

## From Our Pastor February 2, 2019

Sabbath Greetings to Everyone!

There was great celebration when US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev signed the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. The New York Times reported, "With fervent calls for a new era of peaceful understanding, President Reagan and Mikhail S. Gorbachev today signed the first treaty reducing the size of their nations' nuclear arsenals." The agreement required the United States and the Soviet Union to eliminate and permanently forswear all their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers. The treaty marked the first time the superpowers had agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals, eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons, and utilize extensive on-site inspections for verification. As a result of the INF Treaty, the United States and the Soviet Union destroyed a total of 2,692 missiles.

The United States first alleged in July of 2014 that Russia was in violation of the treaty. Subsequent State Department assessments in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 repeated these allegations. In March 2017, a top U.S. official confirmed press reports that Russia had begun deploying the prohibited missiles. True to form, Russia denied that it is in violation of the agreement and accused the United States of being in noncompliance.

No longer willing to ignore the obvious, the United States announced Friday that it was pulling out of the landmark nuclear arms control treaty with Russia. President Donald Trump said Russia has been secretly developing "a prohibited missile system that poses a direct threat to our allies and troops abroad." He said the U.S. had adhered to the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty since it was signed in 1987, but Russia has not. "We cannot be the only country in the world unilaterally bound by this treaty, or any other," Trump said in a written statement.

The history of Nuclear Weapons limiting agreements with the Soviet/Russians illustrates the futility of making treaties with nations with which we share almost no foundational principles. In a speech on "The Tasks of Economic Executives" (4 February 1931) Joseph Stalin said " (We) he (have) to resort to intrigues, lies and ...Tools" in the operation of the state." Tools refers to deception and dissembling. One has to wonder why our leaders make agreements with a nation founded on lies and deception. Is it any wonder that of the eight such treaties between the US and Russia (SALT 1,2 START 1,2,3 SORT, IMF, NEW START) only one is still in effect, and that in a dubious way?

The first half of the Bible (Genesis 1:1-Psalm 118:8) ends with these words, " It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man." The second half of the God's word begins with a repeat of the same truth, " It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes. " (Psalm 118:9). The same warning about trusting in mensa is given in other places. The prophet Jeremiah thundered to the kings of Judah, "Cursed is the man who trusts in man". (Jeremiah 17:5) and King David, who ruled Israel for 40

years and fought many wars admonished, "Do not put your trust in princes, Nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help." (Psalm 146:3).

There will be more agreements and alliances in the future. In fact, the Bible shows clearly that an alliance of worldwide proportions is coming. "It was (will be) granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation." (Revelation 13:9) Agreements and treaties will give this man and his government virtual control of everything. But it will be a flawed and short-lived system. Daniel tells us that that system will be fragile, "As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay." (Daniel 2:43) Thankfully, that One-World government will only last for forty-two months (Revelation 13:5).

The good news is that, at the end of that terrible time, the God of Heaven will establish a kingdom that will indeed rule all the earth in righteousness and peace! "In the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44)

Once the Kingdom of God has come to the earth nations will no longer have a need for treaties or alliances. No more deception and lies signed on paper and celebrated, only later to be broken and discarded.

Psalm 96:13 foretells, "He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth."

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