

## Israel in Prophecy By: Jennifer Sides

Declaring their dependence on May 14, 1948; Israel is the world's only Jewish state with Jerusalem being the capital and largest city. They are the 100<sup>th</sup> smallest country in the world. Speaking of Israel; Ezekiel 36:11 says, "I will multiply upon you man and beast, and they shall increase and bear young; I will make you inhabited as in former times, and do better for you than at your beginnings. Then you shall know that I am the Lord." I believe many of the links my blog provides in the "Israel" section confirm the Lord is bestowing blessings upon His chosen people beyond measure. I will be using a few of those links as examples but I encourage you to be zealous and search out these truths in scripture first hand.

Proof that man would be multiplied upon the land just as Ezekiel 36:11 described began taking place soon after Israel declared their dependence in 1948 with the population increasing from 800,000 to 2,000,000 by 1958. Currently as of 2009 the population of Israel is 7,411,000. In 1952 an estimated 200,000 Jews who infiltrated back into Israel brought with them no possessions and lived in tents. Recently there has been even more confirmation the prophecy of Ezekiel 36:11 is being fulfilled with the "American Dream" slowly slipping away from the fingertips of North Americans as many of them have begun seeking refuge in Israel. For the first time in history the Israeli economy is doing better than the American economy with the Israeli economy growing an average of 5% a year for the past five years. Israel now has the second-largest number of startup companies in the world after the United States and the largest number of NASDAQ-listed companies outside North America. In 2007, Israel had the 44<sup>th</sup>-highest gross domestic product and the 22<sup>nd</sup>-highest gross domestic product per capita (at purchasing power parity) at US\$232.7 billion and US\$33, 299, respectively.

Among other list of impressive accomplishments Israel is considered one of the most advanced countries in Southwest Asia and the Middle East in economic and industrial development. Their chief exports are fruits, vegetables, pharmaceuticals, military technology, and diamonds. Israel is a world leader in water conservation, geothermal energy, cutting edge technology and much more! Israel ranks highest among Middle Eastern countries on the UN human development index and also freedom of the press. Tourism, especially religious tourism, plays another important part in Israel with 2008 being a record breaking year with over 3,000,000 tourists. That is a 30% increase from the year 2007.

Now we all know how bad the global economy is doing as a whole yet Israel seems to be picking up steam at a steady pace. They even have a company called "Agritech" which has taken on a major role to solve the global food crisis. I would say that is quite a huge feat for the 100<sup>th</sup> smallest state in the world! Israel is like David taking on Goliath in the midst of this global economic turmoil! The

list of Israel's accomplishments goes on and on. I encourage you to read the links provided about Israel and really try to understand what is taking place right before the world's very eyes. I have no doubt you will see first hand the Lord at work during these very troublesome and uncertain times. If you think about it Israel has only been a state for 61 years yet they are doing exceedingly well for such a small country. "Why is that?" some might say. It is because the Lord promised He would do it! Remember that 200,000 Israelis started out with no earthly possessions and lived in tents?!?! That is simply a miracle! Amen!

Now I have heard it said and it makes sense to me that when Matthew 24:32 says, ("Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near") that the fig tree represents Israel becoming a state. Chapter 24 as a whole refers to the tribulation, coming of the Son of man and no one knowing the day or the hour. In verse 34 it says that, "This generation will by no means pass away until all these things take place." I personally believe this means the generation which saw Israel become a state will not pass away until the 7 years of Tribulation takes place that is mentioned in the book of Revelation.

There is more scriptural confirmation that Israel will be the productive country foretold about in Ezekiel 36:11. It can be found just two chapters over in Ezekiel 38:12, 13 with chapters 38 and 39 being the main focus as a whole. I encourage you to read those chapters since I am not going to cover it all...just the main points I am trying to make. There will be countries who will invade Israel in verses 12 and 13 of Chapter 38. Their mission will be to attack the Israeli people and acquire their earthly goods. It says in verse 4 of Chapter 38 that those countries will have a hook in their mouths and be lead out with all their armies. I am not sure how those armies will be lead out but I do have three scenarios.

First of all, it may have to do with the global economy getting much worse for those countries and Israel being much more productive. Remember; Israel is already one of the most productive countries in the Middle East. This is no different than the Palestinians coveting and trying to take land from the Israelites that does not belong to them; which brings me to my second point. Many countries have taken it upon themselves to tell Israel how to run their country by giving them ultimatums on how they need to stop building settlements in their own God given territory. Even more disheartening is an article dated June 22, 2009 on the [www.america.gov](http://www.america.gov) website proclaiming the results of a poll taken recently by Americans. It claims the percentage of Americans growing impatient with the Israeli people building settlements on their own territory is on the rise. This is just another example of how America has been shaken off the foundation of its' Godly heritage. A world-wide percentage of people along with so many of the countries leaders who are already rallying against Israel to divide their land may spark a war far greater than one that may occur with Iran.

Third, there is no doubt tensions are flaring up in Israel like never before. Recent developments confirm Israel is working on offensive and defensive strategies to face whatever might happen in the not so distant future. On May 31, 2009 Israel held its biggest civil defense drill in their history. In recent weeks Benjamin Netanyahu has been asking world leaders for permission to fly over their countries to invade Iran over their nuclear facilities. Israel wants to take out those areas of Iran before Iran tries to take them out. God only knows; Israel could fly over air space that a country did or did not grant them permission to fly over and that country along with several others may use it as an excuse to attack Israel and attempt to take everything they own. A good example to illustrate this point would be how it was said recently that Saudi Arabia granted Israel permission to fly in their air space to attack Iran. On July 7, 2009 Saudi Arabia denied the claims. So what would've happened if Israel had flown over Saudi Arabia before the claims had been denied? Also, on July 18, 2009 Israeli warships rehearsed for Iran attacks in the Red Sea.

I have every reason to believe there is the grave possibility that Israel will follow through with their plans to disarm Iran. Those beliefs stem from previous attempts in Israel's past to launch similar attempts. Here are a few examples. On June 7, 1981, Israel heavily bombed Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor in Operation Opera, disabling it. Israeli intelligence had suspected Iraq was intending to use it for weapons development. In 1982, Israel intervened in the Lebanese Civil War to destroy the bases from which the Palestine Liberation Organization launched attacks and missiles at northern Israel. On September 6, 2007, the Israeli Air Force launched Operation Orchard in Syria, bombing what it suspected to be a nuclear site.

There are many signs to focus on when it comes to end times events. Most importantly remember that the main focus will revolve around Jerusalem, Israel which is the center point of much of Bible prophecy. With those things said, I believe there will be at least two major wars between Israel and those countries mentioned in Ezekiel Chapters 38 and 39 during our lifetime or generation. Yes, the Bible says, "There will be wars and rumors of war" in Mark 13:7 but there are specific wars to watch for. No doubt there will be the war of Daniel 9:25-27 which takes place in the middle of the 7 ½ years that will mark the beginning of the "Great Tribulation" spoken of in Matthew chapter 24. Reference is also made to it in Luke 21:20-24. It states, "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know the desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which were written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

As I mentioned in the previous paragraph; Luke 21:20 says that once Jerusalem is surrounded by armies the desolation will be near. The desolation it is referring to can be found in Daniel 9:27 (see also Matthew 24:15) after the middle of the 7 years of tribulation which will also be in the middle of the 7 year peace covenant Israel makes with many. After Jerusalem is made desolate the Antichrist will be revealed as stated in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2:3-4. He will do so by sitting as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians states in verse 2:2,3 that Christ will not come until the falling away comes first, and the son of man is revealed. "Falling away" in the Greek means military rebellion. Therefore, Christ will not return until the armies have surrounded and made Jerusalem desolate. Without knowing what "falling away" means I believe it is still clear those events have to take place before Jesus returns. I believe Matthew, Mark and Luke all give the exact order of the events which will take place.

I promise I am not trying to be confusing on this next example. I just see a couple of different scenarios on the following two verses. The second or first war, it is really hard to say, is the one I referred to in Ezekiel Chapters 38 and 39 which may also be tied into the final war in Revelation 20:6-10 where God and Magog surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city Jerusalem. I have heard it said those two wars are one in the same. Whatever the case may be that war could happen after the 7 ½ years of tribulation. One thing is for sure – we need to be watching for the signs of Jesus coming. They were given to us when the disciples ask Jesus specifically in Matthew 24:3, "What will be the sign of Your coming and the end of the age?" Jesus answered them at that moment because He did not want them to be blind about what the future would hold. Now I know the things I have written about in this article did not take place during their lifetime but each of them did have to face great personal tribulations of their own as 11 out of 12 of them were martyred. We may not know the day or the hour in which Jesus will return just as He does not; but in Matthew chapter 24 we are cautioned to watch and be ready.

In closing, just remember Luke 21:35-36 says, "It will come as a snare on all those who dwell, on the face of the earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." Whatever you do don't be like the scoffers who in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:3 walked according to their own lusts saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" We are living in a day and age where we can't afford to rule out what may be the very signs we were instructed to watch for! We are also instructed in Psalm 122:6 to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. The first 3 ½ years of the tribulation may seem like Jerusalem has peace once and for all but it will really be like a smokescreen. Satan is running out of time and is devising a plan in which he will use the antichrist along with many others to try and fulfill his evil schemes. You can't be a Christian and not be for the Jews. We as Christians have been grafted into the vine as described in Romans Chapter 11 having become one in Christ ultimately known as the "Bride of Christ." So I encourage

you to pray for the peace of Jerusalem which will not be until all things are made new in Revelation Chapter 21 when the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven. He will then wipe away every tear, there will be no more death, no more pain, or sorrow, nor crying! Amen!

In the meantime -  
Watch and pray,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Sider". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D".