

FROM OUR PASTOR

April 15, 2017

Days of Unleavened bread Sabbath greetings to everyone!

While God's people are quietly keeping the Days of Unleavened bread and thinking about how to put sin out of our lives, the world is on overdrive. Last week the US bombed a Syrian air base after chemical weapons were used in the ongoing mini Vietnam quagmire in Syria. All sides deny using the chemical gas, which killed a number of children, so no one seems to know for sure what is going on. What we do know is that in the past four years the US has flown nearly 8,000 bombing missions into Syria and targeted three different groups--ISIS, Al Kaida, and Assad's forces. These groups are fighting each other so we apparently don't know what side we are fighting on. As least the Russians know they are supporting Assad against the other sides.

You might want to research the two major oil and gas pipelines that are planned to go across Syria. Some observers feel that the Sunni and Shia Moslems are fighting over territory for the pipelines to benefit their host countries, Saudi Arabia and Iran. Turkey is also in on the fighting and is growing more nationalist and belligerent by the day. Many Turkish citizens are emigrating to other countries due to the fear of where their nation is headed.

This week in Afghanistan, the U.S. for the first time dropped what is called the "Mother Of All Bombs" (MOAB) on ISIS caves and tunnels in eastern Afghanistan. This is America's most massive non-nuclear weapon and has never been used before. The GBU-43 bomb weighs 21,600 pounds, is 30 feet long, contains 11 tons of explosives and carries a mile-wide blast radius. It can create a blast crater more than 300 meters wide after being dropped from a Hercules MC-130 cargo plane. Since a conventional bomb of this size has never been used before, this event sends a clear message.

These two bombings come at a time in the early Trump presidency when tensions are rising with Russia over its role in Syria, where ISIS has its headquarters. The MOAB explosion will also send a saber-rattling message to North Korea and Iran that rogue states' nuclear-weapons ambitions could be met with brute force.

Trump said of North Korean dictator Kim Jong-Un: "I don't know if this sends a message. It doesn't make any difference if it does or not... North Korea's a problem. The problem will be taken care of."

So we have two real wars--Syria and Afghanistan--and two potential wars--North Korea and Iran--to deal with. Anyone who thinks that "an era of peace" has arrived is sadly mistaken.

President Trump has been labeled a "populist" and compared to a president 184 years earlier. In his 1833 Inauguration Speech, the seventh president of the United States,

Andrew Jackson, spoke these words, "Finally, it is my more fervent prayer to that Almighty Being before whom I now stand, and who has kept us in His hands from the infancy of our Republic to the present day, that He will so overrule all my intentions and actions and inspire the hearts of my fellow-citizens that we may be preserved from dangers of all kinds and continue forever a united and happy people."

Andrew Jackson knew that he could make mistakes, so he asked his Creator to overrule him when needed for the sake of the nation. Will the current president exercise caution and look to our God for guidance? I hope he is daily reading God's words (Deuteronomy 17 : 18-19) and asking for wisdom and guidance. The world is a dangerous place and becoming more so every passing week. As King David wrote years ago, " Thou shall guide me with thy counsel,.. " Psalm 73:24 and " Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." Psalm 33:12

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