

FROM OUR PASTOR

March 5, 2016

Sabbath Greetings to Everyone!

Jesus Christ foretold that we would hear of “wars and rumors of wars” in the days before His return to this earth. The news media in our time is focused on the “wars of words” going on in our primary elections, but seems to be ignoring the news of the real wars that are going to erupt as the year progresses.

The cease-fire in Syria, which began on Feb. 27th, is not a solution, and in fact many believe it was agreed to just so the sides could resupply and get ready for the next onslaught. Some Syrians fear the worst is yet to come. Assad wants nothing less than a return to his total control of the country and the Russians aircraft and equipment continue to pour into Syria while the world watches and temporizes. Anyone remember Spain and China in 1936?

In Iraq, the Iraqi army—such as it is with US assistance-plans to begin taking back cities and territory held by ISIS. The big city of Mosul is the next great prize. BBC news reported Friday that, “8 to 12 Iraqi brigades are being prepared for the offensive. Nobody imagines this will be either fast or easy.” ISIS is equipped with modern US weapons left behind by the Iraqi army when they fled at the sight of ISIS several years ago. US taxpayers are probably not pleased to have paid for the weapons used on both sides, but most don’t care so long as they can watch March Madness on TV. The Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford noted, “operations against Mosul have already started. . .we’re isolating Mosul.”

So we have two wars in the volatile region. . . no wait!! We have another-Libya. The consequences of the short-sighted US policy towards Libya are now resulting in another regional war. In fact, US warplanes are already targeting and bombing in Libya, so we are at war again and no one seems to know or care. There are basketball games to watch and teams to be on.

BBC News also reported, “There have been sporadic US air strikes against IS targets in Libya – most recently one launched in mid-February by US warplanes from a base in the UK, that struck in IS training camp outside Sabratha, some 50

miles west of Tripoli. But in Libya too there have been hints of much more going on beneath the surface. Libya, given its lawlessness and its proximity to Europe, is fast becoming a major security concern for the US, the EU and NATO.”

Meanwhile, lunacy is always on display in North Korea. Dictator Kim Jong-un recently conducted a nuclear test and military exercises and this week said North Korea’s nuclear weapons should be ready for use “at any time”, state media reported. He told military leaders that North Korea would revise its military posture to be ready to launch pre-emptive strikes, the Korean Central News Agency said. Really?? Pre-emptive strikes against whom?

After the basketball season is over there may actually be a war somewhere in the world large enough to be covered in the US media. No matter, we must continually be mindful of Jesus Christ’s words in Luke 21:36, **“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.”**

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