

How the Ceasefire in Israel May Set the Stage for God's Future Rescue

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HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

How the ceasefire in Israel may set the stage for God's future rescue. That is the topic we'll discuss today right here on The Christian Worldview radio program, where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a nonprofit, listener-supported radio ministry. You can connect with us by visiting our website, TheChristianWorldview.org and the rest of our contact information will be given throughout today's program. As always, thank you for your notes of encouragement, financial support, and lifting us up in prayer.

Earlier this month, President Trump and his administration brokered a ceasefire in the two-year-old war between Israel and Hamas that has taken place in Gaza, the small Palestinian territory in southwest Israel. After Hamas's savage attack into Israel two years ago, where they killed 1,200 people and took 250 hostages back to Gaza, Israel has systematically targeted entrenched Hamas fighters in Gaza, resulting in a near takeover and destruction of Gaza. So, what makes this ceasefire significant? It's what it doesn't do and what it could lead to. While greatly diminished, Hamas lives on in Gaza, certain to rebuild, just as Iran is doing after President Trump called Israel off that war. In other words, while Israel has flexed powerful muscles across the Middle East, their enemies live on to fight another day. Meanwhile, President Trump is eager to have the Abraham Accord signed by Israel and longtime Arab enemies throughout the Middle East. Plus, there is a strong international push for a Palestinian state in Israel.

Soeren Kern, geopolitical analyst and managing editor of The Christian Worldview Journal, joins us to discuss the ceasefire and how it may be setting the stage for God's miraculous rescue of Israel in the future.

Soeren, thank you for coming on The Christian Worldview radio program today. President Trump traveled to the Middle East at the signing of this recent ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, and he spoke to the Israeli Knesset, which is their governing body over in Israel in Jerusalem. And here is what he had to say in that message.

Audio Sound Bite: President Trump:

So, now we're going to forge a future that is worthy of our heritage. We're going to build a legacy that all the people of this region can be proud of. New bonds of friendship, cooperation, and commerce will join Tel Aviv to Dubai, Haifa to Beirut, Jerusalem to Damascus, and from Israel to Egypt, from Saudi Arabia to Qatar, from India to Pakistan, from Indonesia to Iraq, from Syria to Bahrain, Turkey to Jordan, the United Arab Emirates to Oman, and Armenia to Azerbaijan, another war that I just settled. We are going to have hope, harmony, opportunity, and happiness here in the spiritual and geographic center of the entire world. That's what you are. Israel, America and all of the nations of the Middle East will soon be safer, stronger, greater, and more

prosperous than ever before. And I want to thank you all once again for this exceptional honor. This has been truly an honor. It's seldom that a president is invited to do this. And I love Israel. I'm with you all the way. You'll be bigger, better, stronger, and more loving than ever before. Thank you very much. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. And God bless the Middle East. Thank you, everybody. Good luck. Thank you very much. Thank you.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

This was really a big statement what President Trump just said. "We're going to have new bonds of friendship and peace." And he had hit on all these countries, including many of Israel's enemies, that there's going to be hope and harmony and happiness. A lot has been made about this particular ceasefire. Some calling it a "peace deal." "Peace coming to the Middle East," "Trump should get the Nobel Prize," et cetera, et cetera. Give us some context on what took place here. Is this a ceasefire, or is it actually a peace deal? And what went into agreeing to this deal? And the return of hostages that Hamas was holding, considering that having hostages was Hamas's really... their biggest bargaining chip in this war.

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

Sure. It's a very confusing situation. There's a lot of criticism and skepticism about the ceasefire. Many analysts are asking questions about what's next. Will Hamas release the bodies of the dead hostages? What happens next to Hamas as an organization? What happens to Israeli security? Will the war continue? What is the role of the United States moving forward? What does the future of the region look like? I mean, there's many challenges and opportunities for Israel in this situation, but it's clear that enemies of Israel are not finished fighting. So, I would just break this down into kind of see of, like, what is the best parts of the deal? And what are the worst parts of the deal?

And I think the best part of the deal, obviously, is that Hamas released the 20 alive Israeli hostages. Families reunited, and this really transcends everything else that is in the agreement. By doing so, the releasing of the alive hostages really, Hamas essentially lost all its leverage over Israel. And it also, in a way, removed Israeli restraint because Israel was acting with a large amount of restraint in Gaza because it was afraid of killing the hostages. The other positive aspect of this agreement is that for the foreseeable future, Israel will retain control over 50% of Gaza. Of course, it's not ideal, but it controls all of the borders. So there will be total control over what goes in and what goes out of the Gaza Strip.

The negative aspect of this really is, like, what are the long-term implications of this? Will East and West Gaza be separated for a very long period of time in the way that East and West Germany were during the Cold War? So, a lot of critics are saying that essentially now the clock has been reset to October 6, 2023, the day before the Hamas massacre of Israelis. By Israel withdrawing from large parts of Gaza, it creates a vacuum. And it's really questionable having Arab autonomy in Gaza after everything that's happened. And even possibly worse is that Arabs and the Turks are involved in running the Gaza Strip in the future, which is part of the agreement. It's not really clear what is the role of Qatar and Turkey in the future.

The other bad part of the deal, obviously, is releasing terrorists back into Gaza. More than 1,000 Hamas terrorists that were being held in Israeli jails have been allowed to return to Gaza in exchange for the 20 live hostages. In the past, these prisoner exchanges, between 60% and 80% of the prisoners have gone back to terrorist activity. This is a really concerning part of the deal. We know that it's a 20-part deal, and phase one is the release of the hostages, both live and dead. And so nothing will move forward on this deal without Hamas disarming. The agreement calls for a demilitarized Gaza Strip. Hamas will not disarm itself, obviously. Hamas will fight this tooth and nail, as we've already seen over the last couple of days.

The other issue, really, to remember is that when Islamists sign agreements, it's really not worth the paper that it's written on. In Islamic theology, dissimulation or concealing your true intentions is a part of the doctrine. So, a ceasefire in Arabic is called a hudna. And it's basically an agreement to reach a ceasefire if the Muslim side is in a disadvantage. And as soon as the circumstances change for the better, then the Islamists are allowed to break it. We don't really know how long this will last. The Gaza agreement that was signed in Sharm el-Sheikh on October 13th was signed by the United States, Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey. They're all supporters of Hamas. Turkey refers to Benjamin Netanyahu frequently as Hitler, and Israel as Nazi Germany. Turkey has threatened to send the Turkish Navy to Gaza. Qatar funds Hamas. Egypt has armed Hamas. These four countries are supposed to be part of an International Stabilization Force, the ISF. It's very unlikely that they will disarm Hamas, and the United States is unlikely to send troops to Gaza. In the end, if Hamas does not disarm itself, Israel is the only one that can disarm Hamas.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

So, Soeren, why did this ceasefire occur at this particular time?

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

Earlier this year, the Israeli attack on Iran weakened Iran. Hamas is a proxy of Iran. The Israeli attack on Qatar a few months ago, although Israel failed to kill the Hamas leadership in Doha, the attack showed that Israel can strike Qatar. And I think the Qataris realized that it was time to make a deal. The Israeli move into Gaza City. The IDF is moving into, that's a stronghold of Hamas. And, of course, Trump's pressure on Qatar and Turkey, I mean, that left essentially Hamas isolated. And that's why this deal came together now.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Soeren Kern with us today here on The Christian Worldview talking about recent developments in Israel and in Gaza between Israel and Hamas and the ceasefire that's already been broken, by the way. Both sides blaming the other for why it was broken, but two IDF soldiers were actually killed after the ceasefire in a skirmish. After this ceasefire, Soeren, Hamas, just in public view, see videos all over social media about this, began doing public executions, just shooting people, kneeling down on the streets of Palestinians. I think there's been over a hundred of these executions so far of Palestinians that they deem to be sympathetic or maybe helping the Israelis in some way. You talked about Hamas being unwilling to disarm. Israel hasn't taken over Gaza. What do you think is Israel's objective with Gaza? Considering it's very unlikely that Hamas will give up power, after all, they have the guns. What is the future objective for Israel with Gaza and Hamas?

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

Israel was under a lot of pressure from its own citizenry to bring an end to this war. It's important to understand that the Israeli army is mostly a reserve army. They're made up of reservists. Around 80% of Israeli troops are reservists. Only 20% are the regular full-time soldiers or troops. And so a lot of these guys were the reservists. They've had to abandon their families, their businesses, their lives for the last two years. And I think that this was really taking a toll on the Israeli public. Also, President Trump put a lot of pressure on Israel to bring this war to an end. I know that a lot of people are saying that Trump wants the Nobel Peace Prize, and that's why the timing of this deal was the same day, I guess, or the day after the Nobel Prize Committee announced the winner of this year's Peace Prize. I think that from President Trump's point of view, Gaza is just one small piece of the Middle East puzzle.

And so Trump's main objective is expanding the 2020 Abraham Accords. I think that that's why President Trump is putting a lot of pressure on Israel to just bring this war to an end, make some concessions. Because in the end, Israel has a lot to gain by the expansion of the Abraham Accords. There's discussions that Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population, wants to join. And there's continuing rumors that Saudi Arabia is ready to join. These would be really huge achievements. And it would essentially be showing the Islamists that Israel is in the region to stay.

What does Israel get out of this? Well, the strength of Hamas has been reduced to the point where they cannot cause an existential threat to Israel at this point. Can they rearm? Yes. Will they rearm? Probably. But I think for right now, Benjamin Netanyahu came to the conclusion that the Israelis have a lot more to gain by trusting in President Trump and trusting in the idea that the Abraham Accords will be expanded.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Soeren, Jared Kushner, who is the son-in-law of President Trump, and Steve Witkoff, President Trump has appointed them to be his negotiators in not just with Hamas but in the broader Middle East. They were on 60 Minutes recently where Lesley Stahl asked them about their motivations in the Middle East, considering that they have lots of business dealings over there. Both of them are Jewish, by the way, and I would assume are favorable toward Israel. And let's listen to this soundbite and then I'll follow up with a question.

Audio Sound Bite: Lesley Stahl:

So, you have both done a lot of business with the Gulf states, billions and billions of dollars worth of business. And you've done some of the business while this negotiation has gone on, and that has raised some issues of conflict. I mean, some blurring of a line between what you're doing in terms of foreign policy and benefiting financially from what's going on.

Jared Kushner: So, first of all, Lesley, nobody's pointed out any instances where Steve or I have pursued any policies or done anything that have not been in the interests of America. Number two is-

Lesley Stahl: But the perception?

Jared Kushner: But Lesley , we can't spend our time focused on perception as much as we have to focus on the facts. We're here to do good. These are impossible tasks. And because this is important, I've volunteered my time to help the president and Steve try to make progress. But Steve nor I will be involved in awarding contracts or figuring out who does business in Gaza after.

Steve Witkoff: Well, from my standpoint, Lesley, I'm not in business anymore. I've-

Lesley Stahl: Yeah, but your family is.

Steve Witkoff: But I've divested. Like Jared, I receive no salary, and I pay all my own expenses.

Lesley Stahl: This has become an issue.

Jared Kushner: What people call conflicts of interest, Steve and I call experience and trusted relationships that we have throughout the world. If Steve and I didn't have these deep relationships, the deal that we were able to help get done that freed these hostages would not have occurred.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

That was Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of President Trump, and Steve Witkoff, his two primary negotiators in the Middle East at this point. They're standing behind Vice President Vance the other day over there. They're very heavily involved in these negotiations. What do you think of these two being appointed to be the negotiators of these deals and this foreign policy for America in the Middle East?

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

Yeah, it's very difficult to discern their motivations. It's obvious that they're compromised due to their financial ties, particularly Steve Witkoff, who was in a very bad business deal, and he got bailed out by the Qataris to the amount of, I think, \$400 million. President Trump, earlier this year, he presented this Gaza Riviera plan in which he wanted to turn the Gaza Strip into sort of a Mediterranean resort. That plan is dead because the Arabs do not want foreigners, particularly Americans, to be rebuilding Gaza. We don't know all the financial ties and all the motivations.

My view, like I said earlier, is that President Trump is really the one behind this because he wants these Abraham Accords expanded on his watch. And so he's got two guys that he trusts. Remember, in the first term, he could not trust hardly anyone at all. So he's got Jared, his family member, and Steve Witkoff, a long-term friend. I would say that this deal could not have been reached without Trump, regardless of Jared and Witkoff being there. President Trump has a very powerful personality. He has strong personal ties with Arab leaders. And particularly with Israel, there's no way that Prime Minister Netanyahu could have persuaded the right-wing parties in his coalition government to end the war without the assurances that President Trump gave. Trump was able to provide both the Israelis and the Arabs with political cover to unite against Hamas. I

do believe that President Trump's motivation here is not financial. It's not monetary. He really does want to be known as a president who's expanded the Abraham Accords, and particularly to get a peace agreement between Saudi Arabia and Israel.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Now, Soeren, we're going to get to the biblical prophecy aspect of this. That's really the most important thing. That's why we discuss Israel frequently on the program, because that is the center point of God's future plan and promise for the world. This return of His Son, everything centers around Israel. Not that other countries like America aren't important. They're going to play into it somehow, and that America is so closely involved is very, very interesting. So that's why we're discussing that. We'll get to that in just a second. But I want to ask you one more question about the Abraham Accords and this international demand for a two-state solution.

Soeren, this from Salem Media. And you just mentioned this, that the United States remains deeply committed to Trump's 20-point plan. The broader message from the administration in the visit to Israel was clear. This is after the ceasefire now, and it's been broken since then, but there's not currently lots of fighting going on right now. There's just been some skirmishes and so forth. So it's kind of tenuously holding at this point. They quoted the publication Ynet. "The Americans are making it clear: they are fully engaged and not letting go. Since the cease-fire took effect a couple weeks ago, senior White House officials have been in Israel, effectively managing the operation. Alongside President Donald Trump's visit," he had that visit, we already discussed that, "his envoys, the deal architects they're called, they toured Gaza." This was Kushner and Witkoff. They said it looked, by the way, like a nuclear wasteland. That's how destroyed Gaza has become in this war. "They met with released hostages. They even joined a meeting at Israeli Defense Force headquarters, which is an unusual move," this article says.

"Vice President JD Vance arrived this past week in Israel to oversee operations, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio is expected to be in Israel in the coming days for a two- to three-day stay." So, this is a full-on effort by the Trump administration to keep this so-called tenuous peace going. "Behind the scenes, Jared Kushner, Steve Witkoff, and the U.S. Central Command Chief Admiral Brad Cooper are directing the mission. First, the recovery of fallen hostages, then the creation of the stabilization force, followed by reconstruction. Progress will take time, but U.S. officials remain optimistic."

I'm not really sure why, knowing the history of this region, that peace is elusive, if not impossible, between these two sides, especially with Hamas toward Israel, who doesn't even acknowledge their right to exist. So, let's try to summarize this, Soeren, as to, you talked about the Abraham Accords, this peace deal within the broader Middle East between Arab nations and Israel, but there's also been a demand for a two-state solution again. France, England, Canada, many countries say the Palestinians need their own state. So, how do you take the Trump administration's huge priority of this particular conflict in the Middle East with what the broader future is for the Middle East, the demand for a two-state solution, and where this is all going?

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

We published an article about the two-state solution in the October issue of The Christian Worldview Journal. So I would really encourage listeners to get a copy of that if they're interested. We wrote in that article that the two-state solution, all of these efforts by European governments, Canada, Australia, UK, is really an attempt not to create a Palestinian state but to delegitimize Israel and to isolate Israel on the global stage. And that's really what is the motivating factor here. I think that for a lot of European countries, the publics, particularly very, very large Muslim minorities, are very vocal. The European governments are trying to maintain peace in their own countries by throwing Israel under the bus.

When President Trump was in Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt, he declined to talk about the two-state solution. He said that he does not have a definitive position on it. He said something to the point where a lot of people like a one-state solution, others like a two-state solution, but he said that whatever decision he makes would be in coordination with other states. So, there's no two-state solution without backing from the United States, and certainly not without backing from Israel. The real question right now is, who will succeed President Trump as president in three years? Will there be a Democratic president that will try to exert pressure on Israel to accept this peace deal? And also, the whole question is, what happens in a post-Netanyahu Israel, where almost certainly more left-leaning parties will come into power? Will they be more likely to agree to a two-state solution? As I mentioned for right now, the Abraham Accords are the priority for the White House. The expansion of these accords is likely to happen before Trump leaves the White House.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Soeren Kern with us, the managing editor of The Christian Worldview Journal. Be sure to sign up for this journal. Soeren writes monthly for it and articles you won't get anywhere else on what's going on in the world and specifically the Middle East.

So, Soeren, after this ceasefire was agreed upon by Israel and Hamas and the return of the hostages and so forth, fighting stopped, at least temporarily. This is what the left was demanding all along, all over the world, by the way, not just in Israel, but all over the world, people were demanding an end to this and Israel was the problem and so forth. But there was no celebration on the left of any magnitude when the ceasefire took place and the hostages were returned. It's almost like, well, that really wasn't what they were all motivated about anyway. And even within Israel, Soeren, as you well know, there's a very leftist faction within Israel. They hate Benjamin Netanyahu. They sympathize with the Palestinian plight, no matter that Hamas killed 1,200 Israelis or excursion into Israel on October 7th, 2023. I mean, even outside Israel, you have Jews in New York who are supporting this mayoral candidate, Mamdani, who's a radical Muslim communist. So, can you help us understand the worldview, the mindset of the left, but even those who are Jewish on the left?

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

I think the fact that there have been anti-Israel protests almost weekly all over the continent, and they're very violent, and they're almost always hard left figures who are in an alliance with Islamists called the red-green alliance, red for socialism, communism, and green for the colors of Islam. These two groups have completely different worldviews. They have completely different objectives. But what they do have in common and the reason why they're working together is they hate Jews and they hate Christians. And that's really what's bringing them together. I mentioned before that many European governments are afraid of the Islamist groups and even the left-wing groups, the radicals, the anarchists in their countries. And that's why they're

basically doing political grandstanding and doing all these pro-Palestinian theatrics at the United Nations, placing sanctions on Israel.

The Iran missile program is a very dangerous and emerging threat. And it's not just to Israel, but it's to Europe, too. And so it would seem like logically that the Europeans would be standing with Israel because Israel is a huge strategic asset for Europe. And it's not like that at all. I think as far as the left is concerned, Israel is practically completely corrupted by the left. Almost all of the main institutions in Israel, including the judiciary and the IDF, most of the generals in the IDF are woke, just like many of the generals in the United States are woke. And that's what Pete Hegseth is trying to address. The IDF, the woke generals, were largely responsible for failing to prevent the October 7 attacks.

And I think there's also a mentality pervasive among Israeli elite. It's called the Oslo mentality or Oslo mindset. And it really refers to the Oslo Peace Accords that were negotiated in 1993 with President Clinton. They believe that giving land away for peace, it's possible to do that. So the protesters in Israel are very, very virulently anti-Bibi. We have the Trump derangement syndrome in the United States. And there definitely is a Bibi derangement syndrome in Israel. These protests in Hostage Square in Tel Aviv every week, they were using the hostages to try to depose Prime Minister Netanyahu. And when the hostages were finally released and Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner addressed this crowd and gave Prime Minister Netanyahu credit for releasing the hostages, they booed the stage. They're not even able to give Prime Minister Netanyahu the benefit of the doubt for getting the hostages released and all of the difficult decisions that he's made. Like I said before, I think that it's very possible that the Bibi Netanyahu era is coming to a close, just not by his age but also by the political pressures within Israel. And it's very likely that there will be a more left-wing government coming into power in Israel, maybe not this next election cycle, but in the foreseeable future. They will cave to pressure the United States and from the European countries to slice up the land of Israel and create this Palestinian state.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Soeren, if Prime Minister Netanyahu does step down or is out of power here coming up in the future, what do you think his legacy is going to be with regard to the state of Israel?

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

He's been a real blessing to Israel. He's really helped Israel through a very important stage in its development, economically and militarily. Israel now is a regional superpower, and all the countries around it know it. And I think that that's why many of them were amenable to signing this agreement to bring an end to the war. The interesting thing about Netanyahu is his name. His name means given by Yahweh. Netan is a Hebrew verb for to give, and Yahu or Yah is a shortened form of Yahweh in the Bible. Benjamin Netanyahu has really been a gift, I think, by Yahweh to the Israeli people, but a large, very vocal segment of the Israeli population doesn't see it that way, and they really hate him to the core of their beings, and it's irrational. It's just very, very difficult to understand.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

So, there's lots of internal opposition against Netanyahu, and he's not a believer in Jesus Christ, the Messiah. And so he operates on his own human reasoning. But because he's an Israeli patriot, he has worked hard to protect the continued existence of Israel and the Jews. But he's not relying on God to do that, but rather on America to help, a nation in similar rebellion to God as His own. And yet, God sovereignly works through all this human reasoning and keeps His plan for the redemption of Israel right on track, even if an unbeliever is leading the way at this time. Okay, let's get to the biblical prophecy standpoint. And of course, we don't know exactly where God is moving right now in the Middle East, whether these are just signs and symptoms of where things are going or really what's going on. But where do you see things moving from a biblical prophecy standpoint?

It appears to me, as I just assessed the situation, Soeren, that Israel in the last two years has really become ascendant, powerful in the Middle East after this attack by Hamas. They've responded. They've debilitated Hamas in Gaza, not exterminated, but very much degraded them, Hezbollah to the north in Lebanon, even the Houthis in Iran, of course. They've shown that they're not going to be pushed out of the Middle East anytime soon. And they're talking about peace now in the Middle East and the Abraham Accords and all this. But we know from Scripture that there's going to be a false peace where Israel is going to be thinking they're dwelling securely and then are going to be attacked and put in a very vulnerable existential situation. Could you comment on where you see things are now and to how they may be setting themselves up for what happens in Scripture where they feel like they're in peace and security and then a sudden unexpected attack and vulnerability?

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

I think that this is, as you said, setting the stage for the end times. I was really quite amazed at the spiritual warfare. I mean, we can't see it, but we can definitely perceive it. The spiritual warfare that was taking place in the Middle East over the last particularly three or four weeks. Israel was finally going into Gaza City. It was finally going to destroy what was left of Hamas. And the whole world essentially stepped in to save Hamas. It's a very similar scenario to what happened when Israel attacked Iran earlier this year, take out the nuclear program and the missile threats to Israel. And President Trump, just as the Israelis were getting ready to decapitate the Iranian regime, President Trump stepped in and prevented Israel from finishing the job. And so, it's very frustrating to see that Israel is so close to defeating its enemies, and then the enemies seem to always, at the end, get a reprieve, and now they can rebuild. The situation with Iran is very dangerous because Iran is rebuilding its nuclear program and it's rebuilding its missile program. And it's almost certain that Israel is going to have to strike again, possibly in 2026, to prevent Iran from achieving missiles that can target strategic points within Israel.

So, I see that what's behind all of this is we see the natural effects of war and of the war machines, of the weapons. But behind the scenes is an intense spiritual battle taking place. In the end, basically, we know that the land of Israel will be divided. The prophet Joel 3:2 says that it will be divided and God will be enraged and will judge the gentile nations for what they've done. And so, I think, again, this is stage setting. A lot of people, you just mentioned the peace and safety verse. It's in 1 Thessalonians 5:3, where the apostle Paul writes that peace and safety and then sudden destruction comes upon them. When you see a lot of Bible commentators on the internet, they're saying that this is that. And this is not that, because basically, Paul is

writing this verse very clearly referring to the peace treaty that the Israelis will sign with the Antichrist at the beginning of the tribulation. So, what we've seen is nowhere near what Paul was talking about, but the stage is definitely being set.

And as I've mentioned before on several occasions, I really do believe that if we are in the generation of the rapture, and we're final generation, that these Abraham Accords are the basis. Because Daniel 9 tells us that the Antichrist will confirm a peace treaty with Israel. And so we don't know if confirming... The language is not clear, but is he just confirming a treaty that's already in existence? Is he expanding that treaty with Israel? We know that a very big part of that deal will allow Israel to rebuild the temple and to resume the sacrificial system on the temple mount. We're not close to that, but definitely the stage is being set.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Soeren, considering that the leadership of Israel, they're not believers in Christ, their Messiah. They have a society and a culture like ours that is very God-rejecting in many ways, morally and every other way. And yet, we know from Scripture that God has a purpose and a plan for the Jewish people and for Israel. He hasn't given up on them. He's going to restore them, and many are going to be saved in the future. So, how does a Christian who's listening today think about this situation over there and pray for it, knowing that there's tensions that have to be held that Israel's going to do things that are against God's will, they're going to do things that are immoral? And yet, God has a purpose and plan to redeem His chosen people in the end, because He's such a gracious and promise-keeping God.

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

Ezekiel 36, 37, 38, and 39 talks about the prophecy of the dry bones, about at some point in the end times, God brings the Jews back into the land, but there will be an unbelief. And God is going to allow an invasion of Israel, and that's going to be probably led by Turkey. Turkey is going to be a major player in this. Iran is going to participate in this. And a lot of other Islamist countries are going to participate in this. And when they invade Israel from the north, God is going to supernaturally destroy these invading armies. And the point of this whole thing is that the Jews will understand that they were saved not by their weaponry, not by their technology, but by God himself, by Yahweh. And so, the Jews have to be in the land in unbelief because Jewish believers would never sign a treaty with the Antichrist, right? The treaty should be signed with Yahweh, not with a human figure. That's where this is going.

So, when the Bible tells us that we are supposed to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, we're really praying for the return of Jesus and the establishment of His millennial kingdom in Jerusalem because there will be no lasting peace in Jerusalem or anywhere in the Holy Land before Jesus comes and establishes His kingdom. So, I think that as we're seeing all these things unfold, without setting dates, obviously, we know that everything is leading into a certain direction. And that is basically that I think the Abraham Accords are very important, because they are so-called moderate Islamic states that are saying, "Okay, we have a lot of economic benefits that we can have by having peace with Israel." And these Abraham Accords are being resisted by the Islamist powers. So that would be Turkey and Iran and Qatar, and to some extent, Sudan, some of these other Islamist countries. So, you can see that there's a tension between the countries in the

Middle East that want to make peace with Israel and the tension with those countries that do not want to make peace. And it is precisely those countries that do not want to make peace with Israel who are leading this Gog/Magog invasion in Ezekiel 38 and 39, like I said, without setting dates.

And when we see all this stuff happening, we know that God is working. His plan is right on schedule. When the church, when this last person that is a member of the church comes to a saving faith in Jesus, the church will be raptured, and we will enter into a different dispensation. We need to pray for Israel. We need to avoid all the anti-Semitism and all the anti-Zionism that is sprouting up within conservative movement in the United States. Just stand by Israel, trusting God, that he's got the whole situation under control. The Israelis are not perfect. The Jews are an unbelief. But it has to be this way, according to Scripture. Pray that the Lord brings us to a close soon, that He brings peace to Jerusalem, lasting peace, that we just try to live lives that are holy, obedient, and expectation of the return of Jesus, which for His church and the rapture, which really can happen at any time.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

I think that's so well said, Soeren, and it puts this whole thing in the right perspective, that this isn't just a war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, and that's why we're discussing it. There's a much larger plan going on here that God has enacted, in that He amazingly and sovereignly is able to use unbelievers to accomplish His will and to move things toward the return of His son. I think you have an excellent point that if Israel was in belief right now, they wouldn't be going to be signing a treaty with the Antichrist in the future. They're in unbelief, and they will do that, and they will put themselves in terrible jeopardy that so only God can supernaturally save them so that they will realize that and turn to Him finally in belief before the culmination of history and the return of Jesus Christ, His son. So, yeah, just to think about that is amazing and puts this whole thing in perspective and gives us a macro view of it, not just a micro view of what's going on any given week in the news cycle.

Soeren, we so appreciate your coming on The Christian Worldview today, as always, all the great articles and columns you're writing in The Christian Worldview Journal, helping us to keep our focus, not get distracted by the things that are less important in this world, but keep our eyes on the return of Christ and what He's doing in Israel and also in the church here in America as well. So, all of God's best and grace to you.

GUEST: SOEREN KERN:

Thank you, David.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

We hope you gained from this conversation with Soeren today. Israel should be trusting in God and purging those whose only desire is to destroy them. But instead, they give in to the demands of the U.S. and the left within their own country to have these ceasefires and peace deals, which only allows their enemies to rebuild and attack them again someday. It's a vicious cycle. As Soeren stated, though, God is ordering these events so that Israel and the Jews will someday be placed in an untenable situation where God, obviously, saves

them miraculously, and they finally turn to Him in repentance and faith in the lead-up to the return of Christ to reign.

Well, I mentioned last segment that the October issue of The Christian Worldview Journal was mailed late this month. If you're a Christian Worldview partner, you should be receiving it any day now. But the reason it was late getting out is that in late September, into early October, my mother-in-law, my wife Brodie's mom, whose name is Gena, went through the final stages of cancer, with the Lord bringing her home to heaven on Friday, October 4th, at age 79. We held a family burial in mid-October and a memorial service just this past week. So it's been a trying time for us, along with care from my own mom, who turned 92 this month and has had a very difficult set of health problems this year, including a major surgery and a fall. She's back home now and needs daily care.

Brodie's family and my family have a connection that goes back nearly 50 years, when Brodie's family moved to Minnesota from Cincinnati in the winter of 1978. My mom was 44 years old then. Brodie's mom, Gena was 32. I was 8, and Brodie was 5. Brodie also has a brother who's two years older. When they first arrived in Minnesota, Brodie's mom, Gena signed their family up for cross-country ski lessons. The first instructor they contacted didn't want to teach the whole family, but the second instructor she contacted said that would be just fine. The second instructor was my mom. The first lesson took place at Lake Grace. I bet you can see where this is going. A couple lessons later, Gena was asking my mom, who was a committed believer, how to raise children in the changing society, having gone through the '60s and the '70s. My mom replied that "You can't do it without the Bible." Gena said she couldn't understand the Bible, and so my mom offered to have her come over, and she would show her how to understand it. Gena took her up on that offer.

As my mom had done with many others over the years, she sat down with Gena at her dining room table with a Bible and a blank sheet of paper on which my mom would write out four points that capture the main message of the Bible, the gospel, and its pertinence for every person. And those four points are who God is and his purpose for each of us. Number two, how our sin separates us from God. Number three, how Jesus Christ is God's provision for our sin. And number four, how we must respond to God's offer of salvation. Now, perhaps Gena came to get some parenting tips, but she left that day in March of 1978, having believed in Christ as her Savior and Lord. And God changed her life in eternity from that moment. Both of her children, Josh and Brodie, would later be saved, and Brodie and I would marry many years in the future. Now, there's much more to the story that was told at the memorial service. And if you're interested, we will put a link to watch it in an upcoming Christian Worldview weekly email that goes out on Fridays.

I'm just going to read a few lines from her obituary. It says, "After coming to saving faith, God faithfully grew and sustained Gena for the remainder of her life through good times and difficult, including a painful divorce when her children were in their early teens. She was never remarried. Gena was a homemaker who was devoted to and delighted in spending time with her two children, Josh and Brodie, along with her five grandchildren. She cherished her neighbors and conversing with them on daily walks with her dog, Charlie. Her Bible was well-worn from daily readings, and her radio often played sermons and hymns." Just as an aside, she was a weekly listener to this program."

Gena enjoyed giving, perhaps a book with a handwritten note she thought would be helpful for a friend or to give funds to aid a ministry. One of her heroes was George Müller, who relied solely on earnest prayer rather than financial appeals in operating his large orphanage in England in the 1800s. Another of her heroes was the great London preacher Charles Spurgeon from the same century. She read his devotional books regularly. We all know that death is universal. None of us gets out of here alive. It's the consequence of sin that God guaranteed when Adam and Eve sinned. Our family has been grieving, particularly Brodie and her brother. It's painful to lose a loved one, especially a mother, and a good mother who raised them to love and follow Christ. And I'm especially grateful to Gena for her love for me and how she shaped Brodie's life to be a godly woman, wife, and mother. So we do grieve, but we grieve with hope. In 1 Thessalonians 4, the Apostle Paul wrote to Christians who had anxiety about what happens after the death of fellow believers. Paul writes, 'But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.'

Now, hope in Scripture is not, "Well, maybe something will happen." Like, "We hope it doesn't rain today." But rather, hope in Scripture means 100% assurance that what God has promised for the future will happen. It's the anticipation of a future certainty. And this is a hope open to everyone, but only believed by some. Because the rest of the passage says, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep or died in Jesus," died as believers. My mother-in-law Gena, believed that Jesus died and rose again, as that verse says. She confessed that. Her life exhibited desires and actions consistent with that. So we know 100% by faith in God's promise, her immaterial soul and spirit departed her earthly body and is now with God in heaven. And that passage in 1 Thessalonians 4 closes this way, "Therefore comfort one another with these words." And our family is comforted by that promise, because Gena was a believer in Christ as her Savior and Lord.

So, thank you for your prayer that God would do his work in our family through this trial. And thanks also for joining us today on The Christian Worldview and for your support of this nonprofit radio ministry. Until next time, think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm.

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