

A Clear and Present Danger - Part 1

Twilights Last Gleaming

By: Vince Aquilino

To His Glory Ministries

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America, by even the most conservative measure, is ripe for judgement. As detailed in the Ezekiel 38 study on this web site, America's judgment may be meted out concurrent with God's judgment upon Russia when Russia invades Israel in the last days. The possibility of a Russian-led and Russian-armed invasion by Russia, with their radical Muslim allies, may be imminent in light of a recently released report that indicates Russia is planning to attack Israel within 12 months. It is painfully obvious that Israel's enemies are closing in, its allies are drawing back, and that both Russia and China are arming for war at an unprecedented rate.

"Intelligence Digest" is an old and respected intelligence service from the UK that has a demonstrated record of accuracy. This report may herald America and the West's demise as it lines up with what many have been sensing about prophetic judgment on America. The report's conclusions, which are discussed below, are especially interesting in light of a recent public statements by Russia's President Boris Yeltsin: "I am in fighting form, ready for battle, especially with Westerners." Since Kosovo, as Jim Bramlett and others have noted, there does seem to have been a sudden anti-American and anti-Western shift in Russia. Is it possible that Kosovo was the "hook in the jaw" that has caused Russia to think an evil thought and invade Israel? (See Ezekiel 38) Only God knows, but movements are beginning to take place that indicate we are close to this end-times prophetic fulfillment. Joseph de Courcy, editor of "Intelligence Digest," noted this week that "while NATO congratulates itself on bombing the Serbs into submission, Israel's Mossad and other Middle Eastern intelligence sources have discovered that Kosovo was one humiliation too many for Russia.

Now Moscow has agreed to back Saddam's secret plan of revenge and with this all-important Russian backing, Saddam is joining with Iran and Syria to launch one final war against Israel. Saddam will allow Iranian troops to cross Iraqi territory to join the attack on Israel. And to keep America from interfering, Moscow has given Osama bin Laden and other terrorists the means to attack American population centers with weapons of mass destruction. Intelligence Digest says the threat is real and that it is based on hard intelligence.

The implications are terrifying as Ezekiel 38/39 clearly indicates a nuclear exchange as part of this invasion. I personally believe that America is the other nation mentioned in Ezekiel 38 and that we are about to be judged by God when Israel is attacked. See the Ezekiel 38/39 study on this web site at:

<http://aplus-software.com/thglory/invoke04.htm>, <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/invoke05.htm>

<http://aplus-software.com/thglory/invoke06.htm>, <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/invoke07.htm>

America has grown so proud in its accomplishments, having "won" two small wars against minor military powers, that she thinks she is invincible. The truth is, we are more vulnerable to attack than at any time in our history. America, that has shed the blood of the innocents, thinks she is above reproach. Yet, God is no respecter of persons or nations.

"The vision of Obadiah. This is what the Sovereign LORD says about Edom - We have heard a message from the LORD: An envoy was sent to the nations to say, "Rise, and let us go against her for battle" - "See, I will make you small among the nations; you will be utterly despised. The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rocks and make your home on the heights, you who say to yourself, 'Who can bring me down to the ground?' Though you soar like the eagle and make your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down," declares the LORD. (Oba 1:1-4)

The above vision applies to any nation (or person) that has turned away from God being deceived by their pride. Notice the reference to the "eagle" (a symbol of the United States?) and "nest among the stars" (satellites?), a stretch perhaps, and perhaps unnecessary to this treatise, but nonetheless interesting.

Jeremiah 12:17 -- "But if any nation will not hear and obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, says the Lord."

Jeremiah brings a stern warning to any nation that refuses to hear and obey the Lord.

EZE 14:13-20 "Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it: Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD. If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts: Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate. Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say, Sword, go through the land; so that I cut off man and beast from it: Though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered themselves. Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast: Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.

Is America above military destruction? Note that the event that triggers military destruction (a sword upon the land) of a nation is that the "land sins" against God. Has America sinned against God? Please read the Three-part series entitled: "What in Heaven is Happening to America: <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/america1.htm>,

<http://aplus-software.com/thglory/america2.htm>, <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/america3.htm>

We must recognize that the Lord brings peace to a nation, but will also bring calamity. Our security resides in God only, not our national military and when God's wrath begins to fall, nothing will save us.

ISA 45:7 I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things.'

But some might note that America is a prosperous nation -- just look at the Stock Market. Is this "blessing" a sign of God's approval in spite of our corporate sin? You would think so to look at the stock market. As of this writing the Dow Industrials are once again in record territory; but this does not mean that God's blessings of prosperity is upon us because of our national righteousness.

"I spoke unto you in your prosperity; but you said, "I will not hear. This has been your manner from your youth, that you obey not my voice." (Jeremiah 22:21)

Recognize that about 100 years before God caused King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to militarily attack Israel, Israel had enjoyed the greatest run of material prosperity in her history. There were a few true prophets of God that warned the people that they would be destroyed if they did not repent, but the false teachers of that day pointed to Israel's national prosperity as "proof" that God could not be angry enough to destroy the country.

Sodom and Gomorrah, before God destroyed them, were exceedingly prosperous and they dominated the culture and the commerce of that day. [Genesis 13:10 and Ezekiel 16:49]

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever and he will punish sin, both individual and national.

Throughout the Scripture, we see that massive national sin always triggers God's judgment. God is continuing to warn America, but when final judgement comes, it will be sudden and without warning as the time of repentance has passed by. God often uses a wicked nation to judge a nation under God's judgment as Babylon was used to judge Israel. This is God's pattern of judgment. God used it in bringing physical judgment upon Israel on several occasions in the Old Testament and it will apply to the United States as well. In light of the recent Intelligence Digest report on Russia's plans to invade the Middle East, will America also be judged? Are Russia and China being raised up as a Rod of severe chastisement in the hands of God? In America, are we being set up for a fall?

One would think so, when you recognize that in the face of the growing threats by its enemies, America has now cut its military in half to the lowest level since 1938; and has virtually dismantled its defense industry. However, there are now 25 countries who have, or are close to having, nuclear arms. Russia continues to deploy nuclear weapons and red China, now in possession of virtually all of America's nuclear secrets, has target the U.S. with ICBMs. China is also continuing to arm at an alarming pace.

It appears that Russia may indeed be the rod of chastisement for America as she also continues to maintain and expand the largest conventional and nuclear arsenal in the world. Although Russia's people are poor and poverty stricken, Russia is not poor when it comes to military expenditures. Russia is continuing to produce and annually deploy 75 strategic missiles, 8 nuclear submarines and 20 strategic bombers. Although it appears that Russia is in strategic retreat, Russia is continuing its military buildup -- particularly in the area of first strike strategic nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

Russia is now developing a Stealth fighter very similar to our own F-117 Stealth fighter, which is also capable of being used as a nuclear light bomber. Russia deployed a new SS-27 (TOPAL-M) silo-based, solid-propellant, three-stage ICBM with 6,820 mile range which can be armed with multiple warheads. The Topal-M is far in advance of anything we have and is capable of orbiting the planet and then being directed to targets on demand virtually without warning; and it has built-in missile defense systems. At least 12 SS-27s have been deployed in 1998 and 1999, with 20 more scheduled for next year.

In the 1980s Toshiba sold technology, made in America, to Russia which has enabled them to silence their submarines. They are now so quiet we can not track them. Over the past decade, Russia has built six silent Akula 941 nuclear subs. Each sub is estimated at 5.8 billion dollars each. The Akula 941 is 562 feet long and has 20 missile tubes which in aggregate can deliver 200 total nuclear warheads. It also has 13 launch tubes for single warhead cruise missiles. In 1996 a Russian sub entered Puget Sound and remained undetected while it mapped the Sound and spied on the U.S. Trident submarine base in Bangor, Washington.

In addition, Russia has deployed 18 Akula class 971 attack subs at a cost of 5.2 billion each. Spending estimates total 66.4 billion in nuclear submarine spending alone in just four years. The Akula class submarines (941/971) cannot be detected by our SOSUS warning Net. As a result, these submarines could approach the coast of America and blanket the continental U.S.A. with nuclear warheads virtually without warning.

These three new weapons systems are all offensive, first-strike nuclear weapon delivery systems. Why would Russia, at a time of supposed world peace in the post-Cold War period, when she is supposedly broke, be on a crash program to build such systems? Russia is moving to rapidly modernize and expand its fleet of warplanes, its short, intermediate and long-range nuclear missiles; its submarine fleet and sub missile systems, its production and deployment of tank, armored vehicles, helicopter gun ships, small arms, etc? Is Russia talking peace and preparing for war?

At the same time, while we never built our "Star Wars" system, Russia has deployed an anti-missile defense system in and around their major cities. The United States preparations to shield the civilian population from a nuclear attack are virtually non-existent, but Russia has over 100 underground cities shielded by several hundred meters of concrete. Russia has implemented huge new civil defense programs, including enormous fallout shelters -- one new underground city is larger than Washington, DC.

As Russia builds up for war, America is disarming. Under Clinton, the US military has been cut to the bone, leaving America more vulnerable to foreign attack than at any time since the Cold War. Specifically:

- Clinton has slashed troop levels in the Army, Navy and Marines by 30-40%. Most remaining battle troops are now deployed overseas, in the Middle East, Bosnia, South America and elsewhere.
- After our engagements of Iraq, Kosovo, etc., the US arsenal of cruise missiles was reported to be a dangerously low number
- Clinton has continued to slash defense spending, from 28% of the federal budget in 1988, to 17% today.
- The navy has decommissioned almost half of its ships, down from 600 in 1991 to 336 today. That's the lowest level since 1938.
- The critical balance of nuclear weapons is now heavily in Russia's favor. The US has about 10,000 to 11,000 nuclear weapons left, compared to over 30,000 for Russia.

Further, many of our remaining nuclear weapons are vulnerable to attack. For instance, the nuclear warheads for our strategic bombers are in the US, while many of the planes are in the Middle East and Europe. Never before has America been so vulnerable to devastating attack.

Consider comments by Stanislav Lunev, the highest-ranking Russian military intelligence officer ever to defect from Russia who warns that Russia is preparing for war against the United States. Lunev's book "Through the Eyes of the Enemy" (Regnery publishing) states categorically that the Cold War is not over and that Russia continues to plan for a nuclear war. "Russia remains terrified of the power of America, and Russian

military intelligence does everything it can prepare for a war that it considers inevitable," he wrote. This war, Lunev details, would employ nuclear, biological and chemical weapons against America.

Lunev speaks of an attack on the U.S. beginning with the infiltration of Russian special operations troops whose purpose is to kill top political and military leaders. Lunev also warns that Russian GRU (military intelligence) agents have already deposited, near key water reservoirs, deadly poisons and toxins which would result in millions of civilians being ravaged by disease. In addition, Lunev indicated that Russia will deploy suitcase nuclear bombs at strategic points throughout the US.

In the face of this clear threat, President Clinton has unilaterally changed more than four decades of US defense policy of "launch on warning." Under a secret Clinton directive -- known as a Presidential Decision Directive or PDD -- issued in November of 1997, the United States would accept a first strike and only retaliate after millions of our citizens had been killed. Some of the details of the PDD were leaked to the Washington Post (12/7/97). The Post reported that the Clinton administration was unilaterally changing America's nuclear defense posture. Clinton's PDD directed the US military to no longer plan to win a nuclear war with Russia.

Jeffrey Nyquist -- an independent researcher on Russia and author of *The Origins of the Fourth World War* notes that Clinton's new launch policy is an invitation for Russia to attack. With the US prevented from launching on warning, a Russian first strike could wipe out two of the three legs of America's strategic defense triad: land-based missiles and strategic bombers. At any given time, 6 of America's 18 ballistic missile submarines are in port and would probably be destroyed in a Russian first strike under the Clinton doctrine. All that would be left to defend America would be 12 ballistic submarines with 180 megatons of warheads. That's less than 50% of the 400 megatons required under MAD to deter Russia. [MAD refers to the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction, a policy that kept America safe in the nuclear age.] Given Russia's missile defense system, modernized weapons, and vast system of underground shelters, it is easy to see why Russia might find launching a first strike against America in 1999 tempting and any losses they would suffer "acceptable."

Nyquist concludes that Russia could destroy every major American city and military target, and suffer only limited retaliation against its own cities even if America fired every surviving nuclear weapon. After America launched its handful of surviving missiles, Russia would still have tens of thousands of weapons in their arsenal, making them the only military superpower on earth and the world's likely rulers.

"Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?" (REV 13:4b)

Jeffrey Nyquist was interviewed by Christopher Ruddy of www.newsmax.com. According to Nyquist, there are eleven disturbing signs we should watch for that indicate Russia is in fact preparing for war. [The following is excerpted from this interview which you can read in its entirety at <http://www.newsmax.com>

1. Watch for frequent change in Russia's Alert Status. Russia has been regularly putting its missiles on a high state of alert, claiming their early warning systems did not work properly to desensitize the West to this action being a harbinger of an attack.
2. Watch for increased mock attacks. In the past two years, Russia has engaged in numerous mock attacks against the United States, including nuclear attacks.

On February 21, 1997, then Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin "was at the Odinstovo nuclear command center, overseeing an exercise whose assignment was 'to destroy the US in less than an hour,'" according to a press account in Segodnya. You will note the phrase "in less than an hour" relative to Revelation 18:17.

In September of 1997 Russia's defense forces conducted a three-day nuclear attack exercise, which included a test firing of ICBM's, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and bomber-launched cruise missiles.

The Washington Times reported that in the fall of 1997, a Russian attack submarine stalked "close enough to sink with high speed cruise missiles," three carrier battle groups off the coast of Washington state.

In October of 1998, TASS reported that Russia's Strategic Rocket Forces practiced a mock nuclear attack, firing an ICBM, against the United States. The exercise was coordinated with the Russian's strategic bomber force.

The Washington Times reported that in April of 1998, "Russia's strategic bomber forces recently carried out simulated nuclear bombing raids against the United States in an exercise that included test firings of long-range cruise missiles." During these exercises, Russian bombers flew to the polar regions, as they would in an attack against the United States.

On July 30, 1999 Russia conducted yet another mock attack on the U.S.A. The Associated Press (6/30/99) wrote the following about Russia's recent nuclear war games and mock attack against America:

"Two Russian strategic bombers on a military exercise were intercepted by U.S. fighter jets last Friday near Iceland and another two Russian bombers flew down the Norwegian coastline, the Washington Post reported Wednesday. "Four U.S. F-15 fighters and an American P-3 patrol plane escorted the two TU-95 Bear bombers in a clockwise fight around Iceland, which like Norway, is a member of NATO, the newspaper said.

"It said Norway scrambled jets to meet a pair of Russian TU-140 Blackjack bombers flying down the Norwegian coastline but the bombers turned back before the interceptors reached them.

"The Post quoted U.S. defense officials as saying the military exercise was the largest by Russia in a decade and the first time since the end of the Cold War that Russian planes had probed Western air defenses.

"A White House national Security Council official was quoted anonymously by the newspaper as saying 'we are looking into' the incident, but the United States has not raised it as an issue with Russia.

"Russian officials said last Monday that long-range Russian bombers had flown over the North Pole and test-fired strategic missiles in six days of military exercises last week code named 'West 99.'

"The planes made 15-hour flights which took them over the Atlantic before heading to the Arctic and crossing the North Pole, said Col. Alexander Drobyshevsky, a Russian Air Force spokesman. Long-range missiles were test-fired and hit targets in southern Russia, he said. "More than 30 ships, several nuclear powered sub-marines. 10,000 troops and a number of aircraft from Russia's Baltic Fleet also took part in the exercises.

"Russia insisted that the maneuvers were not connected to NATO's bombing raids in Yugoslavia, which officially ended June 16. But Moscow sees NATO as a threat, and the alliance's campaign raised calls in Russia to boost military spending.

"Moscow vehemently opposed NATO's air against Yugoslavia and played a prominent role in mediating a peace plan for Kosovo."

On June 23, Reuters described Russia's biggest military exercises since the end of the Cold War: "A military official said on Tuesday that Russia launched the biggest domestic military exercises of its kind since 1985 but these were not a show of force connected with the Yugoslavia crisis.

"Col.-Gen. Yury Baluyevsky, first deputy chief of Russian General Staff, said the exercises were significant in involving top military officials across the entire territory of European Russia.

"All forces of five military districts from the Black Sea to the Arctic White Sea are involved now in unprecedented military exercises code named Zapad (West) 1999, he told a news conference. They are so-called top staff level exercises involving 560,000 troops on ground. The exercises started on June 21, he added.

"Russia was a strong critic of the spring NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, a military campaign which plunged U.S.-Russian relations to their lowest level since the Cold War. Baluyevsky called the Russian military exercises the largest of their kind since the Zapad 1985 drills, but said the action was not a direct reaction to events in Yugoslavia.

"The exercises were planned in December 1998," he said. But events in Yugoslavia were certainly taken into account in planning the exercise.

"Baluyevsky said military officials from neighboring Belarus, which is seeking to expand ties in a Moscow-Minsk union, were also taking part in the nuclear exercises."

World NetDaily (6/28/99) wrote the following regarding the recent Russian nuclear war games and their simulated attack on America:

"Russia began gigantic war exercises last Monday. Troops from three military districts and the powerful Northern Fleet, together with Russia's Air Defense Forces, maneuvered to evade imaginary Western air and missile strikes. Then on Saturday, Russian forces turned to launch a mock counter strike. In recent months, preparing for a future nuclear war has top priority with top Russian General Staff, which believes such a war is not only possible, but inevitable. Books and articles spelling out the techniques of thermonuclear world war continue to be regarded as classics in Russia's war colleges. The theory and practice of nuclear war did not die with the Soviet Union.

"Demonstrating this emphasis on nuclear war, an unprecedented number of Russian war games have taken place in the last year and a half. The frequency and size of these war games dramatically increased after NATO began bombing Serbia on March 24. As the crisis over Kosovo healed up, not only did Russia's leaders make veiled threats about the possibility of nuclear war, but Russian soldiers, sailors, and airmen were being trained to fight and win such a war.

"Some in the West would argue that Russia's training methods are a bluff. But there is a good reason to think otherwise. As authors like James F. Dunnigan have explained, there has been a revolution in military affairs.

In late May '99, Viktor Mikhalov, the Russian Deputy Minister of Atomic Energy, proposed preparing for "limited atomic war." He called for Russia to build the capability "to inflict 'pinpoint,' low yield nuclear strikes on military targets located anywhere on the globe," according to the *Moscow Times*. The reason, he said, is that "In so doing, it is assured that such 'pinpoint' strikes will not bring about an immediate global nuclear war." In early June, former Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said that the world is moving close to the brink of nuclear war.

3. The Stockpiling of food.

Nyquist indicated that there is evidence that Russia is stockpiling food in the midst of a supposed "famine":

Three years ago, Ambassador Richard Starr, a top Reagan administration arms control expert, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, said that Russia had stockpiled some 362 million metric tons of wheat. (One economist calculated this was enough grain to feed the entire population of the former Soviet Union for three years.)

During a nuclear war, millions of Russians would be underground, unable to plant, harvest or process food. A nuclear war would likely create a complete breakdown of the economy of the warring parties, and the rest of the world's economy. Any nation engaged in a war would need food, oil and other vital supplies. A nation without such supplies would likely have no alternative but to surrender or be destroyed.

Nyquist noted that any unusual changes in the food requirements of Russia could be a tip-off that war is close at hand. Russia continues to feign famine to get food aid when their harvests have in reality been adequate. The deception is working. Last Fall, The European community has agreed to send approximately \$550 million in food. The aid package includes a million tons of wheat, 100,000 tons of pork, 150,000 tons of beef, and 50,000 tons of milk powder and rice.

The United States aid package was formalized just two days before Christmas 1998. The US agreed to ship Russia \$625 million in food. The package includes an outright gift of 1.5 million metric tons of wheat. The US will also "lend" Russia funds to purchase an additional 1.5 million tons of other commodities -- including corn, soybean meal, rice, beef, pork, and nonfat dry milk. [Note: Even if the wheat shortage was real, why does Russia desperately need everything from beef to milk?]

Interfax reported that by the fall of 1998, overall farming production was actually up, ".4 percent higher than it was in 1996." Russia's demand for wheat has also fallen considerably in recent years. Why? Russia has been slaughtering her herds during the past five years -- another ominous sign. In 1997, Russia had a bumper grain crop of nearly 90 million tons of wheat, with claimed reserves of 20 million tons. Since Russia has about fifty percent fewer livestock than five years ago, this should have left substantial reserves for this winter.

4. Watch to see if Russia is cutting back on planting. If famine is for real, Russian planners should be seeking expanded planting and harvesting, but they are scaling back. This would only make sense if Russian planners know that a large area of Russian farmland will be contaminated with fallout, or that the population will be underground during the planting or harvest season. TASS, the State Statistics committee reported on October 15 that Russia is dramatically reducing the number of acres to be planted next year, from 60 million acres this year to 54 million acres.

5. Watch to see if Russia has been slaughtering its herds. According to Nyquist, they have. In the past year, the slaughtering of the herds, particularly of cattle and sheep, has dramatically increased. Interfax reported that as of October 1, 1998, Russia had 16 percent fewer sheep and

goats, and 9 percent fewer cattle than a year previous. Why the reduction? Nyquist believes that the Russians are canning the meat from their herds because they know that grazing herds, such as sheep and cattle, will be less valuable after a nuclear war begins. Fallout from such a war would contaminate livestock, making them useless for food. [And remember, last year Russia had a bumper harvest, so there should have been no shortage of animal feed, and it is still cheaper to raise livestock in Russia than it is to ship meat and poultry from United States or Europe.]

6. Watch to see if Russia is hoarding oil. Russia has long been a net exporter of oil, but in October, 1998 TASS reported that Russia had "cut export of petroleum products by 26.6 percent to 30.2 million tons in 8 months of 1998." Why would cash-starved Russia cut back on exports and of its best sources of hard currency in the midst of an economic crisis?

7. Watch Russian movement of its strategic nuclear weapons from land to sea. According to Nyquist, this is perhaps one of the most ominous developments to take place in Russia during the past six months. In July of 1998, the commander-in-chief of Russia's navy announced - as widely reported in the Russian press -- that the

Russian military was moving a huge number of their total land-based, strategic nuclear weapons onto naval ships, where they will be much less vulnerable to attack or counter-attack. Previously, the Russian navy only controlled 30 percent of Russia's strategic nuclear weapons. That number will dramatically increase to 50 percent under the new plan.

8. Watch if Russia is hoarding gold since in times of war it's a precious commodity which can go up 3, 5, even 10-fold overnight in a warring nation. Nyquist quoted a October, 1998 report showing Russian's importing of Gold where they have always been an exporter.

9. Watch if Russia is openly entering into an alliance other totalitarian powers hostile to the US. This has been the case as Russia strengthens ties with China and the radical Muslim nations.

10. Increased building of Russia's Nuclear War Bunkers. Nyquist indicated that the clearest sign that Russia is planning on fighting and winning a nuclear war is their investment of billions of precious dollars to build a vast system of underground bunkers and shelters. This system has just one purpose: To enable millions of Russians to survive a nuclear war. In 1996 the New York Times described just one of these huge underground facilities, which was being built under the Ural Mountains. Its size alone is staggering: Over 10 square miles of shops, homes, and storage facilities were being built underground -- an area greater than that of the entire city of Washington, DC. The Times reported that the facility includes railways, factories, and apartment complexes -- everything hundreds of thousands of people need to survive a nuclear war. And this is just one of scores of such facilities throughout Russia and the CIS.

11. Russian development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems. According to William Lee, a former Defense Intelligence Agency analyst, Russia has between 10,000 and 12,000 anti-ballistic missiles ringing Russia, controlled by 18 battle management radar systems. The only possible use for this system is to neutralize a nuclear counterattack by the United States. Under Russia's 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with the United States, this anti-missile system is completely illegal. Moreover, the system is widely believed to use nuclear weapons at the tips of their interceptor missiles, which could be exploded high above the atmosphere to knock out incoming US missiles. Clinton has yet to utter one word of protest.

Nita Johnson and other prophets are echoing God's cry for repentance, but is anyone listening? Nita recently indicated that it was too late for America to repent, judgment was assured, and the only thing intercession could do was to delay the inevitable.

What will you do with this information. Some will ignore it as "in the days Noah". Others will repent and seek God's face before it is too late. Yet others will be overcome with fear and panic demonstrating a lack of faith in God and His provision for His children. Others will make prudent reasonable preparations for their families, their neighbors and relatives, and then get on with the Father's business of soul winning before it is too late. What will you do?

Maranatha!

Vince

Prophetic Links:

A Clear and Present Danger - Part 1

Judgment on America - Part 1

Judgment on America - Part 2

Judgment on America - Part 3

Ezekiel 38 - Part 1

Ezekiel 38 - Part 2

Ezekiel 38 - Part 3

Ezekiel 38 - Part 4

Newsmax

References:

"The McAlvany Intelligence Advisor", August, 1999, 1-800-528-0559

Intelligence Digest, August 27, 1999 mailing

"Watch and pray, therefore, that you would be counted worthy to escape the judgment that is coming upon the earth and be able to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Maranatha!

A Clear and Present Danger - Part 2

Humpty Dumpty took a Great Fall

By: Vince Aquilino

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America, by even the most conservative measure, is ripe for judgement. Is Russia to be the instrument of that judgement?

According to World Net Daily, an American businessman in Moscow, the managing director of Matrix Technologies, said Moscow's police looking for "military-aged individuals" and persons with medical experience for military training as part of a "general preparation for war."

Members of an American church, who recently returned from mission work in one of Russia's largest cities, reported contacts with Russian soldiers. These soldiers were "very disturbed" because they believed the present Russian mobilization is aimed at the United States -- not Chechnya. In a related report, a recent American visitor to Russia was privately informed by a Russian military officer that Russia had been preparing for war against America for the last 17 months.

Are these reports credible?

There is no question that the Russia military began a buildup in response to the crisis in Kosovo. At that time nearly 170,000 new recruits were called up in a special Russian military draft. There were rumors that conditions in Russia were so bad that they could not afford to feed their inmates, so they were being released. However, recent reports indicate that hundreds of thousands of convicts have been offered amnesty in exchange for military service.

We have previously reported on the mobilization of Russia's armed forces for ever increasing military exercises, with mock attacks on the U.S., etc. Several analysts have commented that Russia seems to have called up its reserves for these exercises.

The ongoing situation in Chechnya has been used as an excuse to explain the large military mobilization, but Chechnya is a very small theater of operations. The buildup has been so large that Russia now says they have exceeding CFE force limits due to the crisis in the north Caucasus. The Conventional Forces in Europe treaty (CFE) -- a treaty that limited the Russians to deploying 20,000 battle tanks, 20,000 artillery tubes, 6,800 combat aircraft, 30,000 other armored vehicles, and 2,000 attack helicopters west of the Urals -- Russia never kept this treaty anyway. If they have exceeded these numbers, they have a monstrous force ready for attack on whom? This is way to big for tiny Chechnya.

Could Israel be their real target as recently reported by Intelligence Digest?

(<http://www.aplus-software.com/thglory/082999up.htm>)

"Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them. "After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely. "You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you." Thus says the Lord God: "On that day it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan: "You will say, 'I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates' - "to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land." . (Ezekiel 38:7-12)

If it is Israel, America will have to be taken out of the way militarily so we cannot protect the Middle East and our Oil interests there.

Is this why Ezekiel notes no more than a diplomatic protest from Great Britain (Merchants of Tarshish) and the U.S.A. (young lions): "Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish, and all their young lions will say to you, 'Have you come to take plunder?' (Eze 38:13)

Sheba and Dedan can be considered the Arabs. Is it not interesting that Rick Joyner from Morningstar Ministries, at a gathering of the prophets of the USA in North Carolina (Paul Cain, Mike Bickle, Bill Hamon, Rick Joyner, Bob Jones, John & Paula Sanford, Dick Eastman, Dutch Sheets and others from January 27 - 28, 1999), has prophesied war with the Arabs, Great Britain and the US this year unless repentance delays it.

J.R. Nyquist writes: "We have to be careful about embracing stories that confirm our worst fears. But if we look at such reports in the context of other information -- which is absolutely undeniable -- then we have to say that there is nothing inconsistent or surprising in the idea that Russia is preparing for war with the United States. Russia's new ally -- China -- is also mobilizing. This is supposedly a coincidence. The Taiwan Straits crisis just happens to coincide with the Chechnya crisis. Therefore, the military mobilizations in both countries are supposedly justified. But, if we have any strategic sense at all, shouldn't we be questioning this coincidence? Shouldn't somebody in the Pentagon be whispering in the president's ear?

According to Eric Margolis of the Toronto Sun, President Clinton has ordered the Pentagon to send state-of-the-art night vision equipment to Russia for use in helicopter gun ships. He is also having them send over military communications gear. It is odd, to say the least, for the United States to be sending military assistance to a country that has more tanks and combat aircraft than just about any country on earth.

Moscow's current dis-information campaign has worked wonders. Every American who bothers to watch the six o'clock news imagines that Russia has a military disaster on its hands. One hears, incredibly, that Russia might even lose the war! After all, Chechnya defeated Russia before. (One fairy tale sits atop another, each supporting the grand fiction of Russian weakness.)

Russia's filling up of tank and motorized rifle divisions is not something spontaneous and of the moment. Last summer Russia curtailed gasoline and diesel fuel exports, as well as exports of fuel oil. Almost a year ago Russia cut her oil exports by more than 25 percent, while increasing oil imports from Iraq. But Russia is supposedly broke! She desperately needs cash, and 45 percent of Russia's \$80 billion in exports in 1997 came from fuel exports." Nyquist asks, why is this being done? (It may be that 20,000 tanks and 30,000 armored personnel carriers can suck a lot of fuel.)

In my opinion, there may not be a body, but there is certainly a prima fascia case that Russia is indeed arming for war. As the Ezekiel 38 study

<http://aplus-software.com/thglory/invoke04.htm> <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/invoke05.htm>, <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/invoke06.htm>, <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/invoke07.htm>

on this web site indicates, when Russia is judged by God for invading Israel, God will also judge another country that lives in the safety of the far distant coastlands - quite probably the United States. If you are not clear on God's pattern of judgements then read the series on this web site entitled "What in Heaven is happening to America" on this web site

<http://aplus-software.com/thglory/america1.htm> <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/america2.htm> <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/america3.htm>)

Also of interest are the two prophetic words recently given at my home church <http://aplus-software.com/thglory/jb0002.htm> with regard to Russia and the United States -- they fit perfectly with this scenario.

All of this is going on while in Israel the cry is for peace, peace -- inviting sudden destruction.

<http://www.aplus-software.com/thglory/is090799.htm>

Maranatha!

Vince

Behold, I set thee a watchman on the wall" (Isaiah 62:6)

What in Heaven is Happening to America? -- Part 1 of 3

The State of the Union Address

Art Work by Bill Cristman, (c) 1993

It would appear that natural disasters are continuing to increase. What does it mean for America? Is this just a string of bad weather, or is there a pattern developing and if so, what does it mean? This three part series will answer those questions. Although written a few years ago, this material is more relevant today than in any time in America's history. Most everyone at this point can sense that the United States is caught up in the waves of change, but many are unaware that the Bible speaks directly to the United States and to any other nation that turns its back on God in a specific pattern of judgement. May God have mercy on America.

What should be our response when we see judgment coming?

In the 11th chapter of Luke, the apostles asked the Lord what the signs of His return and of the end of the age would be. Jesus proceeded to tell them about the signs of judgement. Jesus then told them what their response to all these things should be (Luke 21:36). *"Watch, therefore, and pray that you should be found worthy to escape the judgment coming upon the world and be able to stand before the Son of Man."*

This bears repeating. Jesus Himself said to *"watch."* We are not to bury our heads in the sand when we see the signs of judgement approaching. Rather, we are to watch for the signs of His return and then pray for escape from the coming judgement.

The Bible has a lot to say about judgement, both the final judgement upon the earth and judgements upon nations who have turned their backs on God. In the book of Isaiah, we find many signs that indicate a nation is being judged. For example, an increase in natural disasters is one sign of God's judgement.

Considering all the political, social and religious upheaval in this country over the last few years, we feel it is prudent to take a hard look at the United States of America. Therefore, in this and the following issue, we are going to depart from the general signs of Christ's return and focus on what is really happening to the home of the brave and the land of the free.

There is no question that the United States is caught up in the waves of change, but many are unaware that the Bible speaks directly to the United States and to any other nation that turns its back on God. As we examine the state of the Union, we'll be looking at some very negative things. This will make many feel uncomfortable, because we don't like dealing with negative issues. This is true of us as individuals and corporately as a nation.

Anatoli Goletsin, an ex-KGB Major who defected to the United States, wrote a book in 1984 entitled *New Lies for Old*. In this book, he outlines the Russian strategy to deceive the West. He also reports that the Russian Government has developed a psychological profile of the West which indicates that the U.S. *"does not want to know the truth."* Jean Kirkpatrick, the former U.S. ambassador to the U.N., calls it *"the will to disbelieve the horrible."*

In other words, our nation wants to believe that everyone is good, that there is no evil, and that the world will have nothing but peace and prosperity. We all aspire to the great American Dream. We don't really want to hear that we are losing the drug war, that crime is out of control, that there are hidden forces attempting to force the United States into relinquishing national sovereignty and entering the *"New World Order"*. Don't tell us that we have come under the chastening rod of the Almighty Lord. And yet some of us sense that the waves of change are driven by an ill wind which is sweeping our great country.

What should our reaction be?

In Second Chronicles 7:13-14, God tells us: *"When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people; if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."* Our response to judgement should be national repentance and prayer. This country must once again become a believing people, *"one nation under God."*

It is with this heart that this newsletter goes forth -- it is a call to repentance. As you read it, remember Jesus' words: *"Let not your hearts be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me"* (John 14:1).

Read Psalms 23 and 91, as well, which are the Lord's beautiful promises to preserve and comfort his children. Walk with the Lord, listen for His voice, trust Him to preserve you and protect you, but *"watch, therefore, and pray."*

The State of the Union

We are living in an unparalleled time in the history of America.

Marriages are breaking up at unprecedented rates and the single-parent home is becoming the norm rather than the exception. The number of children living in single-parent homes has tripled in the last 30 years. The teen suicide rate has increased 200% and is now the leading cause of teenage deaths in America. Sickness and disease are rampant, as AIDS and other venereal diseases rage out of control. Over one-half million Americans now have AIDS.

Our school systems have become havens for the teaching of new age philosophy, which has tried to erase God from every tenet of society. And what is the result of turning away from God? We have lost our Anchor and our Way. No longer able to tell good from evil, we have become a hedonistic society.

Let's examine the fruits of our national sins.

Overall, since 1960, there has been a 560% increase in violent crime. In the first 16 days following the mayoral election in N.Y.C., there were: 62 murders, 125 rapes, 4,150 robberies, 4,350 burglaries, 2700 assaults, 5650 cars stolen and 10,350 larcenies. Crime is out of control. There is a spirit of lawlessness rising in America. Teenagers kill each other for sneakers and jackets. Teens are committing unthinkable crimes but, when interrogated by police, show no remorse for their actions. In New York City, robbers tore the leather jacket off a pregnant woman and then made her watch as they fatally shot her husband. Three children in the Midwest, aged eight to ten years, have been charged with beating a homeless man to death. In a small town in Mississippi, teenagers involved in Satan worship killed three children under ten years of age.

The U.S. News and World Report estimates that more than three million crimes are committed in or near the 85,000 U.S. public schools. A University of Michigan study reports that nine percent of eighth-graders carry a gun, a knife or a club to school at least once a month. An estimated 270,000 guns go to school every day. Twenty percent of suburban high school students surveyed by researchers at Tulane University thought it appropriate to shoot someone "who has stolen something from you." Eight percent believed it is acceptable to shoot a person who has "done something to offend or insult you." One authority said a "Juvenile Armageddon" may be approaching.

Young children are being killed and abused in escalating numbers. The government's response? An unsuccessful attempt to liberalize the nation's laws against child pornography. Nine out of ten young people slain in the industrial nations are slain in this country. The U.S. homicide rate for young people between the ages of 15 and 24 is five times greater than for any other country.

A new pattern of teen homicides being committed by younger teens has emerged from FBI and census data. The homicide rate for 17-year-olds jumped 121% between 1985 and 1991. The rates for teens between the ages of 15 and 16 grew even faster. Criminologist James Fox, Dean of Northeastern University's College of Criminal Justice who headed the study, says that "the trend is troublesome, because this young and ruthless age group is increasing and shows no remorse for their crimes." These trends have not abated in the new Millennium.

In California, there is an epidemic of hate crimes. There are now more than 2,500 members of organized hate groups in California which are becoming increasingly violent.

There has been a dramatic increase in racism in the U.S. The pro-Nazi movement is escalating. One talk show host even had a "church" representative that made the statement: "Before all of America can be truly free, we must kill all the Jews." And it's not just the Jews under attack. A recent media survey found 98% of newspaper and television executives to be Anti-Christian. The Club of Rome, a futuristic organization, met in Los Angeles last year. Their conclusion: "The real thing standing in the way of the world's progress is fundamentalist Bible-believing Christians." Their enlightened solution: "They will have to be eliminated."

Christians are now being painted as evil, a thorn in the side of progress. "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil ..." (please read Isaiah 5:20-25).

The L.A. riots demonstrated the height from which we have fallen. To us it was just another TV movie filled with horror and bloodshed. We view so much rioting, looting and murder on television that we have grown accustomed to it. We watched one helpless truck driver almost beaten to death. The perpetrators' consciences seemed to be seared as they methodically performed their gruesome attack, without restraint or remorse.

What in Heaven is happening to America?

Homosexuals are becoming more and more blatant. They curse God to His face and are trying to force acceptance of their Biblically abominable life-style through legal means. In September, the U.S. Congress, which governs our nation from its "model city", the District of Columbia, has allowed Washington D.C.'s sodomy laws to lapse -- thereby making the act legal for the first time in the city's history. Washington, D.C. has also become the nation's first jurisdiction to actively recruit homosexuals to adopt children. And the Boy Scouts of America, a model of wholesomeness and value, are currently dismissing about 90 scoutmasters a year for suspicion of molesting boys.

Life is becoming valueless. We have sacrificed over 30 million innocent children to the god of convenience and greed. It is now legal to have an abortion at any point in the pregnancy, even five minutes before birth. This will allow babies to be "harvested" for their brains and hormones; they call this "fetal tissue research." And, in spite of this mass slaughter, illegitimate births have increased 419% over the last 30 years.

God have mercy on America!

The Government's response to this insane slaughter is to apply the RICO law against the Pro-Life Movement, which allows prosecution under the same anti-racketeering laws as organized crimes. The danger of this precedent is that it could be abused to the point that even lawful assemblies, unless politically correct, will be impossible without criminal proceedings. Many of our rights guaranteed under the constitution are being eroded. For example, our right to bear arms and our right to due process of law: Last year 52,000 Americans had their assets seized without due process.

In the decade of the 90's Jack Kevorkian continued to promote "Euthanasia" (mercy killings), and the courts to date have ruled that it is unconstitutional for the states to have anti-suicide laws. Michigan Circuit Judge Richard Kaufman ruled that "terminally ill patients have a right to commit suicide." John Pridonoff of the Hemlock society called the ruling "a significant step."

The U.S. economy, the envy of the world, continues to see-saw. In only ten years, the United States has gone from the world's largest creditor nation to the world's largest debtor nation. We are no longer leaders in exporting. We no longer lead the world in any manufacturing field except machine tools, a lead which is rapidly dwindling. The mighty U.S. dollar has been devalued time and time again. Our debt is now greater than the debt of all other nations in the world combined. Based on present estimates, the interest on the national debt alone will exceed all personal income taxes paid in this country by the end of 1995. A day of reckoning is on the horizon.

New hidden taxes continue to take an ever-increasing bite out of disposable income; high paying industrial jobs are being replaced by low paying service jobs; our imports far exceed our exports. The leadership of this country has gone from bad to worse. There are avowed

homosexuals and lesbians in high-ranking government positions. The Oval Office has been busy issuing executive orders (government by decree) which clearly promote anti-Christian agendas, such as support for homosexuals and abortion on demand.

The United States has continued to experience increases in natural disasters. From Hurricane Andrew, the most expensive hurricane in U.S. history, destroyed over 20 billion dollars worth of property in Florida alone to the recent flooding in one part of the U.S. at the same time fires and draught are taking their toll on other parts of the country. With regard to Hurricane Andrew, in a law suit involving Prudential's action to cancel insurance in the Florida area, the lawyer for the company stated that they had to borrow money from reserves just to pay the claims and expressed concern over the fate of the company should another disaster befall it. This is not the "rock" you want to put your trust in when the winds blow. There have been reports in recent years of 50 inches of snow on the Carolinas which paralyzed the eastern seaboard from Florida to Maine. There have been late June or even early July snow falls in Colorado that caused skiers to take to the mountain slopes on the 4th of July. A record 1,381 tornadoes touched down in 1993 and the Mississippi river basin became the largest flood in U.S. history, causing billions of dollars of damage and ruining millions of acres of rich farm land.

Firestorms in California are again this year consumed hundreds of thousands of acres. The last Los Angeles earthquake went down as the most expensive earthquake in U.S. history, with an estimated 30 billion dollars in damage. There were 3,500 after-shocks at that time, some significant enough to do additional damage. After the L.A. earthquake, a group of seismologists, monitoring the increase in frequency and intensity of earthquakes around the world, stated: *"It's as if someone is picking up the earth and is starting to shake it."* Sound familiar? Read Haggai 2:6-7.

Even *"mother nature"* appears to be going mad. Newspapers across the country have even posed the question: *"Are these acts of God?"* And What in heaven is happening to America?

America has turned its face from God, that's what! America, a country whose principles of government are based on the Bible, has sought to remove God from every tenet of society. America, the land of the free, has become the home of the politically correct. We have, as a nation, gone beyond ignoring God. We are now openly antagonistic toward Him, parading Gay Rights in the streets and openly attacking and mocking God and His anointed.

America has been blessed for over 200 years. As a result, we have developed an attitude of superiority and spiritual pride. We think that no matter what we do, God will overlook it. This is not true!

God is not slack concerning sin, but is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:7-9). However, God will judge sin. Except for Noah and his family, the Lord once destroyed an entire world because of rampant sin. He also destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah and many other cities of the plain because of homosexuality. God is not mocked. When He says homosexuality is an abomination, He means just that. We have lost sight of the fact that God judges nations for both the sins of the nation and the sins of the nation's leaders. A nation will reap what it sows (Gal 6:7).

Consider Elijah. After winning his confrontation with the prophets of Baal on top of Mt. Carmel, he cried out to God to take him home -- because he thought no one else believed in God but him. God told him he was wrong. God told Elijah that there were 7,000 men left in the nation who loved Him, men who had not bowed their knee to Baal, men of integrity and righteousness. However (notwithstanding the 7,000 righteous in the land), because of the wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel, God's judgement fell. The entire nation (including the 7,000 righteous), went three and one-half years without rain. Just because there are righteous in the land does not mean judgement will not fall.

Another example of God judging a nation for the sins of its leaders is found in 1 Chronicles, Chapter 21. David, because of his success in battle, came to the point where he felt he was the source of Israel's success. He insisted on numbering his troops, even though he was cautioned by his general to remember that it was God who had won the victories. But David insisted on taking the census of his fighting men. As a result, God gave David a choice of three punishments: God would either bring three years of famine on the land, or three months of fleeing before their enemies, or three days of plague. David chose the latter. As a result of the sins of Israel's leader, 70,000 men died of the plague. God judges sin. He judges nations for their corporate sins and for the sins of their leaders.

Many of us are familiar with the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, but we overlook the warning in Jude, Chapter 1, verses 5 through 7, which tell us that Sodom and Gomorrah were an example of what will happen when the people are given over to sexual immorality and perversion. With the rise of government-sanctioned homosexuality in America, especially in cities like San Francisco and New York, Billy Graham's statement *"If God doesn't judge America, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah"*, takes on prophetic significance. On November 28, 1993 the San Francisco Board of Supervisors created a 20-member group, including three former prostitutes, to consider legalizing prostitution and other steps that might help neighborhoods where men and women sell sex on street corners. It is provocative to contemplate the fact that the Los Angeles earthquake had its epicenter in the middle of the U.S. porn industry.

Is America about to be judged by God for its national sins? In the next issue, we will examine what the scriptures have to reveal in this area.

"I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory," says the LORD Almighty." (Hag 2:7)

"Watch and pray, therefore, that you would be counted worthy to escape the judgment that is coming upon the earth and be able to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Maranatha!

Art Work by Bill Cristman, (c) 1993

"For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth, to know the worst and to prepare for it." (Patrick Henry, 1775)

"History fails to record a single precedent in which nations subject to moral decay have not passed into political and economic declines. There has either been a spiritual awakening to overcome the moral lapse, or an ultimate natural disaster." (General Douglas MacArthur)

"The salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord; He is their stronghold in time of trouble. The Lord helps and delivers them; because they take refuge in Him." (Psalm 37:39-40)

In the last issue, we examined the tremendous problems that have gripped our nation. And, as we looked at them in composite, they begged the question -- Is America under God's judgment for its national sins?

Before we begin, however, we need to understand that God's judgments are righteous. He is a God of Love, but He is also a God of Righteousness. He is long-suffering and not willing that any should perish. But He will judge sin.

As we review the judgments of the Old Testament, we see that God is merciful. He doesn't bring catastrophe on a nation without warning, and His initial acts of chastisement are redemptive in nature. They are designed to get us to examine our sinful state, to recognize "*the height from which we have fallen*" and, ultimately, to secure our free will act of repentance and turn back toward God. It is not God's will that any should spend eternity in Hell. Jesus came to save the world, not to condemn it. Only man can condemn himself to that fate by rejecting God's provision for forgiveness: that being Jesus Christ.

It is sobering to recognize that it was 120 years from the time that God instructed Noah to begin constructing the Ark until it was completed and that, over that 120 years, there were four generations of Noah's prodigy who warned others of God's impending judgment. Did the people heed Noah's warning? No. They probably laughed and ridiculed him. That is, until the flood came and God closed the door to the ark. By that time, it was too late to enter into the refuge which God had provided. So it was in the time of Noah; so it shall be at the time of the second coming of Jesus Christ.

We are living in a time of moral and spiritual blindness. We no longer fear God. In fact, many are openly hostile and antagonistic toward Him. Others deny His existence. They are comfortable in their sin. It is time to get serious about God before it is too late. Judgment is again coming. It is right on our doorstep. It is time to recognize the signs of the times and take heed. Don't be like Noah's neighbors -- caught up in everyday living, separated from God, ignorant of spiritual things and the signs which will herald Jesus' return.

Is the United States ripe for judgment? The book of Ezekiel tells us that God brought judgment upon the Jews and dispersed them to the four corners of the earth. One reason was because they had spilt blood in the land. We have now sacrificed the blood of over thirty million unborn children in this country. Will God not judge us likewise?

Perversion is rampant in this country and is now seated in power in the highest positions in the land. Billy Graham was quoted as saying: "*If God doesn't judge America soon, He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.*"

Let's examine the warning signs of God's judgment upon a nation. In the book of Isaiah, we find five things which indicate that a nation is under God's judgment.

Increase in Natural Disasters

There has been a tremendous increase in natural disasters in the United States. Last year Hurricane Andrew, the most expensive hurricane in U.S. history, destroyed over 20 billion dollars worth of property in Florida alone. A record 1,381 tornadoes also touched down in 1993. The Mississippi river basin became the largest flood in U.S. history, causing billions of dollars of damage and ruining millions of acres of rich farmland. Yet, strangely, at the time of the flooding, there was drought in the Carolinas. Firestorms in California consumed over 200,000 acres of land, and the Los Angeles earthquake went down as the most expensive earthquake in U.S. history.

These disasters, referred to as God's signature judgments, are not meant to utterly destroy; they are meant as warnings. For example, as was mentioned in the last issue, the L.A. earthquake was centered in the middle of the nation's porn industry. Over 90% of the porn industry was destroyed. However, the other aspect of this earthquake that points to it being a signature judgment of God is that it occurred at 4 AM on a holiday. If you had to pick a time for an earthquake where there would be the least loss of life, that would certainly be it. When Hurricane Andrew devastated Florida, it could have taken thousands of lives had its eye been just a few miles northward. The massive Mississippi flood did primarily property damage. Compare it to the floods and hurricanes in Bangladesh a few years ago that killed tens of thousands. We mourn the loss of life and property but, mercifully, it was not worse. These were signature judgments.

Will the next event cause catastrophic damage? It will, if it follows the biblical pattern of increasing frequency and intensity. This pattern can be seen in the trumpet and bowl judgments in the book of Revelation. It is seen in the book of Exodus when God brought judgment upon Egypt. Each judgment was worse than the previous one. The result? "*And still man did not repent.*"

Jesus himself said, in the Olivet discourse, that the events leading up to final judgment on mankind and His Return would be like birth pangs; that is, they would increase in intensity and frequency as the day of judgment grew near. Clearly, natural disasters are increasing worldwide. But in the United States, while these disasters are increasing in frequency and intensity, there are other aspects of the pattern of these disasters that speaks of God's direct judgment on this nation.

For example, alternating drought and excessive rain is another sign of God's judgment. At the time of the flooding in the Midwest, there was drought in the Carolinas. "*Farmers in the Southeast have lost an estimated 500 million in corn, tobacco, soybeans, vegetables, fruit and hay in a crippling drought... In western South Carolina, just three percent of normal rainfall has fallen this summer...*" Georgia's Agriculture Commissioner said, "*There's hurting in the South, and damage is increasing day by day. It's a disaster...*" "*Farmers are watching helplessly as nature, in the form of drought and excess heat, takes their crops.*" "*The intense heat is just baking them in the fields,*" said a South Carolina Farm Bureau expert. "*Upper New England is suffering unusually dry conditions which are sparking fires and causing farm problems.*" Farmers in the drought area have said, "*We'd like to have a little of their rain [referring to the Mississippi flood], and give them a little of our sun*" (USA Today, July 19, 1993). While California was in the midst of a several-year drought a few years ago, there was flooding in other parts of the country.

God says, through the prophet Amos: "*.....you have not returned to me, declares the Lord. I also withheld rain from you when the harvest was still three months away. I sent rain on one town, but withheld it from another. One field had rain; another had none and dried up. People staggered from town to town for water but did not get enough to drink, yet you have not returned to me, declares the Lord.*" (Amos 4:6-8)

This speaks clearly of God's judgment on America. Amos 4:7 has been fulfilled. "*One field had rain; another had none.*" Notice two things in this passage of scripture. Number one, God caused this situation by His own word. And number two, this passage demonstrates the purpose of the judgment: that being repentance ("*... you have not returned to me, declares the Lord*").

In 1 Kings 19:9-12, we find that wind, earthquake and fire, occurring one after the other, is another pattern of judgment. Let's go back to 1989. First there was Hurricane Hugo (a level-4 storm), then the Houston Oil Refinery explosion and fire, and then the San Francisco earthquake

(three billion in property damage). More recently, we have experienced Hurricane Andrew (a level-5 storm; sustained winds of 200 miles per hour with tornadoes packed inside of it), the California Firestorms (over 200,000 acres burned), and the Los Angeles earthquake (estimated damage, 13 to 20 billion -- the worst in U.S. history).

These level-5 storms are also called 100-year storms, because it is anticipated that they will only occur every 100 years or so. Since 1988, we have had four level-5 storms. Clearly, there has been an increase in frequency and severity of disasters in America over the last few years. But is it judgment? When you consider that the U.S.A. fulfills the other signs of judgment, as well, there is no question in this author's mind that the United States is in for a rough ride.

Water Added to the Wine

There has been a decline in exports and in the overall quality of the finished products. The United States is no longer a leader in export. We have become a consumer nation. Imports far exceed exports. The quality of foreign goods, in general, is superior to ours. We have all been sensitized to the trading problems with Japan, but with the new trading consortium in the Far East and Europe, we haven't seen anything yet. Japan has withdrawn from our economy and is beginning to invest in China. With China's abundant natural resources and Japan's capital, there will be an economic boom the likes of which the world has never seen.

The European Community (made up primarily of socialist, pro-Islamic countries) is already anti-American and will most likely present a major problem in accepting U.S. goods without imposing high tariffs. The U.S. is headed for major problems in the global markets. Coupled with the lack of capital investment in America necessary for plant modernization to improve product quality, and the handwriting is on the wall. Our trade deficit is at record levels and growing.

Although the government keeps presenting statistics that indicate we are out of recession, be aware. It was reported that Christmas sales were up over last year, a sign of recovery. What wasn't said is that credit card usage was also up over 23%. We are hearing that G.M. and Ford are reporting profit increases of over 40%. What was not said is that a major portion of new car sales are now lease arrangements. We're in the midst of a debt expansion -- not a fundamental improvement of the economy characterized by job creation. On the contrary, hundreds of thousands of high-tech or high-skill jobs have been eliminated. Those few that have been created are low-paying service jobs. Pay close attention.

Exchange in Leadership

Leadership goes from good to bad and from bad to worse. Let's take a look at the leadership of the United States of America.

On the third day of his administration, President Clinton issued five executive orders. In essence they were:

- 1) to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military.
- 2) to lift the ban on fetal tissue research.
- 3) to remove the ban on abortion counseling in federally-funded clinics.
- 4) to begin the process of approving the importation of the abortion-inducing drug RU486.
- 5) to provide funds for the first time for abortions in military hospitals overseas.

The leadership the White House has put in place is equally impressive. The following are quotes from an article in Texe Marrs' Flashpoint newsletter, entitled Big Sister is Watching You (he has also published a book by the same title). *"Hillary's White House feminists include lesbians, sex perverts, child molester advocates, Christian-haters, and the most doctrinaire of communists."* According to Marrs, he has new evidence that *"Janet Reno is a hardened lesbian."* *"Joycelyn Elders, Surgeon General, is out to make sure pre-schoolers and elementary school children are given condoms and instructed on how to use them."* *"Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services, is the most vicious Christian-hater ever to hold a top cabinet post she is also a director of the CFR and a member of the Trilateral Commission."* Roberta Achtenberg, according to Marrs, *"While demonstrating at a gay rights parade, the militantly lesbian Achtenberg passionately kissed her female lover as her young son looked on.... she once led a hate campaign against the Boy Scouts because their oath includes the word 'God.'" "Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Supreme Court Justice, is in favor of legalizing child sex with adults."*

Everything rises and falls on leadership. Clinton is our elected representative, elected by a plurality of the people. And as we discussed in the last issue, God will punish a nation for the sins of its leaders. For those who think Bill Clinton is a Godly leader, read the article entitled *"Living with the Clintons"* in *"The American Spectator"*, January 1994 (2020 N. 14th Street, Suite 750, Arlington, Virginia 22216).

In Part 3 of this series, we will discuss the remaining two signs of judgment upon a nation.

Unless there is national repentance, the United States will continue to experience ever more severe chastisements. If, God forbid, the United States sustains a cataclysmic natural disaster, a nuclear accident or even a government default, then key services and programs will be curtailed. There may be anarchy in the streets when banks close and the citizenry is denied access to its cash. When the dollar becomes worthless, the cost of food and necessities will skyrocket. Unemployment will be rampant. The government will declare marshal law. Constitutional rights will be suspended.

Sound impossible? It is exactly what has already happened to many countries that have turned their backs on God.

When you don't know where your next meal is coming from, will you be persuaded to give up your national sovereignty and become part of the One World Order? When you are hungry and oppressed, even the Russian fanatic Zhirinovsky, or Germany's Hitler, begin to look good.

Will the U.S. government single out a scapegoat for all its problems? Will it be the Jews? Will it be the Christians? Will you be persuaded to take the *"Mark of the Beast"* on your right hand or forehead to survive? *"He [Anti-Christ] also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name."* (Rev 13:16-17) *"A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: 'If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.' This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus."* (Rev 14:9-12)

Is there Hope?

" .. if my people [not the unsaved], who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Notice that this passage says that it is God's people who must humble themselves and repent before God will relent. This is exactly what happened to Nineveh. Jonah was sent to Nineveh when it was just 40 days from judgment. Then a miracle happened. From the king on down, the entire country humbled themselves and repented. Although judgment had been pronounced and God had even given them a date for their destruction, God relented and Nineveh survived another 100 years before meriting final judgment. Will America repent?

And what if judgment does come? Are you ready, physically and spiritually, to be God's instrument to bring hope and healing? Don't despair or grow depressed. There is Hope. Jesus has promised His children, those who have been reborn of the Spirit, that He would never leave them or forsake them. If you have accepted Jesus' free gift of salvation, then no matter what happens in the future, He will be with you. When the storms of life come against you, it will be possible for you to stand by His mighty power and presence in your life.

God knows how to deliver His people. Noah and his family were protected through Judgment by the Ark of their salvation. During their exodus from Egypt, God fed the children of Israel with manna in the wilderness and provided water out of solid rock. He even parted the Red Sea. Lot and His family were escorted out of the city by Angels before Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego walked through the fire unharmed, because God was with them. *"I have never seen God's people forsaken, or their children begging for bread."* (Psalm 37:25b)

Psalms 23 and 91 are beautiful promises of God to preserve and comfort his children. Read them, walk with the Lord, trust Him to preserve you and protect you. God has begun to shake America, but Jesus says: *"Do not let your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me"* (John 14:1).

For the Turtle Rock community, in the middle of the California firestorms, these promises became a reality. A wall of fire 200 feet high was heading for their community. Destruction was all around. Many of God's children were in that community. Their home church, when notified of the impending disaster, went into corporate prayer for them. They prayed: *"God, your judgments are just, but there are righteous there, like when you destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah."* They prayed for God to stop the wind. The next day the papers reported: *"It was like a miracle, the fire came right up to the edge of the community and then, inexplicably, the winds shifted and the fire took a right-hand turn."* After the fire, Turtle Creek looked like an island of safety in a sea of destruction. Yes, God answers the prayers of His children. And yes, God knows how to deliver His children.

"I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory," says the LORD Almighty." (Hag 2.7)

"Watch and pray, therefore, that you would be counted worthy to escape the judgment that is coming upon the earth and be able to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Maranatha!

Behold, I set thee a watchman on the wall" (Isaiah 62:6)

What in Heaven is Happening to America? -- Part 3 of 3

Pray for America!

Art Work by Bill Cristman, (c) 1993

"A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it." (Proverbs 22:3)

In the previous two issues, we examined the tremendous problems that have gripped our nation. We examined the scriptures and found that they fit into a biblical model, or pattern, of judgment upon a nation. We discussed how increased natural disasters--flooding (with simultaneous drought), cheapening of a nation's products (exports) and deteriorating leadership--are all signs of judgment. We also discussed that spilling blood in the land (abortion) can also lead to God's judgment on a nation.

In the final installment of this three-part series, we will deal with the remaining signs which indicate that our own nation is under judgment.

Dross Added to the Silver

This means that our money is not worth the paper it is printed on.

Clearly, we fulfill this sign of judgment. In the last ten years, the U.S. has gone from the world's greatest lender to the world's largest debtor nation. In addition, there is no longer any gold or silver backing our currency. It is only backed by the "full faith and trust of the United States Government" ... which is on the road to default. The collapse may be forestalled for several years, but many credible individuals now say it is inevitable.

In spite of all the rhetoric on deficit reduction, it is just that. We have not balanced the budget, we are still spending billions more than we take in. Deficit reduction is not deficit elimination. It is just a feeble attempt to slow the rate at which we are adding to the national deficit. The government has already implemented the largest tax cut in history in an attempt to keep things afloat. They will contrive other mechanisms to secure your personal wealth.

For example, consider the National Health Care issue. It is not just about health care; it is about cash flow and control. The government already controls 53% of the health care dollar spent in this nation through Medicare and Medicaid. The National Health Care system will bring the rest of the cash flow under government control. As currently proposed, the health care program will be funded by still another payroll tax, and the government will most likely be sure there is a surplus flowing into the plan (just like there is in the Social Security System). This way, the funds can be diverted into the "General Fund" to help keep our government afloat.

There are other dangers with the Health Care Plan. Of special concern is the possibility that surpluses will be generated by curtailing health care to the elderly and to those who are not politically correct. Under the plan, as currently proposed, you will not be able to elect surgery. This will be done for you by a panel. If you are 75 years old and living on government payouts, do you think you will get care over someone younger who is still a "contributing member of society"? Is forced euthanasia, by denying services, on the table? Perhaps. In Canada, which already has a socialistic Health Care System, the average wait for a heart transplant is seven years. What does that tell you?

And by the way, if you have money and try to circumvent the U.S. plan by paying the doctor directly for the care you need, the penalty is up to 15 years in jail for both the doctor and yourself.

As part of this system, every American will be given a national identification card (a "smart card" containing a computer chip). This will set the stage for a cashless society and open the door for one-world government control (which will ultimately conclude with the "mark of the beast" required to buy and sell [Rev. 13]). Some have already suggested that the "smart card" will not be enough and that an implant might be necessary to guarantee the identity of the person requesting health care.

Treasury bills (the vehicle through which we finance our national debt) are no longer being gobbled up by the Japanese and other foreign investors. Foreign investments in the U.S. have steadily declined from 67.9 Billion in 1989, to 45.1 billion in 1990, to 11.5 billion in 1991, to 2.4 billion in 1992. And for the first three months of 1993, down 3.9 billion.

Since the treasury bill action is the primary vehicle by which the U.S. government finances the ever-growing deficit, how do they insure the treasuries are purchased? By working with the Federal Reserve (an independent non-governmental organization, made up of six or seven of the world's largest banks) to force a large spread between short-term interest rates and long-term rates. So the banks are now able to pay its depositors under three percent on their deposits and then take that money and purchase treasury notes paying over six percent. They make over 100% profit, with no perceived risk and very little administrative overhead. The end result is that banks are now the number one buyer of treasury notes, and, therefore, most of the national debt is now held by the American public.

This was a very opportunistic move by the government. It has not only bailed out the banks from default ("bad" real estate investments precipitated the Savings and Loan crisis), but has also bailed out the government from the verge of financial collapse. This temporarily saved the banks and the government but has made the average American the fall guy for the coming economic meltdown.

In a March 17, 1992 "Wall Street Journal" article, it was reported that the Federal Reserve has assumed a bigger share of the U.S. debt. Whatever debt was not sold through the treasury bill action is being financed by the Federal Reserve. How? With the stroke of a pen, on paper, they create bank reserves out of the air. Thin air is what is backing our paper currency. We have been off the gold standard for decades. The Federal Reserve continues to dilute the value of the dollar. Thus "Dross has been added to the silver".

Let's continue this scenario a bit further. The banks were bailed out but, with few exceptions, are apparently not investing in productive business loans. "Time" reported in its June 28, 1993 issue, in an article entitled "Are the Banks Obsolete?" that "Not a single new dollar has been lent to businesses by banks in the last 27 months."

Without capital, corporations cannot expand. Layoffs in the tens of thousands from companies like IBM, AT&T, NYNEX, Dupont, Procter and Gamble, etc. are just the beginning. Where feasible, foreign markets will be exploited for cheap labor in an attempt to stay competitive. NAFTA set the stage for plant expansion not only in Mexico, but eventually in Brazil and other South American countries. This trend will not benefit indigenous U.S. companies.

The stock market has also benefited from the interest rate climate. Retirees and people who have never invested in the market before are now investing in droves. This allows the smart money, the big money, to manipulate the market and reap huge gains by methodically investing in one sector after another. That sector starts to rally, the new investment funds jump on the bandwagon, this sector goes up in price and the big money jumps out at a huge profit and plays the game all over again. This is possible because of the huge influx of money into the stock market.

Sooner or later, this cash inflow will stop. Investments will be liquidated as unemployment soars (now estimated at over eleven percent by independent analysis firms -- the number reported by the government does not include those who are no longer receiving unemployment). Individuals may also be scared out of the market due to the recent volatility caused by rising interest rates, international instability or falling corporate profits. In any event, when the market finally crashes, it is the average American who will be left holding the bag.

The Fed also realizes that this "national debt funding vehicle" can't last forever. So the question becomes: How are you going to finance the national debt when savings are coming out of the banks, foreign governments are no longer investing in the debt instruments of the U.S. government, and falling corporate earnings precipitate a financial crisis? Surely there must be a way out.

Well, as was mentioned earlier, the Federal Reserve is in essence printing more money to finance the treasury action shortfall. But this is inflationary. If inflation gets out of control, then the debt service on the national debt will likewise increase, causing the government to default. So the Federal Reserve will aggressively seek to keep inflation from getting worse by raising interest rates. However, if interest rates continue to increase, the money will flow out of the stock market and back into the banks, which will continue to buy up the national debt. This will, at the very least, bring about a so-called market correction (or crash).

But, if the stock market crashes, then the companies' access to capital through stock offerings is severely curtailed. If the banks won't lend them money, and they can't float successful stock issues, they can't get capital to expand and improve profitability. Lower profits mean less taxes to the government. The government has recently implemented the largest tax increase in the history of America. There will be more tax increases coming, but it can't go on forever. There is a limit.

If the government continues to raise taxes, then the taxpayers have less money to buy corporate goods. Corporations faced with less demand for product and increasing taxes will be forced to seek tax relief off-shores or cut their profit margins on goods sold in the U.S. This will escalate unemployment and reduce the tax revenue from corporations. It appears that there is a hard road ahead. If something is not done soon, we may be heading into the largest depression in U.S. history.

The Fed has already begun to ease up interest rates, ostensibly to curtail inflation before it starts its upward spiral. However, recognize that inflation figures quoted on the nightly news are truly bogus. They do not include income tax increases, property tax increases, increased new car costs, etc. Independent firms are currently reporting an annual inflation rate of nine percent.

If the government continues to print money, but at the same time adds to the national debt, the U.S. is most likely in for a period of hyperinflation. Interestingly, the book of Revelation talks about a time of hyperinflation where a whole day's wage will be required just to buy food for one person. According to the biblical account, based on one interpretation, this occurs around the time there is a tampering with the "oil and the wine". This author notes that last year the U.S. government tried to impose French import tariffs on primarily oil and wine.

Regardless of the scenario, circumstance or mechanism that judgment brings, it is clear that America is being impoverished. And if the government recognizes that financial collapse is impending (although it doesn't recognize the real reason for America's problems--God's judgment), then it also must realize that anarchy is just ahead. It then becomes easier to understand the real reason for the big push to disarm America.

It is not difficult to see the real purpose for the "national police force" that was established with the passage of the Brady Bill. Control of the masses will be required if they are to surrender national sovereignty and become part of the "new world order". Why else the emphasis on outcome-based education to create politically correct individuals and the attempt by the administration to abolish home-schooling? Reading, writing and arithmetic are not important. What is important is having a proper world-view, accepting homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle, becoming politically correct. And a proper world-view rejects Christianity, with its belief that there is only one way to God -- that being through Jesus the Son.

We are under the chastening rod of judgment, and there is only one way to lift it from us. "Return to me saith the Lord and I will return to you."

If you are still not convinced, please read Deuteronomy 28 from the perspective of the United States of America. It is amazing how well we fit that biblical account. For example, verses 1-14 contain God's promises to a nation that is careful to fully obey God. Among other things, God promises that such a nation will lend to many nations, but will borrow from none. The LORD will make that nation the head and not the tail; they will always be at the top, never at the bottom.

These have always been the blessings of God upon the United States of America. A nation whose laws and constitution were based on the Bible, whose founding fathers were Christians who wrote religious tracts. A country who just 50 years ago taught religion in the public schools. In 1949, the Dallas public schools were using a text entitled The Lordship and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

We were indeed the head, lifted high above all nations. But we have erased God from public education. And now the leadership of this country has started an assault to erase God from every tenet of society. God will not stand for it. He will bring judgment, and only the true Christians will be protected through it.

In the second part of Deuteronomy 28, God says "If you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you." These include confusion and rebuke in everything we put our hand to, sudden ruin because of the evil done in forsaking him, incurable diseases (including tumors and festering sores, which sounds like AIDS and which is now running rampant through the college campuses of America and through the younger generation), scorching heat and drought, blight, mildew, the alien who lives among us rising above us higher and higher, while we are sinking lower and lower. The alien will lend to you, but you will not lend to him. He will be the head, but you will be the tail.

God goes on to say that because we did not serve the Lord our God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity, therefore in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and dire poverty, we will serve the enemies the LORD sends against us. He will put an iron yoke on our neck until we are destroyed. And He closes by saying that if we "...do not revere this glorious and awesome name--the LORD your God--the LORD will send fearful plagues on you and your descendants, harsh and prolonged disasters, and severe and lingering illnesses until you are destroyed."

America is rapidly becoming a country that is playing the Harlot. We have turned from our godly heritage and have embraced a hedonistic lifestyle. Not only do we not revere the name of God, but we are trying to erase Him from everyday life. Consider God's words in the book of Hosea (4:1ff): "Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land."

Does this sound like the United States today? The removal of God from the midst of Israel yielded a sensual and merciless society. There was swearing, lying, killing, stealing, the committing of adultery, and bloodletting. God increased Israel's blessings while they obeyed Him, but the people turned from God. And God said: "As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame." (Hosea 4:7)

Will God do any less to the United States of America? As we were blessed by God and increased, we turned from Him and sinned; and now, as a result, God will bring all our glories to shame. No longer can we boast of having the best educational system, being the greatest economic power, having the best medical system, and so on. God is changing our glories into shame.

Nation Captured Physically or Philosophically

It is clear from the book of Isaiah, and elsewhere in the Bible, that God often uses one country to execute judgment on another. For example, He used Babylon (under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar) to conquer Israel.

Today, because so many in the United States have rejected God, the nation is laboring under a strong delusion. We can no longer discern the truth (2 Thes 2:10-12). With the fall of communism and the breaking up of the USSR, many are convinced that Russia is our friend. We have shut down our early-warning radar systems, grounded our strategic bombers, closed our bases, and reduced troop strength. Everyone is crying "Peace, Peace, but there is no peace."

Russia continues to build its military machine at unprecedented rates. Intelligence reports indicate that Russia is building Typhoon class submarines ("Red Octobers") at the rate of one every three weeks. Russia today is more dangerous than ever. Practically overnight the U.S. has dropped its defenses, inviting a preemptive first-strike by the sleeping Russian bear which will soon "awake and devour much flesh."

We seem to be living in an unprecedented time. The Berlin wall has come down and communism appears to be dead. It is almost too good to be true. And so it is. We are being deceived. To understand the basis of the deception, you need to understand the Soviet Dialectic Philosophy of deception, designed to get their adversary to drop their guard. Think not?

Anatoli Goletsin wrote a book in 1984 called New Lies for Old. He was a KGB Major who defected to the USA. He documented the Russian plans to deceive the West. They include:

1) False liberalization will be introduced in Eastern Europe & USSR. Auspicious independence will be exhibited by Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

- 2) The West will accept Solidarity in Poland as a spontaneous occurrence, compatible with the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 which will portend the demise of communism in Poland.
- 3) If the liberalization is extended to East Germany, the demolition of the Berlin wall might even be contemplated.
- 4) If the cosmetic liberalization is accepted as genuine by the West, it will trigger the reunification and neutralization of Germany and bring about the collapse of NATO.
- 5) Political liberalization and democratization will be introduced in the USSR. The liberalization will be spectacular and impressive. Formal pronouncements will be made about a reduction in the communist party roll. Its monopoly will apparently be curtailed and an obtrusive separation of powers between legislative, executive and judiciary introduced.
- 6) An extraordinary display of the fictional struggle for power will take place in the Soviet leadership. The KGB will be reformed. Dissidents will be repatriated, and those in exile will be allowed to return. Some will be allowed to take up leadership positions. Sokarnov might even be included in the government in some capacity.
- 7) The Brezhnev regime and its neo-Stalin actions against the dissidents will be condemned.
- 8) Censorship will be replaced; controversial plays, books and art will be published, performed and displayed.
- 9) Citizens will have greater freedom to travel.
- 10) The party control over the Soviet economy will apparently be diminished. Economy will seemingly move into line with the western socialist models. Control will be more decentralized. Individual self-managing firms might be created. Material incentives will be increased, but in spite of being less conspicuous, the party will continue to control the economy from behind the scenes.
- 11) A deliberately-painted picture of stagnation, deficiencies in the Soviet economy as a part of the preparation for deceptive innovations will be introduced. It is intended to make a greater impact in the West. Liberalization will stimulate disarmament, and the massive U.S. defense budget will no longer be justified.

How could the West be so susceptible to such a communist dupe when these plans to deceive us were documented as long ago as 1984? The communist party is following this script to the letter.

The Soviet Union is not destitute. The poverty in the streets is Russian theater. And it is working. They are asking for, and receiving, billions of dollars of aid from the West while engaging in the biggest military buildup in the history of the world. In 1990, the USSR built nine Typhoon Class Submarines. These are double-hulled, quiet-drive systems which are undetectable to sonar. (And even worse, it has been reported that our nuclear subs are now detectable by Russian satellites using laser and particle beam technology, effectively neutralizing our retaliatory deterrent.)

Now, if the Russian government is broke and can't even supply bread for its people, then how could it spend 18 billion dollars on strictly first-strike offensive weapons designed to launch a sneak attack on an unsuspecting enemy? Today, according to intelligence sources, they are producing these subs at the rate of one every three weeks.

For those who have not been faithful to Jesus' command to watch the signs, this seems beyond belief. They are not only blind to the truth but don't even want to hear such negative things.

It is also interesting that according to Goletsin, the USSR's strategic deception plays on the American public's desire ``to not want to know." They've done a psychological profile on us and say we really do not want to know the truth. Jean Kirkpatrick, the former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. calls it ``the will to disbelieve the horrible". We don't want to hear about or believe that Russia is deceiving us in order to soften us up, so we'll let down our guard and Russia can destroy us. We choose to believe the lie of peace, when the Bible clearly teaches there will be no peace until the Prince of Peace comes again.

The facts are in. The United States is vulnerable to a surprise nuclear attack by Russia. And we are unilaterally disarming. Will Russia be the instrument in God's hands that brings cataclysmic judgment upon this country? Or, to avoid annihilation, will we just be philosophically held hostage to the Russian will? Perhaps. It is still not too late to pray in accordance with 2 Chronicles 7:14: ``If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

The United States is not exempt from God's wrath. We will reap what we sow. Judgment is at hand. Be sure your trust is in the Lord and not in the things of this world, for soon, everything that can be shaken will be shaken. Only those that have truly built their house upon The Rock will survive.

In closing, remember two things: 1) God is in control. ``He changes times and seasons; He sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning." (Dan 2:21) God is in control, not Russia or any other nation. And 2) God knows how to preserve His people while reserving sinners for judgment.

KEEP THE FAITH. On a daily basis, pray and heed Luke 21:36 which says: ``*Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.*"

In the next issue, we will start a series dealing with the nation of Israel and the soon-coming ``Russian invasion" as it relates to current events.

Maranatha!

Behold, I set thee a watchman on the wall" (Isaiah 62:6)

Peace in the Middle East--A Prelude to War? -- Part 4

Prophesy against Gog of the land of Magog (Russia)

This is part four of a multi-part series dealing with the nation of Israel. In the last issue, we discussed how God is in the process of recalling His chosen people to the land of Israel, setting the stage for one of the most important events in Biblical prophesy: the invasion of Israel. This issue will focus on this end-time military campaign. This campaign involves nuclear weapons, judgment upon "Magog", her allies, and judgment upon another nation "*which lives in the safety of the far distant coast lands.*"

The events leading up to this invasion (as well as the cleanup after the battle) is described in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39. And although the book of Ezekiel was written around 565 B.C., when we examine current events as they relate to Ezekiel's prophesy, it will seem that our target text is coming right out of today's newspapers -- a further demonstration that, on God's prophetic timeclock, we are living in the last days.

PROPHESY AGAINST GOG OF THE LAND OF MAGOG.

EZE 38:1-2 *"And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him."*

"Set thy face against" is a command to a prophet who is being instructed to denounce a nation or a people. In other words, Ezekiel was being told to deliver a prophecy against Gog of the land of Magog.

To determine the identity of the nation Magog, we must recognize that God refers to lands, or countries, by the names of Noah's ancestors as set forth in *"The Table of Nations"* (Genesis, chapter 10). The names of the countries in Ezekiel's prophesy are the names of Noah's sons and grandsons who settled in the areas now occupied by the modern nations of Eastern Europe, the Muslim republics of the C.I.S., Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Libya, Sudan and Ethiopia. Therefore, to identify which modern day countries Ezekiel is referring to, we need to locate where, on today's map, these ancient peoples settled.

Magog was the son of Japheth, a grandson of Noah, who settled in the vast area north of the Caucasus mountains. His descendants were the progenitors of the Russian peoples who later became known as the Scythians. The Scythians terrorized Asia, from the steeps of Russia to the Great Wall of China, from the tenth century through the sixth century B.C. The Great Wall of China was referred to by ancient Muslim writers as the *"Great Wall of Al Magog."* It was built to keep the Scythians out. The name *"Caucasus"* means *"Gog's Fort"*. So Magog is that vast area north of the Caucasus Mountains which today comprises the *"Georgian"* state of Russia. Mikhail Gorbachov was born here.

It should be noted that over twenty Jewish and Christian scholars associate Magog with Russia. For example, in the Talmud (L. Gensburg, 1889/58), Magog is the country of the White Huns (or southern Russia). Flavius Josephus, writing in the first century, also believed that Magog was connected to the Scythians, a people who lived north of the Black Sea in the area of the Caucasus Mountains (S.J. 1,6,25). However, to be certain there is no difficulty identifying Magog with Russia, God expounds on the identity of the nation against whom this prophesy is directed: *"Set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal."* Meshech and Tubal were also Noah's grandsons. Meshech was the name of the tribe that eventually chose 'Moscow' as its capital. Tubal was the name of the tribe that established 'Tobolsk' as its capital city, which later became the capital of Siberia.

It is interesting to note that The Revised Standard version of the Bible translates this verse as: *"Set thy face against Gog of the land of Magog, of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal."* In this case, the name 'Rosh' is a proper name and is the root word from which we get the word Russia. William Kelly, in Notes on Ezekiel (pp. 192-193), says: *"It is true that 'Rosh,' when the context requires it to be a common appellative, means 'head,' or 'chief.' But it is this sense which in the present instance brings in confusion. There can be no doubt therefore that it must be taken as a proper name, and here not as a man as in Genesis 26:2, if the common reading stands, but as a race. This at once furnishes a suitable sense, which is strengthened by the term which precedes it as well as by those that follow. Meshech and Tubal fix Rosh as meaning a Gentile name Rosh."*

Dr. Louis Bauman wrote in Russian Events in the Light of Biblical Prophecy, p. 24, that *"Our Lord's own Bible, the Septuagint, speaks of 'Gog' as 'the prince of Rosh.' If modern lexicographers are consulted as to what nation now represents 'Rosh,' nearly all of them, together with most expositors, say, Russia."*

But if this is not enough evidence, in Ezekiel 38:15, God tells us that Gog will come from his place in the far, or extreme, north. There is no other nation further north than Russia. It is no coincidence that if we consult a globe of the world and draw a line due north from Jerusalem that it intersects Moscow. Therefore, the land of Magog is equivalent to that area far to the north of Israel that we know today as Russia (including Central Asia), and Gog is Russia's leader.

GOD IS IN CONTROL

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 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."*

In Daniel, Chapter 2, and throughout the Bible, we find that God exercises control over the rise and fall of nations. God only lets national sin go so far before bringing judgement. We see from the above verses that God is clearly in control, and Russia will be forced to participate in this military campaign.

Russia may want to stay out of the conflict, as does the person who hires a hit man to do their dirty work. But whether Russia wishes to participate directly in this campaign, or just stand on the sidelines while the nations she has armed do the dirty work, is irrelevant. God will force Russia to participate because, as we find later in this chapter, God will judge Russia for touching *"the apple of God's eye"*, the nation of Israel. Since 1917, Russia has killed 60 million innocent people -- including five million Jews and fifteen million Christians.

The text indicates that before Russia is brought forth with its full army to join its Muslim allies (verses 5-6), she is first turned back (*"And I will turn thee back"*). Since the context of this passage appears to be a military operation, it is logical to assume that Russia is *"turned back"* from some limited military engagement (limited is implied, because when Russia is brought forward, it is with her whole army). God initially forces Russia to be turned back, then *"puts hooks into their jaws,"* drawing them into battle. *"Hooks in thy jaw"* is a Biblical phrase similar to putting a bit into the mouth of a horse, meaning to control by force.

"And then God 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." This certainly sounds like a military operation.

Before we continue, let's take a look at the current military operation between Russia and Chechnya. It was supposed to be the equivalent of a police action, lasting just a couple of days. Instead, the Russian military machine is in disarray, unorganized and confused. The conflict has been going on now for two months; it is not only a military disaster, but a political disaster for Yeltzin (whose political approval rating has fallen to eight percent).

First of all, how could Russia, with its incredible military machine, fail in this endeavor? Is it possible that this is the conflict from which Russia is turned back?

God sometimes intervenes in the affairs of men in order to protect His Holy Word. This was undoubtedly the case in the 1948 war with Israel, which followed the U.N.'s recognition of Israel as a sovereign nation. Israel had been invaded by a coalition of seven Arab nations, facing overwhelming odds, and yet prevailed. How? Their military consisted of two airplanes, a few jeeps and a citizen army. They faced certain defeat.

Then in 1967, Israel was attacked on three fronts by Egypt, Jordan and Syria. They were vastly outmanned and outgunned, yet they emerged victorious. Why? Clearly it was the hand of God; once Israel was reestablished a second time, according to Isaiah 11, they would never be uprooted again. Today, Israel, about the size of New Jersey, is the world's third most powerful military force. But against the entire Russian military and those of the Muslim nations she would have zero chance of survival, save for God's direct intervention.

The Chechnya affair bears watching. If it turns out that it is God's turning the Russians back, then the Israeli invasion cannot be far behind. It is only a possibility, but considering the political unrest in Russia, her entangling alliances with Iran and the other Muslim nations, it is a distinct possibility.

In any case, with Russia in apparent economic crises, and Yeltzin facing elections in 1996, one thing is certain. He cannot afford another Chechnya. If there are any more "police actions" during Yeltzin's term, he had better win decisively or face being forcibly removed from office.

What better time to single out a scapegoat for Russia's internal problems? We know from Jeremiah, chapter 16, that Russia will once again turn on the Jews. And since Yeltzin will be facing Gorbachov and Zhirinovsky -- both popular opponents -- in the upcoming presidential race, will Yeltzin take extreme measures to remain in power?

Vladimir Zhirinovsky is strongly anti-Semitic. He blames the Jews for Russia's problems. In his autobiography, apocalyptically entitled *The Last Dash South*, he outlines his plan for a massive invasion south into the land of Israel. Now whether Zhirinovsky wins in 1996 (or earlier, as there are already outcries for earlier elections), or Yeltzin (in his desperation to remain in power) seizes the initiative, one thing is certain -- Russia will come forth out of her place to invade Israel. It will be after she is "turned back" from some other ill-fated military operation. If it is Chechnya, then Yeltzin cannot afford to lose face a second time. Clearly, going forth "with all thine army" is to ensure success. And when you consider the breadth of this military operation, without God's intervention, Israel is doomed.

It is intriguing that analysts are predicting that the Chechnya unrest will spread to Magog. Denis Dragounski, a Fellow of the U.S. Institute of Peace, answering the question "What will be the next hot spot in Russia?" stated: "The northern Caucasus as a whole will be an area of unrest, specifically the Cossack populations of the Krasnodar Krai and the Strvropol Krai..." Paul Goble, Senior Associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, says: "We'll see guerilla war and terrorism coming out of the northern Caucasus. Chechnya is going to spread ... Boris Yeltsin has thrown water on a grease fire."`

So, after being turned back, Russia begins a massive military campaign with "all their 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." Let's explore the language of this verse.

The Hebrew word translated by the 1611 King James translators as "horse" in this passage is the word "leaper"; In Jeremiah 8:7 the same word is translated "bird"; and in Exodus 14:9, it is translated as chariot. The translators did their best to associate "leaper" with a vehicle of war as it existed in their century. In 1611, a leaper would have been a horse. But today, we could interpret "leaper" as helicopter, perhaps, armored personnel carrier or tank. In even the modern-day Army, motorized infantry is still referred to as Cavalry -- again a reference to horses. Ezekiel had never seen a tank or an armored personnel carrier. He framed this futuristic scene in the language of his day, which was in turn translated into the language of 1611, when horses were the main vehicle of mechanized infantry.

Jumping ahead to Ezekiel 39:3, we encounter a similar case. God says of Magog: "Then I will strike your bow from your left hand and make your arrows drop from your right hand." The term "arrow" is translated from two Hebrew root words (transliterated as "Chets" [Strong's reference number 2671], and "Qesheth" [strong's reference number 7198]. Chet means "a piercer or piercing shaft which is figurative of a thunderbolt from God"). In 1611, a piercing shaft that is projected like a thunderbolt would be an arrow. The other Hebrew word, "Qesheth", is that which launches it, or a bow. The lexicon of the modern-day Bible for Ezekiel 39:3 is not the original Hebrew, but rather the closest thing the English translators of 1611 could come up with. Today, we might say "I will strike your missile launchers from your left hand and make your missiles drop from your right hand" and be perfectly justified in doing so. And as we shall find out later, missiles and nuclear bombs are most likely involved.

GOG'S ALLIES:

5 "Persia, Ethiopia (Cush), and Libya (Put) with them; all of them with shield and helmet:

6 Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee."

God tells us the countries that will join the Russians in forming this massive invasion force. These nations are: "Persia" (mainly Iran and parts of northern Iraq and Afganistan); "Cush" (Ethiopia and Sudan); "Put" (Libya); "Gomer, and all his bands" (Eastern Europe - Gomer was an immediate descendant of Noah who settled north of the Black Sea in modern day Russia. They later moved westward into what is today Eastern Germany in the area of Poland; "The house of Togarmah of the north quarters and all his bands" (Togarmah was the second son of Gomer; his descendants occupied northern and eastern Turkey. Many of these "bands" occupied Southern Russia which used to be comprised of many small nations such as Armenia, and included some of the Tartar hordes who lived in Asia south of the Sea of Aral and toward the Caspian Sea. The Armenians still refer to themselves as the house of Togarmah).

It should be noted that none of the nations that join Russia are Arab -- they are all Muslim. They do not share the same ethnology or the same geographic location, but they do have one thing in common: Islam and a fanatical hatred of Israel. Their goal is the total annihilation of Israel.

RUSSIA HAS ARMED ITSELF AND ITS ALLIES

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."

Russia's allies have something else in common: she has armed them all.

Lybia, for starters, is studded with Russian bases positioned for attack on Israel. They are developing ballistic missiles and have in-flight refueling capability for their bombers. They are dedicated to the destruction of Israel.

Ethiopia, formally a friend of the West, is now also populated with Soviet bases which are manned by Cubans, Russians, East German and North Korean troops and include 50,000 Russian advisors.

Hashimer Rafsanjani of Iran (former Persia) has announced his desire to unite the Muslim Islamic world. Iran is selling oil to Russia at a discount and, in exchange, has been allowed to spend over fourteen billion dollars in arms trade with Russia -- making Iran the premier military power among the radical Muslim nations.

Besides the 115 planes Rafsanjani "*inherited*" from Saddam Hussein during the Iraq war with the United States (UN), he has acquired the latest in Russian air power. These include state-of-the-art "*Backfire bombers*," MIG fighter planes, AWACs, etc. They are also purchasing artillery, tanks and Russian submarines.

According to Rafsanjani, Islam has replaced Marxism as the ideology of the future. He has formed an alliance with Syria and is trying to unite all the Moslems. He now believes that they have the resources, from oil revenues, and the nuclear capability to disconnect planet earth from its Christian/Judeo world order. Iran has funded 30 schools in the Sudan to train terrorists. The Massod, Israel's intelligence organization, says they are the best funded and organized schools of there kind in history. The radical Muslims also hate the United States, the "*Great Satan*", and they are training terrorists for operation in the USA.

Most disconcerting, is that Rafsanjani has hired hundreds of Russian nuclear scientists. These scientists worked for under \$50 a month in Russia, but are now being paid over \$5,000 a month by Rafsanjani. They are, therefore, highly motivated. Iran has also purchased at least four nuclear bombs on the Russian black market and has acquired hundreds of advanced Scud Missiles from Russia, North Korea, and China. These missiles not only put Israel at risk, but pose a risk for Europe as well. It is disconcerting to think what might have happened if the bomb placed under the World Trade Center by Iranian terrorists had been nuclear.

These nuclear bombs have a limited shelf life. Unless the uranium is periodically reprocessed, they become unstable and useless. Iran is in the position of using them or losing them. A sobering thought when one considers that Islam is fanatically dedicated to the utter and complete destruction of Israel (and of all infidels who do not embrace Islam -- including Christians).

Islam did not start with Mohammed. It began in Babylon with the worship of the moon god. Islam does not win converts by their love, they win converts by the sword. The symbol of this ancient Antichrist Babylonian religion was the crescent moon; this symbol still adorns all the Muslim mosques today.

Israel was under Muslim control until December 9, 1917 when Lord Allenby liberated Israel from Turkish control. Lord Allenby's liberation of Jerusalem was a fulfillment of Biblical prophesy. General Allenby, being a Christian, was greatly troubled that the city of Jerusalem might be destroyed by artillery before the Turks surrendered. Allenby contacted headquarters seeking guidance. By today's standards, the reply he received was inconceivable. It was a scripture verse -- Isaiah 31:5 - "*As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it.*"

Allenby decided to overfly Jerusalem, dropping leaflets which demanded their surrender. What he did not know was that the Turks believed in an old prophesy that they would never lose the Holy City until "a man of Allah" came to deliver it. Allenby's signature on the leaflet was mistaken for "Allah Beh" (man of Allah). The Turks surrendered without firing a shot...an incredible fulfillment of Biblical prophesy which put Israel under British mandate. This mandate, called the Balfour Declaration, called for a Jewish homeland and set the foundation for modern Israel. Since Jerusalem was once under Islamic control, the city is considered holy to the Muslims, and they are waiting for the right time to wage a Holy War to reclaim it for Allah. They consider the total destruction of Israel a Koranic imperative.

A major problem for Israel is that the Central Asian Republics (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tadjhikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyztan) are also Muslim and thus committed to Israel's destruction. They have nuclear weapons, ICBM's and have signed a military assistance pact with the Russian Federation. Because these republics contain over 60 million Muslims, Russia fears Muslim fundamentalist agitation throughout former Soviet Central Asia, as well as the Russian federation itself. As a result, Russia has been cooperating with Iran. This could explain Iran's silence, in light of the slaughter of Muslims in both Bosnia and Chechnya.

In his newsletter, Chuck Missler stated that "*Russia needs Iran's restraint in Central Asia, and the price is supporting Tehran's more important ambitions elsewhere: the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and, of course, Israel. We suspect that the Islamic commitments could well prove to be the 'hooks in the jaw' that will draw Russia into the ill-fated 'Magog invasion' of Israel.*" (Personal Update, Vol. 3, No 12., page 6, Koinonia House. P.O. Box D, Coeur d'Alene ID. 83816)

It is evident that Russia continues to build its strategic alliance with Iran. This includes not only weapons, but nuclear power plant technology as well. Russia has supplied Iran with at least two nuclear power plants, is training nuclear technicians and is establishing a nuclear research facility. It is probable that Iran wants to obtain this technology to reprocess the enriched uranium in the nuclear bombs obtained from the Russian nuclear stockpile.

Furthermore (in addition to the Russian-Iranian Axis), Syria, Iraq, Iran, Sudan and Afganistan have formed a strategic alliance with the twin goals of expulsing western influence in the Gulf and the destruction of Israel. Things are heating up for Israel. She is surrounded by radical Muslim nations dedicated to her destruction. Russia is arming and preparing these troops exactly as the Bible predicted. And the peace process -- though fraught with problems, is continuing forward. When it reaches conclusion, it may produce a false sense of security for Israel and may perhaps be the time that "*Russia thinks an evil thought*", and leads the radical Muslim nations in their ill-fated invasion of Israel. More on this next time.

What they will not anticipate is God's intervention in the course of human history. The result is catastrophic for the invaders, but will change life for all mankind, as well. These events include nuclear weapons and an earthquake so large that it shakes the entire earth. But most important is that, during this time in history, God once again pours out His Spirit on the House of Israel, showing His greatness and holiness, and making Himself known in the sight of many nations. "*Then they will know that I am the LORD*". (Eze 38:23) God will "*once again, in a little while,*

shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts."(Haggai 2:6-7) "And the desired of the nations shall come."

God's righteous judgements are always redemptive. He does not desire that anyone perish, but that all come to repentance and everlasting life.

This invasion could now take place at almost any time. To prepare for it, stay close to the Lord by purifying your heart and thoughts through the daily washing of the Word. Be careful not to forsake the Holy One of Israel. Soon the culmination of all things shall begin.

We will discuss what is in store for America and the rest of the world, next time.

Watch and pray, therefore, that you would be counted worthy to escape the judgment that is coming upon the earth and be able to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Maranatha!

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Behold, I set thee a watchman on the wall" (Isaiah 62:6)

Peace in the Middle East--A Prelude to War? -- Part 5

The Timing of the Invasion

This is part five of a multi-part series dealing with the nation of Israel. In the previous issue, we began discussion of Ezekiel, chapter 38. We identified Gog, the leader of Russia (Magog) during the end-times, the one the Bible says will muster an Israeli invasion force consisting of Iran and other radical Muslim nations. We discussed how the political and economic situation has set the stage for that end-times invasion. In this issue, we continue to explore this ill-fated military campaign, which potentially involves nuclear weapons, judgment upon "*Magog*", her allies, and judgment upon another nation "*which lives in the safety of the far distant coast lands.*"

The Timing of The Invasion

"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."(Eze 38:8)

We discussed in the last issue that the Jews are being regathered to Israel in fulfillment of biblical prophesy. The milestone events were May 14, 1948 when Israel once again became a nation and June 6, 1967 when they recaptured Old Jerusalem--both on the exact days predicted in the Bible. Israel's children are currently returning to the homeland from all the countries of the world to which they were scattered. Ezekiel 38:8 is being fulfilled. As this verse clearly identifies, the time of this fulfillment is in the "*latter years*", often referred to as the end-times or (as the Jews call it) "*the time of the footsteps of the Messiah.*" We are blessed to be living in this prophesied time.

The term "*dwelling in safety*" has a double meaning. It refers to a place of actual physical safety and to the feeling of security, a state of mind. The Greek word "*betach*" (Strong's Reference Number: 983) means a place of refuge; abstr. safety, both the fact (security) and the feeling (trust). The word "*betach*" is used a total of 162 times in the Bible; of that 162, 130 times it means "*feeling secure*".

Let's look at what is happening in the world today and compare it to the scripture in Ezekiel. We have good reason to believe that we are in the end-times, Israel has been re-established as a nation, and her scattered people are returning home from the nations of the world. The Middle East peace process is continuing and could ultimately bring about that "*feeling of security*" Ezekiel referred to in chapter 38, verse 8.

The Staging and Motivation for the Attack

"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." (Eze 38:9)

The invading forces are so vast that they are likened to a cloud which covers the land. It is a massive invasion, comprised of the Muslim forces enumerated in Ezekiel 38:5-6 and the entire Russian Army (Eze 38:4). They will come as a storm, with swiftness and great intensity. Since Israel believes she is "*at peace*" and certainly not expecting an attack, she will have little time to muster a conventional response. Without God's intervention, Israel would certainly be totally destroyed. As to the outcome of this invasion? Isaiah, chapter 11, gives us a hint. God tells us, through Isaiah, that when Israel is regathered the second time that it is the time of the Lord's return and that Israel will never again be uprooted.

"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:" (Eze38:10)

We know, from Ezekiel 38:8, that Israel is the target of this invasion. However, at the time this military action gets underway, that may not be obvious. It is possible that there will be a deception to disguise the fact that Israel is the true military objective. This military action may be touted as simply an exercise or may possibly be directed towards a different target. This is consistent with military strategy. The element of surprise is very important in order to catch Israel and her allies unprepared. We do not know what form this deception will take, but we do know that Gog does not think "*the evil thought*" (which is to invade Israel), until the same time the invasion is already underway (see Ezekiel 38:8-9). What are the details of that "*evil thought*"?

"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, 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."(Eze 38:11-12)

Gog, the leader of Russia, will observe that Israel is at rest, feeling secure, and so will seize the opportunity to invade this "*land of unwalled villages*".

During Ezekiel's entire lifetime, it is unlikely that he had ever seen a village (let alone a city) without walls, bars and gates. Fortification was the primary method of defense up until the 19th century. So Ezekiel seeing Israel's villages without walls would mean that they had let down their guard. A successfully-negotiated Middle East Peace Treaty could certainly cause them to do so. God warns that when the Jews cry "...*Peace and safety, destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape*" (1Thes 5:3)

Verse 12 also reveals that Gog has "*come to take a spoil and to take a prey*". These are the two motives for the attack. Cash-poor Russia desires Israel's great wealth; they come to "*take cattle and goods*". The radical Muslim nations, however, have come to "*take a prey*"; they desire to utterly destroy the Jewish people.

"*Cattle and goods*" are a reference to the wealth of Israel. She is becoming a wealthy nation. Israel has begun to harvest the tremendous mineral wealth of the Dead Sea, worth many trillions of dollars. They have also recently struck a potentially-massive oil reserve south of the Dead Sea (which will certainly inflame their Arab neighbors). Israel is ranked first in the world in graduating PHD's. The Israelis continue to be leaders in medicine and science. Six percent of the work force is engineers (as compared to 1.6% in the U.S.), and thousands of Russian scientists have emigrated to Israel in the "*alyia*" (return to Israel).

It is likely that the number of Israeli inventions and scientific breakthroughs will increase. A prime example of Israeli innovation is the development of a method to produce electricity for a fraction of a penny per kilowatt-hour, while producing pure water from sea-water as a by-product. This is accomplished by spraying sea water across the top of a half-mile high tower. As the water evaporates in the hot desert sun, it cools the air. The cooler, heavier air then starts to fall. By the time it reaches the bottom of the tower, it is traveling at great speed and can power wind turbines to generate electricity.

In Russia meanwhile, Zhirinovsky, the extremely anti-Semitic Russian ultra-nationalist, takes an unusual view of Israeli technological prowess. He regards Israeli technical advances as Russian property and has pledged to reclaim that property if elected in 1996. Zhirinovsky is a serious contender for President. And his book, *The Final Push South*, does not disguise his desire to possess the wealth of Israel or his desire for a warm-water port. His chances of election were recently bolstered when he was promoted to a Colonel in the Russian Army Reserves. Some see this promotion as an endorsement by the military, a go-ahead signal to the military to vote for him in 1996.

Zhirinovsky is also promoting Russian-Muslim alliances, having recently met with Iraq's Saddam Hussein to propose a Russian-Muslim coalition against what is termed their common enemy -- the West.

Verse 12 mentions that the invasion occurs after Israel has been regathered from the nations and has re-inhabited the desolate places. This has been accomplished. In fact, they have planted so many trees that the weather has been affected, yielding rain, as the trees on previously-barren mountain tops capture the moisture from passing clouds. This rainfall, coupled with irrigation efforts, has resulted in the "*desert blossoming like a rose.*" (ISA 27:6) In fact, their agricultural techniques have been so successful that their "*fruit is filling the whole earth.*" (ISA 35:1) Tiny Israel, about the size of New Jersey, is now the world's third-largest fruit exporter. Israel is indeed becoming rich. And with her growing braintrust, she will continue to grow in wealth and goods. It is during such a time of prosperity and well-being that Gog will strike.

The invasion is against those that "*dwelt in the midst of the land*". Israel is certainly surrounded by enemies, but an examination of the words "*that dwell in the midst of the land*", in the original Greek, lends some unique insight. The words "*that dwell in*" is the transliterated Greek word "*yashab*" (Strong's reference number 3427). It is usually translated "*to dwell, to remain, to settle or to live*". However, it can also mean "*to sit down*", specifically as a judge, or to sit down in ambush. An ambush is certainly the dynamic of this invasion. It is at a time that the Jews have a new-found sense of peace and security that they are ambushed by Gog's forces.

The phrase "*in the midst*" is the transliterated Greek word "*tubbuwr*" (Strong's reference number 2872). It means accumulated; i.e. (by implication) a summit. In this context, accumulated in the sense of a mass of people but, by implication, at a summit. Could summit imply a peace summit? Or is summit referring to the top of a mountain? In scripture, when a Jew is outside of Israel, he always goes "*up*" to Jerusalem, regardless of the geographic terrain.

Israel has wealth the Russians need. Furthermore, with the growing anti-Semitic attitude of Russian leadership and their entangling alliances with the radical Muslim nations, Russia could certainly be getting ready to take a spoil. The stage is indeed set, the players are in place. All that is left is for God to draw Russia and her allies into battle...where they will be judged.

Is it possible that the invasion will occur at the same time, or shortly after, the "*final*" peace treaty is negotiated in Jerusalem? "*What I say to you, I say to everyone: Watch!*" (Mark 13:37)

Nations opposing Gog are surprised

"*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?*" (Eze 38:13)

Sheba is most likely a reference to the area from which came the Queen of Sheba who visited King Solomon. According to archaeologists W. F. Albright and Wendell Phillips, Sheba was on the southwestern edge of the Arabian peninsula. Dedan was probably the habitat of the Arabs on the northern part of the Arabian desert, which is modern-day Saudi Arabia. The ancient capital of Saudi Arabia is still called Dedan on many maps today. We can, therefore, identify Sheba and Dedan as Saudi Arabia.

"*The Merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof*" is not as simple to identify, but very important in our analysis. Tarshish, according to Davis' Dictionary of the Bible, "*was a distant land...it is believed that Tarshish was Tartessus, in the south of Spain, near Gibraltar...ships of Tarshish were originally ships trading to and from Tarshish.*" According to German writer Gerhard Herrn: "*In 500 B.C. Tartessus disappeared from sight so mysteriously that Plato was inspired-- or so one imagines--to base his Atlantis myth on it.*" But the fleet survived and continued to trade.

"*Young lions*" is derived from the Hebrew word for "*whelps*" or "*cubs*". In this context, they probably refer to the colonies or offspring of what or who is represented by the merchants of Tarshish. Ezekiel's "*merchants of Tarshish*" (i.e. traders by sea) generally operated out of the port of Cadiz after the city of Tartessus disappeared. They continued to established trading posts (many of which had grown into sizable colonies) along the entire coast of Western Europe, including an active tin trade with Britain. Britain later colonized the United States, Canada and Australia. As we shall see, it is no coincidence that the lion is the symbol of Great Britain today.

Around 1010 B.C., the Phoenicians colonized western Spain, including the port city of Cadiz. It was from Cadiz that Phoenician navigators, having usurped the Tartessian routes and trade business, piloted the ocean-going fleet of Tarshish. At the time of Solomon, the Bible mentions the fleet of Tyre as capable of making difficult crossings. The king had at sea a navy of Tarshish which every three years brought gold, silver, apes and ivory. Jeremiah mentions Tarshish and gold from Ophir. Ezekiel apparently visited the ports of Tyre and Sidon where he had seen the Tarshish ships himself (see Ezekiel, chapter 27). In any event, it is possible that in these contexts, the fleet of Tarshish is used to describe an ocean-going navy.

So Tarshish was originally a Western European colonizing power based in Spain, and the fleet of Tarshish is sometimes used to describe an ocean-going navy. This fleet is what the Phoenicians ultimately used to conduct trade from Spain, even after the original city of Tartessus ceased to exist.

Ezekiel was certainly seeing a distant time and lands which did not yet have names. So when Ezekiel mentions "*the merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof*", he is referring to a future nation, perhaps with an ocean-going navy, who was associated with or colonized as a result of the Phoenician's colonization activity. This includes Great Britain and (directly or indirectly) the United States. According to Professor Barry Fall of Harvard, in his book *America B.C.*, the Phoenicians even reached the east coast of America, where they set up trading colonies. However, more importantly, since "*young lions*" refers to offspring or colonies, one cannot help but notice the connection between Great Britain (whose national symbol is the lion) and the United States (Britain's colony--a young lion).

The U.S. is a major sea power in the Middle East and is also aligned with Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, Isaiah in chapter 60, verse 9, tells us that, in the last days, some of the Jews return home to Israel in "*ships of Tarshish*." So we have to be able to identify this reference today. And since the largest concentration of Jews outside Israel today is in the United States, when the mass exodus of Jews from the U.S. begins, undoubtedly many will seek transit by ship which can carry many thousands of passengers at a crossing. (Others, of course, will be carried home on the wings of eagles, or modern-day American airplanes.)

In any case, when the invasion begins (perhaps because the invading forces include Russia), the only resistance offered by Saudi Arabia and the U.S. (and perhaps other western allies) is what amounts to a diplomatic protest. As we discussed in Ezekiel 38, verse 10, it is possible that the military action is not initially targeted against Israel. There are some interesting events currently taking place in the Middle East that indicate Saudi Arabia may be a possible target.

It was recently reported on the CBS evening news that Iran is conducting cross-border raids and amphibious operations under conditions of contamination (chemical, biological or nuclear). The intelligence community believes their strategy may include Saudi Arabia as a target.

Why would they want to attack Saudi Arabia? There are several conjectures: 1) the Saudis are Suni Moslems, not Shiittes, and therefore have many philosophical differences; 2) Saudi Arabia is too closely-aligned with the West. They gave the West (in particular, the United States -- "The Great Satan", as Iran refers to us) their land to use as bases in the Persian Gulf War; 3) they control Mecca & Medina. If Rafsanjani is hoping to control the Muslim world, he needs to control these sacred sites.

As nervous as Saudi Arabia was about Saddam Hussein, they are terrified of Iran. The balance of power in the area has shifted. It was pressure from Iran that caused Turkey to deny the U.N. the use of their bases during the second buildup against Iraq. Iran is the major Muslim powerbase in the Middle East, as well as the key nation named in the Israeli invasion. It should be mentioned that the U.N. cannot just go over and bomb Iran the way it did Iraq, because Iran has allied herself with Russia, Syria and other Muslim nations.

God's Intervention

"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? 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" (Eze 38:14-15)

God is telling Gog in advance what Magog is going to do against Israel and, in the verses that follow, what the result of transgression will be. God is pronouncing judgment here on Gog of the land of Magog, the leader of Russia.

God tells Gog that the Russian Army--mechanized infantry--will leave Russia (a country from the far north), accompanied by the armies of the other Muslim nations we have already discussed, and join into a mighty invasion force.

"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." (Eze 38:16)

The invasion is clearly against Israel. But what is important is that God says Israel is HIS LAND and Israel's people are HIS PEOPLE. God is once again interacting directly with the Israeli people. Many Bible teachers, such as Chuck Missler, believe that God's dealings with the Gentiles and God's dealings with the Jews are mutually exclusive. If this is true, then this battle could be the event that marks the end of the Gentile Age. God once again focuses on the nation of Israel, potentially marking the beginning of the tribulation period, the rapture and -- ultimately--the rise to power of the Anti-Christ.

It should be noted that other prophesy teachers such as Hal Lindsey believe that this invasion is part of the Armageddon scenario which occurs in the middle of the seven-year tribulation period. We will discuss these differences in the next issue.

Regardless of the exact timing, how far away can the rapture be? It is time to look up, for our redemption draweth nigh.

It is God himself that tells us that He is bringing Gog forward. And when God judges Russia in the sight of all nations, they will recognize that it was God's direct intervention which saved Israel. No doubt, if we are still here, we will be watching this invasion on CNN.

"Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?" (Eze 38:17)

God tells us in advance, through His Prophets, that this would happen. God is defending His Holy Word, saying "*Did I not tell you I would bring Gog forth so I could judge her and show myself a Holy God?*" God does not overlook sin. God only lets sin go so far. It does not matter if it is a nation or a person; God will judge. He is long-suffering in the hope that none would perish, but God is not slack toward sin. He will bring judgment when sin has reached its fullness.

"And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face." (Eze 38:18)

Now God tells Gog what His judgment will be. God is about to take swift, decisive action. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God.

"For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken. Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel." (Eze 38:19)

God has a zeal for Israel. In that zeal, He will bring forth fiery wrath against the invaders that attempt to vanquish the apple of His eye. Judgment either begins with an earthquake, or (as we shall see later) His "*fiery wrath*" may be a reference to what causes the earthquake. In any event, it will be a massive earthquake that is felt around the world.

"So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD." (Eze 38:20-23)

Gog's objective is to attain the gold and silver (i.e. the wealth) of Israel. But the gold and silver is not Israel's; it is the Lord's. God tells us through Amos the prophet: *"For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts."* And through Haggai the prophet: *"All the silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts."* (Hag 2:6-8)

As a result of this earthquake, *"...the desire of all nations shall come."* This earthquake is larger than anything ever experienced in modern history. Every living thing on planet earth is affected. And, as a result, God will be magnified and sanctified throughout the earth. Many will be awakened from their spiritual slumber and come to a place of saving grace with the Lord. The people of the nations shall know that *"I am the Lord"*.

As for the invading troops, *"every man's sword shall be against his brother."* God will cause great confusion among the troops, as He did in the days of Gideon. The troops will fight among themselves. God will *"plead against them with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone."* There is apparently biological warfare involved, as well as another dynamic of the battle which results in *"an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone."*

We shall discuss what this is next time, as well as how the U.S. is potentially involved in this judgment.

Stay close to the Lord. Maranatha!

``Watch and pray, therefore, that you would be counted worthy to escape the judgment that is coming upon the earth and be able to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Maranatha!

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Behold, I set thee a watchman on the wall" (Isaiah 62:6)

Peace in the Middle East--A Prelude to War? -- Part 6

The Identity of the Other Nation

"For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth, to know the worst and to prepare for it." (Patrick Henry, 1775)

"History fails to record a single precedent in which nations subject to moral decay have not passed into political and economic declines. There has either been a spiritual awakening to overcome the moral lapse, or an ultimate natural disaster." (General Douglas MacArthur)

This is part six of a multi-part series dealing with the nation of Israel. In the previous issue, we completed discussion of current events and how they related to the 38th chapter of the book of Ezekiel. We identified the timing, motivation and target of that invasion. We discussed how Saudi Arabia and the West, primarily the U.S., are apparently caught off-guard by that invasion and respond with what amounts to a diplomatic protest.

In this issue, we will discuss some recent developments and begin discussion of Ezekiel, chapter 39. This is a very important chapter. It records the method that God uses to judge Russia and *"another country."* It also describes the cleanup after the battle. The cleanup is significant because nowhere else in the Bible is the cleanup after a battle dealt with in such great detail. Since Romans 15:4 tells us that nothing in God's Word is trivial or incidental, we must deduce that God is communicating something of importance across the almost 2500 years of history that have passed since Ezekiel first recorded this prophesy.

It will become clear that God's judgment upon Magog, her allies, and upon another nation, *"which lives in the safety of the far distant coastlands"*, most likely involves the use of nuclear weapons.

God Protects His Children

Does the mention of nuclear weapons cause an emotional response in you?

Just the thought of nuclear weapons makes most of us feel uncomfortable. We don't like dealing with negative issues. This is true of human beings, both as individuals and corporately as a nation. In fact, a psychological profile of the West done by Russia, indicates that the U.S. *"does not want to know the truth."* Jean Kirkpatrick, former U.S. ambassador to the U.N., calls it *"the will to disbelieve the horrible."*

But God did not give us a spirit of fear or timidity (2 Tim 1:7). Jesus does not expect us to put our heads in the sand when we see danger approaching. He told us to watch and to pray for escape from the judgment coming upon the world (Luke 21:36). The Bible does have a lot to say about judgment, both the final judgment upon the earth and judgment upon nations that have turned their backs on God. But the Bible also has much to say about God's protection. *"The salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord; He is their stronghold in time of trouble. The Lord helps and delivers them; because they take refuge in Him."* (Psalm 37:39-40) We need to be aware of what is coming, but we also need to trust in Him to protect us through it. Can we be sure that God will protect His children? We have only to read His Book.

Noah and his family were protected throughout the flood by the Ark that Noah built in obedience to God's command. During their exodus from Egypt, God fed the children of Israel with Manna in the wilderness and provided water out of solid rock. He parted the Red Sea to make a way of escape from the Egyptian army. Lot and His family were escorted out of the city by Angels before Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego walked through the fire of the furnace, because God walked with them.

God protects those who love Him (and are obedient to His commands). However, as the Israeli invasion force will soon discover, there is no escape for the enemies of God.

Chechnya, a Hook in the Jaw?

Things are continuing to move into alignment for this battle. The ongoing Chechnya conflict is proving to be of prophetic significance. Chechnya is located just north of the Caucasus mountains in the Russian republic of Georgia, biblically known as Magog. We know that God will draw Magog into this ill-fated invasion of Israel by putting *"hooks in their jaw"*. It appears that the Chechnyan affair may prove to be one of those hooks.

On July 5, 1995 the *"USA Today"* reported that *"talks between Russia and the break-away republic of Chechnya disintegrated Tuesday [July 4] when the Chechen negotiator condemned a Kremlin decree establishing a permanent army presence in the rebel area."* This means that Russia has a burgeoning military presence just 900 miles north of Israel. The Russian bear is in position for its final plunge south toward Israel and the riches of the Middle East.

As discussed in previous issues, Russia has been negotiating with Iran, exchanging nuclear technology and weapons for both Iran's silence in the Chechnyan affair (the Chechnyians are Muslim) and to prevent radical Muslim agitation in the southern republics of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyztan. Russia is becoming hopelessly entangled in Muslim affairs. Furthermore, considering that every Arab state has expressed support for their Muslim brothers in Chechnya, Russia's predicament becomes more and more difficult. What price will they pay to maintain the relationship with their new-found Muslim allies? We know from God's word that it will be their direct involvement with and leadership of the Israeli invasion force.

Ehud Ya'ari, a Jew from a Caucasus city west of Chechnya, discusses this entanglement in an article entitled *"The Northern Middle East"* ("Jerusalem Report", June 29, 1995). He writes *"The Caucasus, with Chechnya at its heart, is the new front line between Russia and the Islamic world; the new starting line for rising competition between Iran and Turkey; and the new point of contact between Israel and its Muslim environment. Whatever happens in the Caucasus will affect Moscow's stance toward Islamic powers far beyond...Jerusalem's current interest in the region is to rescue the 30,000 Jews from the Caucasus and, beyond that, is exporting goods in a limited capacity. Israel can only look on and watch the growing battle for influence, which our ancestors would have seen as something on the scale of Gog and Magog."* An incredible choice of words and accurate prophetic assessment.

So the Russian army is now in strategic proximity to the countries with whom she will ally in the attempt to destroy Israel. To the west and southwest of Chechnya lie Turkey and Armenia, the House of Togarmah. To the south, en route to Israel, lie Iraq and Iran (Persia). Chechnya is also close to Russia's Black Sea naval facilities, which would be key to quick deployment to the south and to the west.

"Gomer and all his bands" are also part of the Israeli invasion force. Gomer was an immediate descendant of Noah who settled north of the Black Sea and then migrated westward into what is today Eastern Germany and Poland. So Israel will be hemmed in by the Mediterranean on the West, on the east by Iran and Iraq, to the north by Syria and Turkey. *"Cush"* (Ethiopia) and *"Put"* (Libya) to the south will complete the invasion force, making Israeli escape an impossibility.

Interestingly, Syria--though not mentioned in Ezekiel 38 and 39-- remains a major threat to Israel. Syria is the leading Arab country in the development of chemical weapons. They have thousands of chemical bombs and a well-developed delivery system of Scud-B missiles and attack aircraft. She also has recently begun to produce the long-range Scud-C missiles, in cooperation with Iran, North Korea and China. With these missiles, Syria can strike every point in Israel.

Should Israel decide to launch a preemptive first strike against Syria (see Isaiah chapter 17; Damascus is destroyed, never to be inhabited again), Russia would be forced to retaliate on behalf of her ally. In this event, Russia's alliance with Syria would prove to be another *"hook in the jaw"*, which would draw Russia into the Israeli invasion. This is especially likely given Russia's growing ties to the Muslim nations. If that were to happen, Israel would use all options available to defend herself--including nuclear weapons.

Israel has openly stated that she will never be conquered again and, if faced with annihilation, would use the *"Sampson"* option (nuclear weapons). *"The Jerusalem Post"* reported in the June 17, 1995 issue that Israel's new and improved Jericho missile has been deployed. The Jericho-2 missile has a range of 930 miles and can carry a payload of 500 kg with incredible accuracy. Considering Israel has a significant stockpile of nuclear weapons, Israel can now reach southern Russia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia and Libya. Rest assured that this has not been overlooked by either Russia or the radical Muslim nations, who may use it as an excuse to invade Israel and protect their borders from this *"growing Israeli threat."*

Israel's recent discovery of oil south of the Dead Sea may also prove to be a factor in the dynamics of this invasion. Russia has plans to use the oil-flow from the Middle East, and the strategic metal resources of South Africa (now communist), as a weapon against the West. As discussed in previous issues, Iran is fortifying islands and deploying Russian-built submarines and anti-ship cruise missiles in the Straights of

Hormuz, through which passes 25% of the world's oil. Israel's new-found oil, if it proves to be a massive strike, would render these tactics less effective and may be a factor in their decision to invade and *"take a spOIL."* (Eze 38:12). The radical Muslim nations would also see the discovery of oil as not only a threat to their oil cartel, but as a source of funding for Israel to continue to build her defense forces. Things are moving into alignment for this battle.

On the Russian homefront, Boris Yeltzin has recently been hospitalized with various health problems, including a mild heart attack. He has recovered; however, should he relapse and remain incapacitated, Prime Minister Viktor Cheromyrdin would take over. Cheromyrdin recently cut a deal with the Chechnyan rebels to defuse a hostage situation. Cheromyrdin has been growing steadily in popularity in Russia and, although he has said he would not oppose Yeltzin, he could find himself in charge. This is the same Viktor Cheromyrdin who has made veiled threats of war against the West. For example, he has made it clear that should the West come to Bosnia's aid, Russia would have no choice but to back the Serbs.

In any event, if Israel is put in a position of having to defend herself against overwhelming odds, or if she decides to launch a preemptive first strike, a nuclear disaster could certainly ensue. If this occurs, the world would want peace at any cost. Enter the *"man of peace"* (the anti-christ) and the One-World Government, stage left (to be discussed in a later issue).

Let's pick up with Chapter 39, continuing Ezekiel's prophesy.

PROPHESY AGAINST GOG

"Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." (Eze 39:1)

As we have extensively documented in this series, Ezekiel's prophesy is directed against Magog's head, the leader of an invading body which consists of the combined forces of the Russian army and their radical Muslim allies.

INVASION FORCE DEFEATED

"And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel." (Eze 39:2)

God himself pulls Russia into the foray to execute judgment upon her, and that judgment results in almost total annihilation of the invading forces (5/6's are destroyed) on the mountains of Israel.

"And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand." (Eze 39:3)

As discussed a couple of issues ago, Ezekiel describes this futuristic scene in the Hebrew language of his day which, in turn, was translated in 1611 into the English language by King James' translators. What Ezekiel actually saw, from an examination of the original Hebrew, was *"a piercing shaft that was projected like a thunderbolt from God."* In 1611, this was interpreted as a bow and arrow; but in today's vernacular, we could easily translate this verse: *"I will strike your missile launchers from your left hand and make your missiles drop from your right hand."*

"Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD." (Eze 39:4-5)

The invasion force only makes it as far as the mountains of Israel, where they are slaughtered and lay in the fields for the beasts and ravenous birds to devour.

JUDGMENT BY FIRE

39:6 *"And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the LORD."*

Ezekiel tells us that God will judge by fire both Magog (Russia) and another nation that lives *"carelessly in the isles"*. The invasion force is also judged by fire, as recorded in Ezekiel 38:22-23. The fire is accompanied by an *"overflowing rain, great hailstones, and brimstone."* A nuclear burst could certainly result in these dynamics.

For example, a nuclear burst would expand and rise high into the atmosphere where it would cool, condense, and result in giant hailstones and an overflowing rain. The giant earthquake that occurs in the middle of this battle (Eze 38:19-20) could be the aftermath of a nuclear burst which, in turn, could cause the volcanic activity (brimstone) that Ezekiel described. It is also possible that the fire and brimstone that Ezekiel saw was nuclear fire or the heat shields of missiles entering the atmosphere.

In any case, it is a major cataclysmic event which will cause the world to acknowledge the existence of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The identity of this other nation is not disclosed by name. There are, however, some clues given and conjectures we can make as to the identity of this *"other country"* hidden in the text of Ezekiel 39:6. We know that this nation:

- 1) Is not identified by name.
- 2) Probably has intercontinental ballistic missile capability.
- 3) Has inhabitants who live in the far distant coastland.
- 4) Has inhabitants who dwell under a false sense of peace or security.
- 5) Is no longer one nation under God.

More importantly, whatever country this is, it merits God's judgment.

The U.S. is one of 180 countries in the world. There is no question that the U.S. is experiencing many of the *"signs of judgment"* enumerated in Isaiah 1-5, Deuteronomy 28, and Amos 4:6-8. We have also spilt innocent blood in the land (40 million aborted babies). If you do not have a copy of the three-part series entitled *"What in Heaven is Happening to America"*, which discusses how the U.S. appears to be fulfilling the signs of God's judgment, please write to request it. Whether or not this other nation is the U.S. remains to be seen, but let's look more closely at what we do know about it from Ezekiel's prophesy.

THEY HAVE NO NAME

This in itself is a clue to the identity of this nation. Genesis, chapter 10, is commonly referred to as the Table of Nations. Nations in the Bible are designated by the names of the sons of Noah who settled there. It is possible, therefore, that this unnamed nation was not directly settled by any of Noah's sons and thus is not on the Asian/European or African continents.

INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE CAPABILITY

If we assume that God's judgment takes the form of a nuclear exchange, and that the *"other nation"* exists on another continent, then they must have intercontinental ballistic missile capability.

However, I.C.B.M's are not the only possibility. It could be the result of terrorist activity. Russia and the radical Muslim nations that invade Israel will know that the United States is Israel's ally. The invasion will be massive and swift, and the United States mounts only a diplomatic protest. Has the U.S. been caught off-guard?

There are other possibilities, as well. Acting CIA Director Admiral Studeman and FBI Director Perry recently told a Congressional committee that terrorist organizations opposed to the peace process not only have the ability to produce chemical and biological weapons, but could also be acquiring nuclear weapons from the former Soviet Union. We know Iran has at least four nuclear bombs. In a recent article, *"New Republic"* magazine revealed that dozens of Hamas terrorists are receiving training in the United States in the preparation of car bombs. They disclosed the existence of secret Hamas training camps in the United States and even name the group's leaders and mosques.

Was it coincidence that about a month before the Oklahoma City bombing, we heard that the CIA had been put on alert because of reports that a nuclear weapon had been smuggled into the United States? Was the Oklahoma bombing a horrific diversion? Given Iran's hatred of the United States and the growing outcry against the United States for meddling in Muslim affairs, it doesn't take a physicist to surmise that one or two tactical nuclear blasts would be more than sufficient to distract the United States while the invasion of Israel is in full force.

THEY LIVE IN THE DISTANT COASTLANDS

A study of the Hebrew word transliterated *"iy"* which comes from the Hebrew root word *"ilya"*, is translated *"isles"* in this passage. It occurs 34 times in the Old Testament and is usually interpreted as island or coastland. The Hebrew root word means a remote, pleasant island or coastland.

In the last issue, we examined the scripture reference to *"the merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof."* We learned that *"young lions"* was derived from the Hebrew word for *"whelps"* or *"cubs"* and, in the context of the passage, refer to future nations that result from the colonization activity of traders from Tarshish. The fleet of Tarshish was sometimes used in scripture to describe an ocean-going navy. We surmised that when Ezekiel mentions *"the merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof"*, he was most likely referring to a future nation, with an ocean-going navy, that was associated with or colonized--directly or indirectly--as a result of the Phoenician's colonization activity. This activity includes the United States.

We discussed Isaiah chapter 60, verse 9, which tells us that, in the last days, some of the Jews return home to Israel in *"ships of Tarshish."* We identified the U.S. as having the largest concentration of Jews in the world and conjectured that when the mass exodus of Jews from the U.S. begins, undoubtedly many will seek transit by ships which can carry thousands of passengers at a single crossing.

Isaiah 60:9 refers to the departure point for this ocean-going navy that transports the Jews home to Israel as *"il"*, the same term used in Ezekiel 39:6 to describe the *"other nation"* that is judged with fire. This distant island or coastland is *"in the lead"* (which means, from the Hebrew, first in rank). The text also tells us that the ocean-going ships of Tarshish bring home the children of Israel from *"afar"* (which, in Hebrew, means a remote, precious place). In all cases, the United States is definitely a candidate.

"Surely the islands (Strong's reference number 0339, the Hebrew word transliterated `iy, meaning remote island or coast land) look to me; in the lead (Strong's reference number 7223, the Hebrew word transliterated ri'shown, meaning first in place, time or rank) are the ships of Tarshish, bringing your sons from afar, (Strong's Reference Number: 7350, the Hebrew transliterated word: rachowq, meaning remote, lit. or fig., of place or time; spec. precious) with their silver and gold, to the honor of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor." (ISA 60:9)

THEY DWELL UNDER A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY

God tells us that this nation *"is dwelling carelessly"*. The word carelessly is translated from the Hebrew word transliterated as *"betach"* (Stong's Reference number 983). We are familiar with this term. It is the same term that was used to describe the mental state of Israel just prior to the Magog Russian invasion. It refers to the state of mind of feeling secure (not actually being secure in a physical sense).

The United States does live in the safety of the far distant coastlands. Although we have endured two world wars, no foreign invader ever set foot on U.S. soil; we were effectively protected by thousands of miles of ocean on all sides. However, with the advent of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles and the escalation of international terrorism, we are no longer physically secure.

Furthermore, with the so-called demise of Communism in Russia, the media tells us that the Cold War is over, and that not only is Russia no longer a threat, but that she is our new democratic friend. What deception. We are to believe that Russia suddenly decided to abandon its communist goals of the last 70 years. And since Russia is now our trusted friend, the U.S. has shut down its early-warning radar systems, grounded its strategic bombers, closed its bases, and reduced troop strength. Everyone is talking about the peace dividend, is in essence crying *"Peace, peace"*, but there is no peace. We are certainly experiencing a sense of security such as we haven't known since the beginning of this century.

While the U.S. unilaterally disarms, Russia continues to build its military machine at unprecedented rates. Intelligence reports indicate that Russia has now built over 60 Typhoon class submarines (*"Red Octobers"*). These submarines are silent and undetectable by sonar nets. Each has 20 missile tubes; each missile has 10 independently-targeted warheads. They have a range of 5,000 miles and can conceivably reach the United States from their homeports. With all the unrest in Russia, she is more dangerous today than at any time in history. The current movie *"Crimson Tide"* dramatically illustrates how easily a nuclear exchange could be precipitated.

To make matters worse, the U.S. and other IMF (International Monetary Fund) nations are continuing to fund Russia's military build-up. The latest loan to Russia is 6.5 billion dollars, of which 22% is out of the U.S. Treasury. With it, Russia is currently building a new class of attack

submarines which is far advanced of anything else afloat. They have also developed an underwater missile and anti-ship cruise missiles which can be launched by submarine.

Deception is one of Satan's key devices. Russia's false liberalization and deliberately-painted picture of stagnation and economic deficiency has not only stimulated the largest unilateral disarmament of the United States in history, but has duped us into sending money so they can build the armament necessary to neutralize us. We are funding our own possible destruction!

The fact is that we are more vulnerable today to a surprise nuclear attack than at any other time in history. Practically overnight, the U.S. has dropped its defenses, inviting a preemptive first-strike by the awakening Russian bear. Clearly, the Bear is awake, hungry, and is preparing to devour much flesh.

This increasingly militant stance in part results from the bloody conflict between Yeltzin and the Parliament in 1993. It was a standoff until, at the last hour, the Army came to Yeltzin's rescue. Why did the Army wait so long to support their president? What did General Grachev negotiate? The answer might be found in the 23-page document presented on November 23, 1993 by the Russian general and approved by Yeltzin. It redefined current Russian Military Doctrine:

1) The military abandoned its former longstanding pledge not to exploit a nuclear first strike if it, or its allies, are attacked with conventional weapons.

How interesting that Iran has allied herself with Russia. And Clinton, as the next election approaches, is rattling the saber toward Iran.

2) The military may intervene in domestic crises to protect the constitutional system.

There have been over 30 border disputes in the last three years. The Army is clearly active, recently in Chechnya. But what is even more alarming is the launching of three Russian satellites during the time of the Parliament crisis. These were Russia's most advanced electronic intelligence systems. The last was an oceanic surveillance satellite. But since Russia does not have significant sea assets to be monitored, and because of its orientation, it is feared that it will be used to track U.S. Trident submarines, rendering them vulnerable to a preemptive first strike.

Add in the fact that on January 1, 1996, U.S. submarine commanders can no longer launch missiles without direct electronic command from our Commander and Chief. This will inevitably cause a delay in our response time, allowing Russia opportunity to neutralize the submarines. It is certainly in the realm of possibility that Russia could destroy our subs, take out our silos in the Midwest, and hold our population centers hostage. Consider that there is no *"King of the West"* mentioned in the final battle of Armageddon.

In spite of Russia's economic problems, they continue to build up their Military. Yet we are supposedly friends and at peace. It begs the question: What are they preparing for? Meanwhile the U.S., under strong delusion, disarms.

NO LONGER ONE NATION UNDER GOD

Verse six also tells us that Russia and this other nation, as a result of this judgment, *"will know that I am God."* The word *"know"* in this passage is the transliterated Hebrew word *"yada"* (Strong's Reference number 3045). The word *"yada"* occurs 897 times in the Old Testament; 439 times it is translated *"to know"* in an experiential sense, as in *"seeing is believing"*. As a result of God's judgment, these nations will know that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the one true God. Which is exactly what God tells us later in Ezekiel, chapter 39.

We can certainly visualize that godless Russia, as a result of this judgment, will come to know God. However, we must consider other countries, as well. Today, Russia, the United States, and many other nations have lost their God-consciousness. Many people are rebellious and hedonistic, lacking morality and respect for God, country, parents, the elderly, property, etc. As a result of God's judgment, the unbelieving people of Russia, the United States, and other countries will once again know that He exists, because they will personally see His hand protecting Israel while executing judgment on Russia and the *"other nation."*

In Proverbs 30:4, the term *"yada"* is also used. It reads: *"Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in his cloak? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and the name of his son? Tell me if you know! [yada, 3045]."* These nations will again know the name of God and the name of His son, Jesus Christ. The desired of the nations shall come; and many will be saved by seeking and coming to know (in a spiritual sense) the Holy One of Israel.

In closing, recognize that the text in Ezekiel 39:6 did not say to what extent this *"other nation"* will be judged by fire. God's word says that I [God] will judge those that judge thee [the Jewish people] and bless those that bless thee. America is still Israel's leading supporter. In addition, 85% of world evangelism originates from the United States. Pat Robertson feels, and this author agrees, that we are on the verge of the largest harvest of souls in the history of the world. Mr. Robertson recently stated that he believes God revealed to him that the U.S. will be spared from God's wrath for the next five years--as long as we continue in world evangelism.

If God tempers his wrath for these reasons, it is possible that only limited destruction will be forthcoming. But Pat Robertson also feels that the world will experience God's progressive judgment upon the earth during that same five years. Natural disasters are increasing world-wide, as well as within the U.S. These judgments are God's *"signature judgments."* They are designed to cause man to turn back to God, not to utterly destroy him. But do not be deceived. Neither America, nor any other nation, is exempt from God's judgment.

Next time, we will complete our discussion of Ezekiel chapter 39, discuss a possible season for this battle, and differentiate this battle from the battle of Armageddon.

In the interim, stay close to God, repent (2 Chronicles 7:14), listen to His voice, and be faithful and obedient to whatever He tells you. Remember, *"A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it."* (Proverbs 22:3)

"I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory," says the LORD Almighty. (Hag 2.7)

"Watch and pray, therefore, that you would be counted worthy to escape the judgment that is coming upon the earth and be able to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Maranatha!

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Behold, I set thee a watchman on the wall" (Isaiah 62:6)

Peace in the Middle East--A Prelude to War? -- Part 7

Oslo II, The Road to Peace?

This is part seven of a multi-part series dealing with the nation of Israel. In the previous issue, we explored the possibility that the war in Chechnya may be one of the "hooks in the jaw" that God will use to draw Russia into its ill-fated invasion of Israel. We determined that God's judgment upon the Russian alliance and upon another nation will probably involve the use of nuclear weapons. We also speculated about the identity of this "other nation".

In this issue, we will discuss some recent developments in the Middle East, explore a possible season for this battle, discuss the clean-up after the battle and complete our discussion of Ezekiel, chapter 39. The cleanup is important to our understanding. Since this cleanup is dealt with in detail, and Romans 15:4 tells us that nothing in God's Word is trivial or incidental, we must deduce that God is communicating something of importance to us. It will become increasingly clear that God's judgment upon Magog, her allies, and upon "the other nation which lives in the safety of the far distant coast lands", does in fact involve the use of nuclear weapons.

YIZHAK RABIN ASSASSINATED

On November 4, while attending a peace rally, Yizhak Rabin was assassinated. Only minutes before being shot, Rabin told a cheering crowd that "people really want peace". The perpetrator was a Jewish law student with links to the Jewish anti-peace extremist fringe. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres was named acting Prime Minister during an emergency Cabinet meeting the following Sunday. Rabin had been a recipient of the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize, an honor he shared with Peres and Arafat, for their work in the 1993 Oslo peace accords.

The ramifications of this event are not yet clear, but any change in leadership can precipitate internal strife and opportunity for Israel's traditional enemies.

For example, there is the possibility that Rabin's successor might be more militant. This is not likely, since Peres was the moving force behind the Oslo peace accord. Nonetheless, there are always hidden agendas and personal bias that surface when an individual assumes a position of greater authority. There is a danger that this action might crystallize public opinion against the peace effort--especially where the populace is already divided over this hotly-contested issue. The greatest danger facing Israel is that their enemies may seize this season of instability to gain military advantage.

From a prophetic perspective, Rabin's passing may indicate that one of the peace covenants signed by Rabin may be that covenant which is confirmed for seven years by the Antichrist.

"He [the Antichrist] will confirm a covenant with many for one `seven'. In the middle of the `seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him." (Dan 9:27)

The current peace accord, as well as the others that have been negotiated over the last two years, are certainly candidates to be "confirmed" at a later date by the Antichrist. The term "many" in Daniel 9:27 is provocative. It comes from the same Hebrew root word from which we get "Rabin". Has the Holy Spirit given us insight that it is one of Rabin's peace covenants that will ultimately be confirmed by the Antichrist?

Time will tell. "What I say to you, I say to everyone: Watch!" (Mark 13:37)

OSLO 2 - THE NEXT STEP ON THE ROAD TO PEACE

Things are continuing to move into alignment for the invasion of Israel. The latest step in the Middle East peace process was taken on September 24, 1995 -- approximately two years from the historic September 13, 1993 signing of the "Declaration of Principles" between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). It has been a shaky two years for Israel. There has been constant internal strife, coupled with terrorist (Hamas) agitation. But with the Oslo 2 agreement, the next step has been taken on the road to peace.

The current accord was struck in Egypt after all-night talks, which included a shouting match between Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. This altercation resulted in the angry exit of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. An agreement was reached between Israel and the PLO, however, ending nearly three decades of Israeli occupation of the West Bank cities.

This agreement calls for the withdrawal of Israeli army forces from six cities and 450 towns and villages on the West Bank, giving the Palestinians full control over 30% of the West Bank, an area of 2,270 square miles. The Palestinians are to elect an 82-member, self-rule council that will have executive and legislative powers. The Palestinians will be given control of all holy sites except for the Tomb of the Patriarchs (free access to holy sites is guaranteed, however). Other agreements deal with the release of prisoners and the setting up of joint military patrols to escort Israelis through Palestinian areas.

This accord has already inflamed extremists on both sides. And because the accord does not call for the removal of any of the 120,000 Jewish settlers now living in about 100 West Bank enclaves, we will most certainly see continued unrest and conflict in the months ahead.

On the surface, this covenant seems benign, but it greatly increases the risk of a nuclear exchange in the event of an invasion. Israel's enemies can now easily split Israel in two, since the West Bank is only about eight miles wide. Furthermore, giving up control of the West Bank means giving up an additional buffer against invasion. Israel will now have precious little time to mount a conventional response to invasion. And, considering that she is surrounded by traditional enemies whose combined forces total 16 million men, Israel has little choice but to defend herself with nuclear arms.

As discussed previously, Israel has a nuclear stockpile of almost 400 nuclear weapons and the will to use them. If their survival is threatened, they will use the "Sampson option" and utilize nuclear bombs. This fits exactly with what is prophesied by Ezekiel.

It is interesting that the only effective military retreat route is toward the southwest, toward the city of Petra. The rock city of Petra is thought to be the city to which the Jews will flee to escape the Antichrist in the middle of the tribulation period (3 1/2 year point of the final seven years leading up to the battle of Armageddon and the return of Messiah Jesus).

It is also noteworthy that, to date, Israel has signed six peace accords, and Syria has signed none. According to Arafat, Damascus has allocated 18 million dollars for terrorist organizations operating in Syria to operate against the peace accord and the PLO. Syria is not named among those countries which invade Israel, but as we discussed in previous issues, Isaiah 17:1 tells us that, some time in the future, Damascus will be totally destroyed, never to be inhabited again. A nuclear burst over Damascus could totally destroy the city, rendering it desolate for generations due to radiation. Israel has launched preemptive strikes in the past; if backed into a corner, they will take the initiative, utilizing whatever technology they deem appropriate.

If Syria and Israel do have a military confrontation, it may be that Syria's military alliance with Russia will be another of the "hooks in the jaw" mentioned in Ezekiel 38 that will force Russia into its invasion of Israel

GOD REVEALED TO ALL NATIONS

"So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel." (EZE 39:7)

Israel was dispersed to the four corners of the earth for many reasons, including profaning (or polluting) God's Holy Name. But, as a result of Israel's deliverance from the overwhelming Russian/Moslem invasion, God's Name will once again be revered in Israel. At the same time, the heathens (foreign nations) will come to know that it was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that brought about that deliverance.

THE EVENT IS COMING, ITS FULFILLMENT IS ASSURED

"Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord GOD; this is the day whereof I have spoken." (Eze 39:8)

"Behold, it is come, and it is done." This invasion is surely coming, and its fulfillment sure. God goes on to say that this is the day whereof He has spoken. Since God has spoken of this day elsewhere, it must be important to our understanding of what is being conveyed.

One place where God previously spoke about this invasion is in the book of Joel. Joel does not deal exclusively with the "Day of the Lord". Written 300 years earlier than Ezekiel, the book of Joel may deal, at least in part, with this Russian invasion of Israel. At least three times, the text indicates that the "Day of the Lord" is not yet, or that it is coming.

Joel 3:20 speaks of the destruction of the northern army, not of the armies of the world which will be destroyed at Armageddon. Verse 3:28 says that God's spirit will be poured out on the house of Israel, which is also described in Ezekiel 39. Joel 3:30 clearly tells us that God will "...show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, BEFORE (emphasis added) the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord." This is a similar description of God's judgment to that which is described in Ezekiel 38. Joel 3:32 even speaks of Israel's deliverance on the mountains of Israel.

What Joel saw was, in part, before the terrible day of the Lord. And as we stated last issue, there is speculation over whether the Ezekiel invasion precedes, or occurs at the end of, the seven-year tribulation period at the battle of Armageddon. Some scholars consider the "Day of the Lord" an idiom for the seven-year tribulation period. They maintain that the whole seven-year period is the time of God's wrath (which they use to support a pre-tribulation rapture viewpoint). If they are correct, and if what Joel saw was the Ezekiel battle, then Joel indicates that the events we discussed above will occur before the Day of the Lord, not at the battle of Armageddon.

There are also at least eight points which distinguish the Ezekiel battle from the battle of Armageddon: (1) The different location of the battles; (2) the different opponents; (3) the different outcomes; (4) the different aftermaths; (5) the different purposes; (6) the different consequences (shift in balance of power in the Middle East, with 5/6's of invading Russian confederacy destroyed); (7) the Ezekiel 38 battle will furnish the climate for the rise of the Antichrist, whereas Armageddon brings the end of the Antichrist; (8) following Ezekiel's battle, the climate would be set for the rebuilding of the Jewish temple -- this is not a possibility following the battle of Armageddon, since the temple must be in existence 3 1/2 years prior to the second coming of Messiah Jesus (so the Antichrist can desecrate it).

The exact timing of Ezekiel's battle should not be another opportunity for division. Satan can use honest differences as an opportunity to bring division, such as occurred over the timing of the rapture debate. Regardless of where on the prophetic timeline this battle falls, as we see things rapidly lining up for this battle, we need to ask ourselves, how close is the rapture? It is left to the reader to meditate on these things and review the book of Joel. Note the possible reference to the rapture in verse 2:16b of Joel and also in Psalm 90.

Another place in scripture where God may have spoken of this battle is in the book of Haggai. Haggai 2:6-7 and Ezekiel 38:19-20 both speak of a catastrophic earthquake which is felt around the world. Furthermore, a comparison of the language in Ezekiel 38:19-22 with Haggai 2:18-22 indicates that the "day whereof I have spoken" (Eze 39:8) may be the 24th day of the month of Chisleu, the day before Hanukkah in our month of December.

It is possible that the invasion will occur on this day. It is an historic day of prophetic fulfillment in the history of Israel. It was on this day that (1) the foundation for the second temple was laid in 520 B.C., (2) the last true temple sacrifice took place in 168 B.C., when Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) took away the golden altar and candlestick (the next day Antiochus Epiphanes began pagan sacrifices in the temple), (3) the temple was captured and cleansed in 165 B.C., (4) Jerusalem was freed from Turkish control (December 9, 1917 by General Allenby). Only time will tell if Israel's deliverance from the Russian/Muslim invasion will occur on the anniversary of so many of Israel's past deliverances.

"Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God; this is the day whereof I have spoken." (Eze 39:8)

FOR SEVEN YEARS, IMPLEMENTS OF WAR ARE BURNED

"And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD." (Eze 39:9-10)

Ezekiel is, in essence, saying that Israel's energy needs are met for seven years from the weapons left over from the battle. Some older commentaries point out that this must be symbolic, because back then, they could not imagine or visualize that Israel would have all its energy needs met for seven years out of the leftovers of the implements of war.

More modern commentaries, however, point out that many Russian arms are made out of lignite, which is a compressed wood product. It is light and extremely strong. It will burn at very high temperatures and can be used as an alternate fuel supply. But there is no amount of conventional weaponry in existence today which could be burned to meet all the energy needs of Israel for seven years.

There is, however, a technology in existence today that could provide the energy needs of Israel for seven years, with a very small quantity of raw material. That is nuclear power plant technology. The breeder reactors in Russia, such as the ill-fated Chernobyl reactor, produce not only municipal power, but plutonium as a by-product of their operation. It is plutonium which is used to create nuclear weapons. The plutonium in these weapons can be reprocessed into fuel for nuclear power plants, something the United States is doing today. Note that Ezekiel says *"they shall burn the weapons with fire"*. Could he be referring to the nuclear fire within a reactor?

The Holy Spirit deemed it necessary to tell us that their energy needs will be met for seven years. The number of years must be significant, since everything in the scripture is there by supernatural design. We are being given a clue to help identify this weapons technology.

It turns out that the plutonium used in Russian nuclear weapons has short-lived impurities which, over time, causes its geometry to alter, rendering them useless. Therefore, the nuclear weapons in Russia's arsenal have a limited shelf-life before they must be reprocessed. To determine how long the shelf-life of a Russian tactical nuclear weapon is, refer to Ezekiel 39:7. It is seven years!

It is also no coincidence that the Russian nuclear plant that had the melt-down and poisoned the water and land for hundreds of miles around was named Chernobyl. In the book of Revelation, John sees one-third of the world's drinking waters poisoned by a star named Wormwood.

"The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter." (Rev 8:9-10)

What was the star named Wormwood? The Holy Spirit is again giving us a clue to something that we would be able to identify in our day that probably made no sense to John. The Russian word Chernobyl, translated into English, is Wormwood. Fallout will certainly be a dynamic of judgment upon the unregenerate world.

BURYING THE DEAD

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamongog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog. Also a town called Hamonah shall be there. And so they will cleanse the land." (Eze 39:11-16)

Notice that they do not rush into the battle area to bury the dead. First they *"sever out men of continual employment"*, meaning that they hire specialists or professionals to help them. But notice that the professionals don't enter the battle zone for seven months; when they do, they bury the bones they find east of the Jordan (downwind). When someone finds a bone that was missed, they don't touch it; they mark the location and wait for the professionals to come, to handle it properly. This is consistent with military procedures for handling nuclear contamination.

Could it be any clearer? God has communicated to us through Ezekiel, who lived about 2,500 years ago, in terminology that Ezekiel couldn't possibly grasp that this confrontation involves nuclear weapons.

THE ENEMIES OF GOD ARE HUMBLING IN DEATH

"And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD." (Eze 39:17-20)

The enemies of God are humbled in death, as their invincible army is devastated and becomes fodder for the animals of the field. Let's look at the spiritual ramifications of these events from God's perspective.

"And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them." (Eze 39:21)

God will be glorified before all the world. Even the gentile nations will see God's judgment, since the events will undoubtedly be covered on CNN. People will recognize that the Jews are still God's chosen people and are once again under His covenant protection. Has the fullness of the gentile age arrived?

"So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward." (Eze 39:22)

As a result of their miraculous deliverance from an impossible situation, Israel--after thousands of years--will have their spiritual blinders removed. It has been estimated that only 10% of Israel's population is *"religious"*. No longer. The entire house of Israel shall know that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob delivered them. *"Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God the Lord is One."* They shall know the Lord their God from that day forward.

"And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them." (Eze 39:23-24)

The gentiles will recognize that the people of Israel went into captivity because of their sin, which separated them from God. They were under judgment and dispersed to the four corners of the earth into the hands of their enemies, where they were killed.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; Then shall they know that I am the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there." (Eze 39:25-28)

In these verses, God is saying that He will regather the Jews back to their homeland for His Name's sake. Then at a time when they "dwell safely in their land", their deliverance shall come. As a result, they will no longer be spiritually blind, but will become God-aware.

WHAT TO DO IN LIGHT OF THESE EVENTS

In the God-awakening that follows this battle, the church will have one of the greatest opportunities for evangelism in the history of the world. Therefore, we need to make evangelism and our unity in Christian service our focus and not allow Satan to cause division over lesser issues, such as the exact timing of this invasion.

Exactly when this battle will occur is unknown. It may be several years away. But, there is a 100% probability that it will occur and, when it does, it will change the course of human history. Therefore, as we see things coming into alignment for this battle, we need to recognize how very close we are to the Lord's return and to the rapture. We must get our spiritual house in order. And always remember that today is the day of salvation for those who are perishing--eternity is only a heartbeat away.

"Watch and pray, therefore, that you would be counted worthy to escape the judgment that is coming upon the earth and be able to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Maranatha!

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