

World War III?

Denominationalists are all in a tizzy about what is happening in the Middle East right now. Is this World War III? Is this finally the time of Armageddon? Is the end-time here? They worry about all these things thinking the Bible addresses them—all to no avail.

First, if these things are a matter of Bible prophecy, there is nothing we can do but accept them.

Second, the Holy Spirit said the last days began in the first century (Heb. 1:1, 2).

Third, denominationalists have been in a tizzy every time something happens in the Middle East. They are like a broken record—annoying and long past any usefulness.

Let us not get caught up in the hysteria, but confidently trust in the truth.

- Steven F. Deaton

Assemblies

Sunday Morning	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening	6:00 p.m.
Wednesday	7:30 p.m.

Elders

Tom Brown	502-921-2778
Laymon Byers	502-957-3627
John Smith	502-231-5341

Evangelists

Ron Halbrook	502-955-1748 halbrook@insightbb.com
Steven F. Deaton	502-543-9686 sfdeaton@insightbb.com

Phone: 502-957-5115

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When Blindness Does Not Bring Repentance

In Genesis 19 we have the account of the demise of Sodom. God sent angels to lead Lot and his family out of the doomed city. The men of the city attempted to sexually assault the visitors. The angels struck them blind “so that they became weary trying to find the door” (Gen. 19:11). The men still sought to find the door after they were blind and only turned away after growing weary. This is an amazing display of perverse immorality. The men wanted homosexual relations so badly that blindness barely stopped them in their pursuit and did not lead them to repentance.

“But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds.’”

- Rom. 2:5, 6

There are people in our time like the wicked men of Sodom: the drinker who will not quit though he has cirrhosis of the liver; the smoker who refuses to give up cigarettes despite having lung cancer; the man who looks at pornography and will not stop though his marriage is falling apart; the child abuser who sends his daughter to the hospital and beats her again after she comes home.

The Bible describes a sin nature (Eph. 2:1-3). It is not inherent or passed down from Adam (Eze. 18:20). Rather, it is acquired by habitual practice. People become addicted to the sin because there is an emotional or physical rush that accompanies it—and this is what makes staying in sin so dangerous. You can get to the point you like and want it regardless of the consequences.

We can look at the men of Sodom and see how foolish they were to press on in their sinful conduct. However, can we see our own—dare we say—stupidity when we continue to live in sin?

- Steven F. Deaton

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Are Your Prayers Heard?

The Bible exhorts us to pray.

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Phil. 4:6).

“Pray without ceasing” (1 Thes. 5:17).

We pray for health, spiritual well-being, material blessings, faith, strength in temptation, forgiveness, and many other things. We often acknowledge the benefits of prayer—it gives peace (Phil. 4:7). But do we stop to consider whether or not our prayers are heard?

We have a Bible example of One whose prayers were heard in His most trying hour. The Hebrew writer says of Jesus, “who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear” (Heb. 5:7). When Jesus was in the shadow of the cross, with all the pain and anguish falling on Him, He turned to the Father in prayer—and “was heard because of His godly fear.”

Jesus had reverence. He respected the Father and His will. He behaved accordingly every day of His life, always pleasing the Father (Jn. 8:29). Thus, when He prayed, He was heard.

If we want to be heard in our time of need, we must have godly fear. We must honor God and His Word, appreciating things that are holy, not mocking them or treating them as common things. We must respect worship, prayer, preachers, elders, the church, the Bible, Bible classes, and many other things ordained of God. If we do not have reverence, we will not be heard.

- Steven F. Deaton

Dam It Up

The wise man said, “The beginning of strife is like releasing water; Therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts” (Prov. 17:14).

If a dam breaks disaster follows. If it holds, all is well. It would be unthinkable to purposely or willfully blast a dam and destroy the property and lives that lie downstream. In fact, we might think the only ones who would consider that are “terrorists.” The Proverb writer tells us that strife is like that water behind the dam—if it is released, turbulent trouble comes. If it is restrained, all is well.

Every home has strife or the potential for strife. No home is immune to the stresses and strains of everyday life. Some homes restrain strife, while others do not. The homes that have bickering, fight about money, sex, jobs, trash, dishes, toothpaste, toilet paper, pets, cars, clothes, TV, and on and on. These are things we must all deal with. Why is it, then, that some quarrel about these things while others do not?

The answer is some have heeded the wise man’s words by damming up the strife. They hold back from making that sarcastic comment. They refrain from pushing the other’s buttons. They stop the quarrel before it happens.

Are there quarrels in your home because of unrestrained strife? Learn to dam it up. If you do not, the destruction and disaster will continue to the harm of everyone.

- Steven F. Deaton

“When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.”

- Matt. 12:43-45