

From Our Pastor

May 12, 2018

Sabbath Greetings to Everyone!

King Jehoram of Israel, a son of Ahab, asked an age-old question. "Now a watchman stood on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he came, and said, "I see a company of men." And Jehoram said, "Get a horseman and send him to meet them, and let him say, 'Is it peace?' " (2 Kings 9:17)

The world is asking the same question this week: "Will there be peace or war?" Peace, it appears, is breaking out in Korea. The Korean peninsula was thought to be at the edge of a nuclear war only a few months ago. The release Wednesday of three Americans once held as prisoners by North Korea was a goodwill gesture by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un that surprised the world. In the coming weeks there will be an historic summit with President Trump that the world will watch closely. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met with the North Korean leader during his nearly 13-hour visit to Pyongyang to plan the meeting with Trump about denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

A third of a world away, a battle of rockets and missiles took place between Israel and Iran--NOT between Israel and an Iranian supported terrorist group such as Hezbollah or Hamas. The "elephant in the room" in that disputed land for years has been the buildup of Iranian forces in Syria, with the well-known intent of those forces to attack Israel when they have a large enough army and weapons prepared to win the coming war. Apparently that time may be close.

Tehran and Jerusalem have exchanged fire in Syria so pretending they are not at war is no longer possible, even for the most diehard peacenicks. The mullahs controlling Iran have made clear statements that they intend to "destroy Israel" for the past 25 years, and Israel has responded that they will defend themselves in the face of any threat.

Breaking Israel News reported this week that some religious leaders are sounding the alarm. "Rabbi Pinchas Winston, a prolific end-times theorist who has penned 50 books, has predicted a conflict is on the brink. "Things are about to get Biblical," Rabbi Winston warned.

Of the past 3,400 years of recorded history, humans have been entirely at peace for 268 of them, or just 8 percent of the time. At least 108 million people were killed in wars in the twentieth century alone. Estimates for the total number killed in wars throughout all of human history range from 150 million to 1 billion, but the number is likely much higher since we lack many historical records of wars in Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

There are currently eighteen ongoing wars resulting in a death toll of over one thousand each, so this year will not be added to the list of peaceful ones. As much as we

appreciate the efforts at peace, such as the current initiative in Korea, it does not appear possible that the world will be at peace any time soon due to man's efforts.

Jesus Christ admonished each of us to become peacemakers. In the most famous speech ever given, he said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God," (Matthew 5:9) so each one of us should try to live a peaceful life and maintain peace and good will in our relationships. But real peace will not come to the entire earth until the one who spoke those famous words returns to set up a world government that will establish and guarantee peace for all.

The coming time of peace was promised long ago by the prophet Isaiah. "For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. (Isaiah 9: 6-7)

So, will there be Peace? In the future "YES" but not due to the efforts of man. Let us all work to lead peaceful lives as we await the return of our King and Savior who will bring peace to all the earth.

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