

CHRISTIAN WATCH

A PROTESTANT BIBLICAL WITNESS

"And what I say unto you

I say unto all, Watch"

Mark 13:37

NEWSLETTER

September/October 2011

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To all Christian Watch Members

CHRISTIAN WATCH

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of the dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

How vitally important it is for us each to be able to say with a God-given assurance, "**My Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ**". An outward form of the Christian religion will never enable us to rightly say this, no matter which religious denomination we may belong to. It is alone by the work of the Holy Spirit convincing us of our sins and causing us to flee to the one and only Saviour, with repentance in our hearts. So often when we consider various aspects of our lives, the question arises, as to the reality of our religion. The late Baptist minister, William Gadsby, expressed his concern in the lines of a hymn he wrote: "*Am I made a real Christian, Washed in the Redeemer's blood?*" We need faith, which is the gift of God, to enable us to look away from ourselves unto the One who came to this earth in a sinless human body, to atone for the sins of His chosen people.

There are various developments in the world, to which we referred in our previous Newsletter, indicating we are living in the last times. We referred particularly to the Palestinian plans to take a part of Israel - which they claim is their territory. The planned meeting of the United Nations has now taken place at which the Palestinians have not succeeded in achieving all they hoped. However, the deferment of some important decisions has caused delays which may or may not result in Israel's favour. Because of the importance of these current events that are so clearly in fulfilment of Scriptural prophecy, we include an article by one of our Members, Suzanne Fernandes, entitled, **THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL – UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE (66th SESSION) AND 'DURBAN 111' - NEW YORK**. A considerable amount of background information is provided to give a better understanding of the strategy being pursued by the Palestinians. There is no doubt whatsoever that ultimately the Lord will fulfil His promise and give His chosen people, Israel, the victory. There are many wonderful promises in Scripture applicable to them. For example, there are those we read in Isaiah 54, and particularly the final verse which says, "*No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.*" There are some important God-given covenant promises yet to be fulfilled for the people of Israel, some of which will have a substantial effect upon the other nations of the world. The most important point for us individually is to be among that number termed 'Spiritual Israel' to whom these sacred promises also apply, but in a spiritual sense.

The British Government continues to progress their wicked endeavours to promote and pass laws which are completely condemned by God in His Holy Word and which inevitably will result in the Lord's further judgments upon us nationally. The Government's support for the homosexual lobby, and their opposition to the promotion of the Christian faith, is clearly manifest by their proposed legislation. The arguments they use, in an attempt to convince the population that their strategy is morally right, do not stand up to reason and lack commonsense. This is substantiated by an article we include entitled, **Response to the Civil Partnerships in Places of Worship Consultation** by David Skinner in which he identifies many of the sad and solemn developments which have taken place during the past fourteen years. These include an abominable attempt to teach young children explicit details concerning perverse sexual orientation. It becomes increasingly important for all of us to witness against

these many evils which are being promoted in so many areas of society – by arranging meetings with, and writing letters to, those in authority or who have positions of influence. Our silence indicates our agreement to these evils and is contrary to what the Lord requires of us, as professing followers of Him.

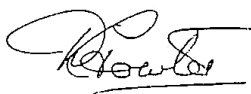
Two of the most neglected aspects of a true Christian religion are prayer and studying the Word of God. By these shortfalls, we do not experience some of the spiritual blessings and providential benefits we would otherwise be blessed with. How often do we find that it is only when we are in trouble or experiencing serious personal or family afflictions, that we urgently plead with the Lord to have mercy upon us. The regular and prayerful reading of the Holy Bible is vitally important to our growth in grace and to our having a right understanding of the Lord's dealings with us. The Psalmist recorded in Psalm 119: 105, *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"*. May it be so with each of us. We include the next article in the series 'Christian Responsibility' by our good friend Andy Clarke. This is subtitled, **Prayer and the Study of the Scriptures**, and we trust this will prove to be of real benefit and help us to increasingly understand and profit from the experiences the Lord places in our lives.

So often the Lord's dealings with us are mysterious to our natural reasoning and understanding. We have found at times it is by looking back over some of the trials the Lord has caused us to pass through, that we can see the purpose, the wisdom and the mercy of our God in them. We include a copy of a discourse by one of the Lord's ministering servants, the late Mr. J. K. Popham, entitled, **THE MYSTERY OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS**, which we trust you will find helpful and encouraging.

In our August Newsletter we included an article entitled, **AMERICAN CHURCHES TO EMBRACE CHRISLAM** by NTEB in which it stated that Rick Warren of Saddleback Church was the one who started this movement. One of our members has advised us that this is not correct and that Rick Warren denies any connection with the CHRISLAM movement. Apparently the publisher has issued an apology, with which we concur.

We again desire to thank you for your continued prayerful and financial support. We have extensive plans for our future defence of the Word of God and the proclamation of the Gospel. Obviously, the more we do the more expenses we incur, but we trust in the Lord's goodness and your continued generosity to enable us to continue in this labour of love. May the Lord bless you with the riches of His precious grace.

Yours, in the Lord's service,



David Crowter

NOTE

Owing to a number of unforeseen circumstances during the production of this Newsletter, we regret it has not proved possible to despatch this issue before the end of September. We have decided, therefore, to make this Newsletter the September/October issue. It is our intention, God willing, to produce the next two Newsletters early in months November and December.

Management Committee

Mr D Boyd; Mr M Brockes (Hon Treasurer/Co Secretary); Mr D Crowter (Chairman);
Mr I Henderson; Mr M Hobbis; Mr D Lawson; Mr M de Semlyen; Mrs J Cummins (Secretary).

Response to the Civil Partnerships in Places of Worship Consultation

By David Skinner

I am responding to the Government's commitment - as part of its LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) work programme - to implement Section 202 of the Equality Act 2010 to allow civil partnerships to be registered on religious premises, where faith groups wish to host them.

Inevitably, as with all the other legislation introduced over the last fifty years, relaxing laws on homosexual behaviour, especially since the Sexual Orientation Regulations were introduced in 2006 /07, what begins as permission rapidly becomes a tyrannical demand. In spite of the relentless propaganda machinery of Stonewall telling us that homosexuality is an innate and superior stage in evolutionary development, the public knows in the farthest recesses of its consciousness that - even if it were genetic - for a child to be born homosexual would be a tragic condition that carries with it a raft of physical, emotional, societal, economic and spiritual costs.

But the truth, that we are silenced from revealing, is that homosexuality is not an immutable, genetic state of being like being black or white. This is a lie that the gay lobby have relentlessly broadcast - as far back as in the late 19th century - in order to legitimise what is essentially an emotional disorder, a consequence of sexual abuse, sexual confusion, or a consequence of gay, Marxist ideology. A black man (or a white man) can never become more or less coloured, but homosexual desires can and do become either stronger or weaker. They also require an object of desire. Without such an object, a homosexual ceases to exist. Homosexuality describes therefore a sexual relationship, whereas being black or white does not.

But we are silenced from debating this. On the particular issue of allowing civil partnerships to be registered on religious premises - no matter what assurances are given by Government - we know that within a short space of time churches that refuse to be in standing ovation mode, not just for homosexuality, but for a spectrum of poly-sexual perversions (on a scale we could never have imagined), will be forced to close, or suffer the consequences - just as Mr. and Mrs. Bull are being forced to close their bed & breakfast at Chymorvah in Cornwall, because they refuse double beds to adulterers and fornicators.

If accepting homosexuality, as being a mark of humanity, is on the same scale as recognising black people as also being fellow human beings, and is therefore rational and just, why is it that the gay lobby are having to use coercion, by way of public humiliation, fines, arrests, loss of occupation, closure of business, physical and verbal threatenings, prison and a raft of oppressive legislation in order to get what they want when they want it? Why is appealing to that which is reasonable and fair not enough?

Who would have believed such scenes as those that were apparently staged at the 2009 Manchester Gay Pride? Or that children were now being recruited and radicalised to turn against their own parents and older generation?

Before rejecting the proposal, I wish to lay out, word upon word, line upon line, the historical and social context of the proposed legislation. Let us dare to open our eyes to the condition of our nation and our children.

In 1997, the Labour Party were swept into power with plans for building a New Britain. At the time, there seemed to be practically nothing of a revolutionary nature that Mr. Blair might do by way of combating the values of the then exhausted and sleaze-ridden Conservative Party, and for which the British people wouldn't have given him their full support.

Yet the form this revolution took was not a demand for re-dressing the widening gap between the rich and poor, or with addressing the problems of a growing illiteracy amongst school children, or a breakdown in discipline in our schools, or a growing anarchy on our streets - or even transforming Britain into a thriving and productive economy. Instead it was the demand for drugs, alcohol, condoms, treatment for AIDs, HIV and a host of other STIs, as well as abortions for teenage girls - all free and confidential at the point of delivery - and all without the knowledge or authority of parents. It was also a demand to transform our towns and cities into a rainbow of competing minority groups and dysfunctional families that come in all shapes and sizes. All this was paid for by the productive and stable part of society, namely families with a husband and wife, mother and father at their centre, and the voluntary aid of numerous Christian based organisations.

When we view Britain, fourteen years later, what do we see?

- We see Britain not just exhausted and sleaze-ridden, but demoralised and paralysed by political correctness, being impelled with no slackening of pace down the same Gadarene slope.
- We see the corruption of Government, the breakdown of trust and loyalty at both corporate and family level, the dramatic rise in divorce rates, the extermination of millions of our unborn babies, the widespread sexual abuse of children, especially when put into the care of Social Services, the spectre of enforced euthanasia hanging over the elderly and disabled.
- We see the rise in motiveless, violent crimes committed by children that would have been rare even among adults a generation ago.
- We see a society blighted by addictions to alcohol, drugs, gambling and pornography.
- We see the huge increase in mental and emotional disorders amongst our children and the sheer hopelessness and nihilism of feral children being raised on rundown, gang-ridden estates throughout Britain.
- We see our prisons, bursting with an increasingly younger population.
- We see rising unemployment, rising debt, homelessness, insecurity, and the imminent collapse of business, trade and industry.
- And, finally, we see society debauched, infantilized, feminised, stupefied, bedazzled and seduced by cutting edge technologies, the mass media; yet stripped of a moral compass and afraid to think, speak, choose or act according to their consciences, but forced instead to bow the knee to the diktats of individuals like the anarchist lesbian, Angela Mason, and Sir Trevor Phillips (both of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, and who traitorously persecute Christians in Britain whilst heaping praise on Islam) or face the prospect of joining Christian dissenters, such as Mr. and Mrs. Bull, Mr. and Mrs. Owens, and a growing list of others who have been publicly ridiculed, fined, sacked, had their businesses shut down, threatened with violence and even imprisoned, for no other reason than they wish to uphold decency and family values.

When we view all this and we ponder on Iain Duncan Smith's statement,

"the collapse of marriage has brought soaring crime rates, doubled the chances of living in poverty and cost the country an astonishing £100 billion a year...."

we would think that life cannot get any worse: that the pendulum will swing the other way. But not so - humanly speaking - Britain is beyond redemption.

Yet all this is denied by Theresa May, the Home Secretary, who, whilst giving her first major speech on LGBT rights at an event hosted by the gay lobby group Stonewall, interspersed her speech frequently with comments like:

"I think that shows how far we, as a society, have come;".... "As a country we have come a long way;" and "as a party, my own party, the Conservatives, have come a long way. We now have more openly gay MPs and openly gay Ministers than ever before." And yet again: *"We've come a long way. I said at the start of my speech that as a nation we have come a long way, and we have."*

But ominously she repeats the mantra of the gay liberation lobby - and useful friends like her - by saying that there is so much more to do. Incredibly proud that she and the Home Office came top of this year's Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, she has said:

" despite the real progress we have seen in recent years, there is much still to do".... "And we will go further - we will implement section 202 of the Equality Act which will remove the ban on civil partnership registrations being held on religious premises."

But the Christian Church, for the last two thousand years, with all its faults, has defended the faith and acted as a bulwark against barbarism and paganism. It remains the last defence of marriage, the family, children and civilised behaviour and yet in the words of Theresa May and David Cameron:

"We are committed to taking action to tear down these barriers and to help build a better Britain."

My own Conservative gay MP, Conor Burns, has used precisely the same jargon when I raised my concerns about the queer, Stonewall actor, (Sir) Ian McKellan, being allowed to cruise around the nation's schools, under the pretence of tackling homophobia. Mr. Burns also said:

"The government remains determined to take concerted action to tearing down barriers to equal opportunities and to build a fairer society, and I fully support them in this aim."

Fairer society? More tolerant? More inclusive to whom? Not all animals living on Diversity Farm are equal. Even foxes have more rights than those of the Christian, the unborn child and now the disabled.

After little more than a year in power, Mr. Cameron is introducing laws that will effectively - in time - make it a criminal offence to practise the Christian faith, defend marriage based upon Biblical principles, or even for me to write a letter like this.

Allow me to finish by quoting from the most celebrated of gay human rights champions, Peter Tatchell, and allow him to guide you smoothly to where Section 202 of the Equality Act 2010 will lead.

In *"Beyond Equality"*, he writes:

“In many ways, our transcending of heterosexual mores is a positive and immensely liberating experience. Compared with most straights, queers tend to be more sexually adventurous with a wider repertoire of sexual behaviour, less bound by the strictures of traditional morality, and more experimental in terms of relationships. We don't need a marriage certificate to validate our partnerships.”

“Although getting rid of homophobic discrimination is a laudable aim, it doesn't go far enough. Ending anti-gay bias will not resolve all the problems faced by lesbian and gay people. Some of our difficulties arise not from homophobia, but from the more general eroto-phobic and sex-negative nature of contemporary culture.”

“We get equality, but at a price. The cost to our community is the surrender of our unique, distinctive queer identity. The unwritten social contract at the heart of law reform is that lesbians and gays will behave respectably and comply with the heterosexual moral agenda. No more cruising, orgies or sadomasochism!”

In *“Teenage Sex - What Should Schools Teach Children?”* he writes:

“Until very recent times, all sex education was overwhelmingly biased towards promoting heterosexuality, marriage, parenthood and traditional family life. Anything outside this exclusive framework was either ignored or condemned.....”

“This old-style monocultural sex moralism is now totally out of sync with our modern multicultural society where there is a great diversity of cultures and communities, lifestyles and love-lives.”

.....” Nothing must be off limits.”

“Sex education, to be effective, needs to start at a very early age, beginning gently in the first year of primary school and gradually becoming more detailed and explicit at secondary level.....”

“The best way to persuade teenagers to adopt oral sex and mutual masturbation is by making them look and sound sexy.”

But Tatchell, in *“Insignificant Other”*, wants to go even beyond to something called the Civil Commitment Pact, where any kind of relationship is given social and legal recognition.

“For these reasons, I have suggested a new legal framework – Civil Commitment Pact. It would allow people to nominate as their next-of-kin and beneficiary any 'significant other' in their life. This could be a partner or lover, but it could also be a sister, carer, house-mate, favourite nephew or life-long best friend.”

“Any new partnership legislation should allow people to select from a menu of rights and responsibilities. This flexibility would enable them to devise a tailor-made partnership agreement suited to their own particular needs.”

As night follows day, Section 202 of the Equality Act 2010 will smash down the barriers to full on LGBT relationships. For these reasons I oppose the Government's Civil Partnership proposals.

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THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE (66TH SESSION) AND 'DURBAN III'- NEW YORK

By Suzanne Fernandes, Christian Watch Member

Background:

Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, in his speech to the United States Congress on May 24, 2011, said that a central goal of direct negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians was the establishment of two separate states for two peoples i.e. a Palestinian state alongside the Jewish state in secure and recognised borders. He said that a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state would serve only to undermine a lasting and negotiated peace agreement and deepen the conflict. A negotiated settlement and the rejection of unilateral moves were enshrined in the 1995 Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement and endorsed by the Middle East Quartet. Apart from being counterproductive, the sanctioning of a unilateral move by the Palestinian Authority (PA) represented a violation of an existing international framework for Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the binding bilateral agreements between the parties. Such bilateral agreements included UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, both of which call for negotiations "between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace."

Various news reports reported that the Palestinian leadership would seek full UN membership through the Security Council. The United States, however, said that it would use its veto, also taking into consideration that if the Palestinians were not able to gain the nine crucial votes, the 15-member Council would not be able to proceed further.

PA President, Mahmoud Abbas, who anticipated that the United States would exercise its veto at the Security Council, decided to turn to the UN General Assembly, whose resolutions are less binding, in order to seek the support of European Union member states in the vote. Meanwhile, France and Spain, along with the European Union's representative for foreign affairs and security policy, Catherine Ashton (who is in charge of the EU's foreign policy), were in advanced stages of negotiations with the Palestinian Authority over a "package deal" that would enable the 27 member states of the EU to vote at the United Nations General Assembly in favour of upgrading the PA to the status of a non-permanent member of the UN.

The Europeans were also trying to gain the United States' agreement to abstain from the vote and to continue to provide financial aid to the Palestinians, in return for a promise by President Abbas not to take Israel to the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

The speeches of US President, Barack Obama, of May 19, 2011, and the conclusion of the EU's Foreign Affairs Council of December 2009, indicated their clear endorsements that any proposals should be based on 1967 borders and the EU recognition of the Palestinian state .

Recent reports indicate that the general public in UK and France are in favour of a Palestinian State according to opinion polls and general press coverage. Both continue to press for a return to peace negotiations as an alternative to pursuing the statehood strategy. In the UK, 59% of those polled said the government should vote in favour of a UN resolution recognising a Palestinian state alongside Israel. In France and Germany, the figures were 69% and 71% respectively. Support for the Palestinians' right to have

their own state, without reference to the UN vote, was even higher: 71% in the UK, 82% in France and 86% in Germany.

The poll was conducted by YouGov on behalf of Avaaz*, a global campaigning organisation that continues to conduct an online petition in support of a Palestinian state, which it is planning to deliver to the European Parliament, having more than 913,000 signatories, backing what it describes as "this new opportunity for freedom".

"David Cameron must listen to the views of the public," said Ricken Patel of Avaaz. "The Prime Minister has a clear choice, either to stand with the British public and 120 other nations to support a Palestinian state and a new path to peace, or to side with the US government, which continues to push for a failed status quo." The Palestinians appear to be assured of a majority if a resolution is put before the UN general assembly. However full membership of the UN requires Security Council approval, which the US has confirmed it would veto - although they are anxious to avoid wielding the veto and thereby potentially incurring the wrath of Arab countries. Consequently they are pushing for a return to negotiations – a move also supported by the EU, which is keen to avoid a damaging split among its 27 member countries.

European foreign ministers have met in Brussels to discuss a common position on Palestinian statehood. Britain and France said they would prefer to see meaningful negotiations on the basis of the pre-1967 borders with agreed land swaps, but have hinted they may vote for enhanced status for the Palestinians. Germany is thought to be opposed to the Palestinian plan, but the chancellor, Angela Merkel, said: "I am not going to disclose today our voting intentions, whatever they may be." She added that Germany was wary of unilateral moves. "We are going to use the days that remain to perhaps achieve a few millimetres of movement," she said.

The UN secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, recently backed the idea of a Palestinian state. "I support ... the statehood of Palestinians, an independent, sovereign state of Palestine. It has been long overdue," he said in Canberra.

Israel acknowledges it has almost certainly lost the battle for votes at the general assembly. Ron Prosor, its ambassador to the UN remarked, "This is a diplomatic endeavour against all odds ... It is clear to me that we can't win the vote." Instead it appears that Israel is concentrating on securing a "moral minority" of powerful countries, which they hope will include the EU bloc.

** The Avaaz poll, carried out by YouGov in the UK and Germany, and Ifo in France, was conducted online, with 2,552 respondents in the UK, 1,017 in Germany and 1,011 in France.*

Durban III – the Latest

Durban III is the United Nations attempt to promote the agenda drawn up at its 2001 "conference against racism" in Durban, South Africa. Fourteen countries - all democracies - withdrew from attending Durban III in New York on the 22nd September before it was convened, because of the targeted racism and prejudices aimed primarily against the Jews, which was adopted by the previous Durban conference.

David Cameron announced that the UK would play no part in the Durban III conference in New York. The French Foreign Ministry made the following statement, "France would not participate in the meeting planned in New York on the 22nd of September, commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Durban conference against racism. France reaffirms its attachment to the universality of human rights and its determination to fight

against racism. France remains strongly determined to pursue the collective efforts undertaken within the UN and other international bodies to fight efficiently against all forms of racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and racial discrimination". New Zealand's Foreign Minister, Murray McCully, told the Jerusalem Post – "We remain concerned that the commemoration of the 2001 Durban Declaration could reopen the offensive and anti-Semitic debates which undermined the original World Conference in Durban. For these reasons, we have decided not to participate. New Zealand is fully committed to combating racism and we agree the UN should lead discussions on the elimination of racism. That is why we engaged constructively in the preparatory discussions in New York. However, in the end, the text is not one that we could support," McCully said. New Zealand joined the growing list of countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Israel and the USA, that also indicated they would not participate. Twelve of the UN's 193 member nations have pulled out of Durban III – those listed above as well as France and the Czech Republic. Poland announced also that it would not send a high-level delegation, but did not formally withdraw its participation. Denmark, Romania and Finland planned to participate in the Durban III. New Zealand did exactly the right thing by pulling out of Durban III and refusing to legitimise what is clearly a campaign by extremists inside the UN to undermine Israel, democracy and the genuine protection of human rights.

China supports establishment of Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as the capital.

China supports the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital and with full sovereignty. Chinese special envoy to the Middle East, Wu Sike, on a visit to Egypt, said, "China supports handling the Palestinian issue on the basis of a two-state solution. The establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, and with full sovereignty, is not only the expectation of the Palestinian people, but also is conducive to regional and world peace and stability". The special envoy told reporters after talks with the Arab League (AL) Secretary General, Nabil el-Arabi, at the AL's headquarters, that China will keep close co-ordination and co-operation with the AL in this respect. The two sides discussed the efforts of Arab countries and the Palestinian side to break the stand-off in negotiations to solve the Palestinian issue. The Chinese envoy said, "China appreciated and supported the efforts, but the United Nations (UN) must shoulder important responsibilities and play an important role in the Middle East peace process." The head of the Palestinian National Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, said that the UN recognition would lead to an end of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Wu Sike also said in an interview that, for Palestine to seek UN recognition, cannot replace negotiations, which are the fundamental way leading to a solution to the Palestinian issue. Before arriving in Cairo, Wu Sike visited Palestine and Israel.

Further research to provide background information and latest news....

UNITED NATIONS - For years now, Palestinian diplomats have quietly been pressing individual countries to recognise Palestine as an independent state. Their efforts have borne fruit, as more than 120 countries around the world have done so. But, as the UN General Assembly opens the General Debate of its 66th regular session, the Palestinians are expected to seek the biggest prize of all. They hope to turn their support for statehood into UN recognition, as a full member-state of the world body.

The proposal is almost certain to set off one of the most contentious debates in the UN's new year. It may also be one of the most divisive. The reason for this is because the

Palestinians are very likely to get the two-thirds majority approval they need from the General Assembly – that is, support from 129 of the body's 193 members. They can expect strong -- possibly unanimous -- backing from African, Asian, Latin American, and certainly from Arab countries. If the General Assembly gives its approval, the request for full membership must then go to the Security Council for endorsement when the United States, has already said, it will apply its veto, in support of Israel. Israel rejects the Palestinian's statehood drive, saying it violates the 1993 Oslo Accord under which self-government was to be granted by Israel in phases.

Who gets the support of The Great Democracies?

In the run-up to the UN showdown, both sides – the countries which will vote "yes" and those which will vote "no" – have been doing all they can to gain support. The biggest targets are Europe and the other Western democracies, which must decide whether backing their biggest ally – Washington – is worth the political damage that would inevitably result in the Middle East.

“The question here is: Do they get the great democracies? That’s the question,” says Elliot Abrams, who is a regional expert at the Council on Foreign Relations and who has held senior foreign policy positions under U.S. Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. “The United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the EU - that’s really the question. If they win with the automatic vote, but lose the most prestigious democratic countries, then it will be a form of defeat for them,” he said. So far, the European Union has given no indication which way it might go. The EU's foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, carefully avoided telling the Palestinians whether the EU opposed or supported their UN move, when she visited Israel and the Palestinian territories in June.

“It is apparent that the French want to encourage some kind of resolution, but it’s not clear how far they are willing to go in opposing the United States,” says Rashid Khalidi, a professor of Arab studies at Columbia University. He said, “I think Russia and China might support, but not clear how Britain will behave.” Russia's ambassador to the UN, Vitaly Churkin, has confirmed that Russia would support any type of official UN recognition the Palestinians decided to seek.

Some European diplomats have told the Western media privately that key EU states hope to avoid a definite choice by floating an alternative draft resolution at the UN. The object would be to seek international endorsement of some of the parameters the Palestinians would like to see for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. These parameters include some points which Israel does not currently accept, including basing any land exchanges on the borders as they existed in 1967, before the Six-Day Arab-Israeli war, and sharing Jerusalem as a capital. Britain, France, and Germany endorsed these negotiating parameters earlier this year as they sought to restart the stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. U.S. President, Barack Obama, has also declared that a future Palestinian state must be based on the 1967 borders, while supporting Israel's need for security.

Whether the Palestinians would shelve their statehood drive at the UN in exchange for an effort to set a framework for peace talks is an open question. But, at the very least the Europeans hope that coming forward with a proposal could help defuse an almost certain regional outburst of anger – and perhaps violence – should the United States veto the membership bid without an alternative.

Playing For Time

There may be other ways the Palestinian drive for full membership at the UN could proceed. One would be for the Security Council to play for time should the General Assembly approve the Palestinian request. "The Security Council...could sit on the matter," Khalidi says. "In other words, even if the Palestinian delegation presents a request for consideration as a member state, it would first have to go to the Security Council, who may not necessarily immediately consider or act upon the matter." This would only be a temporary delay to the Palestinian membership drive, during which time all sides would endeavour to gain further support before the final battle - or compromise - in the months ahead.

Another possibility is that the Palestinians – if they are certain of being blocked in the Security Council – could ask the General Assembly that they be recognised as a state, but not as a member of the UN. This request, which requires only a simple majority approval in the General Assembly, and does not need Security Council endorsement, would give them the position of a "non-member state" with observer status.

'Non-member state observer' is the same status the Vatican has at the UN. Palestinian diplomats at the UN claim it would give them the right to sign certain international treaties, including joining the International Criminal Court (ICC), which would enable them to prosecute Israel over alleged war crimes.

The Palestinian drive for statehood at the UN seeks recognition based on the borders of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, with East Jerusalem as the capital. Israel warned on 14th September that such recognition would result in "harsh and grave consequences" for the Palestinians, but did not specify what steps it might take.

POST UN MEETING – THE INITIAL OUTCOME

The Quartet which consists of Russia, The European Union, The United Nations and the United States - have not really made any further progress at the UN. U.S. President, Barack Obama, tried to dissuade Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas from seeking full UN membership, arguing that Palestine would become a state only through negotiations with Israel. This was rejected by Abbas, and on the 22nd September Abbas made a formal request to the UN for membership.

So far it is planned that preparatory talks should be held in a month, followed by substantive proposals from both sides on borders and security within three months. Finally, negotiations for a peace deal by the end of 2012. This would provide an opportunity and time for an organisation, such as Christian Watch, to prepare a strategy to facilitate support for Israel.

It is important to accept that the Palestinians reject Israel as a Jewish state and their main agenda is of the Palestinians "right of return" by those who fled, or were forced to leave, their homes during the wars. We must always remember that the underlying agenda of the Palestinians is to wipe Israel off the world map.

The next process is that the UN Security Council needs to commence consultations on the application for full state membership of the UN, as was submitted by the Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas. This request needs the support of 9 of the 15 members of the Council. We are now aware that the U.S. has confirmed they will veto this. President Abbas has reinforced the message to the UN to back a territorial agreement with pre-

1967 borders and with no pre-conditions. The last time there were any direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians was in September 2010 when there was conflict over the building of Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank. Since that time there has been no further progress.

Further consideration must be given to the recent 'Arab Spring' and Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who appears to be gaining much in popularity in Egypt and in other countries affected by the Middle East uprisings. Erdogan has not minced his words and has spoken forcibly to these nations that their leaders should back a Palestinian statehood bid at the United Nations. Turkey's breakdown in relationship with Israel has fuelled Erdogan's popularity and incited further hatred towards Israel. Erdogan has stressed that Israel is becoming more isolated, and he will not let Israel forget the Israeli flotilla raid that cost the lives of eight Turkish citizens and one Turkish-American.

Vladimir Putin declared on Saturday 24th September that he plans to return to the Russian presidency after the current head of state, Dmitry Medvedev, relinquishes office in the presidential elections, scheduled for March next year. Putin served as president from 2000 to 2008 and was unable to run for a third time due to constitutional limits. The laws have now changed, and Putin, if elected, could continue as Russia's president until 2024. Russia is a member of the UN Quartet and has supported the PA bid for statehood. Russia is also one of Lebanon's main suppliers of military equipment and Israel has expressed fears in the past that this may end up in Hezbollah's hands.

After twenty years of peace processes and continued negotiations it seems the final outcome at the UN indicates that Palestine will achieve upgraded status of non-member state observer in the UN. This would give Palestine legal recourse to pursue justice and take legal action against the State of Israel in the International Criminal Court and International Court of justice. Israel needs our prayers and support.

"HE MEASURED.... AND BROUGHT ME THROUGH"

Ezekiel 47 : 3,4

That weakness and pain so hard to bear
That sorrow and trial too
It did not last... it passed away
He measured... and brought me through.

Tis always so with our loving Lord,
Be the trials many or few,
He times them all - His appointed time,
He measures... and brings us through.

Not a moment too long did it remain
Though 'twas hard to bear 'tis true
But there came an end with a spiritual gain
He measured... and brought me through.

Child of God in trial, it soon will end
Trust Him for His word is true
Be patient and wait, in His own Good time
He'll measure...and bring you through.

E. G. Lessey

Christian Responsibilities

Part 5 – Prayer and the Study of the Scriptures.

So far in this series we have looked at what makes you a Christian, the marks of a true Christian and your prime responsibilities before God to *'love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind'* (Matt. 22:37) and to *'love thy neighbour as thyself'* (Matt. 22:39). We will now begin to look a little more specifically at some important personal Christian responsibilities.

PRAYER

It is not possible to do any justice to the subject of prayer in such a short article. So, as before, this article is not a doctrinal discourse but rather an heartfelt exhortation and encouragement to faithfulness in an age of declension and apostasy. Also, I highly recommend reading the article on 'Morning Prayer' by Shaun Willcock in the previous Newsletter (August 2011) or request a copy from the office (see back cover).

Firstly, you need to fully understand that none, aside from the Lord, knows the human heart better than the devil. He knows well the wickedness and deceitfulness of your heart and the weaknesses of your flesh. He knows a multitude of ways and means to fill your heart with fear, sidetrack you with worthless and pointless 'activities' and pursuits and burden you with guilt. His aim is to encourage in you a forgetfulness of death and the judgement to come by occupying you with ANYTHING other than seeking the Lord in prayer.

Satan knows that prayer is life to the believer's soul like breath, water and food are to the body! He knows there can be no salvation – unless you pray to God for mercy? He knows there can be no comfort or consolation – unless you pray to the Lord for all needed help and grace. He knows you can have no power to overcome besetting sin or in the preached word – unless you pray to the Lord for help and strength?

You see, dear believer, this is the reality you must be aware of - Satan is continually on the prowl to disrupt your prayer life, above all else. Observe the haste of Satan's appearing if anyone exhibits even a flicker of concern for their own soul (Matt. 13:19). See how quickly you are burdened with all the cares and concerns of this world if you bend the knee in prayer to the Lord? Watch the speed with which the devil will appeal to your weak flesh to *'take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry'* (Luke 12:19), especially during prayer or when preparing for prayer.

Oh, dear believer, be ever mindful that you *'wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.'* (Eph. 6:12). Powers that cannot be fought in the flesh.

This is why you need access to the very throne of God and why you need to live a life of *continual* dependence on God through prayer. You alone are unable to defeat this *'roaring lion'* (1 Peter 5:8). You alone cannot overcome the deceitfulness and wickedness of your own heart. The devil knows this and this is a major reason why prayer can prove so difficult sometimes. Even when you are ready to pray (or even during your prayer) you can still be assaulted on all sides with distracting thoughts and remembrance of unnecessary tasks and duties you need to perform. This is the truth you must be aware of and prepared to face - the devil and his minions will use ANY means necessary to keep you from the Lord in prayer or to hinder your effectiveness in prayer.

The question I have to ask, therefore, is this, **"How is your prayer life, dear Christian?"**

Is prayer as needful to your soul as food and water is to your body? Is prayer THE single most important activity of *every* day of your life? It should be. This is **GOD ALMIGHTY** you

are praying to. The merciful and gracious God of infinite supply who promises to provide your *every* need (Matt. 6:31,32) and to whom you can take *every* burden, need, trial, tribulation, sorrow or joy. There is nothing too big or small for the Lord. You pray to the God who promises to '*never leave thee, nor forsake thee*' (Heb. 13:5) and that '*all things work together for good to them that love God*' (Rom. 8:28)'. (Emphasis added). In addition you have the added comfort of knowing your precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is interceding in the heavens for you (Rom. 8:27, Heb. 7:25). Is it not astonishing to think that the Creator, Sustainer and Judge of all the earth should even consider your prayers – never mind promise to answer *every* prayer prayed in His will? Oh Christian – why would you want to rely on your own feeble efforts when you have One such as this to call upon. Why would you *ever* even think there could be *anything* more precious or important - than time with your Lord?

So, this is my prayerful hope – that this short and inadequate article may be used of the Lord to exhort and encourage you to make prayer the 'life blood' of your walk with the Lord. To make prayer your first refuge, every day and in every situation, rather than a last resort when all else has failed - as can quickly be the case if you are not vigilant and watchful. To this end, therefore, may I encourage you to set aside *private* time with the Lord EVERY day, where NOTHING should be allowed to prevent it or interrupt it. NOTHING. I doubt you would break an appointment with Her Majesty the Queen or anyone important in your life. So why not do the same with God Almighty and make an unbreakable *private* appointment with the Lord *every* day - just you and the Lord. Then pray to the Lord for all needed help – and pray dear Christian – PRAY.

STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES

For the vast majority (probably all) who may read this article they will not be imprisoned, tortured or suffer a cruel death simply for translating, producing, owning or reading God's Holy Word as so many have been in the past. Indeed the vast majority who read this article can have a faithful and reliable translation of God's Word (the Authorised Version for English speakers) available to you for about 15 minutes labour (if that)!

The Bible is no longer just a book, but is now also available on your computer, online, on your mobile phone, audio player (like Ipods), e-reader (like Kindle) or computer tablet (like Ipad) – and often even for free! There is literally nowhere you cannot now take the Word of God with you to be read, listened to, studied and meditated upon.

Be ever watchful, therefore, that this easy access to the Scriptures does not allow God's Word to become little more than a 'good read'. Rather keep mindful that however easy they may be to obtain, the Scriptures are still the 'God breathed', infallible, inerrant Word of God providing you with an unlimited storehouse of eternal treasure to be conscientiously searched for and sort after.

Sadly, like prayer, the study of God's Word can also easily become a neglected habit and activity where you can quickly satisfy yourself with merely reading the Scriptures and seldom (if ever) spending time carefully mining their depths. So, as with the subject of prayer, may I encourage you to set aside time *every* day for the prayerful and *diligent* study of God's Word. You have ALL the tools necessary – a Bible to read, tongue to pray, a mind to think and meditate and untold other 'tools' such as concordances, dictionaries, commentaries, maps, books from other 'worthies' etc. to assist you. You have NO Excuse to neglect the study of the Scriptures; so study God's Word, dear Christian – STUDY.

I pray the Lord will give you the desire to seek close and intimate communion with Him in prayer, a hunger to study His Holy Word and all needed grace and help to be a faithful and obedient servant.

Yours in Christ Jesus.

Andy Clark

THE MYSTERY OF THE LORD'S DEALINGS

From a discourse by J. K. Popham in 1919 on the death of Lazarus:

"I am glad for your sakes that I was not there"

(John 11:15)

Jesus Christ has always the best interest of His people at His heart; His people lie very near to Him. He can neither do, nor permit to be done, anything to their real injury. Pained, grieved, burdened, perpetually killed, "killed all the day long" they may be; but all shall turn to the furtherance of the gospel in them. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

On the face of it, His not attending to the implied urgent call from the sisters of the dying, then dead, Lazarus, would argue against His care, His love, His wisdom; as said the Jews, "Why could not this Man have prevented the death of His friend Lazarus?" He said here, 'I am glad for your sakes, for I love you, I intend your good in all that I do. I am glad that I did not go. I let him die for your profit.'

You are all acquainted with the pathetic story of this interesting family – the man Lazarus and two attached sisters, all of them loved by Jesus Christ. When Christ's friend Lazarus was sick, then sent the sisters to Him that message, "Lazarus is sick." I said it was a sort of summons. Perhaps they did not doubt that Christ would go instantly to heal their brother; but He abode two days after hearing of this sickness in the place where He was. He let His friend die. He did it wisely. He did it lovingly. He did it for His glory. He did it for the good of those whose sorrow was great at the death of Lazarus. And Jesus was glad to let this circumstance go to an extremity; glad that a death should come where it would have been absolutely easy for Him to have preserved life. He had but to send, as it were, a word without any utterance; a look, a command; and the disease would have left Lazarus. But no, that was not the Lord's way of glorifying Himself in this case; so He lets His friend die.

According to the Scripture it is no uncommon thing for the Lord to let things go to extremes, to permit death to go here and there, to decree a consumption upon things, upon businesses, upon lives, upon experiences, upon hope; to let a death come. Instances are numerous in this in the blessed Word of God, which was "written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." We will look at one or two instances of this dealing of God with His people.

Take, first of all, Abraham's case. He receives a promise of a son; and what more natural than for him to expect that son to follow at once? The promise was given, but God lets death come, permits it to be an impossibility on natural grounds that this son should come as promised. Twenty years killing a promise – solemn naturally, killing a promise. Twenty years of a blight on a promise full of life, full of myriads of people, nations and kings, and above all others, of Christ, who should come in the promised line; and all, all dead, naturally dead.

Take Jacob's case, "Go," said his God to him, "Go back to thy country, and to thy father's house, and I will deal well with thee." What more natural than for Jacob to think that the way would be cast up, not a dog to stand in the way to hinder him from obeying God's commandment? But 400 men following an injured brother stand in the way, and Jacob's fears stood in the way; his apprehensions, his perturbation stood in the way; death had come, 400 swords to prevent a promise being fulfilled; a brother's

injured spirit, hatred rising up and standing between Jacob and the country to which he was told to return. God allowed it to come.

Take the case of Saul of Tarsus. Who would have thought that he, this enemy, this injurious person, persecutor, consenting to the murder of Stephen, was a vessel of mercy and an ordained minister and an apostle? Why did not the Lord stop him before? Why was he permitted to hale to prison men and women, and to endeavour to cause many to blaspheme the Holy Name by which they were called? Nay, He lets the murderer go on, He lets him get his hands full of authority, as full of authority as his heart was of enmity, and go boldly and madly toward Damascus, reach its gates, and all but lay his hand on these poor saints; then comes the moment.

And why did not Christ prevent Peter's sad fall? He, who prayed that Peter's faith should not fail, could have prevented the trial, or permitting the trial, have prevented the fall. We see by these instances, and they could be easily multiplied, that Christ does not always stop evil when it would seem to His interest, and to the interest of His dear people, that He should do so.

Now come to your cases, to my case. Why does not the Lord put the hand of His power on our sins, our lusts, our wicked hearts, to prevent the outburst, never seen perhaps, never heard by men, blessed be God, but heard and felt by ourselves? Why does He let these things occur? Bring us into an acquaintance with that that the apostle sets out for himself in the Romans, - a conflict in which he was for a time defeated: "When I would do good, evil is present with me"; and "how to perform that which is good I find not." When I would do good, I cannot do it; evil prevents me. And "the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." And this may go on for such a time as to make the subject of the conflict think that he will die by the hand of his sins; think that his blood will be spilled on the battlefield and the prize he set out to win, the conquest he hoped to gain, the crown he looked forward to wearing, and the harp he hoped to harp to God's praise in glory, now he may think he shall miss all. And the Lord does not step in powerfully to stop it.

Do you know this conflict - this bitter disappointment? Look back upon ten, thirty and forty years and more - I can go back to fifty years and rather more, of conflict, and yet there it is, a conflict. Shameful defeats are sustained. People cry out and shout to Christ, but He seems to shut out their prayers - as He seemed to shut out Jeremiah's. Why? And why this trouble in providence? Why an affliction that irritates you, delay that wears you as the waters wear the stones, that makes you feel, and say perhaps sometimes to the Lord, that He knows you would honour Him, and how can you with this irritation always present? How can you with this annoyance to your eyes, this thorn in your flesh, this weakness, this crookedness, this difficulty, how can you? You would fain worship Him in quietness, and you are always more or less perturbed, disturbed, distraught. Why this straitness? And why does that mighty Conqueror who led captivity captive and received gifts for men, and who by a look could chain Satan and prevent his assaults and his subtlety, permit him to come, and deal you deadly blows, or work such foul deceitfulness in your mind, and whisper such terrible things concerning that God you would fain love and serve, to your utter distraction and dismay?

What is the reason? We do not well to ask of some things, why? There are things we may not enquire into concerning God, who giveth not any account of His matters. When you would pry into God's reasons, then you need faith and reverence and patience and the fear of God; but when Christ does reveal a reason, then we may seek, we may look into that reason, and seek to have it realised in our own soul. I say, when

He does reveal a reason, we may enquire into it. There is a reason here which Himself gives. Peter expresses the same truth when he says to the saints that the trial of their faith, which was much more precious than of gold that perisheth, was to this end – that it “might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

And so here, this trial to Martha and Mary, this that brought the question in the minds of the Jews, “Why could not this Man have prevented the death of His friend?” - this that would be a trial to the disciples – had for it a reason, and one very near to them; a reason expressed to them very soon, namely, “*To the intent that ye may believe.*” But they did believe already, did they not? Had they not said by Peter, “We believe and are sure that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God?” Yes, but no matter how much we believe, there is yet more in God to be believed; how much soever of Christ we believe, there is infinitely more in Him to be believed; and however much we have received there is infinitely more to be received from Him.

And His dealings strange and cross, contrary to reason, destructive to natural possibilities, we have here in death. “To the intent – for this end; this is My reason, My purpose. I purpose this, I intend it always, that when dispensations speak, when they reveal My mind, when the cloud is dispersed, when appearances of unkindness, of neglect, of impotence are passed away, you shall believe more than you believed before.’ And what are you to believe? ‘To the intent you may believe more fully that I am your Head, your Saviour, and Friend. To the intent that ye may know that I who am the Life speak to death, and death is nothing to Me; that I speak to corruption.’ “Lord,” said Martha, when Christ commanded that the stone be rolled away, “Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days.” In that climate, corruption was soon manifest. O, but what is this to Him who is Purity? What is death to Him who is Life?

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SCRIPTURAL LITERATURE FOR BELIEVERS

We are pleased to provide information about an organisation, based in Germany, who has made contact with us. The service they provide is for the purpose of promoting the Lord's Word for the spiritual benefit of His people in various countries and more particularly, for the honour and glory of His name.

The following is a slightly edited extract from their letter:

“This ministry was started in 1920 in Silesia, with evangelistic work amongst Jews and Gentiles, for whom a small Gospel witness was established. However, during the 1939/45 war our endeavours were scattered. In 1966, however, the work was revived and re-established in Sachsenheim, Baden-Wurtemberg, in the heart of Germany.

Being independent of any specific religious denomination, we endeavour to witness by open air preaching and a ministry of distributing spiritual literature, including faithful booklets and leaflets. In addition, we have published for over 80 years a bi-monthly magazine called, “Thoughts from the Word of God”. In this apostate age, messages about the Word of God, written in the past by various Christians are now widely rejected or treated with indifference, in as much as the Bible itself is neglected today or has become a means of getting gain by the publication of various corrupt modern versions.

We do not expect our literature about the Word of God will be of interest to the majority, but, in the providence of God, there are those who receive your Christian Watch Newsletter who we trust would benefit from that which we make available. In this hope we rejoice and pray that our gracious God may use this introduction to bless His beloved people. We shall be very grateful if the Lord will use our mutual endeavours to encourage more faithfulness and spiritual prosperity among His blood bought people.”

Comment by Christian Watch

This organisation produces an extensive range of spiritual items of literature which are supplied free of charge, as their funds permit. If you are interested, we suggest you send a request to the following address, asking for a copy of “WALKING WITH GOD” to be sent to you, together with an order form detailing the other literature available.

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Published by:

CHRISTIAN WATCH, PO Box 2113, Nuneaton, CV11 6ZY.

Email: info@christianwatch.net **Web:** www.christianwatch.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1095108