

Today's News in Light of the Bible

PROPHETIC *Newsletter*

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A Message from Dr. Ed Hindson

The past month has been one of great challenge for many Americans dealing with the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. While there are certainly physical factors involved in the spread of this disease, we must also recognize God is warning us of even greater judgments to come in the future. This should be no surprise in light of America's (indeed the world's) continual rejection of God's will and purposes for the human race.



DR. ED HINDSON

I have often been asked: What will it take for America to have a spiritual awakening and revival of biblical truth? We have wandered so far away from God that ordinary calls for repentance often fall on deaf ears and hard hearts. I have often responded that it unfortunately will take: 1. A major war 2. Economic collapse 3. Biblical plague

God warned His people Israel that they would lose His blessing and experience "all these cursed will come upon you" (Deuteronomy 28:15), which include "consumption, fever, inflammation, etc. (28:22) America is not a covenant nation, nor

theocracy as was Israel. Therefore, we are not automatically guaranteed God's blessing or cursing as were they.

Nevertheless, the basic spiritual principles of obedience and disobedience apply to all nations as the prophet Isaiah (34:1) declared: "Come near, ye nations, to hear and hearken ye people: let the earth hear and all that is therein; the world and all things that come forth of it."

America cannot keep running away from God, rejecting His laws and moral principles and continue promoting an immoral lifestyle to the rest of the world and then expect God to come to our rescue in spite of ourselves! While many innocent people unfortunately suffer the consequences of such illnesses, we must take our national responsibility seriously.

Please stand with us as we call America to turn and seek the Lord. While we take every human precaution, He is the only One who ultimately can protect and deliver us. Please join with us in prayer for God's grace, mercy and protection for believers everywhere. Pray also for His mercy toward unbelievers who need to come to faith now more than ever before while there is still time and opportunity to seek the Lord. — PNL

This month, Dr. Hindson's speaking schedule is located on page 5 of this newsletter. You are invited to attend if in the area.

Tensions Continue to Rise in Syria

Russian-backed Syrian forces have advanced into Idlib, forcing hundreds of thousands of refugees to flee into Turkey.

Under the direction of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, forces have devastated the area. The Idlib region, near the border with Turkey, is the last rebel-held bastion in



Syria. Tensions continue to rise as this has caused Turkey to send more troops and tanks into the region in response.

The push by Assad's forces into towns and villages in the province has uprooted more than a half-million people, many of whom have been displaced several times throughout the eight-year civil war.

Turkey, who has backed the rebels, has been actively involved in the region to both limit the flow of refugees into their own country and to eliminate Assad from power. This has led to some direct conflict between Turkish and Syrian troops, with at least eight Turkish and 13 Syrian soldiers being killed. While war has not officially begun, if tensions continue, it could lead to a war between Syria—with Russian support—and Turkey.

Russian and Syrian planes have pounded hospitals, clinics and schools in Idlib, causing civilians to pack their belongings into cars, taxis or pickup trucks and flee the region towards the Turkish border.

“If they stay, they run the risk of falling victim to the indiscriminate violence taking place in urban areas. If they leave, they

have nowhere to go. The shelters can't accommodate everyone, and it is more and more challenging for humanitarians to reach

them and meet their needs,” said Lorenzo Redalie, head of the Aleppo office of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Turkey, which has been monitoring a cease-fire in the

rebel region, has protested the government assault, calling it a violation of the truce it negotiated with Russia. In recent weeks, Turkey sent in troops and equipment to reinforce monitoring points and has also deployed forces around other towns threatened by the Syrian advance.

Video evidence shows a long line of Turkish armored vehicles and trucks, including tanks, moving into rebel-controlled rural areas of the province. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the new troops were deployed west of the town of Saraqib. It was the fifth known deployment of new troops into Syria by Turkish forces.

Marta Hurtado, a U.N. Human Rights spokeswoman, stated, “It appears foreign powers are battling for territorial and political gains, while blatantly disregarding their obligation to protect civilians.” Even after the evacuations, there are still nearly three million Syrian civilians living in this war-torn region.

The region is a hotbed for activity between Turkey and Syria. Russia, by backing Syria, wants to gain influence into the region and

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Iran threatens to destroy tomb of Esther and Mordechai

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is raising concerns over unconfirmed reports that authorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran are threatening the destruction of the tomb of Esther and Mordechai. These recent threats are a response to President Trump's Middle-East peace plan, which Iran has vehemently opposed, arguing it favors Israel over Palestine.

The tomb is believed by some to be the resting place of the Old Testament Queen Esther and her relative, Mordechai. Esther was the queen of the Persian King Ahasuerus.

She is credited with helping save the Jewish people from being massacred. It is a popular pilgrimage site for Jews and Christians in Iran.

"USCIRF is troubled by reported threats to the tomb of Esther and Mordechai in Hamedan, Iran," USCIRF stressed in a tweet. "[USCIRF] emphasizes the Iranian government's responsibility to protect religious sites."

The Alliance for Rights of All Minorities in Iran posted on social media, "Iranian authorities are threatening to destroy the historic tomb of Ester and Mordechai in Hamedan and convert the site to a consular office for Palestine.

"According to covering reports, members of Iranian Basij, a paramilitary unit, attempted to raid the historic site in an act of revenge against the Israeli Palestinian peace plan by President Trump," their Facebook post added.

This is not be the first time the tomb of Esther and Mordechai has been threatened. As the

Brooklyn-based *Jewish Press* reported, a group of Basij members from Abu Ali Sina University threatened to destroy the tomb in 2010 even though the tomb was labeled a national heritage site in 2008.

Additionally, the *Jewish Press* noted that authorities in Iran downgraded the status of the tomb in 2011 and removed a sign indicating that it was a pilgrimage site.

"The threat of the tomb's destruction highlights Iran's Jewish history and community. But it also runs parallel to several challenges that

Iranian Christians face, as many of their charges following arrest are phrased within a framework of terms that connect them to Zionism," the watchdog group International Christian Concern explained in a report.

Several sites in Syria and Iraq sacred to Christians and Jews have been targeted over the years by radical Muslims. In 2014, the Islamic State destroyed the tomb of Jonah in Iraq. In the Muslim mindset, anything that occurred prior to the founding of Islam is not true history and is open for destruction, especially Jewish and Christian sites and relics.

Iran ranks as the ninth-worst country in the world for Christian persecution, according to Open Doors USA's 2020 World Watch List. Religious minorities are regularly arrested for worshiping in house churches and Muslim converts to Christianity are severely persecuted.

— PNL



PRAY: Pray the Islamic forces in control of Iran will stop persecuting Christians and they will stop destroying priceless Jewish and Christian relics and sites.



Workers at a small Iranian factory near Khomein have a strange product that they make, American and Israeli flags. One might wonder why Iranians would be making flags of their two most hated nations? It is simple; they are made so that they can be used and burned by protesters. The company that makes the flags is called Diba Parcham Khomein and serves as a major producer of the flags burned by protesters at pro-government rallies. Such flag burnings are a sign of support for Iran's embattled clerical rulers and a flashback to the iconic images of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The factory itself is in the suburban village of Heshmatieh, where staffers first dye the blue canton containing the 50 white stars of the American flag on linen before dyeing its seven red stripes. The flags then hang to dry in the factory.

On the Israeli flags, the phrase "Death to Israel" is written in Farsi. While the company also makes other items, such as banners bearing Islamic phrases for religious and official occasions across the country, one cannot help but be shocked when seeing the U.S. and Israeli flags.

While this is not the main source of income for the company, which makes approximately 1.5 million flags per year, it does annually

produce almost 6,000 American, British and Israeli flags. These flags are all sold to protesters.

The factory owner, Abolfazi Khanjani, identified that in recent years, production of the U.S. flags has tripled. Khanjani said that in past years he was unhappy the flags were being burned. But, after the death of Iran General Qassem Soleimani, he no longer is concerned about burning the flags and takes no responsibility for how they are used after purchase. He commented, "Does the production of U.S. flags for burning pose any danger to anyone? Does it hurt anyone? My answer is no. It is an insult at worst. But what about the production of weapons, bombs and drones for terror that have been used against our country's general?"

Khanjani's sister Azam, who works at the factory, is delighted the flags will be desecrated. She said, "The martyrdom of our general was a big torment for us and this year as I sewed every flag, I was excited that they were going to be burned. My feeling is just hatred when I sew them. It does not give me a good feeling."

However, Khanjani still hopes for better relations between Iran and the United

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US Warship Seizes Iranian Weapons, Including Surface-to-air Missiles

United States officials have confirmed that a U.S. Navy warship intercepted Iranian-made weapons from a vessel in the Arabian Sea. Crew members from the USS Normandy seized a huge cache of weapons from a dhow—a small vessel with lateen sails—while conducting maritime security operations.

The weapons and weapon components were intended for delivery to Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen, according to officials. Iran has consistently sent missiles and munitions to their proxies throughout the Middle East.

For example, Hezbollah, an Iranian proxy in Lebanon, has received hundreds if not thousands of missiles in preparation of future use against Israel.

Among the weapons seized were 150 “Dehlavieh” anti-tank guided missiles (ATGM), which are Iranian-manufactured copies of Russian Kornet ATGMs. Other Iranian-designed and manufactured items were three surface-to-air missiles, thermal imaging weapon scopes, components for

unmanned aerial and surface vessels, as well as munitions and advanced weapons parts. This haul consists of incredibly heavy weaponry for the Houthi rebels. They could never accumulate such equipment themselves without Iranian support and backing.

Iran has been distributing these types of weapons throughout the Middle East with regularity. This is dangerous for two reasons.

First, these types of weapons make groups like the Houthi rebels much more dangerous than they would be without support.

These forces also do not have the military training in many cases to use these weapons properly and create greater safety hazards. They, in many cases, use the weapons to attack civilian targets and cause chaos within nations that do not have the military capabilities or political capital or desire to eliminate the groups, such as in Yemen and Lebanon.

Second, they also allow Iran to increase

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DR. HINDSON'S APRIL SPEAKING DATES:

APRIL 19

First Baptist Church
3015 Moores Lane
Texarkana, TX 75503
903-831-6000

APRIL 21

Shepherd's Theological Seminary
Regional Pastor's Fellowship
@ Colonial Baptist Church
6051 Tryon Road • Cary, NC 27518
919-233-9100

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sees Iran and Syria as their strongest allies. The affected region in Syria is not that far from the northern border of Israel. Thus, if tensions break out in that area, it is highly likely Israel would get caught in the crossfire. This could lead to

intervention by United States on behalf of its ally, Israel. Iran also has interest in the region with the hope they can continue their advance against Israel. Thus, tensions continue to mount with little end in sight. — *PNL*

PRAY: Pray as tensions continue to mount without an end in sight. Pray for peace and for the protection of innocent civilians in harm's way.

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States and that one day his flags will be used for different purposes, perhaps even as gifts between the nations.

Khanjani said burning the flags offered Iranians a direct way to express their anger at U.S. policies. These types of actions and

protests show the attitudes of many within Iran who hate both the United States and Israel.

Iran is experiencing a failing economy because of sanctions and their hatred runs deep. It seems like only a matter of time before an escalation in military usage. — *PNL*

PRAY: Pray for hearts to be changed so peaceful solutions can be explored and the deeply-rooted hatred will not lead to military escalation.

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their influence and quick strike ability throughout the region. For example, the Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for the attacks against the Saudi Arabian oil supplies late last year. However, the United States and Great Britain have both asserted Iran was ultimately responsible for the attacks because they both supplied and directed the attacks. Proxies enable Iran to have more options for attacks on their rivals and enemies.

Many of the weapons were identical to those seized by the USS Forest Sherman in the Arabian Sea in November. Those weapons were also determined to be of Iranian origin and assessed to be destined for the Houthis in Yemen – a clear violation of a UN Security Council

Resolution that prohibits direct or indirect supply, sale, or transfer of weapons to the Houthis.

Once again, this shows Iran is not concerned with UN resolutions and violates them in order to advance their own political agendas.

The seized weapons are now in U.S. custody awaiting final disposition. The assessment of the material will be an interagency and international effort. Partner nations and organizations have been invited to inspect the cache.

Iran does nothing to calm tensions in the Middle East. Their officials regularly call for the destruction of both the United States and Israel. They have engaged in direct confrontation with Saudi Arabia. And, on top of all this, they are trying to reach nuclear capabilities. — *PNL*

PRAY: Pray for tensions in the Middle East to subside and for Iran to turn back from their continued desire to escalate conflict in the region.