



Prophecy in Perspective

Dr. Scott Gregory Downing

An email newsletter

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North Korea and China and End Times Prophecy

The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east. (Revelation 16:12)

Along with armies from Western nations, the great powers of the East will also come upon Israel in the latter days for the final battle of the age, Armageddon. In the news today, North Korea is threatening South Korea, Japan and the United States. Their constant testing of missiles and nuclear bombs clearly present an existential threat to millions. President Trump has sent a fleet of ships to that region. Japan will join them shortly. Their presence will hopefully contain Kim Jong-un's insane and diabolical threats.

Mr. Trump has been trying to encourage China to help quell North Korea's "saber rattling." They are sluggish to respond. I believe China possibly benefits from North Korea's weapons testing and may be interested in keeping North Korea's military in reserve for any future invasion to the west. The numbers of troops that China can muster now is well over 200,000 million (Revelation 9:16). Bible prophecy indicates the real possibility that the great powers to the East might even now be preparing for their ultimate battle that will take place in the valley of Megiddo during the latter days of the Tribulation period. This will occur just before Jesus' return to the earth.

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. The Seventh Bowl of Wrath. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done." (Revelation 16:15-17).

Presently, China has fairly good diplomatic and economic relations with Israel. But, according to Bible prophecy, all nations will be gathered against Israel to destroy it in the latter days of the Tribulation. Further, Japan is highly troubled at North Korea's hostile activities of firing missiles in their direction. Japan is on alert militarily and will not sit idly by to be threatened for long. While Japan is a strong ally to the United States, they are drawing closer to Russia diplomatically. Russia is no doubt desiring to extend their influence and strength into that region of the Pacific. We saw in our last newsletter that Russia will probably attack Israel along with their Islamic allies sometime just prior to the beginning of the Tribulation period (Ezekiel 38-39). Gaining global influence and strategic military position is high on Russia's geo-political "to do" list.

The gathering of the Kings of the East, literally, "Kings of the sunrise," will likely occur in the second half of the Tribulation in preparation for the battle of Armageddon. Arno C. Gaebelin writes: "The drying up of the Euphrates seems therefore to mean the removal of the barrier, so that the predicted gathering of the nations

may take place (Joel 3:2). What began under the sixth trumpet is consummated when the sixth vial is poured out. It is an act of judgment-wrath, while at the same time these opposing nations are gathering for the great day of God Almighty." (Annotated Bible, vol. IV, pp. 250-251)

It is fascinating how these nations, key players in end times prophecy, are so prominent in the news today. Any student of Bible prophecy who is looking for the coming of the Lord cannot help but sit up and take notice! It is unfortunate how these verses in Revelation concerning the "Kings of the East," are so neglected in Bible teaching. Yet, the Bible indicates that those nations such as China, Japan and even Korea will have a major part in the latter days prophetic scenario. Interestingly, even the prophet Isaiah expresses how Israel will be drawn in the last days return to their homeland from faraway lands to the east. Many believe Isaiah may even be referring to China when he predicts regarding the return of the Jews to Israel: "***Behold, these (the Jews) will come from afar; And lo, these will come from the north and from the west, And these from the land of Sinim***" (*Isaiah 49:12*). Reference to diplomatic relations with China is often termed: Sino-American, or Sino-Russian, or Sino-Israeli. Jews, Jewish settlements, and synagogues in China have been noted from ancient times. This shows how God's Word and witness has gone out into all the world through His people, the Jews, through their travels and various dispersions from their land. So, apparently, God will regather the Jews from China and the other lands of the East. But, as Revelation shows, He will also gather the "Kings of the East," as well as from the whole earth, against Israel (Revelation 16:12-16).

Dr. John Phillips writes concerning the future drying up of the Euphrates:

The Euphrates has been mentioned before in connection with the trumpets (Revelation 9:14). At that time it was associated with Russia's stranglehold on the Middle East. At that time the fall of Russia enabled the Beast to seize control of the world, and made it possible for him to command even the obedience of China and the Eastern powers. But the time has now come for those tremendous hordes of the East to assert themselves, to mobilize, and to hurl themselves westward. So far they have been held back by an impassible barrier, but that barrier, "the Euphrates," is now removed. For a hundred years it was the British Empire that sat astride the Euphrates and that held down the East. In recent times, Russia has dominated this key area. Later on, it will be held by the revived Roman Empire commanded by the Beast. But his (of Antichrist) kingdom is now (the latter half of the Tribulation) in turmoil, and his power in the East has dried up, making it possible for China, India, Japan, and other Eastern powers to unite. The nightmare that has haunted world leaders for generations becomes a reality. The industrial might of Japan is wedded to the manpower and nuclear knowhow of China and to all the manpower of the East. The way of the kings of the East is prepared, and at long last the awakened millions of Asia see their way clear to avenge themselves on the hated power of the West. (Exploring Revelation, p. 195)

Remember that the Rapture of the Church must come first (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Then the unfolding of the Great Tribulation events will commence. Yet today, I believe, we are seeing a great deal of movement that could well indicate preparations for these future events among these nations. The focus of these events will be Israel. Israel is very much at the center of world politics today. Interestingly, June 7, 2017 will be the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem under Jewish authority as a result of Israel's decisive victory in the Six-Day War of 1967. The Arab (Muslim) nations attempted then to destroy Israel, but failed. That was the time that God gave Jerusalem back to the Jews. In an article in *Israel My Glory*, Executive Director, Jim Showers writes about Israel's victory in the Six-Day War:

Does God fight for Israel?...In 1967, Israel knew its Arab neighbors were planning a war against it. Their goal was the same as in 1948: to annihilate the Jewish state. As the enemies amassed along Israel's borders, Israel was again outnumbered. The war began on June 5 and ended June 10. It is a mistake to think that because the war was short, it was an easy fight. Many valiant men on both sides died. But in the end, Israel not only defended itself, but also gained control of the Sinai to the south, Golan Heights to the north, and much of biblical Samaria and Judea.

The crown jewel of the victory was Jerusalem. For the first time in more than 2,200 years, Jerusalem was again under the sovereign control of a Jewish nation. God even gave back to Israel the Old City, where the Temple once stood. It reminds us of the biblical days when God fought for His people.

In Exodus 14, when the Israelites were trapped between the Red Sea and Pharaoh's army, Moses said, "The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace" (v.14). God parted the Red Sea and dried the seabed so Israel could cross to the other side. He then used the water He had held back to drown the mighty Egyptian army. ..

These great victories by God's hand bear similarities to Israel's victory in 1967. How could such a small nation survive the onslaught of so many Arab armies that were better equipped, better trained, and far more numerous than the army of Israel? There is only one reasonable explanation. As in the days of Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and Hezekiah, God is still fighting for Israel. (*Israel My Glory*, May/June, 2017, p. 5)

World events are certainly shaping up for the return of Jesus Christ. But these events could not be the true fulfillment of Bible prophecy unless Israel was back in their land and in possession of Jerusalem. God will not allow Israel ever to be destroyed! Israel and the Jews are at the center of God's unfolding prophetic purpose in the world today, as current events plainly show. What an incentive for us in the church to trust God daily and to live in amazing victory while watching for the Lord's coming! Indeed, Jesus is coming soon! Are you ready?

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

(Revelation 16:15)

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