

## Mid-East Prophecy Update – January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019

- For today's prophecy update I want to do something a little bit different that what we usually do, and spend time on the "why."
- By that I mean, the "why" of these weekly updates in the sense of what the Lord is doing and producing, in and through them.
- I suppose that you could say this is the purpose of the updates such that, they have an affect on our lives in these the last days.

I'll start with this Jerusalem Post report from yesterday about the Israeli Defense Force striking Iranian and Hezbollah targets near Damascus. According to a report in Lebanon, Israeli Air Force planes circled low in the south of the country and there were "sonic booms" ...Explosions were also reported in the skies of the Syrian capital. Syrian air defense units fired on enemy targets above Damascus and destroyed several, ...Sources in the Syrian opposition reported that the Israeli Air Force attacked the bases of Iranian militias and Assad's regime forces southwest of Damascus.

<https://www.jpost.com/printarticle.aspx?id=577082>

- The reason I'm starting with this breaking news is because of a very specific prophecy found in the book of Isaiah chapter 17:1.

Isaiah 17:1 - A prophecy against Damascus: "See, Damascus will no longer be a city but will become a heap of ruins.

- I would submit that we're on the cusp of this prophecy concerning Damascus being fulfilled, which will set in motion Ezekiel 38.
- The reason being is Russia, Iran, Turkey and other nations who are allied together will invade Israel from its northern border.
- When, not if they do, it's my belief that it will be in concert with the rapture of the church, and commence the 7-year tribulation.
- While I am keenly aware that this scenario could be wrong, the question I would propose is this, "what if it's not and it happens."
- Wouldn't it stand to reason that we would want to be ready and not have it happen, than not be ready only to have it happen?
- It's for this reason that I wanted to spend the time talking about the aforementioned "why" as it relates to the affect on our lives.

1 John 3:2-3 - 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

- If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the most powerful affects Bible prophecy has on God's people, this would be it.
- This because of what we affectionately refer to as "the blessed hope," which is really, the only hope that we have in this world.
- I would argue that it's only when we have this hope to look forward to, it makes whatever we go, through easier to get through.
- As of late, the Lord has been ministering to me an important truth and it's that of having a loose grip on the things of this world.
- God has a way of loosening the tight grip we have, which is to use pain and suffering to get us to fall out of love with this world.
- When things good here, we don't long or ache for heaven, but conversely, it's in hardship and trials that we will long for heaven.

Acts 14:21-22 - 21 They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, 22 strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

- This begs the question of why we as Christians must go through so much suffering and hardship to enter the kingdom of God.
- What follows are a number of reasons for this, chief of which is that God uses the furnace of affliction to prepare us for heaven.
- The truth of the matter is this is the purpose and plan God has in working out everything in our lives for our good and His glory.

Romans 8:28-29 - 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

- Now the question becomes one of how do the many hardships in my life fulfill God's purpose of making me more like Jesus?
- We need look no further than to how trials draw us closer to the Lord taking us deeper in prayer in ways we couldn't otherwise.
- In so doing, God uses the pain and suffering in my life to free me from the bondage to a sin that I wouldn't otherwise escape.
- Another thing the pain and suffering produces in my life is that it gives me a compassion for those who are hurting in their life.
- It doesn't only make me more compassionate for and patient with other people, I'll also have a heart for those who need Jesus.
- So much so that I will find myself desiring to share the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, and win the lost to Jesus Christ.
- It's for this reason that we end our weekly prophecy updates with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the simple ABC's of Salvation.
- The Gospel, or good news is that Jesus was crucified, buried, rose again on the third day, and is coming back for us one day.
- That's the Gospel, and the ABC's of Salvation is a simple childlike explanation of how to respond to the Gospel and be saved.

**The ABC's of Salvation** - The A is for Admit you're a sinner and your need for the Savior, (Romans 3:10, 23 – 6:23).

- The B is for Believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord and God raised Him from the dead, (Romans 10:9-10).
- The C is for Call upon the name of the Lord and confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord, (Romans 10:9-10, 13).