Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas today, in an effort to produce a shelf-agreement that will pave the way for the establishment of a Palestinian state. In just two weeks Olmert intends to step down from his post as Israeli Prime Minister, and it will be up to whoever replaces him to continue on with the negotiations. The meeting follows on the heels of a recent visit by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who is pressing the Prime Minister to conclude a deal before President Bush's final term ends in January of next year. She is also seeking to present the document of agreement at the upcoming UN General Assembly next month, to show what progress has been made since the Annapolis peace conference in November of last year. But Olmert is also under pressure from his own government not to conclude a deal with the Palestinians at this time. Israeli Foreign Minister and possible successor to Ehud Olmert, Tzipi Livni, fears that a shelf-agreement with the Palestinians before the elections is likely to reduce her chances of winning the premiership. She also stated that any agreement had to reflect the country's interests, and feared that Israel may reap the consequences of an agreement hastily produced in order to provide results. Olmert is also seeking to agree a framework mechanism with the Palestinian Authority, that will help to bring about an agreement on the division of Jerusalem within five years. For the first time in the Middle East peace process, international parties will be included in these negotiations, although so far on a consultative basis only.

Quote: *"Central in Olmert's proposal to the Palestinians is that the talks on sovereignty and control over the holy sites in Jerusalem be held under an international umbrella, where governments and other interested parties will be able to contribute their views. The negotiations will be held directly between Israel and the Palestinians, and international parties will not be able to impose their views on a solution. The role of the international parties would be to* ***bolster the agreement*** *that the two sides will agree upon in direct negotiations. According to Olmert's proposal, a five-year timetable will be set out for completing a settlement on Jerusalem.*

As we saw on Friday, Arab states are already agreeing that the European Union should have pride of place in the Middle East peace process. European leaders have long stated that they stand ready to aid Israel and the Palestinian Authority in brokering an agreement, but up until now Israel has been reluctant to include any third party in the negotiations. Now the Israeli government is willing to include international parties in the negotiations on the division of Jerusalem to help strengthen the agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. And this is exactly what the Bible states will come to pass. For we are told in the book of Daniel that the Antichrist, the leader of a revived Roman Empire (Daniel 9:26), will be the one who will strengthen a covenant with many for a period of seven years (Daniel 9:27). And within five years of strengthening that

agreement, three and a half years later, the city of Jerusalem is divided and the Temple Mount falls under the jurisdiction of the Gentiles (Zechariah 14:2, Revelation 11:2). The Antichrist will then sit in the rebuilt Temple and proclaim himself to be none other than God (1st Thessalonians 2:4). And thus commences the period of time known as Jacob's trouble.

It is very exciting for us to see how Bible prophecy is being fulfilled, because we know that this can mean only one thing. That the return of Christ is at hand. And although we know that this world is to pass through a very troubling time, it has a glorious future ahead. For the reign of Antichrist must give place to the reign of Christ. Satan usurped authority over the earth after Adam sinned (Luke 4:5-6, 2nd Corinthians 4:4). But Jesus Christ has all authority to reign over the earth.

He has been given authority to reign over the earth from His Father God (Psalm 110:1, 1st Corinthians 15:24-25).
He has the right to reign, for He is the Creator of the earth and mankind (John 1:10).
As the Son of Man, He has redeemed Adam's right to dominion over the earth (Matthew 25:31-32, Psalm 72:8).
He is of the tribe of Judah, which has the right to rule over the children of Israel (Genesis 49:10, Revelation 5:5).
He is of the lineage of King David, and thus is in line to the throne of Israel (Luke 1:32, 2:4).
He was born King of the Jews (Matthew 2:2), and was mocked and crucified because of that (Matthew 27:29,37)
As Messiah He has the right to reign over the people of Israel (Zechariah 9:9, Luke 23:2).

It is no wonder that Revelation 19:12 states, "on His head were many crowns". In summary the prophet Ezekiel describes Christ and His return to earth to set up His Kingdom as the coming of the One "
whose right it is
"...

Ezekiel 21:25-27
And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.

Praise God that He has exalted Him that was low...

Philippians 2:5-11
Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We can bow our knees before Jesus Christ now, through repenting of our sins and believing on Him for salvation. Or we will be forced to bow our knees before Jesus Christ in eternity, not in repentance but in acknowledgement that He is Lord in the day of our judgement. Don't leave it until that time. Turn to Jesus Christ while you still have the opportunity. He took God's punishment for your sins when He died upon the cross. All who believe on Him for salvation shall have everlasting life (John 3:16). Do it today.

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