

## Mid-East Prophecy Update – February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

- For today's prophecy update I would like to begin by talking about some important news that for the most part went un-reported.
- This last week I was once again reminded of how a presidential election year can eclipse the news with prophetic significance.
- While I realize that this years election is arguably the most important of our lifetime so much can happen in the next 10-months.

Truth be known, there may be an all out world war by November, as evidenced by this Telegraph report on Friday, that Russia is warning there could be a "new world war" starting in Syria.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/12153112/Russia-warns-of-new-world-war-starting-in-Syria.html>

It should probably come as no surprise that on the same day; The Times of Israel would publish a report quoting Jordan's king Abdullah as saying that the two-state solution is the key to defeating the Islamic State. He even took it a step further at the Munich Security Conference and stated that fighting the Islamic State is a 'third world war by other means'

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/jordans-king-two-state-solution-key-to-defeating-is/>

Other news that either went un-reported or under reported was concerning Russia and Iran. Yesterday, The Jerusalem Post published an interesting analysis, stating that Russia's alliance with Iran and their proxy Hezbollah was a threat to strategic Israeli interests.

<http://www.jpost.com/printarticle.aspx?id=442256>

Speaking of threats from Iran in particular, on Friday, The Jerusalem Post also reported on Iran marking the anniversary of the 1979 Islamic revolution by holding "Death to America," and "Death to Israel" signs. If this weren't bad enough, Iranian students re-enacted a scene from the arrest of the American sailors by Iran's Revolutionary Guard, during the ceremony, which marked the 37th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, in Tehran.

<http://www.jpost.com/printarticle.aspx?id=444687>

- The common denominator with all theses news reports is that they speak to a prophecy from the Savior Himself in Matthew 24.

Matthew 24:3–8 (NIV) — 3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" 4 Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. 6 You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. 7 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. 8 All these are the beginning of birth pains.

To me, the most egregious news report that was overshadowed by the wall-to-wall presidential election coverage was the Islamic terrorist attack at the Nazareth Middle Eastern restaurant in Ohio on Thursday. Not only was this a horrifying Islamic terrorist attack, it was carried out by a Muslim immigrant from Africa who used a machete to target a Christian Arab Israeli, by the name of Hany Baransi, who is the owner of the restaurant. Thankfully, no one was killed, however, there were four people who were wounded in the machete attack, one of which was in critical condition. According to one source, as a Christian Arab from Israel, he was a proud supporter of Israel, even flying the Israeli flag in his restaurant. To make matters worse, the Muslim terrorist, Mohamed Barry, was known to the FBI and was in a law enforcement database which includes names potentially related to terrorism. What's interesting is the Christian Arab owner had taken Thursday night off because of an illness, and it appears that he was the intended target. As an Arab Christian who supports Israel, he described himself as "the minor, minor, minority of the minority, [saying], so nobody likes me anyway, but thank God we're in America, amen to that one."

- Here's where I'm going with all this, I believe that never before in history has Bible prophecy been as important as it is today.
- The reason I believe this is because absent a Biblical understanding of eschatology, we won't realize how close we really are.
- In other words, if I don't believe Bible prophecy is being fulfilled I'll be misled to believe that Jesus is not coming back that soon.

Matthew 24:42–51 (NKJV) — 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. 45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' 49 and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- This is perhaps one of the most powerful parables Jesus ever taught as it relates the imminence of the rapture of the church.
- Simply put, this can happen if I'm led to believe that something needs to happen before the rapture of the church can happen.
- It's for this reason the doctrine of the pre-tribulation rapture is so fundamental, such that, I will be ready for my Master's return.

- If I don't believe that the rapture is pre-tribulation then instead of watching for Jesus Christ, I'll be looking first for the antichrist.
- If I don't know that prophecy is being fulfilled, I will be deceived and will have believed that my master is delaying His coming.
- This is why we devote time every week to Bible prophecy. We want to be amongst the wise servants when our Master comes.