

This is Lance Lambert and this is my Middle East Update for April-May 2012.

In this world full of turmoil, demonstrations, violence, murder and popular uprisings, the word of the Lord declares to those, to trust in Him. As we read in Lamentations, chapter 3, verses 21-25, ***“This I recall to my mind; therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord’s lovingkindnesses [that is His everlasting chesed] that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.”***

And to that I would like to add in Isaiah and chapter 12, and verse 2 and 3. ***“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord, even the Lord, is my strength and song; and he is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”***

I would like to add to that, the word of Habakkuk, in the chapter 3, and I will read from 2 to 6: ***“O Lord, I have heard the report of thee, and am afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy. God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; He had rays coming forth from his hand; and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and fiery bolts went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth; He beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the eternal mountains were scattered; the everlasting hills did bow; His goings were as of old.”***

And then from verse 16: ***“I heard, and my body trembled, my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entereth into my bones, and I tremble in my place; because I must wait quietly for the day of trouble, for the coming up of the people that invadeth us. For though the fig-tree shall not flourish, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no food; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord, the Lord, is my strength; and he maketh my feet like hinds’ feet, and will make me to walk upon my high places.”*** (Habakkuk 3:16-19 - ASV)

I am speaking at the end of the Pesach week. The Pesach Seder, Passover, was held on Friday evening, this year a Shabbat, a double Shabbat. It was also coinciding—as it does every so many years—with Good Friday, and it speaks, the Passover, speaks volumes about the Lamb of God—our risen, ascended, glorified Messiah is enthroned at God’s right hand. Into His hand the Father has committed all authority, and power in heaven and on this fallen earth. Therefore we have nothing to fear from the darkness and evil that engulfs us—engulfs so much of the world. Our King reigns!

It is interesting to remember the words of the Apostle John, in Revelation 12:11 ***“...they overcame him [that is, Satan] through the blood of the Lamb.”*** It is a wonderful thing in a world that is very messed up, as at present, to know the blood of the Lamb on the lintels and doorposts of our life and home.

In this update we will cover the general Middle East situation, the Palestinian Authority and its action against bloggers, journalists and NGO's; Iran—the present situation. Fifthly, the enormous gas reserves in the eastern Mediterranean, and the alliance of Greece, Cyprus, Romania and Bulgaria, and possibly even Hungary. Sixthly, the “BRICS” nations, that is, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—the rise of new superpowers, and the possibility of a new world currency. Seventhly, the American election—what will it hold for the United States and the world, and lastly, Israel at present—what she is facing. [End of track 1]

Firstly, the general Middle East situation.

The “Arab Spring” as it has been dubbed, and its present results. It has become, now much clearer, that it is the Muslim Brotherhood, the Salafis, who are even more militant than the Muslim Brotherhood, and militant Islam in general, who are the main victors in the Arab Spring. This spells serious trouble for Christians, for Jews, and especially for Israel. Already there has been trouble in Egypt with the Coptic Christians, and many of them have left Egypt. We can consider the Middle East in general—we take Tunisia: it all began, the Arab Spring, so-called, in Tunisia, and Tunisia was the first country in the Arab world to have a genuinely free election. That was last October. It resulted in what has been called in the world media, a “moderate Islamic party” gaining power in Tunisia. But already they are Islamizing Tunisian life and society, and that has caused, once again, people to take to the streets in protest. It does not auger well for the future.

Then there is Libya, in pieces, still. In June they will have an election. Egypt will have its election in May. It is not clear yet who will be able to run for President. They have disqualified two of them—the Muslim Brotherhood leader, and the Deputy Prime Minister under Mubarak.

The Yemen is still in a mess, and do I have to say anything about Syria? With 9,000 of its civilians murdered by the security forces and by the government. Israel, is therefore, more isolated than ever. Indeed, she now faces huge obstacles to any negotiated settlement, let alone peace. If it is true that it is militant Islam that basically has come out of the Arab Spring, the victor in all these countries, the prospect of a negotiated settlement with these nations, is very far removed. In all of this, there is one hopeful sign. The Iranian situation is causing the oil sheikdoms and Saudi Arabia, to look more favorably on Israel. They have become very afraid of Iran's nuclear program. [End Track 2]

Then I would like to say something about the Palestinian Authority, and its action against bloggers, journalists and NGO's (Non-Government Organizations). Last weekend, the Palestinian Authority journalists staged an unusual demonstration, in the center of Ramallah, protesting the arrest of some journalists and bloggers. The Palestinian Authority crackdown on Facebook users, bloggers and journalists in the West Bank, has as its aim, apparently, the intimidation of the press, and a deterrence against criticism of Palestinian Authority leaders.

In the last few weeks, the Palestinian Authority security forces have arrested three journalists for “extending their tongue” against Palestinian leaders. This is a Jordanian law of 50 years. The demonstration in Ramallah by journalists was the result of the arrest of a Palestinian blogger, who launched a Facebook campaign, entitled “The People Want an End to Corruption!” His

name is Jamal Abu Rihan. Nearly all those arrested, have charged various Palestinian Authority officials with corruption, and have published the facts about those leaders' corruption. The truth is that the Palestinian street knows only too well, that many Palestinian Authority leaders have siphoned off much money given in aid by friendly countries. These arrests bring into question whether the Arab Spring will ever result in true democracy. If you cannot have a truly free press, can you have a genuine democracy? Islamic democracy is something quite different, it seems. It is autocratic and believes in silencing any voice that would criticize it, or its actions. It is also interesting, and possibly significant, that King Abdullah II, of the Jordanian Hashemite Kingdom, has revoked the citizenship of all the Palestinian leaders. Why has he done this? What is he trying to say? It is not clear whether Mahmoud Abbas is also included. [End of Track 3]

Then I would like to say something about the Iranian situation—the present situation. It is like the ebb and flow of the sea. At one time it seems that something will happen imminently. Then it will not—no action will be taken until 2013. On Friday, April the 13th, the six powers met in Istanbul, with Iran. They are the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain, and Germany. The result is as we expected. The powers thought it was constructive, and will now meet again in May. Bibi Netanyahu called it “a freebie for five weeks.” In other words, Iran has another five weeks in which to “steam ahead” with its Iranian [nuclear] program.

I was very interested to hear John Bolton, known for his honest, straight-forward and truthful words, normally. He was the former American Ambassador to the United Nations. When he was interviewed on the World Service of the BBC, he simply said, “They talk about red lines—those red lines have been passed weeks ago. Iran is now capable—with the amount of fissionable fuel that she has produced, to produce a couple of nuclear bombs. And then he went on to say, “While the nations are endlessly discussing, they steam ahead with their program.”

Teheran has already rejected the proposal put forward as a minimal essential by Israel to a negotiated accord. It was Binyamin Netanyahu and Ehud Barak who made the statement. To quote: “First of all,” (Barak) “Iran must open all of its nuclear facilities to the IAEA, disclose its entire history of activity, relating to its nuclear weapons' program, and surrender its entire stockpile of uranium—approximately 120 kilograms—enriched to 20%. In addition, Barak said that Iran would need to suspend all of its enrichment activity and transfer the majority of the five tons of uranium enriched to 3.5%, out of the country, leaving just enough needed for energy purposes.”

Binyamin Netanyahu was a little more lenient than Ehud Barak, but he ridiculed the isotopes claim, during his speech to the AIPAC committee conference—the America Israel Public Affairs Committee. It was a policy conference last month (March). He said, “A country that builds underground nuclear facilities, develops intercontinental ballistic missiles, manufactures thousands of centrifuges, and absorbs crippling sanctions is doing all that in order to advance medical research. So you see, when that Iranian intercontinental ballistic missile is flying through the air, to a location near you, you've got nothing to worry about. It's only carrying medical isotopes.”

Avigdor Lieberman, Israel's Foreign Minister, also made a comment. This was made when the visiting Italian Prime Minister, Monte, was being welcomed. He said that Israel has no problem

with the Iranian people, and until the Islamic Revolution in 1979, had friendly ties with that country. Israel's problem, he said, was with the extreme Ayatollahs leading that country. Beyond the nuclear program and problem, Lieberman said Iran also radiates a message of violence and complete disregard for international laws—evident over the last few months, in the violent takeover of the British Embassy in Teheran, the plan to assassinate the Saudi Ambassador in the United States, support for Assad's ruthless regime, and the death sentence imposed on an Iranian Muslim who converted to Christianity.

If we take the facts, it seems reasonably clear that Iran is bent on achieving nuclear devices. For example, Ahmadinejad's repeated declarations about "wiping Israel off the world map," he also said, interestingly, "with one blow." That sounds like a nuclear weapon. The Ayatollah Khomeini has spoken a number of times in exactly the same vein. And then again, the impossibility of militant Islam accepting Israel in any way, in the Middle East, or anywhere. In its eyes, the presence of a Jewish State in the Middle East, is an obscenity, and cannot be accepted under any circumstances whatsoever. Thus, Hamas, Hizbullah, and Iran are being honest, in simply saying—it's their constitution. If anyone wants to see it, look it up—Google it.

If they are successful, it will be a total disaster for the Middle East—for Europe, for Britain, and for the United States, and in fact, for the world. Whilst the nations talk, discuss, and wait for diplomacy and sanctions to work, Iran's nuclear program steams ahead.

History is not on the side of the Quartet and their deliberations, or the five nations plus one, that met in Istanbul, this last Friday. Why do I say that? I mean simply this: if we look at history, from which we learn, that we never learn from history. If we look at history, the nations never stopped the Nazi authorities, especially Hitler. He had made very clear and plain what he planned to do. They never stopped him. They discussed endlessly, they made different statements; even Jewish leaders didn't say much about what was going on. They didn't like it. But this time, it's a little different. We have an Israel, and Binyamin Netanyahu has been very forthright in the things that he has said. The fact of the matter is, that we are seeing a rerun of history. In the same way that the nations dithered and dithered, and discussed backwards and forwards—whether it was Hitler's rhetoric and "hot air," and would all calm down once he got the German-speaking areas of Europe together, under his control, the fact of the matter—he went on to do exactly what he said he would do. It resulted in a minimum of six million Jewish deaths in the Holocaust. [End of Track 4]

Then I would like to say, fourthly, say something about the discovery of large gas reserves in the eastern Mediterranean. The discovery of huge gas reserves in the eastern Mediterranean, is having an impact. Hizbullah, Lebanon and Turkey are very annoyed. Turkey has become threatening. In fact, she has sent warships to patrol the area around Cyprus. The unexpected result has been in a coming together of Greece, Cyprus—even Romania, and Bulgaria, and possibly even Hungary. The gas finds by Israel could supply not only all of Israel, but all of Greece, and Cyprus, and Bulgaria, and Romania, and Hungary. Greece and Romania, are at present, allowing the Israeli air force to practice in their air space. That would have been unthinkable, a year or two ago. It is even possible that Cyprus will allow an air base to be used permanently by the IAF. Now all this has been denied at present. Avigdor Lieberman is on his way to Cyprus, to be the first time, ever, that a leading figure in the government of Israel has

visited Cyprus, on an official visit. This growing alliance, both the economic and military, may have far-reaching implications. Already it has resulted in a certain kind of unofficial defense pact. These countries are all of them, very wary of Turkey, which is becoming an ever more growing area of power. Of course, they were all originally part of the Ottoman Empire, and suffered from Turkey. [End of Track 5]

Then I want to say something about the general world situation. The economic situation continues, with many sad results—austerity programs, regulations, high unemployment, recession, etc., etc.—all that results from this. The eurozone is in trouble. Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Spain—nor is France out of that trouble. She may well, in the coming year, we may see some serious trouble developing in the French economy.

The United Kingdom is facing a problem, as well. By no means is she out of the problem. The United States still teeters on the brink of further economic trouble. Let me put it this way: at the same time, there is trouble everywhere. Anyone who listens to the news—it's not exactly a pleasurable thing to listen to the news in these days—all you hear is bombs in Iraq, bombs in Afghanistan, bombs in Pakistan, bombs in Nigeria, or in Uganda, or somewhere else—in the Sudan, or South Sudan. Everywhere you turn, there is violence, there are suicide bombings, there is the bombings of churches, of mosques, of funeral parties, of wedding parties. It seems to have no end.

The rise of militant Islam, world-wide, is a very real factor. Much of the violence, death and murder, seems to result from its rise. Take Nigeria, or Egypt, or Pakistan, or Afghanistan, or Somalia, just simply as an example of this—not to mention Iraq and Syria, Sudan and South Sudan, Somalia, Libya, Mali and the Maldives. It's just unbelievable. So wherever we turn, we have an extraordinary situation of unrest and of trouble.

To this we must add the physical problems—fires, floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, volcanoes. Climate change seems to be the reason for the shortage of food in some parts of the world, and the rise of prices for food. For example, one simple thing is Mt. Etna has erupted 24 times in the last one year—*six* times this last month. If we bring all of this together, we have more than a “little” problem.

The BRICS nations (so-called because of the first letter of the different countries—Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) have got together in a conference, because they want to somehow counter the United States, and the EU. They want another World Bank. Will it succeed? They even want a new world currency, instead of the dollar, or the euro. I think this is interesting because China, India and Brazil—without any shadow of a doubt, are the new great superpowers that are developing on the world scene.

Is all this unrest the harbinger of the coming of antichrist? This man of economic miracle, of a stable financial structure, of multi-culturalism, and multi-faith, and peace from war, has been, in the word of God, predicted in many, many places. Are we actually watching the world slowly developing into the condition in which this kind of leader will emerge as the answer to the instability, and trouble, and violence of world society? It is interesting to think for a moment to go back again just a few moments, to the possible coming together of Greece, Cyprus, and these

other countries, in some kind of mutual defense pact. It is at present, in its embryonic stage, but it is a remarkable and significant development.

Turkey has a very fine air force, army, and navy, and also is part of NATO. The possibility of Turkey's entrance into the European Union only makes her presence more powerful. It was Austria—another country that suffered from the Ottoman Empire—who vetoed Turkey's entrance into the European Union. It's also interesting in that connection—that apart from economic matters, which could benefit all of these countries and Israel, there has been talk of electrical power also being shared, by underground sea cables.

If we take all of this together, we have a very interesting situation that we are viewing. I think of Isaiah, and chapter 21, verse 11. It's a very strange little prophecy. It says it's "*The burden of Dumah. One calleth unto me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, the morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: turn ye, come.*" Very interesting—this little strange prophecy. What it really means is this: the morn is coming, but before the morning, there is the darkness of the night.

And it really does seem very much like that, in our present. If we really trust the Lord, we don't need to fear. [End of Track 6]

Then let me say finally, something about Israel. As usual, she is facing many problems: the uncertainty over the Arab Spring; the uncertainty over what will happen with Syria; and of course, the uncertainty over Iran. Added to that is the growing anti-Semitism—especially in the West. These matters have combined to make 2012 a difficult year.

At present, Israel is economically stable. There is domestic unrest over the gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots." But basically, Israel has escaped much of the problem that is hitting the rest of the world. There is enormous pressure on Israel to compromise; therefore we need to pray for the government of Israel, and particularly for the Prime Minister, Bibi Netanyahu—that he will be resolute, unyielding, and uncompromising. Mistakes can be made now, that in the years to come will cause much trouble in Israel. The withdrawal from Gaza, which seemed to be a wonderful gesture toward the Palestinians, has ended in disaster on every level.

The creation of a Palestinian state within the heartland of the Promised Land will be much the same. So now we have a very real problem in front of us, and we need to pray for the government of Israel.

It is interesting that Mahmoud Abbas has said that he is going to send this letter—which he says will be his last letter—to Bibi Netanyahu. I could wish it was, but the fact of the matter is, that the peace negotiations, so-called, have reached an impasse, and there is no way through. Israel is stupid if she believes that she can negotiate anything or compromise in any way with groups that believe in her total destruction and removal from the scene. Until that alters, there's no possibility of any progress forward. There's no reason why Palestinians and Jews should not be able to live together, work together, and survive, as it were. None whatsoever. But the problem is that one side believes in the total destruction of the other. So we have to leave this where we do.

Well, we had the “flotilla” which was a “label” thing—a kind of sea matter, which brought a lot of problem to Israel. Then we’ve had the “flytilla”—all this thousand people coming from different airports in different parts of Europe and Turkey. It has been an amazing operation in which not a single person got through, except for one girl who got through to Bethlehem. This is just an attempt to demoralize Israel and to divide her, and we shall see more of these attempts. This isn’t the last attempt of this, but God has given His word, and that’s very clear. And He says in His word that He that guardeth or keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps, and we have to be very thankful that the Lord is in charge of this whole operation.

Pray for Israel.

There have, of course, been some bright rays of light in this whole situation. The rain and snow this winter has been abundant. I found it very funny when I arrived at the airport and was met by my taxi driver, whom I know very well, and the first thing he said to me when I got in the car was, “Don’t pray anymore—for any more rain or snow!” He said, “We’re swimming in it!” And I found it very funny that someone who didn’t really believe in God thought we should stop praying altogether along this line.

Then again, the snow was so much on Mt. Hermon that the chair lift had to be stopped, because it was actually brushing in on the snow. It was 19 feet in depth. So the Lord has answered prayer, once again for rain and snow, and we trust that the level of the Kinneret will now be normal.

Then tourism has been booming. I haven’t seen Israel quite like the last month or two, for many, for quite a few months, if not years. But this has been absolutely booming—buses everywhere, tour groups everywhere—something quite exciting.

Then thirdly, the discovery of these huge gas reserves in the Mediterranean. On the one side they give us some headaches because of the need to protect them from terrorism and from alien forces that want to destroy this possibility, but at the same time, it is the answer to prayer of so many people, over years, that Israel would discover such reserves. The fact that they are so big, and they could be used to help a large area—even possibly the Arab nations around us—is cause for praise.

Then again, the growing alliance of Greece, Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania, and possibly even at some point, Hungary, I think is a cause for praise. It’s a ray of light in a situation that is very dark and threatening.

The salvation and the redemption of the House of Israel is that much nearer, and we should praise the Lord. There may be some dark times ahead, but the fact of the matter, the morning is coming.

And finally, the Messiah will come to Jerusalem. As surely as I speak and give this update, He will come, and His feet will stand again upon the dust of the Mt. of Olives, and He will move and tread again upon the streets of this old Jerusalem. That has to be a cause of tremendous uplift, praise and worship, because with His coming the whole parenthesis of sin and evil and wickedness will be over. The one thing He says, in the last chapter of the Bible is: ***“Behold, I***

make all things new.” That’s something, I think, to look forward to, and this nation, scattered over the earth, brought back again by a divine miracle, is a testimony and a witness to the absolute relevance and trustworthiness of the word of God.

We do not need to be downcast. We have so much ground to be full of joy. Remember it says that even when we faint, it says, ***“Those that wait for the Lord*** (not only “on the Lord” but wait “for the Lord”) ***will renew their strength.***” Dr. F.B. Myer used to say, those who wait for the Lord will *exchange* their strength—they will get His for theirs. Then, ***“They will mount up with wings like eagles into the heavens. They will run and not be weary; they will walk and not faint.”*** A wonderful promise for those who know the Lord.

So, dear folks, will you pray for Israel, for the Middle East, for the world and for your own country? - That the Lord will meet the needs everywhere. We ask—we say this—with real faith that the Lord will answer our prayer.