

# Absolute Truth & Prophecy

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NEWSLETTER

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## ZEW'S NEWS REVIEW

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### AMERICA CHANGING COURSE

**“And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces” (Zechariah 12:3) (KJV)**

There's a sea change coming. America's policy toward Israel is unmistakably changing, and the consequences of this fact will ultimately fulfill prophecy and reverberate in the events of our day. As the prophet Zechariah tells us, there is coming a time, near the End of the Age, when the entire world will turn against God's People, Israel, - to their own great misfortune. Now, America has long been Israel's best, - and sometimes only ally. But under the leadership of President Obama, that is fast changing. What we are seeing now is a complicated dance involving Israel, the US, the likes of the illegitimate Palestinians waiting to for a state of their own, the Iranians who would see an end to Israel and the creation of a radicalized-Tehran-dominated Palestine, the Syrians panting after the return of Golan, - and the Europeans. Quite the mess, it is!

Take first the question of the Iranian nukes. To start with, Israel's Chief of Staff, Lt Gen Ashkenazi was denied access to top level administration officials on his last trip to Washington in early April. The message from the White House has been clear. *'Israel under Netanyahu is too radical.'* Instead let's talk with Iran and maybe they won't make a bomb. But as for an Israeli strike against the Iranian nuclear facilities: Washington is flat out saying 'NO!'. The US seems even to be withdrawing their support for covert efforts to prevent Tehran from going nuclear. According to an article in the Middle East Times, Israel will be forced to deal with the threat using only its own resources. Defense Secretary Gates has downplayed the likelihood of an Israeli strike against Iran's nukes while General Patraeus, who commands American Forces in the Middle East, still sees it as a very real possibility.<sup>1 2 3</sup> Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has let it be known that should the US fail to stop Iran, Israel may just do the job itself. The PM has described the Iranian leadership, - with their calls for Israel to be “wiped off the map” and depictions of the Jewish state as a “cancerous tumor”, - as “a messianic apocalyptic cult controlling atomic bombs” and a “country that glorifies blood and death”. To Netanyahu, an Israeli attack would not be so much of a military problem as much as a question of “political will”. But now even Israel's normally dovish figurehead President Peres has warned that if America fails to solve the issue “we'll strike”. That of course would bring with it huge consequences such as the interruption of nearly one fifth of the world's oil supply as Tehran would try to close the Gulf and possibly take out Saudi oil facilities. It could also mean the onset of a general Middle East War with rocket attacks coming from Gaza and Lebanon and Syria. Yet the leadership in Jerusalem realizes that a fully atomic Iran would change the balance of power in the region and open up the possibility that WMDs could be provided to Tehran's terror proxies. President Ahmadinejad has already let the world know that he would be willing to cooperate in creating the chaos that is necessary for the Mahdi, - the Islamic Messiah to arise. In any case, the Israeli government wants to deal with the Iran issue separately from the question of the Palestinian question.<sup>4 5 6</sup>

And that seems to be the price of approval for the government in Jerusalem; - to be willing to give up Judea and Samaria in order to establish a Palestinian State. The EU for one, made it known in no uncertain terms that there would be “consequences” if the perceived right-wing bent of the Netanyahu government did not support handing over a major part of Israel to fulfill the two state vision of the West. The interesting thing is that polling shows that the Palestinians aren't interested in a 2 state solution. They want the whole enchilada. Meanwhile Europe has been moving closer to both Hamas and the Iranians in recent months. Now since the Annapolis accords of 2007, the goal of the process has been the creation of Palestine. And the Palestinians wont even have to dismantle their terror groups to achieve that end. Under Netanyahu, a Palestinian terror state is unacceptable. Sounds reasonable! But even that seemingly reasonable and modest announcement has caused an international stir. The world, it seems, wants a 'Palestine' at any cost, - so long as it's only the Jews paying the cost for its creation. And according to former British PM and likely future head of the EU, Tony Blair, even Netanyahu favors a PA State “in principal”<sup>7 8</sup>

For his part, President Obama would like to see; - “Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security”. That last sentence should send shivers down your spine as it did mine. Here are the chilling words of 1Thessalonians 5:3. **“For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.”** That’s the New King James. In the English Standard Version, they actually use the words **“peace and security”**. As we’ve seen here, the Scriptures can be amazingly specific.<sup>9</sup>

The President has expressed his support for the Saudi peace initiative of 2002. According to that outline, the Israelis would also have to give up East Jerusalem and the Golan, and do a deal on the Palestinian refugees that left the area as instructed by their Islamic leaders back in 1948, - and which no Arab state has chosen to accept since then.<sup>10</sup> DEBKA reports that the administration has reached out to Iran for support in solving the situations in both Pakistan and Afghanistan., with meetings at various levels. They are looking to forge some sort of military and intelligence partnership in those particular situations. That’s why you see Washington visibly cooling to even the idea of Israel taking out Iranian nuclear capability on its own. And now it seems, Washington is offering Iran direct talks without the pre-condition of halting their uranium enrichment. We’re giving away the candy without cost. But a price will be paid, - and that by Israel. The price to Israel will come in the form of increased pressure for concessions on the Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian fronts. The “end product” of this whole process, - and the very Road Map which Israel still accepts, - calls for the establishment of a Palestinian State.<sup>11</sup> That’s exactly where this is all going. It is likely to be a **“covenant with death and hell”**. (Isaiah 28) If the Quartet has its way, - (US, EU, Russia & UN), - Hamas will likely be a part of the mix, and there are unrepentantly committed to the destruction of Israel, - as are the Iranians.<sup>12 13</sup>

Writing in the *American Thinker*, Mark Silverberg points out that all of President Obama’s initiatives to the Islamic world, - but especially to Iran, - come at a heavy cost. Our planned withdrawals from the region and the creation of Palestine will result in an expansion in Iranian power and influence. Hezbollah & Hamas will gain, - but Tehran will be the big winner – and the US & Israel the big losers.<sup>14</sup> That will feed the fire of anti-Semitism throughout the world. There will be more events like “Israel Apartheid Week” which was *celebrated* in 54 cities, - more attacks against synagogues and more campus protests against the Jewish state.<sup>15</sup> Even America is turning her back on God’s chosen. One diplomat was even reported to have said “we want to talk about Palestine and not Iran”.<sup>16</sup> Another former US intelligence official warns that Washington has turned sharply against Israel and toward the Arabs. “I have every reason to believe, based on what I’ve seen at my level of [security] clearance especially over the last several years, that Israel will soon be completely on their own... or worse.” Washington will be “undercutting Israel’s defense efforts all while pushing Israel to succumb to the pressure of unreasonable demands designed to end with their political annihilation as a nation”.<sup>17</sup> That may sound unthinkable, but the Bible tells us that someday Jerusalem will be a **“burdensome stone for all people”**.

The final cut may come from the most visible representative of mainline Christianity, - the Vatican itself. Already we know that the Protestant Mainliners, - especially the American Presbyterians, - are fully in the Palestinian camp. They’ve read the verses about the return of the Jews to Israel in the Last Days, - rejected their ‘plain sense’ meaning, - and spiritualized them, - making them to refer to the Church. But they just don’t fit. Now Rome has been negotiating with Israel for a foothold in the Holy City. Over the years, the Vatican concluded a series of ‘secret agreements’ with “various elements” in Israel to gain ownership of the Temple Mount, the Western Wall and the Old City of Jerusalem. In 2000, they concluded an agreement with the Palestinian Authority that Jerusalem would have a special international status.<sup>18</sup> The Illuminati goal has always been one of an internationalized Holy City that would serve as the home to all faiths, - complete with a combined Jewish / Christian / Muslim Temple. It is the very vision of the religion of antichrist. Now we can see on the horizon the outlines of how this may come about. In the meantime, if America continues to pull away from Israel: It will pay a price, - as it has before. We’ve pointed this out numerous times in the past. Scripture is clear on this point. As God told Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation: **“I will bless those that bless you and curse him that curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”**. (Genesis 12:3)

## **HE’S COMING – PART IV**

*In Part IV we will look at more of the case for the Pre-Tribulation Rapture. The Rapture is God’s plan to save His Church from the wrath that is coming to earth. In Part III we finished up by talking about a wedding. That comparison is even more appropriate than previously indicated, as we view the Church as the Bride of Christ.*

### Married To The King

Last time we finished up by looking at Jesus teaching about the Rapture of His Church, as recorded in Matthew 25. In that passage, Jesus compared that event to ten virgins waiting for the unknown, but imminent arrival of the bridegroom returning for his bride according to Jewish custom. Understanding the Church as Christ's bride, is essential for understanding the purpose of, and therefore the timing of the Rapture event. In Revelation 19:7-8, John paints us a picture of the Church as bride at the coming marriage supper. **"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.** But before that celebration, we, the true believing Church, - must be joined with Him. In John 14:2-3, Jesus makes a solemn promise to His bride. **"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."** This passage is best understood in a wedding context.

Now a traditional Jewish wedding had several phases, all with parallel meaning for the marriage of Christ and the Church, - and hence the Rapture, which is when Christ comes to take His bride to the **"Father's house"**.<sup>19</sup>

- **The Katuba** – This was the commitment phase, often undertaken years in advance. In John 14:3, recorded above, we see the commitment Christ made to come and redeem us, His bride.
- **Purchase Price** – The groom would pay a dowry, or price for the privilege of possessing the bride. Of course, that was Christ's atoning sacrifice on the Cross. 1 Corinthians 6:20 reminds us **"For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."**
- **The Marriage Covenant Sealed With Wine** - Toasting with wine was a sign of the sealing of the marriage promise. As He took the wine at the Last Supper, Jesus sealed with us, **"...the new covenant in My blood"**. When we take communion we acknowledge and remember His promise, proclaiming **"...the Lord's death till He comes."** (1 Corinthians 11:25,26) He is coming for us!
- **The Bride Set Aside** - After the covenant was sealed, the bride was set aside to live in purity, awaiting the return of the groom. So Christ has cleansed us and set us aside for Himself, **"...as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish."** (Ephesians 5:25-27)
- **The Groom Builds A Room** – The groom would then return to his father's house to build an addition for the new family. **"I go to prepare a place for you."** (John 14:2)
- **Waiting For The Groom** – There is a time of waiting; - perhaps a year or more. The bride did not know when the groom would return. The 10 virgins of Matthew 25 are waiting the arrival of the groom. It could come at any time. The message is: Imminence. He could return for his bride at any moment.
- **The Groom Returns** – Usually at night, as in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins.
- **His Arrival Preceded By A Shout** - In the parable of the virgins we read, **"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'"** (Matthew 25:6) Here is the description of the Rapture found in 1 Thessalonians 16:17: **"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord."**
- **To A Separate Chamber** – The bride is then taken to a separate chamber to consummate the marriage. **"I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."** (John 14:3)
- **The 7-Day Marriage Supper** – The marriage supper of the traditional Jewish wedding lasted 7 days. The marriage supper of the lamb is to last the 7 years of the Tribulation.

### Not Appointed To Wrath

One of the most compelling arguments that the Rapture is to occur before the Tribulation hour can be found in the promises of Christ himself. The Tribulation is the expression of that very wrath of God **"against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness"**. (Romans 1:18) The 'righteous' are those that have been declared righteous, - justified by God himself through faith in His Son. The wrath of God is for those who **"hold the truth in unrighteousness"**; those who willfully believe the lie. Ephesians 5:6 tells us that God's wrath is for the **"children of disobedience"**. John 3:36 informs us that wrath is for **"he that believeth not the Son"**. But God's children are promised something much better. **"[B]eing now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."** (Romans 5:9) 1 Thessalonians 1:10 tells us we are to **"wait for his Son from heaven"** because He has

**“delivered us from the wrath to come”**. That seems to be Christ’s clear promise that we will not see the Tribulation. This is confirmed again in 1Thessalonians 5:9. **“For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Then there is this. In the Book of Revelation, Jesus is giving messages to the various churches. There is a very significant passage in the letter to the church at Philadelphia, long acknowledged to represent ‘The Faithful Church’, and one of the types of churches that will remain until Christ’s return. In Revelation 3, John writes words of comfort for everyone who has truly committed his or her life to Christ. **“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.”** (Revelation 3:8) This is a description of the true and believing Church. Then in Revelation 3:10 comes this promise. **“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial, which shall come upon the whole world,”** (*the Tribulation*), **“to test those who dwell on the earth.”** This is Jesus’ promise to keep His faithful from the time of testing that will come in the last days.

Now those holding to the Post-Tribulation Rapture position, say that God will protect Christians through the Tribulation period. But this is not what is suggested by the original Greek. According to John MacArthur, the construction of the verb ‘to keep’ definitely conveys the added meaning of ‘out of’ or ‘from’.<sup>20</sup> To believe that it meant “to keep through” as Post-Tribbers suggest, would make curious the statement of Revelation 13:7 in which the Antichrist is given power **“to make war with the saints and to overcome them”**. This would seem to contradict Matthew 16:18, in which Jesus promises His Church that **“the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”**. Again, it appears that the saints of Revelation 13 are not the Church, - but rather are those who come to saving faith during the Tribulation itself.<sup>21</sup>

Finally there is this promise of Divine protection, found in Isaiah. Remember, in Matthew 25, Christ told us that He was going to prepare a place for us, - much like the chamber that a groom takes his bride to on their wedding night. **“Come my people, enter your chambers, And shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were for a little moment, Until the indignation is past. For behold, the Lord comes out of His place To punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity”**. (Isaiah 26:20-21)

### **The Sum Of It All**

The arguments given for the Pre-Trib Rapture are by no means exhaustive. But remember, God has not determined to subject His bride to wrath. Rather He has promised to pull out the Church before that wrath is exercised upon a world that rejects Him. The tribulation (small t) and persecutions we face now and before His return are the work of Satan. The wrath of God of the Tribulation (capital T), is the work of God; reserved for the **“children of disobedience”**.

He is coming for us at an unknown hour. He has gone **“to prepare a place”** for us. He promised to return! **“And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”** (1Thessalonians 5:9) For the time is coming when, in Paul’s words, **“We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”** (1Corinthians 15:51-52)

## **COMING EVENTS**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 18<sup>TH</sup> – 10 AM to NOON - THE BIBLE & TODAY’S NEWS** – An End Times Forum with a Q & A Discussion – with Rob Palaszewski – at My Father’s House – 140 Pound Rd Elma, NY, 14059



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- <sup>1</sup> US Awards Iran Role As Military Partner, DEBKAFfile, April 4, 2009
  - <sup>2</sup> Why is Gates downplaying Iran strike?, Jerusalem Post, April 2, 2009
  - <sup>3</sup> Report: Obama Leaves Israel as 'The Lone Ranger' in Nuclear Iran, Arutz Sheva, April 1, 2009
  - <sup>4</sup> Jeffrey Goldberg, Netanyahu to Obama: Stop Iran – Or I Will, The Atlantic, March 31, 2009
  - <sup>5</sup> Peres makes rare hint at possible strike on Iran, Jerusalem Post, April 12, 2009
  - <sup>6</sup> Ted Belman, Pick your poison, Israel, Israel Insider, March 5, 2009
  - <sup>7</sup> EU to Israel: Create Palestine or else..., Jerusalem News Wire, March 29, 2009
  - <sup>8</sup> Caroline Glick, Ending Israel's conditional legitimacy, Jewish World Review, April 3, 2009
  - <sup>9</sup> Independent Norwegian poll: Palestinian majority opposes two states, DEBKAFfile, April 3, 2009
  - <sup>10</sup> Obama backs Saudi peace initiative, Jerusalem Post, April 3, 2009
  - <sup>11</sup> US Awards Iran Role as Military Partner, DEBKAFfile, April 4, 2009
  - <sup>12</sup> Ted Belman, Pick your poison, Israel, Israel Insider, March 5, 2009
  - <sup>13</sup> FOX News, April 14, 2009
  - <sup>14</sup> Mark Silverberg, Obama's Faustian Bargain, The American Thinker, April 1, 2009
  - <sup>15</sup> Hal Lindsey, A fearful thing, betraying Israel, World Net Daily, March 20, 2009
  - <sup>16</sup> Israel's visiting chief of staff finds doors closed in Obama's Washington, World Tribune, March 19, 2009
  - <sup>17</sup> Obama about to betray Israel, says former intel official, Israel Today, March 19, 2009
  - <sup>18</sup> Hillel Fendel, Warning Issued Not to Sign With Vatican, Arutz Sheva, March 30, 2009
  - <sup>19</sup> The following section taken from a taped teaching by Chuck Missler, The Rapture: Christianity's Most Preposterous Belief, Kononia House, 2002
  - <sup>20</sup> John MacArthur, Notes taken from the MacArthur Study Bible, pg 1997
  - <sup>21</sup> An expansion upon thought taken from Todd Strandberg, The Pretribulation Rapture, Rapture Ready