

It's Spiritual, Part 2

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By M. Wayne Benson

It is Veterans Day weekend as I write this sequel to my previous article entitled, "It's Spiritual." I've just finished binge-watching the series, "Band of Brothers." It being my mother's birthday on Veterans Day, I always think of her and my father who was a veteran of WW II. I guess I'm a bit nostalgic this year, and there's much to ponder about our country.

"Band of Brothers" is a miniseries war drama that follows the history of Easy Company, a parachute regiment of the 101st Airborne division of the U.S. Army. I must give Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg credit for building a storyline that's not based on fictional characters, but on the testimony of real veterans who fought in WW II during horrific battles like Normandy and Bastogne. The most moving episode for me was the depiction of the discovery of a concentration camp near Landsberg, Germany, where the troops free the surviving prisoners. The scene is both horrifying and deeply moving.

Landsberg is but one of a thousand such concentration camps operated by the Nazis in WW II. A walk through any one of them would be enough to convince you that these places were more than a prison. It is a man-created hell for the incarceration and eventual extermination of the entire Jewish race. Yes, there were more than just Jews in these camps. Five million minorities, including various non-German races and other "disposable people" such as the disabled or the homosexuals, were among the incarcerated. But Hitler's "final solution to the Jewish question" went to the next step and resulted in the death of over six million Jews to exterminate them from humanity. Today we call it "the Holocaust."

What could possess the mind of a man like Hitler to be so obsessed with ridding the world of an entire race of people? Much more difficult to understand is how the generals, the politicians, and the religious leaders of an entire nation could rally around the obsession...or, at the very least, turn a blind eye to it. Think of the illogic of squandering the financial resources to run a thousand concentration camps and mass-murder Jews, all the while running a war to take over the world. You would say, "That's insane!" Yes, and it spread like an epidemic mass insanity to an entire nation.

Here is what puzzles me even more than struggling to process the question, "What on earth were they thinking?" The only answer that correlates to any shred of logic is – they weren't...thinking, that is! What happened in the mind of an evil tyrant and, sadly, in the soul of a country was not simply ideological or political. And it certainly wasn't logical. It was strong delusion manipulated by "spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places"¹

Millennia ago, a powerful demonic entity called "the prince of Persia" hovered over the area we call Iraq and Iran today. Such an evil entity must have hovered over Germany as Hitler was rising to power. But Persia, in Daniel 10, had a godly intercessor who

¹ Eph 6:12

fasted and pled with God for 21 days. God's response was to send Michael, the great warring archangel to defeat this ruling demon and his host. Sad to think this but, perhaps, Germany didn't have its own Daniel. No doubt God "looked for a man to stand in the gap but found none."²

The question I have is this: Where is someone to stand in the gap for America today? Is there someone to stand in the gap for Jews? For Israel? It has brought me to my knees. But it may be that I worry more than I pray. That I become irate more than I'm humbled. It's possible to bristle up more than we kneel down while watching the world's insanity.

Once again, astonishingly, here it is...worldwide antisemitism, rage against Israel, as the Jewish people encounter a demonic hatred. Those so inspired make no effort to hide the intent to wipe every Jew from the face of the earth. After a horrific massacre was conducted with such barbaric inhumanity against Jewish people, followed by an onslaught of more than 10,000 rockets³ fired into Israel, thousands of protesters marched to defend the actions of the attackers. I am equally saddened for the plight of the Palestinian people under the control of Hamas as I would have been for the plight of the German people led by Hitler and the Nazis. Both nations elected their terrorist leaders under the delusion that they had their best interests at heart. The Gazans will live with the devastating consequences even as Germany did after WW II.

When we see things in the natural dimension, we need to understand what is happening in the spiritual dimension. Think of the twisted rationale among professors and students in institutions of "higher learning" to side with Hamas and its known objective to annihilate Israel. Protesters are chanting, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" – many of them having no concept that if Palestine spans the area from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean, that means Israel no longer exists. Surely intelligent people would reject the idea of genocide. Yet, within days after the October 7th massacre of Jews, there were thousands of posts saying, "Hitler was right."⁴ This isn't the ravings of a single lunatic, but the mass delusion of thousands.

Let's look at this on a global scale. The United Nations, over the years, has issued 140 resolutions against Israel. By comparison, all other resolutions against all other nations combined was 68!⁵ And not a single one of them included the terrorist organization of Hamas – not even after 10,000 rockets or 1400 murders. Really? Little Israel with its 10 million people, mostly Jews, has "transgressed" far worse than the combined evil of all other nations? One would think such an imbalance would cause world leaders and their U.N. representatives to pause and think for a moment. Ah, but this is not a matter of thought. It's spiritual at its core. Neither good nor evil are a function of the intellect.

² Ezek 22:30

³ Reported by Prime Minister Netanyahu, Fox News, 11-15-2023. Reported 11-9-2023 by www.timesofisrael.com that 9,500 rockets and mortars had been fired since October 7, 2023.

⁴ www.standuptojewishhate.org reports on its recent ad that over 70,000 internet memes have posted that "Hitler was right."

⁵ Source: www.unwatch.org

For years, I wondered about what seemed like extreme prophetic declarations in the Bible about the Last Days. For example, why would powerful nations forge an alliance to make war against a small nation about the size of New Jersey? Conversely, why would powerful nations be threatened by a little nation like Israel? Yet, it is clear that from the beginning of God's promise to Abraham until this very day, Israel will be in the epicenter of controversy...right up until Armageddon. And can we agree that what happens in the Last Days is spiritual? It is the ultimate battle between good and evil.

This isn't about Israel being "good" and all opposing nations "evil." It's about God's promises being fulfilled and Satan's battle to discredit God by destroying God's Word. From the beginning of creation Satan has sought to deflect the worship of God to the worship of himself. Evil is ultimately the face of Satan hating God. Therefore, the object of God's affection would also become the object of Satan's hatred. When God loved and fellowshiped with Adam and Eve, Satan was bent on destroying them. When God chose His "bride" Israel to bring forth the Messiah, Satan was bent on destroying both Israel and the Messiah. Likewise, Satan's hatred for God's New Testament "bride of Christ" is manifested against the church...with a long line of martyrs to prove it.

We cannot control what is happening in Israel. In fact, there is a sense of prophetic inevitability in the drama before our eyes on the world's stage. But what about America? This is where you and I live. Remember childhood lyrics like, "this is my country, land that I love"? Or the words that are replete throughout our government like, "God bless America." Words on national monuments and uttered endlessly by politicians seeking to placate the "religious folk." We've even managed to keep the phrase "in God we trust" on our currency.

Do I shrug my shoulders and relegate what happens to America to the national elections...or doctrinal election? Does America even have a part in End Times prophecy? What is the church's part in that day? What about me...do I have a part? After all, what can a single person do to mitigate the seismic movement of prophetic tectonic plates?

Having travelled extensively, I'm blessed with friends in other countries. But my earthly citizenship is here in America, a country I dearly love. If the prophet Daniel had a responsibility to pray for his nation in captivity, is it not my responsibility to pray for America? And is America also being held captive spiritually?

I've often preached end-times themes about Israel and the prophesied gathering of nations against it. And it's clear that the same prophecies identify a broader, global impact. Most people, whether religious or secular believe in, or have some concept of, an ultimate showdown between the forces of good and evil. The word "Armageddon" has almost become universally understood because of the many books and movies that depict that "final battle." The Bible even describes in ancient or cryptic language the nations or regions that will be involved.

But what of America? Where does this nation fit into all those end-times prophecies? Of course, America didn't exist at the time that the prophecies in the Old and New Testaments were written. But we know from history that the Spirit-inspired writers of scripture looked forward to things that were not yet a reality. From the time of Abraham, God spoke about "things that were not as though they were." So where does America fit in?

I have attached, along with this document, a much more detailed message that I preached last year regarding America and our place in prophecy. In it, I describe America as a "strong man" among nations, and specific ways in which Satan has focused his efforts to "bind the strong man" and "plunder his house"⁶ There are fetters of bondage that have weakened America such as moral decay, governmental ineffectiveness, national disasters or calamities, and economic chaos. But I also conclude with a message of hope about the restoration of the purpose of God for America. I encourage you to read it. It's one of a series of messages on the valleys in the Bible – this one called, "The Valley of Megiddo."

I conclude this article with this word of hope. If Daniel could engage in spiritual warfare that brought heaven's angelic host to the aid of a nation under demonic control,⁷ is it not possible that there should be "Daniels" among us to pray down heaven over America? If Elijah, "a man like us" could defeat evil, interceding with powerful prayers that literally affected the weather,⁸ is there not an Elijah who can change the spiritual atmosphere of America? If Philip's preaching could transform the culture of a city like Samaria, a city despised and rejected, into a place of spiritual renewal so that "there was great joy in that city",⁹ is it not possible that the same gospel can transform the cities of America?

The world is upside down spiritually, and we know it. We need to face the fact that only God, not government, can right the ship. Of course, "good government" as defined by Paul's letter to Timothy is one which allows us to "lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity"¹⁰. Why does God want that? So that the party of our choice can hold power? Or so that we have great economic prosperity? No! It's because "God wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth"¹¹. Apparently, God thinks "good government" is more conducive to that goal. Ask the oppressed Christians in other countries if they would agree!

If the world is, indeed, upside down, then we need to be the Christians of whom they say, "those who have turned the world upside down have come here also"¹². By my calculations...that's right side up!

⁶ Matt 12:29

⁷ Dan 10:18-21

⁸ James 5:16-18

⁹ Acts 8:8

¹⁰ 1 Tim 2:1-4

¹¹ 1 Tim 2:3

¹² Acts 17:6 ESV