

ISRAEL:

THE COMING WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

A commentary, by Michael Landrum

As we enter the new year of 2009, it is as though the geopolitics of our world is about to accelerate into whole new forms and previously unfamiliar alliances. A shaken world economy, that has previously gotten its cues from the engine of American consumerism, is rapidly building toward new systems that will supplant the previous failed structures. Through the mist of this murky landscape, the politics of commerce is very surely being replaced by what will increasingly be seen as the politics of pragmatism—or, put simply, “What do we do to make things WORK?” The world is rapidly entering “default” mode as its once secure systems uncoil under the weight of its jaw-slackening corruptions. We are familiar with this as an echo from times in our historic past, in such images as seen in the Great Depression of 1929, lasting for ten years, ending with a manufacturing economy suddenly given new life in the call to defeat the axis powers in WW2. In the 2008 election year where a loosely described appeal for “change” became its own apparent reason-to-be, as demonstrated in its very apparent rhetorical triumph, we are again at a brink of history. Will this, too, be salvaged only by cataclysm?

In this hour, a new pragmatism will again be introduced to the national and to the world scene. Nowhere on the globe has there been a more sensitive barometer of the effect of the stability of the United States of America in the last fifty years, than the barometer of events in the Middle East.

The crumbling stability of the U.S. as broker for the world economy has taken its place alongside misdirected and now manifestly failed U.S. foreign policy. This is policy which began as a pragmatic effort to accede to demands of Arab oil states as their religio-political demands have grown essential to our own strategic economic needs. As these demands have accelerated, the result has been rearrangement of the political/strategic landscape of Israel. Israel, the only true Democracy in the region, has become the “canary in the cage” for United States and European prospects for long-term peace efforts with the Moslem world. At this point, Israel has been forced into an isolation that is intended by its enemies to make it appear to be dangerously untenable to remain as a nation-state among the nations of the world. The more pressure is applied to this tiny keystone of a beleaguered country, the more volatile its reaction will eventually become. Under current circumstances, it may be a mere matter of time before the powder keg of intransigent opposition to Israel’s future is ignited in a crisis that will change our whole future.

It may seem surprising to some that the anatomy of our times has been outlined with uncanny deliberation in the writings of certain sages from antiquity. It is worthy of our recognition that we be directed to these writings, even now. They still serve to constitute those appropriate frames of reference that our essential Judeo-Christian heritage has long embraced. This is so, whether or not the late-prevailing winds of secular opinion would seek to rewrite that natural beacon.

Since our heritage has known vigorous Biblical exegesis in the past, from various prolific writers, it may be in keeping with such inquiry to look again at the ancients, to observe for ourselves the evidence of “today’s headlines” in “yesterday’s” text. The impelling nature of this information calls to our sense of wonder and also to what we increasingly sense as our vital spiritual interest.

In the News: Prophetic Psalm 94

Psalm 94:2 Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.

Psalm 94:3 LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?

Psalm 94:4 [How long] shall they utter [and] speak hard things? [and] all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?

Psalm 94:5 They BREAK IN PIECES thy people, O LORD, *(Author's note –This is a precise description of what happens in a bus bombing) and afflict thine heritage.*

Psalm 94:6 They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

Psalm 94:7 Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall THE GOD OF JACOB regard [it]. *(Author's note- Is there the need in the Islamic mind to define Israel's God as distinct from their own? There is a grim imperative within Islam to discredit any other name or representation of God other than their own, that of "Allah". But the name is actually taken from the pre-Mohamed era name for the "Moon god". This is clearly not YHWH, the God of JACOB.)* (Amplified Bible)

Ezekiel 25:12-17...

"Thus says the Lord God: Because **Edom** has dealt against the house of Judah by TAKING VENGEANCE and has greatly offended and has become doubly guilty...I will also stretch out my hand against Edom, and will cut off and root out man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate; from *Teman (Author's Note: Prophetically, the principal city of Edom, which is in modern day Jordan, stretching northward into Moab, the area of modern-day Syria)* even to *Dedan (Author's Note: modern day Saudi Arabia)*, they shall fall by the sword. And I will lay **MY** vengeance upon Edom **BY THE HAND OF MY PEOPLE ISRAEL**; and they shall do upon Edom ACCORDING TO MY ANGER...and they shall know MY vengeance, says the Lord God." (See also Isaiah 34; Amos 1:11-12; and Obadiah) "...Because the Philistines *(Author's Note: Those who roughly occupy the same regions of modern-day "Palestine")* have dealt revengefully and have taken vengeance CONTEMPTUOUSLY, WITH MALICE AND SPITE IN THEIR HEARTS, TO DESTROY IN **PERPETUAL ENMITY**...I will stretch out My hand against the Philistines...and destroy THE REMAINDER OF THE SEACOAST." (Amplified Bible)

Notice also that the simultaneous regional destruction of enemies from the east, the northeast, and the west is told, because these people are of a coordinated alliance which has identifiably sworn permanent enmity against Israel and God's people. Quite apparently, no effort of governments or treaties of man will alter their intentions. Therefore God appoints to them a time of His judgment, which will be seen to the whole world as a refuting of their claims, together with His pronouncement that there is a God in Israel!

This precise description of sudden utter desolation upon Israel's specifically-named neighbors, by God THROUGH Israel, has never before occurred. From the time of Isaiah to the present day, there has not been such an event. It is a prophetic event of such a magnitude as to be observed as unfolding specifically in the time of the end, AND AS A PRELUDE of other events to follow in sequence. Damascus, Syria is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. In Isaiah 17:1, the permanent destruction of the city is prophesied. The timing of the permanent destruction of Damascus is very likely a notable effect of this regional war. It may be significant in this respect to note that the major Islamic terrorist organizations are headquartered in Damascus. Their instigations of terror may be the tripwire for their future demise together.

The book of Joel ends with the commencement of literally a new dispensation for Israel from the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob:

"Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for their violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land. But Judah SHALL REMAIN AND BE INHABITED FOREVER, and Jerusalem from generation to generation... And I WILL cleanse and hold as INNOCENT their blood and avenge it, which I have not cleansed, held innocent and avenged, for the Lord DWELLS IN ZION." Joel 3:19-21, (Amplified Bible)

Clear pre-conditions to the later Gog-Magog War

Ezekiel and Zechariah both describe the evidence of the Gog-Magog conflict as sequentially following what I describe as the “Edom Moab War”.

It might be said that what we will call the Edom/Moab war, is going to be one of the unfolding phases of events leading to Armageddon, but as such, it will evidently still be a separate action, A DISTINCTLY SEPARATE “WAR”. The reasons for this include the fact that according to Ezekiel 38:11, when Gog will be enticed to attack, it will come against “the land of unwalled villages...who are at rest, who dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls.” This is obviously not the current condition of Israel, as we speak. Israel has walls being built to protect it from terrorist infiltrators. Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, it has never fully been at rest, or dwelling securely. Indeed, it has not been able to, in the face of a perpetual vow from its immediately surrounding foes to see Israel destroyed. Currently chief among these are the Palestinian terror organizations, inspired and trained by Iran, fostered and headquartered in Damascus, Syria, and financed by Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, in that time the only “wall” that is spoken of is the wall of fire—the Shekinah Glory—which will AFTERWARD be seen around His people in Israel, not before the devastating Edom/Moab war. ***The expression “At rest” also has only truly applied to Israel when in its history it has been at peace with God Himself, living securely in Covenant with Him.***

The evidence is that prior to the Edom/Moab event, there will yet be some serious issues that God will have to “sort out” with Israel. This would include the continued, willful forsaking of its Covenant, until its modern-day prosperity as a secular state is suddenly lost (Isaiah 17:10-11). Concurrently, the prophet declares that, “...in that day the former glory of Jacob [Israel, his might, his population, his prosperity] shall BE ENFEEBLED, and the fat of his flesh shall BECOME lean.” (Isaiah 17:4, Amplified)

The Gog-Magog event which has been so popularly described as imminent by many recent-day authors is therefore more clearly to be understood as **sequentially** following more immediate, necessary events in Israel’s near future.

Gog, distinctly comes, “To take a SPOIL AND A PREY; to turn your hand upon the desolate places now inhabited, and assail the people gathered out of the nations, WHO HAVE OBTAINED LIVESTOCK AND GOODS, who dwell at the CENTER of the earth” (Ezekiel 38:12). Zechariah makes mention of the very SAME event in time, saying that THIS will be the time for His people from all over the (presently apostate) world to return to the land:

“...Jerusalem shall be inhabited and dwell as villages without walls, because of the MULTITUDE OF PEOPLE and LIVESTOCK in it. For I, says the Lord, will be to her a WALL OF FIRE round about, and I will be the GLORY in the midst of her. Ho! Ho! Hear and flee from the land of the north...Escape to Zion...For thus said the Lord of hosts, AFTER His glory had sent me [His messenger] to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the apple or pupil of His eye.” (Zechariah 2:4-9, Amp.)

A very different Israel

All of these references (from Isaiah 17, Ezekiel 38 and Zechariah 2) speak of the very same event: a dispensation of supernatural security, only AFTER previous disaster to the nation. These both directly describe that Israel will be occupying circumstances of tremendously acquired wealth as well as world-wide notoriety as the “center” of international attention—not negative attention, as its modern 50 year history has had it, but evidently now, very positive attention. This directly implies at least two basic presumptions: 1.) Israel will have no more immediate threat from its formerly “Palestinian” territories, and 2.) Israel will have enough unopposed opportunity in order to draw huge numbers of immigrants in a very short period of time, because the political and economic scene will have drastically changed from its former state. For those inclined to think that all of this could occur through the mere process of negotiation, as has been attempted up to the present time, the scriptures describe otherwise. According to scriptures such as Ezekiel 36:11 and Joel 2:18-19, God Almighty promises to build them up, to multiply, and to increase them, “...according to their FORMER ESTATE”. This refers directly, in context, to His plan to grant their borders according to His original plan to Joshua. That would be anything but “negotiable” to Israel’s immediately surrounding enemies, today.

Also, very revealingly, the naming of the confederation which is to later accompany the invasion of Gog and Magog, also helps to clarify that it is a separate event in time. Ezekiel 38:5-6 describes that league, and conspicuously LEAVES OUT Teman and Dedan, and Edom/Moab. This is so presumably because they will no more be powers to be reckoned, although Dedan apparently retains some political power (Eze.38:13) at the time of the Gog invasion.

Summary

The evidence is that there has clearly been predicted a massive, devastating **regional** war in the Middle East. Based upon the currently evolving geopolitical world scene, this could be in the near future, brought to a crisis by the escalating instigations of Israel's implacable regional neighbors—the "descendants" of Edom and Moab, who have historically sought to oppose Israel, as God's Covenant people in what is repeatedly described as the land of His choosing for them. The effect will be an aftermath of Israel victorious, and its "Edom/Moab neighbors" utterly destroyed. Their former territories will once again be occupied, perhaps over a period of months or several years, under circumstances favorable to Israel. This period of robust prosperity will result in the covetous invasion of Gog and its confederation, which is a distinctly separate event than the previous war, but necessary as part of the plan of Almighty God to allow this stepwise escalation of confrontations and successive judgments, to reveal His wisdom and will for the Earth He created. The events of the Gog-Magog invasion, and Armageddon even later to follow, are of another description, beyond the immediate scope of this article.

Thus, we see the outline of ancient Biblical prediction that is expressly confrontive of the geopolitics of the Middle East in our day. These are written messages whose historicity is unchallenged and whose Authority can only be described outside of time and space, in order to apply as precisely as they do, to our day and hour. The fact is that these writings are sweeping in their import and scope. To actually see these writings fulfilled would be to see the world changed completely. Never before this time have these predicted drastic events been accomplished as they have been described. As the current secular persuasion would have it, these collations of commentary from Holy Scripture are in fact antithetical to all of the intentions of diplomacy and human invention. They represent, in fact, what the God of history has already declared will occur—"before the fact"--in our moment. It would describe an intervention from outside of any predictive model of our own intention. It would describe a Purpose that will be made known—known relentlessly, without regard to current political alliances or political "correctness". It would describe, in fact, our future.