

THE END TIMES

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“I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” Isaiah 62:6, 7

The cry of *Jihad*—holy war against all *infidels*—is setting the world at high alert! Truly, radical Islamic fundamentalism is a new and ominous foe, creating chaos and fear. Why? First, there is no behavior more irrational and brutal than that of religious fanaticism fueled by hatred and religious bigotry. And, second, terrorism is the primary implement of war used by these religious fanatics.

This worldwide terrorism is one of the signs of *the end of the age*: “For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again,” and “...men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world...” Matthew 24:3, 21, 22 NIV; Luke 21:26 NIV

A GENERATION OF TERRORISM

Terrorism is an effective weapon in the hands of those who desire to coerce and intimidate. It is cheap and illusive—the poor man’s military strategy. Unlike guerrilla warfare against military targets, terrorism is aimed at civilians and is designed to instill fear in as many people as possible with the least amount of effort. An unparalleled case in point—one act of terror by a handful of individuals paralyzed this mighty nation of millions for months after the 9/11 attacks.

The advent of world terrorism was launched in 1970 with the bombing of a Swiss Air Flight in route to Tel Aviv, murdering 47 passengers and crew. Just eight months later, four planes bound from Europe to the United States were hijacked. Three of the planes were taken to Jordan to be part of an overthrow attempt by Yasser Arafat which ultimately caused the death of over 2,000 people. In 1972,



at the Munich Summer Olympic Games, nine Israeli athletes were taken hostage and killed. The common thread of these terrorist activities?—hatred for the Jews. And this hatred has been played out over and over with every suicide bombing in Israel.

Although Israel has confronted the threat of terrorism every day for decades, a *worldwide war on terrorism* was not declared until it reached the soil of the United States. Since 9/11, billions have been *invested to stop the terror*. But, much to the amazement of allied world leaders, *terrorism has not stopped*—on the contrary, *it has escalated*.

TERRORISM’S HOTTEST TARGET

Israel, either directly or indirectly, is the central target of the majority of terrorist attacks, and anyone who supports Israel is drawn in to the target. Proportionate to its population, Israel has been the victim of more than the equivalent of fourteen 9/11’s. Since the beginning of the Oslo Peace Process in 1993, over 1,200 Israelis have died at the hand of Arab Palestinian terrorism, and there have been over 8,000 Israeli casualties, not to mention the mental toll it has placed upon a peace-loving people.

After Oslo, a new form of terrorism became increasingly common—bus bombings. These attacks were especially vicious. Noting the effectiveness of terror, suicide bombings spread rapidly to all areas where civilians congregate: restaurants, weddings, shopping malls, and holiday celebrations. There is no question that terror has greatly burdened the daily lives of the Israelis.

The greatest escalation of terrorism in history came after the historic peace talks of Camp David in 2000, when Israel offered a generous plan that would have relinquished to

the Palestinians virtually the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip plus shared control over Jerusalem. Instead of accepting this incredible offer of land for peace, the Palestinian response was to launch a second Intifada—so bloody that suicide bombings occurred nearly every day. Under severe provocation, Israel had to take drastic measures and reenter the Palestinian cities that had been granted autonomy under Oslo.

Israel's generous withdrawal from her land has never brought peace with the Arab terrorists who live within her borders—only a louder cry of *Jihad*, more hatred, and a renewed fervor to declare their desire for *all of Israel*. Sadly, the Palestinian response to the Oslo Peace Process has been a tragedy for Israel.

HAMAS WAGES TERRORIST WAR ON ISRAEL

In 1989 Hamas, a violent Islamic fundamentalist party, began to wage an unprecedented war of terror upon Israel. They demanded a Palestinian State in *all* of the land of Israel. With the death of Yassir Arafat, Hamas grew in popularity among Palestinians, and in a recent election, won control. Israel refuses to negotiate peace with Hamas unless it stops terrorism and recognizes Israel's right to exist as a nation. The US and Europe refuse to donate millions of dollars to the Palestinian Authority until Hamas renounces terrorism and recognizes Israel's right to exist.

The Hamas, by terrorist activities, seems to have won this battle for a Palestinian state in Gaza, but will they win their goal to eliminate the Jews from Israel? Prophecy indicates the contrary. *"...those who hate Thee have exalted themselves. They make shrewd plans against Thy people, and conspire together against Thy treasured ones. They have said, 'Come, and let us wipe them out as a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more... Let us possess for ourselves the pastures of God.' O my God, make them like the whirling dust... Fill their faces with dishonor, that they may seek Your name, O LORD..."* Psalms 83:1-18 NAS

IRAN ENTERS THE FRAY

Yet another enemy of Israel looms upon the horizon. Imminently threatening is Iran. It is estimated that Iran has produced enough enriched uranium to manufacture a nuclear arsenal. Truly, the prophet Joel expressed it well:

"the weak say I am strong." (Joel 3:10) Such volatile weaponry in the hands of unstable regimes and radical religious factions is global disaster waiting to happen.

Iran's new president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, makes this threat even more ominous. According to the *London Times*, Ahmadinejad is no ordinary Islamic firebrand mouthing threats for Israel to *be wiped off the map*. Many fear that this Shi'a Islamic fundamentalist actually relishes a clash with the West in the conviction that it would rekindle the spirit of the Islamic revolution and speed up the arrival of Islam's expected messianic-like figure who will bring cosmic chaos, war and bloodshed to the *infidels*.

A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE TERROR

What is it that drives these radical factions to such brutality—inflicting as many civilian casualties as possible, and not just any casualties, but in particular, Jewish? **Hatred, jealousy and religious fanaticism**, yes, but this worldwide struggle has a larger scope than that which we see here on earth. There are *spiritual forces of evil* which aim to destroy God's people—the *seed of promise*—by fanning these flames of hatred. Ephesians 6:12

Yes, Satan and his demon host are desperately seeking to thwart the plan of God, for they know that His plan to

bless all the people of the earth will mean the final destruction of evil spirits and all evil doers. (Malachi 4:1) And so, their goal is to prevent the *oathbound covenant* promised to Abraham from coming to pass: *"I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven [the true Church of God], and as the sand which is upon the sea shore [the nation of Israel] ...and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed..."* Genesis 22:16-18; Galatians 3:29

Thus, the *unseen powers of darkness* are throwing fuel on the terrorist flame of hatred. Religious fanatics who manipulate the truth and perpetrate evil upon their enemies are playing into Satan's hand—pawns in carrying out his malevolent designs.

Thankfully, there is also an unseen battle going on in the heavens to preserve the *spiritual and earthly seed of promise*, and thereby to bring about God's benevolent plan for mankind. He declares that those who trouble themselves with Israel will themselves be troubled. (Zechariah 2:8-12; 14:3) Just as God brought plagues upon Egypt, saying, *"Let My people go,"* so He will bring plagues upon the modern pharaohs of this world—now under the



influence of Satan—until Israel is freed from the bondage of terror. God’s Word is sure—He will prevail in this battle against evil.

ISRAEL’S PROPHETIC HORIZON

Just as sure as Israel is fulfilling prophecy, so are we assured that God is in control of the end time crisis that looms over the world. God has a peace plan for the Middle East that will eliminate any doubt as to who His people are, who has a right to exist and who is the rightful heir of the land of Israel. Note the fulfillment of prophecy already taking place and yet to take place in the Nation of Israel:

- **Return of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland.** (Jeremiah 16:14,15; 30:10) The rebirth of the state of Israel in 1948 was a miracle of history. (Ezekiel 37:1-11; Luke 21:29,30) Never before has a nation been destroyed, its people dispersed to the ends of the earth, and then, nearly two thousand years later, regathered to their homeland and reestablished as a nation. Prophecy speaks of this final regathering with a *permanency*. Israel “*shall not be plucked up*” “*any more forever.*” Jeremiah 31: 38-40; Amos 9: 14,15
- **Reclamation of wasteland to grow incredible bounties of fruits and vegetables.** Amos 9:14
- **Climatic changes.** Zechariah 8:11,12; Joel 2:21-23
- **Capture of Biblical Jerusalem.** Zechariah 12:2, 5
- **A massive immigration of Jews** from the US, Europe and the former Soviet Republic. Zechariah 8:7; Jeremiah 23:8
- **Another Israeli-Arab war and regained territory.** “*For, behold, Thine enemies make an uproar... They have said, ‘Come, and let us wipe them out as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more.’*” (Psalm 83:2-4 NAS) As an outcome of this war, prophecy seems to indicate that Israel will regain Gaza, all of the *West Bank* and all of the Golan Heights. In addition, it appears that Israel will acquire at least the western part of Jordan, the southern part of Lebanon, and perhaps part of Syria. Genesis 15:18-21; Micah 7:14; Zephaniah 2:1-11; Zechariah 10:9,10
- **Final battle will bring blessing for all.** All the nations who fought against Israel will have to humble themselves and go to Jerusalem to acknowledge the God of Jacob in order to be blessed in Messiah’s Kingdom. “*For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle... Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle.* [One of the ways God fought

for Israel in the past was by putting her enemies at war with one another.] *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts. . .*” Zechariah 14:2, 3, 16

THE KEY TO PEACE RESIDES IN ISRAEL

Respect for Israel and God’s sure promises to her is what the Christian must learn from Bible prophecy. God chose Israel out of all other nations to be a channel of His

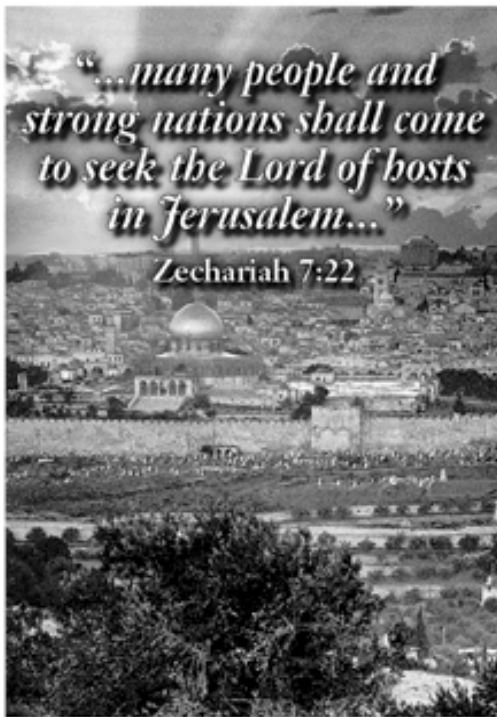
blessings to the world. God calls Israel *the apple of His eye, His Firstborn, His Inheritance.* Zechariah 2:8; Exodus 4:22; Isaiah 19:25

Yes, God has not abandoned His oathbound covenant to Israel through their father Abraham. “*...blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes . . .*” Romans 11:25-28

Israel *is* fulfilling Bible prophecy!

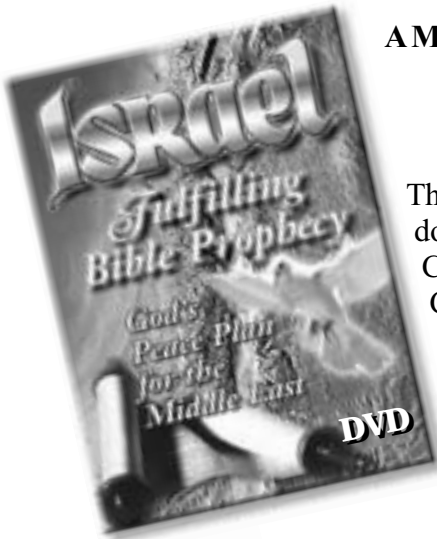
Her regathering as a nation was one of the signs of Christ’s return to establish his everlasting Kingdom. (Matthew 24:32) “*...I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David... that the residue of men might seek after the Lord...*” (Acts 15:14-18) God’s Kingdom, with Christ as His honored agent, will be one of righteousness, unselfishness and peace beginning in Jerusalem and then spreading to the entire world.

Though Israel is now the center of trouble and terrorism in the world today, God’s peace plan will make her a *praise in all the earth.* (Isaiah 62:7) Jerusalem will become the capital of the world and the center for lasting world peace, not only for the Jews, but for all who humble themselves and learn to love the righteousness Laws of God. “*Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem... In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.*” Zechariah 8:22, 23



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