

How Soon is World War III?

by J.K. McKee posted 01 May, 1999 www.tnnonline.net

“You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for *those things* must take place, but *that* is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are *merely* the beginning of birth pangs” (Matthew 24:6-8).

In Matthew 24:6-8, Yeshua tells us that during the time before His Second Coming, we “will hear of wars and rumors of wars.” He later tells us in Matthew 24:15-20 that the key sign of the end is the Abomination of Desolation, prophesied by Daniel (Daniel 9:27). However, foundational to all of this is that the Messiah says, “Behold, I have told you in advance” (Matthew 24:25).

Yeshua has told us that we have been warned in advance in regard to the prophesied End of the Age, as one must remember that hearing of “wars and rumors of wars” is only “the beginning of birth pangs” (Matthew 24:6, 8), and there are more many more events to occur before He returns. However, some of the most profound events that have changed the face of Planet Earth have been wars—and the phenomenon dubbed by many as “World War III” is no exception.

The Conspiracy?

No time has ever been as intriguing as the time we are currently living in. Daniel 12:4 states that in the Last Days “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” Such things are already occurring today as airways are being continually crowded with planes and with the computer exponentially increasing human knowledge. There are too many signs which indicate that life on Planet Earth will continue to become increasingly more complex. Although we will not be presumptuous saying that the end will occur on a particular date or timetable, Believers should recognize that we are approaching the return of our Lord, as the events He prophesied would occur in Matthew 24 are being staged to occur.

As every pre-millennial student should be aware, the Middle East is the focal point of Bible prophecy and the end-times. The Abomination of Desolation occurs in Jerusalem (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15-20; Mark 13:14-19) and the Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:14-16) occurs in Northern Israel. A major war is prophesied to occur in Ezekiel 38 & 39. Some suggest this war, whose epicenter is in the Mideast, may also be worldwide.

Many followed NATO's bombings of Kosovo and Yugoslavia in Spring 1999 very closely. Two countries, Russia and China, officially protested the bombings, and Russia specifically threatened sending troops to the region. However, could there be powers behind the world scene orchestrating such events to occur? Although both states “threatened World War III” against the United States and Europe, nothing happened. But does this mean that such an event will one day not occur? Is there a bigger picture we must consider?

The attitude of many is simply that conspiracy does not exist. History and Scripture, however, prove otherwise. Although many others try to find conspiracy in virtually all world events, which is improper, secret negotiations and dealings between countries and various powerful entities have always occurred. In Psalm 2:2-5, we are told, “The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, ‘Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!’ He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying.”

This Scripture states that “the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed” (Psalm 2:2, KJV). Is this a conspiracy? Yes. Does Scripture teach that a conspiracy exists on Planet Earth that is opposed to God? Yes. Recall the greatest conspiracy in the history of the Bible: **Satan's intent to overthrow God.**

Just as Satan wanted to overthrow the Almighty, Revelation tells us that Satan will ultimately control the entire planet through a man known as the antimessiah/antichrist. If this is to happen as the Bible predicts, would it then be logical to assume that a conspiracy exists in our world to bring about world government?

“[T]hey worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?’ There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him” (Revelation 13:4-5).

Three World Wars

Some prophecy teachers believe that it will take three world wars to bring about the full fruition of world government. This is primarily based on various Masonic writings and conspiracy theories in regard to world politics and intrigue. Rather than discuss what cannot necessarily be documented, I have chosen to analyze this concept based on the historical pattern of what has occurred after each world war.

It is believed among many that the only purpose of World War I was to bring about the creation of the League of Nations. As we should all recall from history, this organization failed as it had no central leadership. World War I in and of itself was fought as a result of the Central Powers’ (Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire) and the Triple Entente’s (Great Britain, France, Russia) secret alliances. It started with the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, which eventually led to Russia declaring war on Austria-Hungary, Germany declaring war on Russia, and Britain and France declaring war on Germany. The war ceased in 1919 when the United States entered on behalf of Britain. Although “evil” Germany was defeated, the war helped the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, which birthed the Soviet Union, and it triggered the downfall of imperial Germany who was forced to pay billions in hard currency to the victors.

Following World War I, Germany was reconstituted as a republic, but due to the massive payments made to the allies, the paper German deutschemarks were printed on was worth more than the currency itself. Things became so bad in Germany that people had to buy bread with wheelbarrows of marks and some found it cheaper to light fire to the currency than buy wood. As a result of this economic downturn, Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany and World War II started.

The world once again was torn by war from 1939–1945. Although Hitler and the Axis Powers (Germany, Italy, Japan) were defeated, the war had a much more profound affect than World War I. First, the war *only* ended after the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan, one over Hiroshima and the other over Nagasaki. Second, the war created a huge gap between the United States and Soviet Union (who had been allies against Hitler), initiating the Cold War between the West and East (which some analysts believe still exists today *to a certain extent* between post-Soviet Russia and the U.S.). Third, the United Nations was founded as an organization to prevent such wars from occurring again. Fourth, and most important as the Bible is concerned, the modern-day State of Israel was founded as a country in 1948:

“For behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel and Judah.’ The LORD says, ‘I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers and they shall possess it’” (Jeremiah 30:3).¹

One can see what has resulted from World War I and World War II. What could be the potential result of a World War III? Arguably, the two most profound results of the Twentieth Century’s wars have been the creation of the United Nations and the founding of the State of Israel. Could a third world war be responsible for initiating the world government of the antimessiah/antichrist, possibly a European-U.N. conglomerate?²

¹ Other prophecies that have yet to be fulfilled in regard to the Last Days and Israel relate to the complete ingathering of all Israel to the Middle East (Isaiah 11:12-16; Jeremiah 10:6-10; Ezekiel 37:15-28; Zechariah 10:6-10).

² Consult the editor’s article “Revival of the Roman Empire.”

How Can Such Events Occur?

One can certainly say that we live in uncertain times. That means we know things can happen, but not necessarily how or when. However, due to 1999's Kosovo and Yugoslavia bombings, two countries (Russia and China) showed much of their true colors by claiming that NATO may start a world war. Although no such war did occur, the Russians and the Chinese did show that they are serious. If there are any two states on Planet Earth not to offend, it would be these.

The focal point of all end-time prophecy is Jerusalem. The Israelis and Palestinians are approaching a critical time in the Middle East peace process regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state. We do not know how the current peace process will change the world in regard to the Mideast, but we do know that such a hotbed is a perfect place for World War III to begin. It is no surprise that Russia and China have historically been allies to the Muslim world, which in turn is in total opposition to Israel and the West. Some believed that as a result of NATO's Kosovo and Yugoslavia bombings in 1999 World War III could have started in the Balkans. After all, this is the same region where World War I began, although after some study in the Scriptures, I am more inclined to believe that such a conflict will begin in the Middle East.

Many adhere to the theorist notion that a conspiracy exists for World War III to have occurred by the end of the Twentieth Century. However, the Twentieth Century is now past and such a war has not yet taken place. However, the concept that three world wars will be used to initiate world government does stand as valid, and we would encourage you to remain on guard in regard to pending world conflicts.

Conclusion

As Believers in the Messiah Yeshua, we must always remember that God is in control. According to Daniel 12:1, the archangel Michael currently *restrains* the world from the full control of Satan. Furthermore, we must also remember that not all of Israel has been gathered back into the Middle East per the prophecies of Ezekiel 37, which presumably will occur before the Ezekiel 38 & 39 conflict (World War III?). Yeshua tells us continually to be on guard and to watch:

"Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think *He will*" (Matthew 24:42-44).

In Matthew 24:42-43, Yeshua tells us to be on guard at all times, and His return should not surprise us as a thief or "burglar" (NEB) breaking into a house.

We cannot be sure how soon World War III is. However, we do know that world events suggest that the end is sooner today than it was yesterday. But this is not a matter to be taken lightly. If a world war does occur, billions will die! Quite frankly, we should not want such an event to take place, but the Bible does speak of such calamities. We have to remain level headed, and always be watching.

Ultimately, our Heavenly Father is in control. We know that before the antimessiah can come to power, possibly through a third world war, other prophecies must ensue. So, what are we to do? The Apostle Paul tells us very clearly in 1 Thessalonians 5:4-10:

"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of *the day*, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him."

J.K. McKee (B.A., University of Oklahoma; M.A., Asbury Theological Seminary) is the editor of TNN Online (www.tnnonline.net) and is a Messianic apologist. He is author of several books, including: *The New Testament Validates Torah*, *Torah In the Balance, Volume I*, and *When Will the Messiah Return?* He has also written many articles on the Two Houses of Israel and Biblical theology, and is presently focusing on Messianic commentaries on various books of the Bible.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard, Updated Edition* (NASU), © 1995, published by The Lockman Foundation.

revised 01 September, 2000; 09 July, 2004

edited for spelling/grammar; minor theological fine tuning
10 October, 2006