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KOSOVO AND THE PREPARATION OF EUROPE

by Thomas Ice

I believe that God is currently setting the stage for events that will take place after the rapture, during the tribulation. Israel is back in her land and being postured to sign what Isaiah calls “a covenant with death” (Isa. 28:15,18) that will commence the tribulation (Dan. 9:26,27). The other party to that covenant will be a Revived Roman Empire, centered in Europe. I think that the current war in Yugoslavia is making a contribution to the stage-setting for the post-rapture period of history.

DANIEL’S OUTLINE FOR HISTORY

Daniel 2

Daniel 2 contains God’s divine outline for history from the sixth century B.C. until the 1,000 year reign of Christ in His kingdom known as the millennium. Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, as authoritatively interpreted by God through Daniel, tells us that history will see the rise of four consecutive Gentile world powers, representing the kingdom of man, that will in the end be crushed by our Lord’s eternal reign. This message was conveyed through the appearance of a giant statue in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. The head of gold represents Babylon. The breast and arms of silver indicate Medio-Persia. While its bronze belly and thighs symbolize Greece. Rome is the final entity that appears in two phases: its legs of iron (the ancient Roman Empire of the first century) and its feet partly of iron and partly of clay (the Revived Roman Empire of the future tribulation period) (Dan. 2:31-35). Students of Bible Prophecy are interested in learning as much as possible about the final, revived form of the Roman Empire.

Daniel 2:42,43 tells us “And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle. And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.” As opposed to Ancient Rome characterized by iron and thus internal strength, Revived Rome with its mixture of iron and clay is a very weak mixture. The fourth kingdom starts off as pure iron and then as you move down the legs to the feet and toes the iron fades out into pieces of iron impregnated into pottery. Daniel interprets this degradation of the pure iron into pottery mixed with iron as a deterioration within the fourth kingdom itself over time. Thus, the picture is that of a heterogeneous composition of the feet and the toes being made partly of iron and partly of clay, is a heterogeneous composition of the culture of the kingdom. Daniel’s prophecy tells us of the progressive deterioration of the cultural unity of the succeeding kingdoms. We can look back in history and see exactly what Daniel is talking about.

The Babylonian culture was very unified, very uniform, being dominated by the god Marduk. The Medio-Persian empire was less united made up of two competing cultures which never did really get together. Cyrus himself was a cultural half-breed, his father was a Persian and his mother was a Mede. Going down into the time of the Greeks you have Alexander conquering the world and trying to Hellenize it. Immediately upon his death four generals started competing over the major cultures that made up Alexander’s

kingdom, that is, Egypt, Syria, Thrace, and Macedonia. Alexander's kingdom suffered because it tried to embrace too many diverse cultures. Later in history Rome brought together every culture under the sun.

Noting the decline in the four kingdoms from strong unity to an enforced unity under the Ancient Roman Empire, it is not surprising to learn that the Revived Roman Empire, that is being prepared in our own day, is made up of just the kind of reluctant mix we see in the Balkans today. Yet that is what is symbolized by the mixture of iron and clay. The move toward the break-up of regions into their ethnic enclaves when a strong centralized power is removed is exactly the picture of the future Revived Roman Empire.

Daniel 7

Any student of Bible prophecy understands that Daniel 7 provides a repeat of the events of Daniel 2 but from another perspective. Instead of a statue, as in Daniel 2, Daniel 7 depicts the true nature of these kingdoms, as beasts. Daniel 7:23,24 tells us, "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.'" Daniel 7 tells us that the Revived Roman Empire will come to power via a 10 nation confederacy. Three of those nations will be subdued through the use of force. This will be the springboard for the Antichrist's global empire. Knowing what the current world is moving toward, it is not difficult to see that the overall trends in Europe are moving in this direction.

THE REUNIFICATION OF EUROPE

What two world wars could not bring to pass, we are seeing develop right before our eyes—the reunification of Europe. Yet, seemingly every poll indicates that most of the people in each country are opposed to what is happening. Nevertheless, unification marches on. With economic union well under way, the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia has revealed a previously slumbering side of Europe as a military power.

Just when many of us thought we had seen it all from the blundering Bill Clinton, he wakes up one morning and decides to start a war in Balkans. But, like all that President Clinton has accomplished, he is moving the world toward the globalism that will clearly attempt to solve the world's problems in the tribulation under the direction of the antichrist. Beyond exhibiting many of the character qualities of the antichrist, this time Clinton's action are once again diminishing American global leadership, while at the same time enhancing the role that Europe will play.

The Stratfor Global Intelligence Update predicts a distancing of Europe from the United States in the future with Europe handling future crisis herself. The Update says,

We believe that the Kosovo conflict will become a definitive event in European history. The failure in Kosovo will cause the United States to recoil from casual interventions. More important, U.S. clumsiness in Kosovo will

cause the Europeans to shy away from American leadership, particularly concerning European matters. The likelihood of an American administration herding NATO into another military adventure in Europe is minimal. This is a crucial change. There has been a tremendous asymmetry between Europe as a politico-military entity and Europe as an economic entity. NATO has been the primary politico-military expression of Europe, the EU the primary economic entity. This has made it extremely difficult for Europe to express a coherent viewpoint. The EU and NATO were simply not congruent.

The Europeans do have a vehicle for politico-military thinking, the Western European Union, which excludes the United States and is, therefore, far more congruent with the EU. But even that doesn't get to the heart of the problem. Germany's interests are specifically German. France's interests are French. The UK's interests are the UK's and are quite different from the other two. We expect two results from Kosovo. First, a strengthening of purely European institutions at the expense of NATO. Second, a greater caution by individual nations toward multinational commitments, including purely European ones.

Kosovo will undoubtedly bring to a close what we might call the era of casual intervention for the United States. There is nothing like failure to increase sobriety. We suspect that this is the last major foreign policy adventure for the Clinton Administration and would not be surprised to see Albright, Berger and Holbrooke accepting private sector positions in the near future. Most importantly, Kosovo closes what we regard as the interregnum between eras. The Cold War was not replaced by a unipolar world. That was a temporary anomaly. The new era of one superpower and several great powers, loosely united to limit U.S. power, is now beginning.

We'll tentatively christen this the New World Disorder while we wait for the new era to name itself. ("The World After Kosovo," May 3, 1999
<<http://www.stratfor.com/SERVICES/GIU/050399.ASP>>)

When the above analysis is combined with the fact that both Israel and the Palestinians have both lost confidence in America's ability to broker the Oslo accords, it is not surprising to find that especially the Palestinians are looking to Europe to impose a solution in the Middle East. The Israeli press has voiced concern that NATO, The United Nations, or Europe will enforce a similar solution upon Israel that is being attempted in Kosovo. Thus, recent developments continue to set the stage for the tribulation.

ISRAEL'S COVENANT WITH DEATH

Daniel 9:27 says, "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." The

pronoun “he” at the beginning of the verse refers to the future antichrist. Why? Because the nearest antecedent is clearly a reference to “the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary” (Dan. 9:26), which speaks of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70. Thus, “he” is the antichrist who will accomplish the events of 9:27 in the middle of the future 70th week of Daniel known as the tribulation on behalf of the Revived Roman Empire as previously taught by Daniel (Dan. 2,7).

Isaiah speaks of why Israel will sign such a covenant with the antichrist in 28:14-22. As was often done in her past, Israel will sign the covenant with the Revived Roman antichrist with the intent of providing security from her enemies that are pressing her from all sides. Instead of securing a covenant of life, as Israel’s leaders will think, the nation will start the tribulation with what is in reality a “covenant with death” (Isa. 28:15,18). Instead of gaining protection from her European vassal, Israel will experience “the overwhelming scourge” (Isa. 28:15,18) which is a metaphor for military invasion. Further, in the middle of the tribulation, this Roman antichrist who starts the tribulation by promising protection for the nation of Israel, will turn upon her and commence the greatest time of persecution ever upon the Jewish people (see Matt. 24:15-22; Rev. 12:1-17).

We see in our own day the increasing isolation of Israel within the world leading to an effort for her to look for security from man made covenants instead of looking to the Lord for stability. One day a European leader will step forth and appear to solve the Middle East crisis through negotiation and a covenant. In the mean time, God is preparing through contemporary events in our own day a Revived Roman Empire that will be the final phase of the kingdom of man that will put forth its greatest effort against Almighty God. The Kosovo crisis will likely result in the isolation of the U. S. from playing a leading role in European military affairs. Thus, paving the way, not only for the developing economic union of Europe, but a military unification as well. While God is preparing our world for judgment, the Believer should continue to watch and wait for the any-moment return of the Lord in the clouds to snatch away His bride—the church. Maranatha!