

“Prophecy Update – Jan 2007”

Scripture Ref: *Matt 24:3-14; John 14:1-3; Mark 13:32-37; Ezekiel 37; Zech 12:1-3; Gen 13:14-17; Ez 6:5-9; Gen 12:1-3; Rom 11:1-12, 2 Chron 6:5-6, 7:16-17, 33:7; 1 Thess 4:15-18; Rev 19:10; Matt 24:36-44*

1. Purpose of this session...
2. To provide YOU with highlights and insights of the current events
 - a. How they relate to *end times prophecy*
3. Bible as a whole teaches:
 - a. We are to live as if Jesus *could come* any time
 - b. We are to enjoy life – fellowship – the earth and even things
 - c. And – we are to watch and prepare for His return
4. This should give us a *focus on His Kingdom*
 - a. Share the gospel message
 - b. Equip the Saints for the work of the ministry

The End Times

Matt 24:3-14

3 "When will this happen?" the disciples asked him later, as he sat on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. "What events will signal your return and the end of the world?"

4 Jesus told them, "Don't let anyone fool you. 5 For many will come claiming to be the Messiah and will lead many astray. 6 When you hear of wars beginning, this does not signal my return; these must come, but the end is not yet. 7 The nations and kingdoms of the earth will rise against each other, and there will be famines and earthquakes in many places. 8 But all this will be only the beginning of the horrors to come.

9 "Then you will be tortured and killed and hated all over the world because you are mine, 10 and many of you shall fall back into sin and betray and hate each other. 11 And many false prophets will appear and lead many astray. 12 Sin will be rampant everywhere and will cool the love of many. 13 But those enduring to the end shall be saved.

14 "And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it, and then, finally, the end will come. ***(The Living Bible)***

5. Jesus told them – and is telling us through the scriptures – HE IS COMING AGAIN.

John 14:1-3

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 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. 3 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.

a. **This is what you would call a *promise from God***

6. There are a few questions that arise from this promise:

- a. **(certainly there are more – but we have a limited time today)**
- b. **Do we believe it? (some don't – regard as *allegory*)**
- c. **Are we watching?**
- d. **Are we living our lives as if we believe He is coming?**

Mark 13:32-37

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. 34 It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. 35 Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming -- in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning -- 36 lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37 And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

7. Today we'll address these questions

Do you Believe Jesus is Coming? Look at the record...

8. This question goes right to the center of your believe system – for there are approx 465 specific characteristics of the Messiah found in the OT that were all filled by Jesus Christ.

- a. **But say you wanted to be conservative – if you just took the top 48 prophecies – the statistical chances of one man fulfilling just 48 is 10 power of 157 – that is one with 157 zero's!**
- b. **Say you wanted to be more conservative – take the top eight prophecies – 1 with 17 zero's!**
- c. **This number – 1 followed by 17 zero's, if you took that many silver dollars – it would cover the state of Texas two feet deep!**

9. In 1974 Hank Aaron passed Babe Ruth's home run record, with #715 – eventually to 755 which still stands today

- a. **If you had asked me in 1960 – Hank was at his prime in stats – at about 200 home runs – “Will he beat Babe?” maybe, maybe not.**

- b. **But if you came to me in the beginning of 1974 season, Hank is sitting at 714 – tied – what would you bet that he will beat Babe....**
- c. **I'd bet all I have**

10. This is where we are at today –

(Look at Ezekiel 37)

11. With the rebirth of the nation of Israel in 1948, from a biblical perspective

- a. **We are stand at the beginning of the 1974 season – at the 714th home run**
- b. **Nothing remains except the rapture – and the tribulation**

Israel at Center Stage

Zech 12:1-3

2 "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. 3 And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.

12. No question about it – every year the nation of Israel becomes more and more of a focal point to the world.

- a. **The “Palestinian Issue” is a topic of discussion in the UN, the heads of state of the G8 nations,**
- b. **Every day there is some press release that deals with the Israeli – Palestinian conflict – 62,000 Google news hits!**
- c. **The pot is being stirred by the rise of Islamic adherence to Jihad**
- d. **(I don't say “extremism”, because the Islamic faith and the teaching of the Koran fully support and direct exactly what is happening right now – but more on that later)**

13. Peace process seems to be stalled right now – but is there ever going to be a peace process?

Hamas to US: we don't want state, but destruction of Israel

From the [Hamas politburo website](#): Dec 28,2006

PA government ... on Tuesday declared rejection of an American proposal to establish a Palestinian state with temporary borders within two years.

(Hamas) described such plans as an unacceptable intervention in Palestinian internal affairs, adding that Washington should recognize the Palestinian people's legitimate rights including establishment of a fully-sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, release of all prisoners and return of refugees. we don't want a state, but destruction of Israel

14. I read in interesting book recently “Why I Left Jihad” but Walid Shoebat, who was born in Bethlehem, grew up in Gaza, and was an operative for PLO, carrying out terrorist attacks against Israel.

- a. He told the story of growing up, and every facet of his young life was shaped into a hatred of Israel, Jew, and America
- b. Kindergarten, elementary school – singing songs of Jihad and death and martyrdom
- c. He attended university in Chicago on a student visa, and became a member of the Palestinian Student Association, where he raised funds, recruited people that might want to join Jihad, and spread the message of Jihad to students
- d. In 1993 He studied to bible in an attempt to convert his wife to Islam, God broke through the hatred and he became a Christian.
- e. In his book he tells us – from in insider point of view – that there is no plan for peaceful coexistence with Israel.
- f. The intentions are to do whatever is necessary politically to further their cause – while at the same time continuing to attack and kill Jews.

15. Another interested item was a documentary – Obsession – that showed the inner workings of Jihad, showed actual video clips from inside Mosques in the Mideast AND US,

- a. Specifically people Like Siraj Wahhaj (né Jeffrey Kearsse) is a well-known African-American Muslim convert speaker in North America, and a supporter of Islamic causes in America. He's currently the Imam of Masjid Al-Tagwa in Brooklyn, New York.
- b. In 1991 Imam Siraj Wahhaj offered an invocation (opening prayer) to the United States House of Representatives. He was the first Muslim to do so. He appealed to Alla to “guide the American leaders and grant them righteousness and wisdom”
- c. Yet one year later addressing an audience of New Jersey Muslims, he stated “If only Muslims were more clever polititcally, we could take over the United States and replace the constitution with a caliphate (Islamic Leadership body)
- d. He concluded “Take my word, if all the Muslims in America unite, the country will come to us”

16. There is no peaceful coexistence – 1400 years of history prove this point...

- a. To the devout Muslim, the Koran teaches that it is Allah’s will for Islam to rule the world. The word *Islam* means “submission”.

17. Bottom line – there is no peace plan that will be acceptable to the Islamic movement.

- a. Recent radio interview – Islamic Professor in US:
- b. “How can we stop hating?”

- i. **Stop Supporting Israel**
- ii. **Destroy Israel**
- iii. **You must convert!**

18. You may say “not all Muslim countries feel this way – True... for now.

19. Egypt and Jordan may be at peace, but the moderates of the mid-east are losing influence, and the Shiite adherents are gaining strength.

- a. **Egypt is experiencing the rising influence of Wahhabi Islam**

Extremist landscape in Egypt is where violence takes hold

By Gregory Katz

Copyright Nov 2006 Houston Chronicle Middle East Bureau

John Watson, a priest and professor who wrote "*Among the Copts*" and "*Listening to Islam*," said that radical Wahhabi Islam is elbowing out more tolerant forms of the religion throughout Egypt and the rest of the Middle East, pressuring Christians and other minorities.

"Copts are leaving en masse," he said. "It's part of an alarming departure throughout the Middle East. I see the attacks on the Copts as part of an extremist element in Islam. There is a powerful fundamentalist element that is small but quite militant. I regard them as a minority, but they are making life unpleasant for the Copts."

20. Lebanon is locking in a standoff where Hezbollah is demanding the resignation of the US backed moderate government

Lebanon conflict overlaps with Mideast turmoil

Reuters Dec, 28 2006.

"Lebanon is the epicenter, at least in symbolic terms," said Beirut analyst Rami Khouri. "Local actors with foreign and regional support are playing out their contest on the streets."

Lebanon's troubles are tied to conflicts pitting Syria, Iran and Islamist groups against Israel and the United States, with Sunni Arab states caught awkwardly in the middle.

As sectarian violence mushrooms in Iraq, few expect the coming year to end bloodshed there, halt Iran's growing regional ascendancy or calm the Middle East's other flashpoints.

There is no guarantee that Washington will be ready or able to revive Middle East peace talks amid Israeli reluctance to return occupied land, Palestinian infighting and the refusal of the Hamas-led Islamist government to recognize the Jewish state.

21. When Hezbollah controls Lebanon, it will look like Iran!

22. Iran has emerged as the regional player in the region – influencing the situation in Iraq, Lebanon, the Palestinian controlled areas...

- a. **\$36B in oil revenues 1st eight months of 2006 – estimated that they fund regional terrorism to the tune of \$100M annually**
- b. **What do we think of a country who is very close to having a nuclear bomb,**

c. And whose president has called for the complete annihilation of Israel?

Reuters – Dec 23, 2006

TEL AVIV, Israel (UPI) -- At a recent conference in Tehran Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad predicted Israel's days are numbered. The Zionist regime will 'vanish,' he declared. Last year he said Israel should be 'wiped out.'

Analysts maintain Iran needs a year or more to produce 25 kilos of enriched uranium for a first nuclear bomb. That bomb might be ready by the end of the decade.

On June 15, 2006 The Guardian columnist and foreign correspondent Jonathan Steele cites several Persian speakers and translators who state that the phrase in question is more accurately translated as "eliminated" or "wiped off" or "wiped away" from "the page of time" or "the pages of history", rather than "wiped off the map". ^[13]

(Ahmadinejad) further expressed his firm belief that the **new wave of confrontations generated in Palestine and the growing turmoil in the Islamic world would in no time wipe Israel away.**

23. I don't know about you, but when a guy that is working to go nuclear, and wants to destroy another sovereign country, and who believes that worldwide chaos will usher in a new era for Islam.

In a speech on November 16th, Ahmadinejad spoke of his belief in the return of the **Twelfth Imam**. One of the differences between Sunni and Shi'ite Islam is that the latter, who dominate Iran and form the majority in Iraq, believe that Allah shielded or hid Muhammad al-Mahdi as the Twelfth Imam until the end of time.

Shi'ites expect the Twelfth Imam, which Jews and Christians would recognize as a messianic figure, to return to save the world when it had descended into chaos. Shi'ite orthodoxy has it that humans are powerless to encourage the Twelfth Imam to return. However, in Iran a group called the Hojjatieh believe that **humans can stir up chaos to encourage him to return.**

24. Add Russia into the mix – Iran's largest trading partner, and partner in nuclear industry!

a. Recent UN resolution... means NOTHING

Russia-Iran cooperation unhurt by new UN resolution on Iran

RIA Novosti 23/ 12/ 2006

UN, December 23 (RIA Novosti) - Russia will be able to continue cooperating with Iran in the nuclear industry under a resolution adopted by the UN Security Council Saturday to punish Tehran for its refusal to halt uranium enrichment.

The final, revised version prohibits all programs related to nuclear weapons, but allows Iranian officials to travel abroad, and imposes no ban on Iranian companies' international trade.

"The Russian side has managed to uphold its economic interests and ensure the implementation of its earlier signed contracts [with Iran], including on [the construction of a light-water reactor] in Bushehr and the delivery of defense systems Tor-M1 and S-300," a source in the Russian delegation to the UN told RIA Novosti after the resolution was voted in. (also exempted Iranian Aerospace Agency – which builds rockets)

25. Why is Russia so bent on helping Iran? Because Russia is hungry for power, and energy is the key

- a. **FACT – Russia was humiliated over the fall of USSR**
- b. **FACT – they have been playing hardball in every area available to regain respect and influence (Georgia incident)**
- c. **FACT – they have been playing hardball with energy in Eastern Europe for the past several years**
- d. **FACT – Russia need a warm water port for naval power – the Mideast offers that**
- e. **FACT – the mineral deposits in the Dead Sea are so great that they cannot be appraised on today's market.**

26. What we see is a continual alignment of the countries noted in Ez 38-39

Russia , Iran , Syria , Hamas, Hezbollah, al Qaeda Alignment May Be Foretold By Ancient Prophecies

By Bill Wilson , Daily Jot News Service Senior Analyst

2006-12-20 -- WDC Media News -- WASH—Dec 21—DJNS-- Iran 's president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has declared that his country's scientists have mastered the nuclear cycle making Iran a legitimate nuclear power. At the same time, al Qaeda has signaled its disapproval of Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas' announcement for elections, leading counter-terrorist analysts to believe the terror group has its sites set on Israel as it arms Islamic fighters from Lebanon , Iraq and Gaza . In addition, security analyst DEBKAF reports that Syrian president Bashar Assad is in Moscow seeking arms to bolster his army and Hezbollah terrorist. Assad has a reported half a billion dollars of Iranian money to buy the weapons from Russian president Vladimir Putin.

The Middle East axis of Russia , Iran and Syria spells nothing but trouble for Europe , the United States , and especially, Israel . Iran is boldly following its plan to develop nuclear technology. Ahmadinejad knows that there will be no effective sanctions from the United Nations Security Council because Russia and China , both allies and multi-billion dollar business partners with Iran , will veto any attempt to shut down the Iranian nuclear program. Russia , in the meantime, has sold Iran sophisticated anti-aircraft missiles in hopes of protecting the Iranian nuclear facilities from an attack by the U.S. or Israel .

All the while, Syria , Iran 's military and security partner in the Middle East, is seeking more Russian weaponry to arm the terrorists that are deployed by Hezbollah in Lebanon . It is reported that al Qaeda, which is also housed and funded in part by Iran , has secretly transferred hundreds of armed Palestinians from Syria to Lebanon and is building mixed units of Palestinians and Arab fighters from Iraq for planting on two Israeli borders - South Lebanon and the Gaza Strip. These would eventually mix with the Hamas fighters that have been armed by a quarter of a million dollars from Iran .

Israel is being surrounded by hostiles equipped, funded and trained by Iran with the aid of Russia . Meantime, the West, led by Britain and the United States , is pressuring Israel to restart the so-called "peace process." Ancient prophecies in the Bible point to two events that will signal the apocalyptic end times—

The aligning of these nations is occurring stronger each day and the end result seems to point toward war against Israel .

27. Why all the focus in Israel?

Israel Chosen By God

28. There are those who teach that Israel has been replaced by the NT church.

- a. **This was prevalent in middle ages, as Israel did not even exist.**
- b. **But the biblical facts are this – God has CHOSEN the Nation of Israel**

Gen 12:1-3

"Get out of your country,
From your family
And from your father's house,
To a land that I will show you.
2 I will make you a great nation;
I will bless you
And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.
**3 I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."**

Gen 13:14-17

14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are -- northward, southward, eastward, and westward; **15 for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.** 16 And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your

descendants also could be numbered. 17 Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

29. Think about this –

- a. **God chose Abraham – whose offspring became Israel, to be whom He would reveal Himself**
- b. **He gave them the law**
- c. **He gave them the prophets**
- d. **From this we have the OT canon**
- e. **God promised – and delivered – the Messiah Jesus Christ though the nation of Israel**
- f. **Jesus was (is) Jewish**
- g. **The apostles – all Jewish**
- h. **The early church – all Jewish at first, until Cornelius (Acts 10)**

30. You might say “the Jews killed Jesus” – or “they didn’t accept Him”

- a. **The religious leaders didn’t – but many Jews did**
- b. **And God is not done with the Jewish people yet...**

Rom 11:1-12

I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.

Jerusalem Chosen By God

2 Chron 6:5-6

6 Yet I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.

2 Chron 33:7

..."In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever;

We should BLESS and SUPPORT ISRAEL

Gen 12:3

3 I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;

31. We should pray for an support Israel – not because we think they are “right”

- a. **But because they are God’s chosen people – and God stated**

- b. I believe why American has been blessed above so many nations – Because of our support of Israel – we are (or have been) their one friend in the world!

32. Practical reasons to support Israel

- a. Archeological evidence supports Israel's claim to the land – they established the first *sovereign nation* on the land
- b. They have a historical right to the land 1000 years of living on the land prior to Christ
 - i. After – in 1917 England set aside land to *return* to Jews
 - ii. Saudi Arabia birthed in 1913, Lebanon 1920, Iraq 1932, Syria 1941, Jordan 1946, Kuwait 1961
- c. Israel a stabilizing force in Middle East
 - i. Democracy
 - ii. Agricultural and technological producer and innovator
 - iii. IDF brings stability (America would have to have a large presence if not for IDF)
 - iv. (Israel has been attacked **FOUR TIMES** without provocation, victorious each time against overwhelming odds)
- d. Strategic Ally to US – **NO ONE ELSE** there is our friend
- e. Roadblock to terrorism – If IDF & Mossad were not active, Mideast would be a free network of terror – against US.

How should We live?

33. We can look at all of this, and there is good cause to worry about what will happen in mid-east, even more so what will come to our shores

- a. But we can take comfort – God is in control!

34. God is not asleep at the wheel, and He is not going to abandon His people – Israel or the church

- a. We should be comforted that the Lord is with us – the church
- b. And we can look at the times and seasons – and know that the times are coming together that will usher in the Kingdom of the Lord
- c. And it should push us to be mindful of Kingdom Work!

What is Prophecy?

Rev 19:10

For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

35. IOW – the point of prophecy is not to get all worked up about dates and events, or to worry about what will happen

a. But to incite us to testify about Jesus Christ!

36. FACT – what is the answer to all the hate and turmoil in the world, and especially in the mid-east?

a. The GOSPEL MESSAGE OF JESUS CHRIST!

We Are to Be Ready

Matt 24:36-44

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40 Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.