

Do Israel's Enemies Suffer God's Judgment?

On a quiet Shabbat evening in Israel, Feb. 15, an asteroid came closer to colliding with the earth than any asteroid before in recent history. The impact would have been catastrophic.

However, earlier that day, a meteor exploded into a blinding fireball above Russia, with the force of 20 atomic bombs, striking fear into the hearts of residents convinced the world was ending. The size of the meteor was about the size of a city bus and traveled at 33,000 miles per hour, what is called hypersonic speed. The results were a shockwave that injured at least 1,200 people and shattered millions of meters of glass in the wintry cold city of Chelyabinsk.

"There was panic. People had no idea what was happening," one of the city residents said. Scientists said the flash of light was brighter than the sun. In the days following, more than 23,000 volunteers and workers would be helping to clean up the aftermath.

Luke 21:25-27 says, "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea, and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then, they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

Shortly after these words, which remind us of what happened in the Ural Mountains of Russia, we read in verses 29-31, "Then He (Jesus) spoke to them a parable: 'Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near.'"

This becomes significant for us as we read through prophecy and take notice of current events in Israel. It has always been considered biblically a type of the fig tree being restored.

Not only did a miracle of history take place when Israel became a born-again, restored nation on May 14, 1948, but during the month of April 2013, in the Jewish calendar, Israel will celebrate it's 65th birthday in modern history. To many in Europe and the world, this was an accident of history that some regret, especially the Islamic nations. But with God, there was no accident but only divine intention to restore the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth and the nations.

That's why it is not only the fig tree budding (which is Israel), but the nations have been budding and putting forth their leaves as well. Verse 36 tells us, "Watch therefore, and pray always ..."

As we see the developments surrounding the Middle Eastern nations, the terror groups and peoples that have sworn themselves to Israel's destruction, we cannot help but notice these very same nations and peoples coming under the hand of God's judgments. In Joel 3:2, the Lord announces that He will enter into judgment "on account of My people, My heritage Israel."

Nations that are seeking to divide up the land of Israel will they themselves become divided. The cover title of the late February/early March issue of *The Economist* magazine, reads, "SYRIA—The death of a country."

Since my last article, the estimates of Syrians killed in the two-year civil war are now thought to be 90,000 and counting, with more dead bodies all the time. There are now more than 1,000,000 Syrian refugees. The developments are going from bad to worse as Syrian rebel terrorists are threatening Israel's

Golan Heights and the northern border of Israel.

As the meteor took everyone by surprise, there is no telling when a war will break out between the Syrian side of the border and Israel itself. The very people of Syria, under Assad, and even more so under the rebels are vowing Israel's destruction and the taking back of the Golan Heights. But yet, doesn't anyone see that today Syria is being divided and is suffering in a civil war of destruction?

Look at Egypt, as they have suffered recently from crops destroyed by invading locusts, and every week riots are taking place in the streets of Cairo and elsewhere.

Thousands have been arrested, placed in prison and tortured, and Islamic jihadism increases its grip upon the press, the Christian community and anyone who would dare oppose Morsi, the new Egyptian president. In Pakistan, hundreds of Christian homes were burned in the city of Lahore. Hundreds were made homeless, and violence is growing across the Middle Eastern Christian communities from Pakistan to Afghanistan, to Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, Mali, Sudan and Somalia.

And where are the evangelical churches across Europe? Where are the Christians when their brothers and sisters are suffering for their faith or identity as traditional Christians?

But, when it comes to Israel, even the Christian churches are ready to condemn our nation—where Christianity is more safely expressed than anywhere else in the Middle East, and possibly Europe as well. Christians in Europe have been exposed to replacement theology and anti-Semitism, and therefore must purge themselves of this sin if they are to become united in call and purpose. Otherwise, the contagion and curse for despising Israel and the Jews will come on Europe.

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