

The Sign of the Rapture: Peace and Safety

By T.W. Tramm

HAS there ever been a push for Middle-East peace like this one?

While Trump envoy Jason Greenblatt was in Israel last week discussing the unveiling of the Deal of the Century, a French envoy was in Jerusalem and Ramallah meeting with senior Israeli and Palestinian officials ahead of the leaders' summit at the Paris Peace Forum on November 11. According to reports, French President Macron wants to integrate the Israeli-Palestinian issue into the summit, attended by key players Benjamin Netanyahu, Mahmoud Abbas, and Donald Trump, by having it mentioned in its concluding statement or by other means.

Additionally, reports are that Macron intends to present his own peace plan in parallel to that of the US, or in the event of the failure of the US plan.

That a Mideast peace plan is on the agenda as at no other time in Israel's modern history is significant because the principal sign given by Paul to identify the season of Jesus' return is talk of "peace and safety." In his first letter to the Church at Thessalonica the Apostle to the Gentiles explains the Rapture and then, immediately after, its timing:

"Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates [of this event] we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape" (1 Thess. 4:13, 16, 17; 5:1-3).

A popular teaching today is that Paul is saying, because we know about the "times and dates" (biblical calendar and feasts), we are not in darkness concerning the time of the Rapture (v. 4). But when we read the above passage carefully and without bias we see that Paul is actually saying (paraphrasing), "There is no need to discuss times and dates (feasts) because you already know that Jesus is coming like a thief in the night, at a time no one can know or predict." The thief analogy is crucial because a thief doesn't show up only on certain (feast) days or during a particular time. If one could know by the calendar when a thief would show up he would watch during that time and not have his house broken into:

"Understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into" (Matt. 24:42).

While it's possible that a thief could show up on a holiday or at a time one might expect, with 365 days in a year the odds are against it. This is why Jesus tells us to *keep* watching.

Because we cannot know the time of the thief's coming by way of the calendar, Paul gives an alternative sign—an event or happening to watch for—so we are not left in the dark. He says the Day of the Lord will commence when they are saying “peace and safety.” This is our clue—assuming certain other prophetic preconditions are met—that Jesus' return is imminent.

Now the exciting part:

As of November 2018—

- Israel has been back in the Land for 70 years (Matt. 24:32-34; Ps. 90:10; Jer. 29:10).
- A host of prophetic signs, timelines, and circumstances are converging as never before.
- There is an unprecedented push to implement a Middle-East peace plan at a time when it's said the stars are, for the first time, aligned to facilitate such an endeavor.

In view of the above, the Day of the Lord should be considered imminent. So be ready, because the Son of Man is coming like a thief.

LINKS:

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/254080>

<https://www.haaretz.com/us-news/.premium-trump-mideast-envoy-greenblatt-to-visit-israel-ahead-of-peace-plan-unveiling-1.6594041>

<https://parispeaceforum.org/>