

I'm feeling a little drained both mentally and physically today. Myself and a friend went up Slieve Donard (pictured right in the background - our highest mountain) yesterday, so I am feeling sore, tired and a little frustrated. And I can think right now of half a dozen spiritual applications to that, but as I'm feeling frustrated right now I don't feel like taking my own medicine! Pilgrim's Progress is one of my favourite books, and I remember thinking when I was coming down Donard, about the time Christian came down the Valley of Humility. They said that it is hard to go down in that valley without catching a few slips on the way. In other words its easier to be humbled by our own sins, rather than to be like Jesus Christ who was humble yet without sin. Coming down the mountain yesterday was impossible without losing my footing a couple of times. After coming down the Valley of Humility Christian met with Appolyon (the devil - Revelation 19:11), and they said that was due to his slips. Likewise in the Scriptures we are warned not to give the enemy occasion to blaspheme by our sins (2nd Samuel 12:14). But Christian resisted him and got the victory. Unfortunately I've also caught a few spiritual slips today. The other mention of mountains in Pilgrim's Progress, was when Christian arrived at the Delectable Mountains. This was "Immanuel's land" - a place of comfort for weary pilgrims, and from here Pilgrim could see a great distance, even so far as the Gates of the Celestial City with the aid of a looking glass. In the same way, the Scriptures are our "looking glass" ("now we see through a glass darkly" - 1st Corinthians 13:12), and through them we can see the whole panorama of prophecy unfolding.

Which brings me to my links from Jim. Javier Solana, the High Representative of the European Common, Foreign and Security Policy, believes that the stage is now being set for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Quote: *""The Arab League for the first time in many years has assumed the responsibility to be more active in the peace process," Javier Solana said. "If you put that together with the reaction of (Israeli) Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, the two things... are beginning to construct the dynamic that could lead to the settlement of a crisis that has been with us for many years."*

The title of this article is extremely interesting, for it reminds us that this unfolding of the peace process in the Middle East is indeed a "stage", on which the Antichrist himself will emerge. Solana left out one key ingredient in his "dynamic", the European Union. Throughout Israel's long history of failed peace processes, the EU largely took a back seat. Now Europe is calling the shots, and that can only mean that we are nearing the time of Jacob's trouble - the tribulation period. But as rumours of peace emanate from Israel, rumours of war are also abounding. As the standoff over the captured UK sailors continues, the head of the IDF's military intelligence, Major General Amos Yadlin, has stated that Iran, Syria and Hezbollah are preparing for a possible US strike against Iran this year.

Quote: *""Their preparation is defensive ahead of war... They fear a war initiated by the Americans because they understand that there might be an attack against Iran over the summer, but not by Israel," Maj. Gen. Amos Yadlin told the Cabinet. "We are closely following these preparations, for fear that one of the sides misinterprets certain moves in the region. I bring up the Six Day War in this context - when you reach a war no one is interested in as a result of the involvement of*

many players. "We need to be ready, and at the same time be careful that such steps do not cause others to get the wrong idea about our moves," he added.

Clearly the "stage is being set" for the outbreak of both war and peace. War - which will eventually culminate in Gog's war of Ezekiel 38-39, and will prepare the way for the coming of the Antichrist and his peace treaty with Israel and the Arabs. Which happens first I am still not certain.

Source Jerusalem Post , YNet News