

John Newlin Ministries, Inc.

- realizing the power of a life in Christ -

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IRAN INDEED - WHAT IS GOING ON?

I know that a lot of us are looking at all that is going on in the Middle East, wondering how all of this fits with Bible prophecy and the coming return of Jesus. Well, regardless of what people may tell you, it's not obvious. Here are some simple, straightforward facts about that war and the recent Palestinian - Gaza war:

- This war in Iran with the US and Israel attacking and Iran responding so wildly is not in the Bible.
- The conclusion of the recent Palestinian war with the plan to establish Gaza as a piece of land under international oversight will not stand and will not hold up. This land called Gaza is part of the land that God gave the Jews. So it is part of Israel long term, no matter what various political groups do.
- The prophecy in Ezekiel 38-39 in the Bible of an attack on Israel led by Russia, Turkey, and Iran and also involving other countries has not yet happened. My thought is this attack will happen after the rapture, after Jesus has taken his believers away from earth. Why do I think that? America is not mentioned in the Bible as coming to the aid of Israel then so I expect believers have previously left the earth in the rapture. God uses that attack to demonstrate His glory and power by wiping the attackers out of the sky

All this said, there are some really interesting observations that can be made at this point. Since the Iran war is still unsettled and underway, of course some of this could change. Please think about this:

1. The Iranian military has been responding to the attack from the US and Israel by sending off missiles and bombs into many other nations. Some are directed at American bases there but many are directed at hotels and refineries and other such places in many Arab Muslim countries! This all seems highly irrational to the reporters and probably many politicians and other observers. But there really is an explanation. Iran is a country of Shiite Muslims, a minority of the world's Muslims. One belief of the Shiite Muslims is that at some point in time a very special person called the Mahdi will appear on Earth and will seek peace and justice. This Mahdi comes in a time of widespread turmoil, upheaval, mayhem. I expect the Iranian military with all these seemingly bizarre attacks on nearby countries has been trying to bring about such a situation for the Mahdi to come.

Some of you may remember that way back under a previous Iranian president Ahmadinejad we heard discussions about this Mahdi. Obviously the Mahdi and this account I have just given is not in the Bible. But the Iranian Shiites are not Christian either - they are Muslims and this is part of their history.

Keep Your Eyes on Jesus!

2. The future Ezekiel 38-39 attack on Israel is still to happen. Somehow Russia, Turkey, and Iran will get together to bring this about. It is pure speculation as to how these countries will come together to attack Israel. One thing though is apparent – evidently this current Iran war does not remove the hatred of Israel by the future government of Iran, whatever that will be, since it is willing to join such an attack. So maybe this gives us a clue as to how this current war will be temporarily settled.
3. Never forget, Islam is a false religion. Surely it is a creation of the evil one, the devil, Satan, an effort to imitate truths of the Bible and lead many astray. You can see in the Mahdi even an effort to imitate the return of the Messiah, of Jesus. A huge amount of the world's people have been led astray by this false religion. Always we can hope that events lead to more and more Muslims being led to Jesus by God. We can and should no doubt pray for that. And do whatever we can do to help in this regard as led by the Holy Spirit and the words of the Lord.

And we must be on guard against the never-ending objectives of Islam to spread and conquer and take over the world. That false faith is having great success in Europe these days and surely has achieved pockets of success in the US. After Mohammed's death many centuries ago it quickly spread through military means to take over a host of northern African countries, finally being stopped by an army under Charles Martel in Tours France and thus saving Europe for the time being.

And then there is this one last point. We are living in the last of the last days. The leader of the Kingdom of Darkness – the devil – knows this. He knows his time is limited. I suggest he is wildly doing all he can to fight against his future. And thus our time of violence and gross immorality and large numbers of people who do not seem to have a clue about what is going on.

In such an environment we must keep our eyes on Jesus, seek to hear his guidance always, put on always all the protection God has for us, use the authority we have in Jesus, and go forward trusting the Lord and eagerly awaiting his return.

WITH ALL THAT IS GOING ON, LET'S LOOK AT THE TIME IMMEDIATELY AFTER JESUS TAKES HIS BELIEVERS AWAY

Maybe this is more material to use in talking with those sitting on the fence of belief/unbelief.

- After the rapture, believers are gone from the earth. So all remaining in key positions of society – government, business, medical, education, judges, police, whatever – are unbelievers, godless people. Imagine how they will act and approach their daily tasks. Believers fill many key positions in the US currently. Even if they are a small percentage of the population imagine life without them and their moral compass in society.
- In some nations there may be little effect – China and India for example.
- If the rapture is indeed as sudden and immediate as it appears likely to be, there will be a huge cleanup effort for those left behind. Accidents from suddenly driverless cars or trucks or airplanes for example. There will also likely be large numbers of truly terrified people – those who do not understand what

happened and those who may have an inkling from some connection with Christians or a church but were not believers. Although not in the Bible it is expected by many that Jesus would surely take away with the believers very young children who have not reached the age of accountability, whatever he considers that to be. What a shock to parents and expectant mothers.

- Alternatively, there is in some of Jesus' words a statement that he will send his angels out to gather the people. So that would appear to be a more orderly process. Perhaps the rapture will be some type of combination of the two approaches.
- If you are a true believer in the Lord Jesus, someone born of water and the spirit as Jesus described, you surely can discern many who will not be going. They are all around you in your larger family, your friends, your neighbors, public figures. It is so difficult finally to realize that some just will not or do not believe and apparently are not on the way to belief. But Jesus did say few are those who find the way.
- It is good to take solace in the fact that many left behind do come to know Jesus during the Tribulation. John sees this huge number in Revelation. And amazingly some will manage to live through the Tribulation and be on earth during the Millenium to live under the Kingdom of God physical government to be established in Jerusalem.

FOR OURSELVES AND FOR THOSE WE WOULD HELP THE FATHER DRAW TO JESUS, WE NEED TO REVIEW AGAIN WHO WILL BE IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

With all that is going on and what we've said above, this is a good time to note again what Jesus said about those who will be in the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of God. Certainly, a person physically does not have to do anything to be in Heaven, in the Kingdom. Jesus paid the price for each of us to get there. That is the basis for the statement that it is by grace we have been saved and not by works. But Jesus did say several verses that bear on being in the Kingdom of God. All these verses have to be considered. They are all said by Jesus. We have to put them all together. You can't just read one and ignore the others. You can't pick and choose scripture.

There is the most famous verse in the Bible – John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.* I have said over and over in so many paces that this “belief” here is solid belief, like you believe there is enough oxygen in the room in which you are living to keep you alive; otherwise, you would be running out the door. In other words, absolute belief. Not that modern way we often use the word believe in normal conversation, which is much weaker.

Then there is this fundamental verse, the one Jesus said when he was speaking to Nicodemus in John 3:5 *“Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.* So there has to be a real spiritual rebirth. In John 1:12-13 the writer notes that it is as if God himself becomes our father. In fact, the Good News Translation actually says that directly:

Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children. They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father.

And then we have this really important verse:

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

– Matthew 7:21-23

This is said in a section where people have come to tell Jesus all they have been doing in his name. Unfortunately for them, he says he never knew them. So they don't get into the Kingdom obviously. They may have been doing good works but they missed the point. They weren't doing the will of God. They didn't focus on knowing Jesus.

Lastly, there is one more key verse in Matthew 18: 2 – 4:

He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

In other words, a person must be as innocent and believing as a little child.

So we have several key scriptures right out of the mouth of Jesus himself, reported to us by the disciples John and Matthew. Pretty good witnesses, I'd say. Yes, we of course must have absolute belief. But we also must live to fulfill God's will as we understand it. And we must be born again, born anew. We must have that new spirit in us. We have to become the new creation Paul refers to when he says in 2 Corinthians 5 that the old has gone and the new has come. This is all serious business indeed!

OUR THANKS AGAIN TO ALL THOSE SUPPORTING THIS MINISTRY WITH YOUR PRAYERS AND FINANCIAL DONATIONS!

**STAND FIRM IN YOUR FAITH AND KEEP YOUR EYES ON JESUS!
SOON YOU WILL BE SEEING HIM IN A WHOLE NEW WAY!**

May you live in the blessings of God always.

John

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