

## THE PROPHECY ABOUT DAMASCUS-PART 1 ISAIAH 17:1-14

### Introduction

There is no doubt that a great amount of deadly violence is taking place on the other side of the world in Syria's civil war.

(I've seen estimates as high as 110,000 dead)

With the possibility of a U.S. attack on Syria by the Obama Administration, some people are not only looking ahead to what might happen in the coming days — but also looking backward into Biblical prophecies recorded in the pages of the Old Testament to examine prophecies related to Syria.

Syria vows to retaliate against neighboring Israel if the U.S. strikes.

Damascus is the capital of Syria with much of the nation's population living in and around the city. Damascus is thought to be the world's oldest, continuously inhabited city with a 5,000 year history! (i.e. It dates back to the days of Abraham *Genesis 14:15*; Abraham's steward is called *Eliezer of Damascus* in *Genesis 15:2*.)

There is no record in ancient history of it ever being fully destroyed. This is significant because the Bible says, as we will see, that there will come a time when Damascus will be totally destroyed and becomes uninhabitable.

### **I. SOME PREVIOUS HISTORY OF DAMASCUS AND SYRIA AS IT RELATES TO ISRAEL.**

- A. In The Days Of King David—2 Samuel 8:5-6**
- B. In The Days Of King Solomon—1 Kings 11:23-25**  
One of the adversaries that God stirred up against Solomon.
- C. In The Days Of King Asa of Judah and King Baasha of Israel —1 Kings 15:17-22; 2 Chronicles 16:1-7**  
King Baash of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) had made a league with King Benhadad of Syria. King Asa of Judah (the Southern Kingdom) made a league with King Benhadad of Syria to go against King Baasha of Israel.

## THE PROPHECY ABOUT DAMASCUS-PART 1 ISAIAH 17:1-14

*2 Chronicles 16:7– “And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.”*

- D. In The Days Of The Prophet Elijah. (1 Kings 19:15-16)**  
God told Elijah to anoint three different people. The first was Hazael, as King of Syria. Elijah was told to anoint an enemy king because God was going to use Syria as his instrument to punish Israel for its sin. Syria brought Israel's external punishment!
- E. In The Days Of King Ahab of Israel. (1 Kings 20:1-43)**  
Because of Israel's wickedness, God had allowed Syria to gain strength and become an enemy of Israel. But God defeated the Syrian army for Ahab so that he would know that *“I am the LORD”* (Vs 28). But even in victory, Ahab was disobedient to the LORD because he failed to destroy the king Benhadad! So God sent another prophet to Ahab to tell him that because he let the king of Syria live, then he would die!  
  
Later in **1 Kings 22**, King Ahab of Israel allied with King Jehosophat of Judah to go against Benhadad of Syria in a place called Ramoth-Gilead that was a city in Israel at Syria's border that had been seized by Benhadad of Syria. It was in the battle for Ramoth-Gilead that Ahab died.
- F. In The Days Of The Prophet Elisha. (2 Kings 5)**  
A captain of the host of the King in Syria (Naaman) sought the God of Israel to heal him of his leprosy because of the witness of a little maid that had been taken away captive out of Israel in one of Syria's many raids on Israel.

## THE PROPHECY ABOUT DAMASCUS-PART 1 ISAIAH 17:1-14

Also, in **2 Kings 8:7-15**, the prophet Elisha prophesied to Benhadad's messenger, Hazael, about the death of Benhadad King of Syria and how that Hazael would be king and do great harm to God's people under his leadership.

**2 Chronicles 24:23-24** records how God fulfilled this prophecy and used Hazael to judge Joash king of Judah.

**2 Chronicles 28:5, 19, 23** records that God used Syria again to punish another wicked King of Judah, King Ahaz.

## II. SOME MORE RECENT HISTORY OF DAMASCUS AND SYRIA AS IT RELATES TO ISRAEL.

Syria is the home of many Islamic terrorist groups and its army has invaded and has occupied Lebanon for almost 30 years. Currently, Syria and Iran are supporting the Hezbollah in southern Lebanon against Israel.

Syria, like the rest of Israel's Islamic neighbors, hates Israel! They have invaded and attacked Israel on several occasions since Israel became a nation in 1948, and have publicly called for the total destruction of Israel.

It is interesting to note that recently an Israeli general, on commenting on the growing threat of Syria, said that the easiest thing to do to neutralize Syria as a mortal threat would be to drop a nuclear bomb on Damascus.

There is no lack of extreme and threatening voices against Israel in the Middle East. Certainly, Syria is one near the top of the list.

Before the civil war (which began March 2011 – 2.5 years ago), Syria had placed its army, Scud missiles and air force on a high level of preparedness. We know that Syria is acquiring some of the most contemporary weapons systems from one of its main allies, Russia.

## THE PROPHECY ABOUT DAMASCUS-PART 1 ISAIAH 17:1-14

So, understand that while this conflict has the **POTENTIAL** to escalate into the fulfillment of the Biblical prophecy concerning Damascus, we should be cautious, because we don't know God's timing on the fulfillment of this Prophecy!

Prophecy is really about the faithfulness of God's Word, and though we may not see the fulfillment of this Prophecy, it **WILL** be fulfilled!

So, before we get in to the Scripture dealing with this Prophecy, I want to give you my disclaimer.

Prophecy is a difficult, but fascinating subject. I think most people want to know what the future holds, and I am no exception.

What is so wonderful about **Biblical Prophecy**, is the fact that it is inspired by God and 100% accurate. Once an event that has been prophesied in Scripture occurs, we can look back at the passages that speak of that event and see the absolute perfection and fulfillment of that Prophecy.

But understand that things are a bit different when we are studying Prophecies that have yet to be fulfilled (Which is what we are dealing with here.) The Bible's accuracy is still infallible, but often the human interpretation can be in error – **especially when it comes to details and timing in Prophecy.**

I want us to look at this prophecy against Damascus because I believe it could very possibly be relevant to the times we are living in. I want you to understand that I **DO NOT CLAIM TO BE A PROPHET!**

But I want us to look at this future prophecy relating to Syria and try to gain an understanding of these things—even though we may get some of the details and/or timing of these prophecies wrong.

There's nothing wrong with God's Word, as events will prove.

## THE PROPHECY ABOUT DAMASCUS-PART 1

### ISAIAH 17:1-14

But there can be an error on our part in understanding of the prophecy.

Today, I understand that Damascus has around 2.3 million citizens and serves as headquarters to a number of terrorist groups that are ALL against the nation of Israel! During its entire history, it has never been destroyed. That is why the Biblical prophecies concerning Damascus are so important.

The prophecies regarding Damascus can be found in three main passages in the Bible, all of them in the Old Testament and none written later than approximately 2,600 years ago. **We will be looking at these three passages—Isaiah 17, Jeremiah 49:23-27; and Amos 1:3-5.**

Let me encourage you to read these Scriptures in their entirety when you get home.

When we look at any prophecy, there are three important questions:

1. What is the prophecy about, (or what is going to happen)?
2. How and/or when will the prophecy be fulfilled?
3. Why was the prophecy given, or why will it be carried out?

Next week, we'll begin to look at these questions.

### **Conclusion**

So, what do we do with what we see in Scripture and what we are seeing unfold in the news?

If you are lost, its time to get saved!

If you are saved, its time to get right with the LORD and prepare to meet Him!