

"PREPARING FOR THE END OF THE AGE"

A SERIES OF SERMONS DESIGNED TO PREPARE CHRISTIANS FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF BIBLE PROPHECY, THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH AND THE RETURN OF CHRIST TO THE EARTH

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MATTHEW 24:42-51

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INTRO: For years I can remember discussions and sermons being preached on prophecy and the return of Jesus Christ to the Earth. As a child growing up I can remember my parents speaking with my PASTOR GRANDFATHER about Ezekiel 38 & 39 and the BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG as well as the BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON. I can recall with clarity evangelists preaching on the END OF TIME and can even remember the first time I heard a preacher back in 1964 set a date for the RETURN OF CHRIST which was to be in 1967. All throughout my college years, the President of Washington Bible College, where I attended, George Miles, preached on prophecy and in the early days of my ministry I had PROPHETIC CONFERENCES in the church I served as pastor. In recent years it seems like the interest in BIBLE PROPHECY has risen again, and indeed **IT SHOULD BE A SUBJECT OF INTEREST as we see what is going on in the world around us, EVEN AS I SPEAK!** ACCORDING TO THE LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE AND THE PRE-TRIBULATIONAL VIEW OF THE RETURN OF CHRIST, it seems to be very clear that **THE END OF THE AGE COULD COME AT ANY TIME!** Thus in this current series we shall study the Word of God in order to PREPARE OURSELVES FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF BIBLE PROPHECY AND THE RETURN OF CHRIST TO THE EARTH.

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**OBSERVE WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE MIDDLE-EAST
(THE BUILD UP FOR THE RAPTURE IS RAPIDLY TAKING PLACE)**

1) THINGS IN THE MIDDLE-EAST ARE BECOMING VERY ACTIVE

a) God has promised Israel a secure land and confirmed it at least **55 TIMES** in scripture and **STATED WITH AN OATH AT LEAST 12 TIMES THAT THE COVENANT FOR THE LAND WOULD BE ETERNAL.** As a nation, Israel has NEVER occupied all of the land, but will do so in the future.

-Scriptures that reveal Israel's future borders: Genesis 15:18-20; Exodus 23:31; Numbers 34:11,12; Deuteronomy 11:24,25; Joshua 1:3,4; Ezekiel 47:13-20.

-The specific borders: The South=Nile River; The North=Turkey; The West= The Mediterranean Sea; The East=The Euphrates River.

-The geographic borders: Part of Egypt, All of Israel, Jordan & Lebanon, Syria and Turkey, ½ of Iraq and 25% of Saudi Arabia.

b) The Palestinians are getting stronger and desire to take land away from Israel for their own state, and many other nations are in agreement, including the U.S. and Russia. **God will judge such nations - Joel 3:1,2**

2) **RUSSIA AND SYRIA:** Russia is now in Syria supporting President Bashar al-Assad saying they are fighting ISIS. The U.S. wants to oust Assad but Russia has told the U.S. to back off and get out of Syria.

3) **EZEKIEL 38 & 39:** In a general way the nations of Ezekiel 38 & 39 are coming together under the **leadership of Russia, who is the "BEAR OF THE NORTH" according to Daniel 7:5.** This lays the foundation for the BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG where Russia will lead numerous nations against Israel. The nations listed in Ezekiel 38 & 39 include:

a) Magog, Tubal = Russia and the nations of the former Soviet Union, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan.

b) Persia = Iran

c) Cush = Ethiopia

d) Put = Northern Africa including Lybia

e) Gomer and Togarmah = Turkey

NOTE: WITH EXCEPTION OF RUSSIA, MOST OF THE NATIONS MENTIONED ARE MUSLIM! TODAY NEITHER RUSSIA NOR ISLAM LIKE ISRAEL AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE THEM DESTROYED!

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THERE IS NO DOUBT WE ARE GETTING CLOSE TO THE END OF TIME!

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WORDS OF A NATIONAL SECURITY EXPERT

"I AM AMAZED AT THE SPEED WITH WHICH THINGS ARE DEVELOPING. IT USED TO BE THAT THE TYPE OF CHANGE WE SEE WITH RUSSIA EXPANDING THESE DAYS WOULD TAKE 30 YEARS, BUT THIS WEEK (SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2015) IT HAS HAPPENED IN 3 DAYS! WITH THE RAPID EXPANSION OF RUSSIA INTO SYRIA AND UKRAINE, AND WITH RUSSIA'S SUPPORT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE AND THE FACT THAT EGYPT AND RUSSIA ALREADY HAVE A PEACE TREATY OF SORTS, ALL THAT IS NEEDED IS FOR THE SAUDIS TO SIGN THE TREATY AND FOR JORDAN TO FALL AND ISRAEL WOULD BE TOTALLY SURROUNDED BY GODLESS NATIONS. AT THIS RATE THE

TRUMPET OF THE LORD COULD SOUND AND THE RAPTURE COULD OCCUR AND THE MAN OF SIN, THE ANTI-CHRIST, COULD APPEAR IN THE NEXT MINUTE" -JRM

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WORDS OF DR. JOHN WALVOORD

"I HAVE BEEN STUDYING PROPHECY FOR MANY YEARS, AND WHILE I DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS POSSIBLE TO SET DATES FOR THE LORD'S RETURN, I DO SENSE IN THE WORLD TODAY AN UNPRECEDENTED TIME OF WORLD CRISIS THAT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS BEING PREPARATORY FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD. IF THERE WAS EVER AT TIME WHICH CHRISTIANS SHOULD LIVE EVERY DAY AS THOUGH CHRIST COULD COME AT ANY TIME, IT IS TODAY."

SERIOUS QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

I. WHERE ARE WE NOW IN RELATION TO THE STAGE BEING SET FOR THE END OF THE AGE?

A. In the past generation we have seen a **GIANT STEP TAKEN FORWARD** toward the fulfillment of Bible Prophecy. Israel becoming a nation in 1948 has thrust us into the very last days of the age.

B. The Life style of the Culture is becoming to the end of the age

1. Matthew 24:36-39

2. Luke 17:28-30

3. 2 Peter 3:3,4

C. World-wide events are setting the stage for the **END OF THE AGE** as we know it. Russia seems to be bringing other nations together to fight Israel.

D. The complete events of Ezekiel 38 & 39 and the **BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG** will no doubt take place after the **RAPTURE AND YET** apparently we are seeing them coming together **RIGHT NOW!** The Rapture is Close!

E. There is **NOTHING THAT NEEDS TO BE FULFILLED** before the Rapture of the Church which could happen today - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

ILLUSTRATION:

II. HOW CLOSE ARE WE TO THE END OF THE AGE?

A. It is clear that the clock is "TICKING AWAY" the last minutes and seconds of the age.

B. However, only **GOD KNOWS** when the Rapture will occur! There is **NO WAY** nor is there **ANY NEED** for us to know the exact year, month, day or hour! 1 Thessalonians 5:1,2

ILLUSTRATION:

III. WHAT MUST WE DO NOW IN LIGHT OF THE END OF THE AGE?

WE MUST ALL PERSONALLY PREPARE FOR CHRIST'S RETURN! AND WE CAN ONLY DO IT PERSONALLY! NO ONE ELSE CAN DO IT FOR US!

A. For those who Do Not Know the Lord

-Trust Christ as **YOUR** personal savior! Romans 10:13

B. For Those who Do Know the Lord

1. We Must Keep Watching for the Rapture - Matthew 24:42

2. We Must Be Ready for the Rapture - Matthew 24:44

3. We Must Be Serving in light of the Rapture - Matthew 24:46

ILLUSTRATION:

APPLICATION: In light of the return of Christ, **ALL CHRISTIANS** have an obligation to be serving the Lord effectively, so as to counter-act the rise of false religions, cults, secular materialism and moral perversion. Note the words of our Savior in John 9:4 to "**WORK WHILE IT IS DAY FOR THE NIGHT COMETH, WHEN NO MANY CAN WORK.**"