

From Our Pastor

December 8, 2018

Sabbath Greetings to Everyone!

Europe is becoming a violent place. Burning vehicles and throwing objects at police are the norm in the news. This week in Athens and Thessaloniki rioting broke out here as masked youths at barricades pelted the police with homemade firebombs. Apparently the rallies were for the 10th anniversary of a fatal police shooting of a teenager. Protesters lobbed firebombs and chunks of concrete hacked out of the sidewalks at riot police, who fired back tear gas. A water cannon was used to douse fires in cars and dumpsters and on barricades and a building's balcony.

The riots and violence in France is reaching a new level. The AP reported, "PARIS (AP) — Anticipating a fourth straight weekend of violent protests, France on Friday mobilized armored vehicles and thousands of police, cordoned off Paris' broad boulevards and made plans to shut down tourist sites like the Eiffel Tower and Louvre. The heavy security will put central Paris in a virtual lockdown Saturday against what the interior minister called "radicalized and rebellious people," who authorities believe will join members of the "yellow vest" movement that has been holding anti-government demonstrations.

Nationwide, about 89,000 police will fan out in the streets, an increase from 65,000 last weekend, when more than 130 people were injured and over 400 arrested as the protests degenerated into the worst street violence to hit the French capital in decades.

While the news reporting blames "youth" and "anger over taxes," much of the ongoing car burning and ever-increasing violence in and around Paris involves Muslim immigrants from North Africa, who have established enclaves around the city where Shari Law is enforced and French authorities are not allowed. The increasing violence in France appears to have no solution.

While rarely in the news, the nations that are South of the Rio Grande are leading the world in murder rates and lack of law enforcement. Latin America accounts for a third of the world's murders—about 400 a day, with almost half of them in Brazil. Yet throughout the region, less than 20% are solved. The numbers are worse in Brazil and Mexico, where less than one murder in ten is solved. In São Paulo, the region's biggest city, more than half of victims from armed robberies don't even bother reporting those crimes to the police, according to a study by Insper, a Brazilian business school. When justice is done, it can be infuriatingly slow. Brazil's Supreme Court, the last resort for even mundane disputes, currently sits on about 44,000 cases dating back to 1969.

The populace is taking vengeance on its own, often punishing the innocent. With little faith in the police or the courts to bring criminals to justice, mobs routinely kill suspected lawbreakers in spontaneous attacks. In Brazil, mobs now kill—or try to kill—more than one suspected lawbreaker a day, according to University of São Paulo sociologist José

de Souza Martins, Brazil's leading expert on the vigilantes. That figure is both the highest in the world, and more than at any point in Brazil's history, he said.

About 1500 years after the Earth was restored and Adam and Eve were created, the Great Creator observed that "the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. (Genesis 6:11)." He told Noah, " The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (Verse 13). Almost everywhere one looks today, violence on the earth is increasing. How long until it is filled?

Jesus Christ predicted that the conditions just prior to His return would be a repeat of the conditions before the flood. He plainly stated, " As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. (Luke 17:26). He went further, explaining that the violence and evil would become so intense that the Creator will have to intervene in order to prevent mankind from killing everyone. " Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved. (Matthew 24:22).

Thankfully, the Creator God will intervene and stop the violence on one day in the future. May that day come soon.

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