration of Jews to Palestine, and their ultimate removal through divine circumstances, whereas the Adventist theologians predicted that *Palestine will never become the home of the Jews*, yet who among them is internationally famed as a "false prophet?"

²¹ Victor T. Houteff, *Timely Greetings*, Volume One, Number 22, Pages 25-27, January 4, 1947

Not the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, but the Bulgarian author of *The Shepherd's Rod*—Victor Houteff. How ironic! To mention the name Victor Houteff in the assembly of most Seventh-day Adventists today, if not used with much scorn and contempt heaped upon him, will engender the fires of persecution against the advocate of his message.

With the backdrop of all that he's already taught prior to May 14, 1948 as his guiding light, here is Mr. Houteff again fielding questions, this time on "*Current events, The Palestine Situation, and how close the separation?*" Now read closely his below time-tested response

"Now as to what I think about *the Palestine situation* itself: I think the Jews need to have a place to go to, but I do not think God is leading them. If God drove the Jews from His land because of their wickedness, because He no longer could tolerate them, then it is certain that He is not leading them back to it now while they are of the same mind and just as hostile against His only Son as they were two thousand years ago. *The Jews, therefore, are taking the land on their own responsibility*, and when the 'times' of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24) end, *the new State of Israel*, as they call themselves, *will then vacate the land much faster than they can now take it*, unless they take God into the land with them. God is nevertheless to have a people there, but they will be the kind He tells of in the Scriptures, some of which I shall now read: [Jer. 30:18-22; Jer. 31:6-10,34; Hos. 3:4, 5 quoted].

"God will have a people in the land all right, but they all shall know the Lord. *Those, therefore, who are now trying to establish themselves in Palestine are not that people*. To learn who the people are that will inherit the land, read Tract No. 8, *Mount Zion At the Eleventh Hour*. But, you say, is there no *prophecy concerning what the Jews are doing today in Palestine?* Of course there must be a prophecy. Let me read it to you: [Zeph. 2:1-3 quoted].

"These verses of Scripture, you note, are to meet fulfilment just before the 'day pass as the chaff,' before the fierce anger of the Lord breaks upon the nation not desired. And while this undesired nation is gathering together, then it is that all the meek of the earth, those who have borne the Lord's message 'before the great and dreadful day of the Lord' (the church), are counselled to still seek meekness. There are, therefore, two peoples brought to view in these verses—the nation not desired and the meek of the earth.

"Now in view of the fact that there is but one such undesired nation, the Jewish, and none other, that is hated by all nations, this scripture *cannot possibly apply to another people*. Also the fact that now while we are broadcasting the message of the great and dreadful day of the Lord, the day before the day of the Lord's anger, *the undesired Jews world over are gathering together in Palestine*—I say in view of all these things now contemporaneously taking place, the truth of the Scriptures boldly stands out, showing that *the anger of the Lord is to fall upon the Jews unless they reform*, and not they, but 'the meek of the earth' are to inherit the land. And so according to Scripture, *Jew and Arab* alike are to go out of the Promised Land, and the meek of the earth to march into it."²²

But those who are not prophecy buffs, yet are realists, can see as through a clear glass window, what's on the horizon for the Middle East theatre—full scale war. The trouble is that America and the West cannot correctly interpret what is happening, and while they assume that the efforts in the Arab Countries (Arab Spring) are in favor of removing dictatorships and installing westernized democracies,

²² Victor T. Houteff, Nov. 6, 1948, *Timely Greetings* Vol. 2, No. 41, pp. 10-13

they are instead getting a shot in the foot when these countries revert to their own totalitarian legislation and practices of Islam. Take for example, the country of Yemen: it was only last August (2014) when President Obama praised the US military strategy in that country, and under his watch, the US forces have had to extricate themselves from Yemen, leaving behind all their military gear, sensitive documents, and national pride! Why? They were not correctly reading the signs of the times, but there are others who do, and against them, such as Israel, the US is volleying barbs.

“Middle East on Brink of Full-Scale War: Israeli General. The Middle East is on the brink of a full-scale cataclysmic war that will feature weapons of mass destruction, warned Israeli Major-General Eyal Eisenberg. ‘After the Arab Spring, we predict that a winter of radical Islam will arrive,’ Eisenberg told a press conference in Tel Aviv on Monday. As a result *the possibility for a multi-front war has increased, including the potential use of weapons of mass destruction.*

“Eisenberg also told the Institute for National Security Studies: The Homefront Command [Israel] faces a challenge that is not simple. The main threat is from missiles and rockets and we may find ourselves in a conflict in which the homefront is under attack. The strength of the homefront is what will decide the outcome of the next war.

“Eisenberg cited other worrisome developments that could lead to a full-blown war. Iran has not abandoned its nuclear program, he said. The Egyptian army is bending under the burden of its missions, as evidenced by the transformation of the [Israel-Egypt] border from one of peace to one of terror and the possibility that the Sinai Peninsula will become an Islamic entity. Strategically, I think Israel needs a peaceful border with Sinai. Also, with what is happening in Syria and the deterioration of [Israel's] ties with Turkey, *the likelihood of an all-out war [in the Middle East] is growing in the long-run.*”²³

So those who are correctly reading the signs are under no illusions to this reality, that there will be a regional war in the Middle East, but most Adventists blow this off as “false prophecy,” and even fear mongering, yet they will be the most embarrassed when the tide of this war turns against her prophetic pronouncements, leaving the church unprepared for the unexpected event, as were the foolish virgins.

In an era of stealth countries are adapting, and while the US, for example, uses stealth technology to penetrate enemies’ defenses, there is another more brazen type of stealth warfare which many are not noticing, while occurring in plain sight. Here’s one form of stealth fighting: the war of Russia against Ukraine’s Crimea and other regions. The Russians simply hood their faces, remove all credentials and markings linking them to their nation, and you have a professional military stealth force, called *separatists* or *rebels*, all operating in plain sight of the world, without any concrete confirmation of their true national identity.

Ever since the declaration of Independence there has been the thought of a joint Arab military intervention force, but sectarian strife and political jockeying have kept this from becoming a regional reality, until now with the rise of ISIL also known as ISIS.

“The Arab League as an organization has no military force, like the United Nations or the European Union, but recently in the 2007 summit, the Leaders decided to reactivate their joint defense and establish a peacekeeping force to deploy in South Lebanon, Darfur, Iraq, Somalia, and other hot spots.

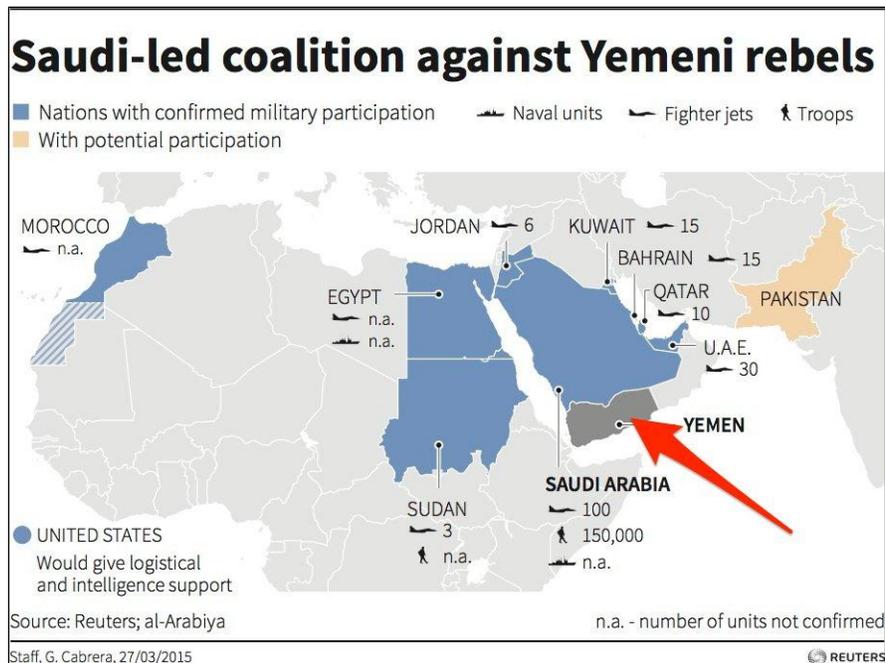
²³ <http://www.ibtimes.com/middle-east-brink-full-scale-war-israeli-general-309846> September 06 2011

“The military history of the Arab League is closely linked to the Arab–Israeli conflict. The 1950 Arab Joint Security Pact set out provisions for collective security among the Arab states, but only in 1961 was the Joint Arab Command (JAC) proposed as a unified military command for the Arab League first by the Joint Defense Council, an institution of the Arab League.”²⁴

Observe carefully that there would not have been Arab fighting force, had there not been an Israel to oppose, but as in other instances, the West is again being blindsided to the real issues, and they only see the formation of a unified military force as a strong answer to terrorist elements such as al-Qaida, ISIL and Iran, for example. But they will be in for the greatest surprise when this joint military is deployed against her pride and joy of the Middle East—Israel! So here is stealth at its best: “tell the Americans and their allies that our joint strike force is for defensive purposes only, to ward off enemies that America also disdains, such as Iran and ISIL, but we won’t say our true intentions are to remove the State of Israel from the Middle East until we are sufficiently unified down the road of no return.” There is a reason why this region, excluding Israel’s military expenditures, is spending over US\$118 Billion dollars annually in military upgrades, and it is to, in the end, ensure a decisive victory against the Zionist State of Israel. But the West is so overjoyed at their mention of ISIS, war on terror, Iran and Yemen, that they do not have time to look beyond the veil, and see the real hovering thunder clouds of a great Middle East war. *The enemy of my enemy is not necessarily my friend*, when my back is against the wall, and my options have ran thin!

“Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said: ‘The Arab leaders have decided to agree on the principle of a joint Arab military force.’”²⁵

Inspired by America’s leadership in forming military coalitions to fight wars on their door steps, the Arab countries have agreed to follow suite, and their training ground is in the Muslim country of Yemen, fast disintegrating into a home for the spawning of international terrorism. America looks favorably on this coalition, because it is formed by Western Allied countries of the Muslim world, and is thrilled that with this fighting force in place, we will almost permanently eliminate the need for American “boots on the ground,” in large numbers, as the moderate



²⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_of_the_Arab_League; *Military of the Arab League*

²⁵ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32106939>; 29 March 2015, *Arab League agrees to create joint military force*

Muslim countries will bear the heavy combat burden in the heat of battle. But prophecy declares that this calculus will fail, and the US along with her allies will crumble on the mountains of Israel. [Read Ezek. 38-39].

“The Arab League on Sunday called for the creation of a joint military force to *counter extremism and political instability across the Middle East* amid a Saudi Arabia-led operation carrying out airstrikes in Yemen.

“At a meeting in Sharm El Sheikh chaired by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, leaders of the 22 countries of the Arab League agreed in principle to form a joint force that would take military action against threats to the peace and security of another member state, according to a final declaration closing the two day summit. Participation in such a force would be optional, the declaration said, and such a plan is unlikely to factor into the continuing operation in Yemen.

“The plan, which is still in its infancy and will take months to formulate, is the first concrete step toward the united military force that Mr. Sisi had sought in early February after a Libyan affiliate of Islamic State beheaded 22 Egyptian migrant workers there—drawing airstrikes from the Egyptian air force against militant sites in the Libyan city of Derna.

“But the creation of the force has taken on new urgency and political contours as the campaign in Yemen exposes the discomfort the Arab world’s traditional powers have with expanding Iranian influence in the region.”²⁶

At the heart of this joint military strike force, is the deterrence or against Israel’s existence that it portends: “The weekend meetings resulted in a resolution declaring a newly unveiled joint Arab defense force that would be *deployed at the request of any Arab nation facing a national security threat*. The force -- comprised of some 40,000 elite troops, war planes, navy ships and weapons -- could also be used to combat terrorist groups like the Islamic State, also known as ISIS.”²⁷

What constitutes “a national security threat,” is a wide open question in this resolution, and the existence of Israel, for example, can be reasonably argued by an independent Palestinian State, backed by Hamas, to be such a threat, commanding the response of all 22 Arab militaries! What role will the US occupy in such a turn of events? Well, the obvious, she will remove earth, sea and sky to defend Israel’s national sovereignty, and this is the “tinderbox” which will set off the greatest conflagration this region has ever seen—“For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up.” Zeph. 2: 4.

That there is today a Westernized allied military engagement in preparation for the next world war is by no means a secret, but coupled with the new Arab fighting force, this is a long over-due and welcomed addition to the coalition of the willing. Here is what prophecy says:

“1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, 3 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: 4 And I will turn thee

²⁶ <http://www.wsj.com/articles/arab-league-agrees-to-create-joint-military-force-1427632123>; March 29, 2015, *Arab League Agrees to Create Joint Military Force*

²⁷ <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2015/03/30/arab-league-to-create-joint-military-force/>; March 30, 2015, *Arab League to create joint military force*

back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: 5 Persia [Iran], Ethiopia [North-Eastern Africa], and Libya [North Western Africa] with them; all of them with shield and helmet: 6 Gomer [Turkey], and all his bands; the house of Togarmah [Turkey up to Russia] of the **north** quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee.” Ezek. 38: 1-6

The characters “Gog” and “Magog” here in prophecy, are not the ones found after the millennium (Rev. 20: 8), but are symbolic of a combined military in the “latter years” (Ezek. 38: 8), or “latter days” (Ezek. 38: 16) of this earth’s history, at a time when the saints are still under the threat of oppression by their enemies. Gog/ Magog are prophetic descriptors for a latter-day military and political power of prophecy called Assyria. With the exception of the writings of Victor Houteff, declared a false prophet by most Adventists, there is no Christian theologian who expounds on this topic—the latter-day Assyrian war centered in Palestine, a fact which has kept them in such gross darkness as to the end results on the ground of these current Middle East conflicts. Antitypical Assyria, is not one country, just as antitypical Babylon is not one country, but instead is a coalition of countries, wielding both Political, Military and economic might in the latter days, our time. Just as anciently Assyria was overtaken by Babylon, similarly, the latter-day Assyria will give way to the antitypical Babylon of our times, but they are separate and distinct in succession of power. This is why the last world governments will agree and give their power to the beast, in which they will establish a totalitarian governmental structure, one which compels against conscience to worship based on the dictates of the State rather than in compliance with the Law of God—The holy Torah.

“12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. 13 These have one mind, and shall *give their power and strength unto the beast*... 17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom *unto the beast*, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.” Rev. 17: 12, 13, 17.

Do you see the problem our SDA eschatology gives us? We hold, as a denomination that “the beast” is the Roman Catholic Church, and we equally hold that “the woman” who sits on “the beast” is also the Roman Catholic Church! How can these things be? How can the Roman Catholic Church sit on itself? The fact now compels us to see that the beast and the woman are both separate entities, and not one and the same.

This totalitarian ecumenism has resulted by heaven’s arrangement of circumstances, so as to complete the work of the *Great Commission*—preaching the everlasting gospel “into all the world for a witness,” before the end comes. As the Scriptures declare, “Until the words of God shall be fulfilled.” These “words of God” are a compacted prophecy concerning the everlasting “mystery of God” (Rev. 10: 7), which even “angels desire to look into,”(1 Pet. 1: 12), and more specifically summarized as “Christ in you, the hope of glory,” (Col. 1: 27).

“In His coming in the flesh—having been made in all things like unto us and having been tempted in all points like as we are—He has identified Himself with every human soul just where that soul is. And from the place where every human soul is, He has consecrated for that soul a new and living way through all the vicissitudes and experiences of a whole lifetime, and even through death and the tomb, into the holiest of all at the right hand of God for evermore.

“O that consecrated way! Consecrated by His temptations and sufferings, by His prayers and tears, by His holy living and sacrificial dying, by His triumphant resurrection and glorious ascension, and by His triumphal entry into the holiest of all, at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens!

“And this ‘way’ He has consecrated for us. He, having become one of us, has made this way our way; it belongs to us. He has endowed every soul with divine right to walk in this consecrated way, and by His having done it Himself in the flesh—in our flesh—He has made it possible, yea, He has given actual assurance, that every human soul can walk in that way, in all that that way is and by it enter fully and freely into the holiest of all.

“He, as one of us, in our human nature, weak as we, laden with the sins of the world, in our sinful flesh, in this world, a whole lifetime, lived a life ‘holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,’ and ‘was made’ and ascended ‘higher than the heavens.’ And by this He has made and consecrated a way by which, in Him, every believer can in this world and for a whole lifetime, live a life holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and as a consequence be made with Him higher than the heavens.

“Perfection, perfection of character, is the Christian goal—perfection attained in human flesh in this world. Christ attained it in human flesh in this world and thus made and consecrated a way by which, in Him, every believer can attain it. He, having attained it, has become our great High Priest, by His priestly ministry in the true sanctuary to enable us to attain.

“Perfection is the Christian's goal, and the High Priesthood and ministry of Christ in the true sanctuary is the only way by which any soul can attain this true goal in this world. ‘Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary.’ Psalm 77:13.”²⁸

So in the end, our God will have a holy Church, a purified people, spotless from the vestige and markings of sin—a perfect people to meet Christ at His Second Coming, thus He will “present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and *without blemish*.” Eph. 5: 27.

The result of the great Middle East War of prophecy, is to prepare a temporary holding place for the saints in the latter days, as they are called out of Babylon into the stone-Kingdom (Dan. 2: 44) of Peace.

Going back to our subject in Ezekiel 38, we see a prophecy showing a large combined Arab-Muslim (westernized Arab-Muslim confederacy) of militaries, with theater of operation in the Holy Land. Let’s read more:

“7 Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a *guard unto them*. 8 After many days thou shalt be visited: **in the latter years** thou shalt *come into the land* that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the *mountains of Israel*, which have been always waste: but it is *brought forth out of the nations*, and they shall dwell safely all of them. 9 Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee.” Ezek. 38: 7-9.

We see that Gog/ Magog will be the “guard” or leader of this coalition of many nations, some of which are today aligned as enemies of the West, but the prophecy cannot fail, and even today’s enemies will become tomorrow’s allies, to the perfection of God’s “*sure word of prophecy*,” (2 Pet. 1: 190). This

²⁸ A.T. Jones, *The Consecrated Way To Christian Perfection*, pp. 44-45.

combined military will be launched in a time of advanced aerial combat technology, for the Scriptures declare they shall “ascend” like a cloud—become airborne, and “cover the land.” It is interesting that modern military planners are more in sync with the Biblical themes than many theologians, for even the US-led coalition to extricate the Iraqi army from Kuwait, in 1991 was called “Desert Storm”—an almost entirely concentrated aerial warfare. The end result was the shortest ground battle the Allied forces have ever faced. My point is that almost entirely aerial campaign was called Operation Desert Storm, for it utilized the air power of the allied forces—this strategy was seen in prophecy nearly three millennia ago, and should give us confidence in the surety of God’s Words, which cannot return without accomplishing their designed purpose.

“10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: 11 And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, 12 To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land. 13 Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? Hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? To carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil? 14 Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; in that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? 15 And thou shalt come from thy place **out of the north parts**, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: 16 And thou shalt come up against *my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land*; it shall be **in the latter days**, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.” Ezek. 38: 10-16.

These verses become very self-evident that sometime “in the latter days,” of this earth’s history, and prior to the Second Coming of Y’shuah in power and great glory, our God will restore divine order to the Holy Land, and gather his people—the saved there—where they can “dwell safely,” and free from the horrors and tyranny of the Mark of the Beast system. Now let me share with you the words of one declared unfit for the kingdom of Heaven:

“Applying the ‘eyesalve’ (Rev. 3:18), they shall ‘behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!’ And beholding Him, they shall accept His message and know the truth and the truth shall make them free, and shall save them from being spued out of His mouth (Rev. 3:16).

“Therefore, only as they awake and give heed to the voice of the True Witness, and turn their steps toward the gates of the Kingdom, may they ever hope to participate in the divine eventuality: ‘O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.’

“Here in prophetic utterance is not only a promise to purify the church when modern Assyria is being crushed, but also a suggestive statement as to what constitutes ‘meat in due season’ for men today; and as to what movement they are to enlist in if they would make sure of salvation. They are enjoined to fix their vision upon the feet of him who brings ‘good tidings’ (message from the Lord), who publishes ‘peace’ (the peace of Christ’s Kingdom), and who declares that while the powers of earth are engulfed in

a gigantic war, the wicked in the church shall be cut off, no more to pass through her. Specifically, the prophet exhorts all penitently to turn unto the house of Judah (the latter-day Kingdom of Judah -- Mic. 4; Ezek. 37:16-22), the church in the purification of which are to be sealed 12,000 out of each of the 12 tribes, as firstfruits. And he urges the subjects of the kingdom to perform their religious duties and to keep their promises to the Lord. In short, he admonishes them to give heed to the message of the hour -- the message which announces the imminence of the church's purification, after which, as the promise is, 'the wicked shall no more pass through' her, for 'he is utterly cut off.' (See also Matt. 13:30, 47-50, Isa. 66:16, 19, 20)...

"Nah. 2:2. 'For the Lord hath turned away the excellency of Jacob as the excellency of Israel: for the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine branches.'

"Having already (through the emptiers) chastened His people, the Lord will chasten them no more, but will now free them.

"Sharing with the nations the guilt for marring the branches of His vineyard (His Kingdom), this modern Assyria must now share in the divine retribution while God is taking His people back to their own land. Inferentially, with the fall of the 'Assyrians' (the Gentiles in possession of the Promised Land), 'the time of the Gentiles' is fulfilled (Luke 21:24).

"Looking forward to this time of deliverance the angel explained to Daniel: 'And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.' Dan. 12:1.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.' Isa. 27:13.

"Glorious promise! Is your heart set upon it Brother, Sister? Then without delay respond to the divine injunction: 'Turn ye unto Him from Whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted. For in that day every man shall cast away his idols of silver, and his idols of gold which your own hands have made unto you for a sin. Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword not of a mighty man, and the sword, not of a mean man; shall devour him: but he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be discomfited. And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, Whose fire is in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem.' Isa. 31:6-9.

"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Dan. 12:10.

"Nahum makes clear that in this conflict God interposes against Assyria, and that as a result she is unable to withstand him who 'dasheth in pieces.' Having set Himself to humble her, He therefore strengthens the arms of her enemy. Accordingly, Assyria falls, not because she is weak and small nor because she is out-numbered and out-matched, but because God's purpose determines her downfall. In other words, the coalition which may have the greater resources and man-power, and which from the human point of view may seem sure to win, is in this case sure to lose.

“Such is the ironic pattern of history. Always has God visited judgment upon enlightened nations or peoples who have become so self-righteous and self-sufficient that their lights have gone out and their works become wicked and hypocritical. Ever has He punished them by the sword of the unenlightened and outright wicked barbarian. This He does for two reasons: first, that they might see the folly of professing themselves to be a righteous people, when they are in fact worse than barbarians; and second, that while these hypocritical ones are thereby led to repent, their conquerors may thereby be led to see that their victory is not of their own strength. Thus both victor and vanquished are brought to a place where they may surrender to God and give glory to Him.”²⁹

What divine love, grace and mercy are here exhibited on display! Our God punishes that he might save, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.

“6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, *that we might be partakers of his holiness*. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable *fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby*. 12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but *let it rather be healed*.” Heb. 12: 6-13.

My friend, this lengthy article is but a brief summary of what the Bible teaches on *Why the Middle East is burning*. I can only encourage you to search beyond the pulpits of the Adventist church for present truth, because there is a severe famine in the land. I love the church and have spent a number of years working in its institutions, but today, we can all honestly say without being bitter or hypocritical, “the faithful city has indeed become an harlot.” This state of affairs have set in because our leaders failed to keep pace with the light of present truth, and have repeatedly, first in 1888, and secondly in 1930, and are now groping in abject darkness. The result is clear that Heaven is today calling for a spiritual revival and reformation of primitive godliness to take place in our midst—the most urgent of all our spiritual needs. God is not looking for large contributions, and mega congregations, magnificent edifices and shock TV programming; all he wants is our surrender to his Torah—His statutes, judgments and commandments, and He will draw all men unto himself through us—our holy living and unwavering obedience to His Word•

I will follow Thee, my Savior,
Wheresoe'er my lot may be.
Where thou goest I will follow;
Yes, my Lord, I'll follow Thee.

Refrain

I will follow Thee, my Saviour,

²⁹ Victor T. Houteff (1943), War News Forecast, pp. 21-26.

Thou didst shed Thy blood for me;
And though all men should forsake Thee;
By Thy grace I'll follow Thee.

Though the road be rough and thorny,
Trackless as the foaming sea,
Thou hast trod this way before me,
And I'll gladly follow Thee.

Though I meet with tribulations,
Sorely tempted though I be;
I remember Thou wast tempted,
And rejoice to follow Thee.

Though Thou leadest me through affliction,
Poor, forsaken though I be;
Thou wast destitute, afflicted,
And I only follow Thee.

Though to Jordan's rolling billows,
Cold and deep, Thou leadest me,
Thou hast crossed the waves before me,
And I still will follow Thee.

■ James Lawson Elginburg, 1886

Breaking News! Extra!

Just as I was finished writing this article, I turned to read the latest world news, and let me share this with you in case you missed it:

"April 1, 2015; Iranian General: 'Erasing Israel Off the Map' Is 'Nonnegotiable'

"The commander of the Basij militia of Iran's Revolutionary Guards said in an interview that 'erasing Israel off the map' is 'nonnegotiable,' The Times of Israel reported. Brig. Gen. Mohammad Reza Naqdi's comments were made public as Iran and six world powers chose to extend nuclear negotiations in a new phase aimed at reaching a comprehensive accord by the end of June.

"Naqdi has issued statements against Israel in the past. In 2014, Naqdi said Iran was increasing efforts to arm West Bank Palestinians for battle against Israel, adding the move would lead to Israel's annihilation, Iran's Fars News reported.

"'Arming the West Bank has started and weapons will be supplied to the people of this region,' Naqdi said. 'The Zionists should know that the next war won't be confined to the present borders and the Mujahedeen will push them back,' he added.

"Fars News also quoted Naqdi threatening both Saudi Arabia and the United States. 'Imposing war on Yemen will, God willingly, have no result other than Saddam's fate for the aggressors and the U.S. that is

the direct sponsor of this crime will have to leave the region forever after losing its puppet, the Al Saud regime,' he said in a statement."³⁰

Heralds of the 'King' Ministries

Brixey, MO 65618

Internet: www.sdaprophecies.wordpress.com

E-mail: Gaugustus336@gmail.com

Phone: 770-722-7969

³⁰ <http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/Iran-Israel-destruction-annihilation/2015/04/01/id/635729/>; April 1, 2015; *Iranian General: 'Erasing Israel Off the Map' Is 'Nonnegotiable'*