

Newsbytes

The First Watch

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"Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him." Tozer

Top Bible Prophecy Stories of 2016

By Jan Markell

At the end of each year I like to review how Bible prophecy played out during the year. Seeing dark news items from a prophetic perspective causes the darkness to be more bearable. I often post these stories to my "headlines" daily which can be found here.

These Tribulation stage-setting events aren't in any particular order. But we must keep our eyes on Israel, God's timepiece. The minute-hand is Jerusalem and the second-hand is the Temple Mount. They have all been prominent in the news.

1) Zechariah 12:3 became a blunt reality on December 23. This was the day the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to come against Israel. America abstained which is essentially voting with the other members. She symbolically became the world's burdensome stone. This was initiated and instigated by the President of the United States which means terrible repercussions are coming to this land. So Israel is to return to 1967 "Auschwitz" borders. The holy city of Jerusalem becomes "occupied territory." And Israel is further isolated and alienated as predicted.

2) The great falling away didn't stop falling in 2016. Many evangelical churches became nothing more than advocates for open borders and multiculturalism. The social gospel made such giant inroads and salvation issues became unrecognizable. Emergent/Postmodernism raged. Other churches fell into lukewarmness. Hardly any would deal with the issues of the day or the Lord's return.

3) The longing for a "man with a plan" was never so prominent. Even CNN's Home page begged for a man who could restore order. It asks in smaller print, "Is there a leader who can stop the chaos and heal America?"

4) II Timothy 3 character was on overdrive in 2016. Various presidential candidates were consumed with pride and self-aggrandizement. Values seemed to tank this past year. National industries featured same-sex ads with no shame. It seemed like everyone was drowning the lake of me-myself-I.

5) Israel's re-convened Sanhedrin took the momentous step of nominating a High Priest for the Temple--for the first time since its destruction in 70 A.D. The Tribulation Temple is in the works, even though the United Nations just declared this area off-limits to the Jews!

6) Israel struck Damascus in early December, targeting some weapons. This is a precursor to what is predicted in Isaiah 17:1.

7) God continues to intervene for His sovereign nation of Israel. In November, he sent a pillar of a cloud of dust and rain to push back ISIS on Israel's border. See it here. He who keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psalm 121). The cloud of dust and rain stayed right at the border and did not cross into Israel.

8) There was stage-setting for the Tribulation's natural disasters which will be far worse than anything the world has known thus far. Publications called many events "record setting," "unprecedented," and "of biblical proportion." The Bible calls them "birth pangs."

9) The war on cash intensified. A few nations are banning cash and this will eventually lead to "Mark of the Beast" accounting. Technology was introduced that enables the total payment of goods and services using only an embedded chip.

10) Gog-Magog players are getting ready. Russia is the new power player in the Mideast thanks to America's absence. So is Iran. Turkey is in chaos and looking to Russia for support. These are the three primary players in Ezekiel 38-39, although other nations participate.

11) Europe is in a meltdown--setting the unstable stage for the arrival of the Antichrist out of Europe. Its godless culture welcomes all things dark and occultic. Their refugee policy has thrown the continent into chaos. It will welcome a "Mr. Fix-It" to calm the storm. On June 1 they had a literal Satanic ceremony as they dedicated the Gotthard Base Tunnel in Switzerland. European leaders cheered this. Below is the demonic "goat man" who was celebrated. This was addressed by Amir Tsarfati at our October 15 conference.

12) The season of mocking the Lord's return intensified. The Christian publication "Christian Today" scorned the Lord's return and said a "zombie apocalypse" was more likely.

13) The predicted rise of evil continues as foretold in II Timothy 3:13. A new term was introduced in late 2016: "Spirit Cooking." It is too dark to write about but you can Google the information. We don't recommend it for sensitive people. It is borne out of the occult followers of Satanist Aleister Crowley and it would have entered the White House and Oval Office had Hillary Clinton won. This may be the biggest reason the Left lost as many in the Clinton campaign were cheerleaders for this evil.

14) The run-up to the lawlessness in the Tribulation has begun. There was post-election rioting with the promise of much more to come -- all a blatant rejection of Donald J. Trump. Barack Obama was the most lawless president in U.S. history. He even told illegals they could vote with no consequences. Now the Left is making daily comments about assassinating Donald Trump.

15) The gay agenda has turned blatant. Many major corporations promoted this with their national advertising. The "days of Noah" have returned as predicted by Jesus. The transgender agenda also flourished. In both cases Target led the way with promotion.

16) The predicted rise in the persecution of Christians and Jews intensified. At the same time, some pastors were forced to turn over sermons for inspection in America and Christian businesses were hammered for trying to stand for righteousness. Yet Islam is protected and no condemnation can be given.

17) For most of these to play out required the prophesied rise in strong delusion (II Thess. 2:10-12).

Those who take delight in mocking and rejecting Him, He will condemn, confuse their thinking, and cause them to believe fables. And they do! Remember, global warming is a greater danger than radical Islam. Today it would seem the Mad Hatter is in charge.

18) Technology giants came against righteousness once again. From Facebook to YouTube to Google to Twitter, their progressive agenda rejected a conservative and Christian message. The Christian film "I Am Not Ashamed" had their YouTube trailer taken down one year in advance, marginalizing ticket sales.

Things are not falling apart -- they are falling into place. Can you hear the hoof beats of the four horsemen of the apocalypse in the distance?

I won't be silent about the signs of the times. If Jesus chastised the Pharisees for not knowing the signs of His first coming, why would we not be expected to be aware of today's apocalyptic signs?

Rise up, wake up and look up!

January 15th: 70 Nations Will Gather In Paris To Discuss The Future Of Israel

by Michael Snyder

On January 15th, representatives from 70 different countries will gather in Paris, France for an unprecedented global conference. The stated goal of this conference is to promote a "two-state solution" as the way that lasting peace will be brought to the Middle East.

In Israel, there is a tremendous amount of concern that whatever is agreed upon at this conference will immediately be used as the basis for a UN Security Council resolution that would permanently divide the land of Israel and create a Palestinian state.

But things would have to move very rapidly in order for that to happen, because Barack Obama's time in the White House comes to an end on January 20th, and Donald Trump has already made it exceedingly clear that he would never support such a resolution.

The UN Security Council resolution that was passed on Friday was one of the most significant events that we have witnessed in decades. Resolution 2334 made all Israeli settlements in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem illegal, it set the 1967 ceasefire lines as the border between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and it granted every single inch of East Jerusalem to the Palestinians.

But it stopped short of giving official UN Security Council recognition to a Palestinian state, and that is why this conference on January 15th is so important.

The Israeli government is reportedly fearful that any guidelines agreed in Paris would be turned into another UN resolution before Trump's inauguration.

A spokesman for Netanyahu claimed to have "ironclad evidence" that the Obama administration had plotted behind the scenes to promote the UN resolution. Israel has said it will present evidence against the Obama administration to the incoming Trump team.

If what an Egyptian newspaper is claiming is true, then there may very well be an international

conspiracy at work against Israel. According to a transcript published by the Al-Youm Al-Sabea newspaper, John Kerry and U.S. National Security Adviser Susan Rice met with Palestinian officials in early December and presented Kerry's plan to them at that time...

In a meeting in early December with top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat, US Secretary of State John Kerry told the Palestinians that the US was prepared to cooperate with the Palestinians at the Security council, Israel's Channel 1 TV said, quoting the Egyptian Al-Youm Al-Sabea newspaper.

Also present at the meeting were US National Security Adviser Susan Rice, and Majed Faraj, director of the Palestinian Authority's General Intelligence Service.

Kerry is quoted as saying that he could present his ideas for a final status solution if the Palestinians pledge they will support the proposed framework. The US officials advised the Palestinians to travel to Riyadh to present the plan to Saudi leaders.

The Obama administration is denying all of this of course. But if it is true, then the betrayal of Israel by Obama is much deeper than any of us realized.

With less than a month to go in his presidency, Barack Obama has decided to launch an all-out attack on Israel. Once Resolution 2334 passed and the uproar against it was limited, that emboldened the Obama administration to go for broke.

Now it looks like they actually could try to get a Palestinian state created before he leaves office on January 20th, and if that happens it will be absolutely catastrophic for America.

You see, the truth is that we have been warned for many years that our land will be divided after the land of Israel is officially divided into two states. Many of us have been watching for the creation of a Palestinian state for a very long time, and now we may be right on the verge of it happening.

When Donald Trump takes office he would not be able to reverse the creation of a Palestinian state, but one thing that he could do would be to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem.

If that happens, the Palestinians are promising to throw a massive temper tantrum...

When asked how the Palestinians would react if Trump carried out his promise to move the US embassy to Jerusalem, Erekat reportedly said the Palestine Liberation Organization would rescind its recognition of Israel and ask Arab states to expel their US envoys.

Erekat made precisely that threat in a December 19 conference call organized by the Wilson Center policy forum. He said he would immediately resign as the chief Palestinian negotiator, and that "the PLO will revoke its recognition of Israel" as well as all previously signed agreements with Israel.

Furthermore, said Erekat, all American embassies in the Arab world would be forced to close -- not necessarily because Arab leaderships would want to close them, but because the infuriated public in the Arab world would not "allow" for the embassies to continue to operate.

Ultimately, everything that is happening now is setting the stage for the biggest war in the Middle East that we have ever seen.

So instead of this "peace process" being the solution, it is actually going to cause the Middle East to explode in violence.

10 Lies Secretary of State Kerry Told During His Big Middle East Peace Speech

BY: BEN SHAPIRO DECEMBER 28, 2016

dailynewswire.com

On Wednesday, Secretary of State John Kerry gave a speech on his proposed plan for peace between Israelis and Arabs. His plan: blame the Jews, pretend that Palestinian terrorism and incitement isn't representative of the actual Palestinian government, and then blather for 69 more minutes. His speech razed facts to the ground in a fashion reminiscent of Genghis Khan.

Here were ten of the worst lies and lies-by-omission Kerry purveyed in his ode to lying and self-indulgence:

1. Equating Jewish Settlements and Palestinian Terrorism. Israel has been wracked by a wave of stabbings and shootings and rocket attacks from Palestinian terrorists over the last two years. Kerry spent a few minutes on that, but only in order to draw moral equivalence with Jews building additional bathrooms in East Jerusalem, the capital of Israel. "The truth is that trends on the ground, violence, terrorism, settlement expansion, and the seemingly endless occupation, they are combining to destroy hopes for peace on both sides," Kerry said. This is nonsense. Before there were any Jewish settlements – when Israel did not control Judea, Samaria, or Gaza – the Palestine Liberation Organization called for the "liberation" of Palestine, meaning the complete destruction of Israel. The problem isn't people building homes. It's Palestinians murdering Jews, and refusing to accept that any home built by a Jew ought to exist in the Middle East.
2. "If The Choice Is One State, Israel Can Either Be Jewish Or Democratic. It Cannot Be Both." This is patently absurd. There has been one state in the area between the Jordan and the Mediterranean for some 50 years. That state has been democratic. This lie rests on two absurd contentions: first, that if Israel were to annex all Judea and Samaria, Jews would be outnumbered by Arabs; second, that if Israel were to annex all lands, Israel would have to grant all Palestinian Arabs full citizenship or face status as an apartheid state. The first claim is simply false – Jews outnumber Palestinian Arabs outside of the Gaza Strip by a factor of two-to-one, and Jews now have the equivalent birth rate of Palestinian Arabs, and will soon have a higher birth rate, as Caroline Glick points out, meaning that Jewish majority status will increase, not decrease. Second, the United States does not offer citizenship to all the people living within its borders, or over territories over which it has sovereignty. Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic are governed semi-autonomously, but citizens of Puerto Rico cannot vote in presidential elections in the United States. Israel could easily grant green cards to Palestinian residents while also giving them local control of their governance without a national vote.
3. Peace Will Only Be Realized With a Palestinian Terror State. The notion that peace depends on the establishment of a Palestinian terror state – and that's what will be established, given that the unity government of the Palestinians now includes Hamas and Islamic Jihad alongside Fatah – is asinine. Israel has had to blockade Gaza because Hamas controls it, and is attempting to take military shipments from Iran. Adding another Iran-backed terror proxy state to the Middle Eastern map is a great way to encourage a two-front war against Israel, given the presence of Hezbollah on Israel's northern border.
4. "No American Administration Has Done More For The Security of Israel Than Barack Obama's." To put it mildly, LOL. LOLOLOLOLOL. Funny guy, this Kerry. Here's a timeline of Obama's "support" for Israel. That timeline doesn't even include the Iran nuclear deal or the current UN resolution hubbub.

5. Israeli Intransigence Is The Problem. Nope. Not even close. In 2008, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert offered 94.2 percent of Judea and Samaria to the Palestinians, a corridor that would link that territory to the Gaza Strip, land swaps that would increase Palestinian land holdings, a formula for division of Jerusalem. Abbas refused the deal. In 2000, Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered a similar deal. Yassar Arafat refused it. Palestinians have never accepted any deal offered by the Israelis. Israelis continue to offer. But the problem is clearly the mean, nasty Israelis. And by the way, that awful Netanyahu fellow offered to freeze settlements early in the Obama administration, and the Palestinians responded with violence.

6. Settlements Are Illegal. No, they aren't. Kerry declared over and over that Israelis settling east of the so-called green line are living there illegally. That's patent nonsense. He also suggested that no Jews would be allowed to live inside a new Palestinian state, because Jews would object – ignoring, of course, that Palestinians would quickly murder any Jew remaining in a Palestinian state, and Jews have a slight objection to being murdered. Right now, over a million Arabs live inside Israel. Virtually no Jews live in the Muslim world because they were expelled, and quickly absorbed into Israel.

7. Equating Palestinian Government With Israeli Government. Perhaps the most insane spectacle was Kerry suggesting that the Netanyahu government is beholden to the “most extreme elements” in Israeli politics, while poo-hooing Palestinian government support for terrorism. Kerry suggested that Hamas was a troublesome rogue group as opposed to an integral part of the Palestinian unity government.

8. Israel As Purported Burden To The United States. Kerry spent serious time talking about how the United States had subsumed its own interests in order to give military aid to Israel. Of course, the Obama administration has also given aid to the Palestinian unity terror government, and attempted to block weapons shipments in the middle of the Gaza terror war. And even the Obama administration says that such aid is good for the United States defense industry; a huge percentage of American aid to Israel is a subsidy to domestic defense contractors. Israel is America's only democratic ally in the region.

9. The UN Resolution Changed Nothing. Kerry kept stating that the UN resolution didn't do much to change the status quo. That's false. This UN resolution said that all territories outside the 1949 Israel armistice lines – the “Auschwitz borders” – are occupied, including Jerusalem and holy sites like the Western Wall. It calls for all settlements in those areas “flagrant” violations of international law. There's a reason Kerry pushed this thing through: of course it changes things.

10. The Obama Administration's Maneuvers Help Peace. This is the opposite of the truth. America's position for two decades has been that it would not cram down a peace deal on the Israelis and Palestinians – all issues would have to be resolved through bilateral negotiations. By placing the onus for all concessions on Israel and making Israel subject to the possibility of blowback from the International Court of Justice, Obama just allowed Palestinians to abandon any pretense at negotiations and stand on their newfound “rights.”

Kerry's speech was chock full of lies. But here's the good news: nobody will remember it a month from now, just as nobody will remember John Kerry's legacy beyond his slander of American soldiers in Vietnam.

Bennett tells Kerry: Pick up your Bible and Read it

Education Minister Naftali Bennett responded to Secretary of State Kerry's call for a 'viable two-state solution.

Arutz Sheva Staff, 28/12/16

Naftali Bennett speaks at Sapir CollegeNaftali Bennett speaks at Sapir CollegeFlash90
Education Minister and Jewish Home Party head Naftali Bennett responded Wednesday to Secretary of State Kerry's call for a "viable two state solution." Bennett said that "Kerry quoted me three times anonymously in his speech in order to demonstrate that we oppose a Palestinian state."

"So let me state it explicitly:"

"Yes. If it depends on me, we will not establish another terror state in the heart of our country. The citizens of Israel have paid with thousands of victims, tens of thousands of rockets and innumerable condemnations for the utopian idea of a Palestinian state. It's time for a new policy and we will lead the way."

Earlier, Bennett sent a sharp message to Secretary of State Kerry on the eve of his policy speech regarding the Arab-israeli conflict.

"A few days ago the UN Security Council voted for a shameful resolution stating that Jerusalem is occupied territory," the minister said.

"Jerusalem has been the Jewish capital for 3,000 years. That is in the Bible, open it and read. We, the Jews, have been lighting the menorah for 2170 years in Jerusalem. We say 'Next year in Jerusalem' every Passover. We lit the menorah 1,000 years ago in Russia and Morocco and said 'Next year in Jerusalem.' We lit the menorah 72 years ago near the Auschwitz crematoria and said 'Next year in Jerusalem.'"

"Mr. Secretary: No UN decision or speech will change the fact that Jerusalem was and will always be the Israeli capital."

2,000 year-old coin from Maccabean Revolt discovered in Jerusalem

Coin discovered at Tower of David just days before Hanukkah celebrations; Second coin discovered in past two weeks; Jerusalem's "Pilgrims' Road" to reopen for Hanukkah celebrations



A 2,000-year old bronze coin dating back to the time of the Maccabean revolt was discovered in Jerusalem. The find comes just ahead of the Jewish celebration of Hanukkah which will begin this coming Saturday through next Sunday.

The coin was discovered during an archeological dig at the Tower of David in Jerusalem. The coin depicts the Greek King Antiochus IV Epiphanes who decreed the annihilation of the Jewish people.

Archeologists reported that coins from this era were minted in

Acre (Ptolemais) between 172 and 168 BC.

The Maccabean Revolt took place between 167 and 160 BC, a Jewish rebellion to the Seleucid Empire led by Judah Maccabee. The story of the Revolt is remembered and celebrated by the Jewish people during the “Festival of Lights”- Hanukkah.

Last week there was a discovery of a 1,950-year old coin that was found in the City of David in Jerusalem, the coin also dating back to a Jewish revolt- that of the revolts against the Romans. The discovery was made on the “Pilgrim’s Road”- a road that was used historically by Jews to make ritual sacrifices in the Temple.

The coin depicts a grape leaf on one-side with the words “Free Zion” with the opposite side’s inscription reading “Two years to the Great Revolt”. The coin dates back to 67 A.D. about three years before the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans.



Both coins discovery come just as Jerusalem is set to unveil the grand reopening of “Pilgrims’ Road” during this year’s Hanukkah celebrations. Israel’s Ministry of Culture in coordination with the Israel Antiquities Authority will celebrate 50 years since the liberation of Jerusalem from Jordan, as well as ancient Jewish history on the historic which will be open again the Jewish people.