

# Friday Church News Notes

## A Visit to the United Nations Headquarters

**Friday Church News Notes, May 23, 2008, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org)**

On May 7, I visited the United Nations headquarters during a short layover in New York City on my way from Istanbul to Buffalo, New York. (I had spent a week in Turkey visiting the sites of the seven churches of Revelation and a day and a half in Athens and was on the way to a couple of Bible conferences in the States.) The UN was established in 1945 to bring about world peace. A statue in the UN garden overlooking the East River depicts a man beating a sword into a plowshare. This is from Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3, but it will not happen until Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, returns to establish His kingdom. Another statue near the entrance to the UN depicts a handgun with its barrel tied in a knot, signifying the UN's dream of global non-violence. The Bible says there is no peace to the wicked (Isaiah 48:22; 57:21), and the United Nations has no power to correct the root problem of world turmoil, which is man's fallen heart. Not surprisingly, the United



*The no-so-subtle message of gun-control is depicted in this sculpture at the UN, but what about man's violent, fallen nature?*

## Bin Laden Denounces Israel

In a new video the terrorist leader Osama bin Laden denounces Israel and says the liberation of "Palestine" lies at the heart of their struggle. In a statement released the week of the 60th anniversary of Israel's statehood, bin Laden proclaimed: "We will continue our struggle against the Israelis and their allies. We are not going to give up an inch of the land of Palestine. ... The Palestinian cause is the major issue for my nation. It was an important element in fueling me from the beginning and the 19 others [referring to the 9/11 plane hijackers] with a great motive to fight for those subjected to injustice and the oppressed. ... Sixty years ago, the Israeli state didn't exist. Instead, it was established on the land of Palestine raped by force. Israelis are occupying invaders whom we should fight" ("Bin Laden Denounces Israel," AP, May 17, 2008). This proves that the issue of Israel is at the heart of Islamic terrorism, and it is an ancient issue. Muslims believe that God blessed Ishmael above Isaac. We were told this recently by a Muslim in Turkey. Bin Laden is dreaming if he thinks he can destroy Israel. She is back in the land in fulfillment of divine prophecy (Deuteronomy 28-30; Ezekiel 37:1-8). She will be scattered and persecuted once more, but not by bin Laden and company. According to Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 24:15-22, Israel will be persecuted by the Antichrist during the Great Tribulation described in Revelation 6-18. At that time she will be converted spiritually and will believe in Jesus as her Messiah (Zechariah 12:10), and when He returns she will be at the heart of His global kingdom.



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Nations is permeated with New Age philosophy. Consider the UN's Meditation Room. Originally it was a non-denominational prayer chapel and was the brainchild of a Christian lay organization whose members included the department store millionaire J.C. Penney. In 1956-57 the chapel was replaced by a new age meditation chamber. It was built in the shape of a truncated pyramid, and a six-and-a-half ton block of iron ore was deposited in the center of the room, the polished top of which is lit by a single beam of light from the ceiling. The light depicts "divine wisdom," and the block depicts an empty altar representing "God worshipped in many forms" (<http://www.aquaac.org/un/sprtatum.html>). Hammarskjöld said, "It is the altar to the God of all" ("A Room of Quiet," <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/dag/meditationroom.htm>). The iron ore also represents the metal from which weapons are made and the New Age hope that through the power of meditation world peace can be achieved. Hammarskjöld said, "... we thought we could bless by our thoughts the very material out of which arms are made." This is the New Age concept of the power of concentrated thought. He said the Meditation Room is a place where people could really "withdraw into themselves and feel the void." The mural at the back of the room,

composed of interlocking geometric patterns, is supposed "to evoke a feeling of the essential oneness of God." It was painted by Hammarskjöld's artist friend Bo Beskow. The UN Meditation Room has been the focus of New Age mysticism since its opening. Hindu guru Sri Chinmoy led meditations there for at least three decades. It is maintained by World Goodwill, which is part of Alice Bailey's Lucis Trust. World Goodwill is an approved Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) with the UN's Department of Public Information. One of World Goodwill's "transformational" tools is the "The Great Invocation." It is a New Age mantra which says: "From the point of Light within the Mind of God, let light stream forth into the minds of men. Let Light descend on Earth. ... Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth" ([http://www.lucistrust.org/en/service\\_activities/the\\_great\\_invocation\\_1](http://www.lucistrust.org/en/service_activities/the_great_invocation_1)). The objective of this chant is to bring the New Age cosmic christ into the world. This is "the Plan." (For more about this see our new book *The New Age Tower of Babel*, which is available from Way of Life Literature. It cannot yet be ordered online but it can be ordered by phone.)

## BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY

The expression "*Behold, I come quickly*" is repeated four times in the book of Revelation (3:11; 22:7, 11, 20). *The quick coming of the Lord refers, first of all, to His coming in God's perspective.* It must be interpreted by God's clock, not ours. See 2 Peter 3:8. Elsewhere in the New Testament Christ's coming is described as soon (Luke 18:8; Romans 16:20). To God a thousand years is as a day or even less than a day. In Isaiah 54:8 He told Israel, "*In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for A MOMENT; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.*" Though He has forsaken Israel for at least 2,000 years, to God that is but a moment because He measures things by eternity. *The quick coming of the Lord also refers to the imminency of His coming,* meaning that it is not preceded by specific signs and could happen at any time (Matthew 24:42, 44; 25:13; Philippians 4:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; Titus 2:12-13; James 5:8-9). It will begin with the

Rapture of church-age saints (1 Thess. 4:3-18), and from then until the return of Christ to establish His kingdom as described in Revelation 19-20 only seven brief years elapse. If a father leaves his teenage son in charge of his younger siblings and the household affairs and tells him, "I have to go away on some business, but I will come quickly," what will that teenage son do if he is wise? He will be ready at all times for the return of his father! The church-age believer is not looking for the Antichrist but for Christ Himself. The events described in Revelation 6-18 are "*the day of the Lord,*" and it will come "as a thief in the night" and as "sudden destruction" (1 Thess. 5:2-3), but the New Testament believer is "*not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief*" (1 Thess. 5:4). God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:5).



## ISLAMIC SUSPECTS IN MURDER OF CHRISTIANS IN TURKEY ACCUSE EACH OTHER

The following is excerpted from "Suspects in Turkish Attack," WorldNetDaily, May 15, 2008: "All five suspects who are on trial in Turkey for the deaths of three Christian martyrs allegedly slain in a vicious attack by Muslims who had agreed to meet them at a Bible publishing house have denied responsibility, instead pointing fingers at each other. Compass Direct, which has been documenting the case, said court testimonies by the five suspects were completed this week during a sixth hearing before Malatya's 3rd Criminal Court. ... As WND has reported, Tilman Geske of Germany and Turkish nationals Necati Aydin and Ugur Yuksel died in the attack. Authorities have said they reportedly met several Muslims for a Bible study, then were tied up, stabbed and tortured for several hours before their throats were slit. ... Judge Eray Gurtekin said because of the conflict among the testimonies all five suspects will be cross-examined together at a hearing scheduled in June. ... Christians, who make up less than 1 percent of the population in Turkey, have been subjected to numerous attacks in recent years. In 2006, a Turkish teen shot to death a Roman Catholic priest as he prayed in his church. Two other priests were attacked the same year. Early last year came the death of Armenian Christian editor Hrant Dink. When the publishing house attack became known, Geske's widow, Susanne, responded in a way that hit the front pages of the nation's largest newspapers. 'Oh God, forgive them

for they know not what they do,' she said, agreeing with the words of Christ on Calvary (Luke 23:34), according to a letter Christians in Turkey have written to the worldwide church, released through Voice of the Martyrs. 'In a country where blood-for-blood revenge is as normal as breathing, many reports have come to the attention of the church of how this comment of Susanne [Geske] has changed lives.'"



Tilman Geske of Germany (center) and Turkish nationals Necati Aydin and Ugur Yuksel died in the attack

## CONSISTENT CHRISTIAN LIVING IS THE KEY TO CHILDREN TRAINING

The following is excerpted from *Training Your Children to Turn out Right*, an excellent book by David Sorenson (Northstar Ministries, 1820 W. Morgan St., Duluth, MN 55811, 218-726-0209, [www.northstarministries.com](http://www.northstarministries.com), [dhs.northstar@charter.net](mailto:dhs.northstar@charter.net)) -- "Twenty years ago, I had the privilege of working with the youth of the church. Later, I worked with young couples. At the same time, my wife and I worked together in a large children's church program. Then we started the Christian school. Again, I worked with families and their children. It was a unique experience. I came to know the younger children in the children's church. I also knew the teenagers, having been the youth pastor for several years. In working with the young couples of the church, I got to know the parents of many of these same young people. Spirituality and character in the children and teenagers closely paralleled the degree of spiritual maturity and character evident in their parents. I

came to learn that when the Bible spoke about reaping what we sow in Galatians 6, it likely had an application to our offspring. ... How we as parents live spiritually will profoundly affect our children. ... Children and teenagers are very perceptive of inconsistency and hypocrisy. Perhaps, because they are required to be under authority, they subconsciously scrutinize those over them. ... Mom and Dad, we do reap what we sow, and the harvest often comes through the children. ... The sowing to the flesh [brings] a harvest of corruption, and children tend to gravitate to the lowest common denominator spiritually in their home" (*Training Your Children to Turn Out Right*, 1995, pp. 137, 138, 146, 147).

## CORRUPTION AND TOTALITARIANISM IN RUSSIA

The following is excerpted from “A Totalitarian Regime in Thrall to a Tsar Who’s Creating the New Fascist Empire,” *Daily Mail*, May 17, 2008: “As ex-President Putin settles in to his new role as Prime Minister, he has every reason to congratulate himself. After all, he has not only written the script for his constitutional coup d’etat, but staged the play and given himself the starring role as well. Of course, he has given a walk-on role to Dmitry Medvedev, his personally anointed successor. But the transfer of power from Putin to his Little Sir Echo, Medvedev, and the show of military strength with those soldiers and clapped-out missiles in Red Square on Victory Day which followed it last week, made it clear who is really in charge. ... Despite the fact that Putin’s Russia is increasingly autocratic and irredeemably corrupt, the man himself--their born-again Tsar--is overwhelmingly regarded as the answer to the nation’s prayers. ... Russia may be a member of the G8 whose GDP (because of oil) should soon overtake the United Kingdom, but, in many ways, it is more like a Third World country. Stricken with an epidemic of AIDS and alcoholism which both contribute to a male life expectancy of 58 years, the population is projected to shrink from 145 million to 120 million within a few decades. ... You can forget any talk from the new President about ‘stamping out’ corruption. This social and economic disease is insidious and rampant. According to Transparency International--a global society which campaigns against corruption--Russia has become a world leader in the corruption stakes. Foreign analysts estimate that no less than \$30 billion a year is spent to grease official palms to oil the wheels of trade and commerce. ... None of this is a

matter of public debate in Russia where the media has been muzzled by the Kremlin, their freedom of expression stifled by the government. Almost every national radio and television station is now controlled directly or indirectly by the state, and the same applies to every newspaper of any influence. ... Some 20 Russian journalists have been killed in suspicious circumstances since Putin came to office. No one has yet been convicted for any of these crimes. ... An autocratic and resurgent Russia that feels bruised and threatened is an unstable beast. The Kremlin’s growing rapprochement with Beijing (the adversaries of a generation ago are now not only major trading partners, but conduct joint military exercises) shifts the balance of power in the world. And as life on earth becomes less and less secure, with evermore people competing for a dwindling supply of vital resources, Russia, as an energy giant, is once again a big player on the world stage. Make no mistake, we are in for a very bumpy ride.”

### Conclusion

Friends in Christ, do not be discouraged by any of this. It is God’s will that we know the times (1 Ch. 12:32; Mat. 16:3) and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. These things remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the coming of the Lord. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ day by day? “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:11-14). This material is sent only to those who personally subscribe to the Fundamental Baptist Information Service list. To SUBSCRIBE or UNSUBSCRIBE or CHANGE ADDRESSES go to <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbis/subscribe.html>. Way of Life Literature, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, [fbns@wayoflife.org](mailto:fbns@wayoflife.org). David Cloud is the director of Way of Life Literature and author of the Friday Church News Notes.