

President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority has declared that under the terms of a future peace deal, Israel should be given no more than three years by which to fully withdraw from the 'West Bank'. He made the comments as fresh details emerged of a new framework agreement that US Senator John Kerry has been developing over the past few months. The US administration hopes that a final peace accord could be presented as early as April of this year, the deadline given for the latest round of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. But there has been little sign of progress to date...

Quote: *""Those who are proposing 10 to 15 years (before a withdrawal) do not want to withdraw at all," Abbas said in an interview screened on Tuesday at the annual conference of the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) taking place in Tel Aviv. "We say that in a reasonable time frame, no longer than three years, Israel can withdraw gradually," he said.*

As it stands, the deal would allow Israel to retain around 75-85% of its 'settlements' in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria. In exchange, the Palestinian Authority would receive territory in Israel's Negev region. Previous peace negotiations have talked about possibly enlarging the Gaza Strip in order to ease overcrowding there, as well as the creation of a ' land corridor ' that would link Gaza with the West Bank. On the issue of Jerusalem, the framework agreement remains purposely vague, although there has been talk about the Palestinian Authority being granted a few Arab suburbs of the city for their 'capital'. Security arrangements include the creation of a buffer zone between Jordan and the West Bank to be monitored by sensors, electronic fences, and drones, but there is no mention of a physical Israeli presence there. Abbas has categorically stated in the past that he refuses to accept any Jewish presence in a future Palestinian state. But he does see NATO as a possible third party that could enforce the peace...

Quote: *""We have no problem with there being a third party present after or during the withdrawal, to reassure Israel and to reassure us that the process will be completed," Abbas said. "We think NATO is the appropriate party to undertake this mission. "The Palestinian borders must, in the end, be held (controlled) by Palestinians and not by the Israeli army," he added.*

Personally I think it is extremely doubtful whether anything will come of this peace plan. Abbas has already stated his vehement opposition to recognizing Israel as a Jewish state. And Hamas does not recognize President Abbas, never mind Israel's right to exist. But like the Annapolis Peace Process before, I believe this latest agreement will be fudged. For neither side are required to sign any document committing themselves to its implementation, so neither side will have to bear any responsibility for its failure. Even the Americans will save face, with nothing concrete having actually been agreed upon. But I do find Abbas' statements very interesting in regard to end time prophecy, specifically the three year withdrawal period and a NATO presence in the Jordan valley.

The Bible states that in the days immediately prior to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, a peace agreement will be confirmed between Israel and the surrounding nations (Daniel 9:27). This 'covenant' is to last for a period of seven years. It seems that this treaty will grant permission for Israel to rebuild the Temple, and the sacrificial system will recommence. But after a three and a half year period, the city of Jerusalem will be forcibly redivided. The prophet Zechariah talks about a time when Israel's enemies would be in siege both against Judah and Jerusalem

(Zechariah 12:2, 14:2). Revelation adds that the Gentile nations will occupy the Old City of Jerusalem for the final three and a half year period (Revelation 11:2). Today Israel's enemies are claiming this exact portion of land for a Palestinian state. And their purpose in doing this is simply to further their own
goal
of the destruction of the state of Israel.

The Bible refers to this three and a half year period as “the time of Jacob's trouble”, Jeremiah 30:7. The prophet Jeremiah says of it that, “
that day is great, so that none is like it
”. The prophet Daniel adds that “
there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time
”, Daniel 12:1. And again, the Lord Jesus Himself says that, “
then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be
”
, Matthew 24:21. It will be a horrific time for the Jewish people and for the nation of Israel. But we can praise God, because the fulfillment of these prophecies proves one thing, that Jesus Christ is coming back. For if these events are now coming to pass just like the Bible said they would, we can be sure that the return of Jesus Christ will also take place just like the Bible said. And we can be doubly sure, not only because the Old and New Testaments predicted it, but because Jesus Himself promised it (John 14:3).

Are you ready to meet God? Have your sins been forgiven? Have you trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation? Don't wait until it's too late. He is coming back soon. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation today (Acts 16:31).

John 3:16
For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

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