

Israel News Desk

With
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The result of the January 22nd election in Israel is quite remarkable, confounding most people's expectation. Mr. Netanyahu did not obtain the number of seats expected although he was top of the poll. Recriminations abound, the Labour Party blame Tzipi Livni for forming her own party and thus splitting the left wing vote. Their leader Shelly Yachimovich is now daggers drawn with Tzipi Livni. Had the two been united they would have been second to Mr. Netanyahu in the poll.

The well known personality Yair Lapid's new party was in second position with their title 'We have a future' and seen the obvious coalition partner for Mr. Netanyahu's Likud – Baitenu Party. Mr. Lapid's party Yesh Atid have indicated that they want the third party in the election results Habayit Hayehudi in the coalition but this raises other problems, all three demanding the post of Foreign Minister and in any event they would still need other parties involved in order to have a working majority.

Another problem is that only two of the main three election winners want to see universal conscription although Likud might compromise.

There are many scenarios as this plays out and is not inconceivable that a government without Mr. Lapid's party could emerge, although this would not be popular with a large section of the electorate.

The leader of the third largest party Naftali Bennett has met Mr. Netanyahu but no agreement seems near.

As regards portfolios Mr Lapid is demanding the Foreign Ministry but Avigdor Lieberman currently on trial for breach of trust will demand he retain it if he is found not guilty.

Mr. Lieberman is already chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee.

The finance portfolio is another problem as is defence with few people with understanding in the parties outside of Likud. It's a question of 'watch this space' but we know that God is over all and Israel will get the government of His choice.

A friend of mine in Israel's government said to me recently, *'What on earth did England want with a coalition government when it looks at us and sees what weak government can result'*! Don't we know it!!

The Peace Process Mr Obama is now cranking up the pressure on Israel to recommence talks with the Palestinians. He knows that Israel are not the culprits, but Israel insist on recognition of Israel as a Jewish state and no return to Israel for the refugees who have grown to vast numbers and would swamp Israel if allowed to return. Mr Abbas will not enter talks without an assurance on these two points so Mr Netanyahu now suggests leaving these two matters until later. A non starter for the Palestinians.

Mr Obama is now further suggesting that if Israel will recommence talks he will in return increase pressure on Iran regarding its nuclear programme as a sop. Aaron Miller of the Woodrow Wilson centre said, 'Mr Obama does not wish to be the president on whose watch Iran obtained a nuclear device nor be accused of presiding over the demise of a two state solution,'! Obama will visit Israel shortly and one can imagine that 'the heat will be on'! It is profoundly disturbing that Mr Obama has picked a Muslim for CIA chief. John Brennan converted to Islam whilst working in Saudi Arabia and former FBI Islam expert John Guandolo warned that by appointing Brennan Obama has picked a very questionable candidate.

Mr Obama is also proposing anti-Israel Chuck Hagel for Defence Secretary who is currently under investigation by the Senate for taking funds from 'Friends of Hamas'! These are dangerous men who Obama is seeking to place in high office!

It raises a question often asked, 'Is Mr Obama a closet Muslim', referred to by Mr Mubarak the former Egyptian president at Mr Obama's inauguration with the words, 'Now we have our man in the White House'!

Add to that Secretary of State John Kerry once thought of as pro Israel, trying to free up \$700,000,000 for the Palestinian Authority, previously frozen and one must conclude that Mr Obama's second term in office does not auger well for Israel. Again, fortunately God will have the last word in all these matters and Islam will be dealt with by God, ultimately on the mountains of Israel Ezekiel 38/39, may be sooner than we think!

The Pope Israel considered Pope Benedict as a friend who consolidated interfaith! Rome's chief Rabbi said there were irreconcilable differences but there were some positives. Pope Benedict visited more synagogues than any other pope. The Pope said he, 'respected Jewish integrity and Catholics did not mission Jews'. I hope as evangelical Christians we seek to share the gospel with them unlike some who seek only to bless Israel surely the greatest blessing we can give is to introduce Jewish people to their Messiah.

The front runner to be the new pope would seem to be the Honduran Cardinal Oscar Maradiaga a noted anti Semite. He stated that 'The Jews got even with the Catholic Church for its anti Israel position by arranging for the press which it controls to give disproportionate attention to the Vatican sex scandal'. He compared the Jewish controlled media with Hitler because they persecute the church!!

Bulgaria A bomb plot that killed 5 Israeli tourists last year has been proven by Bulgaria to have been the work of Hezbollah. A leading item in the Times said it is now time to proscribe Hezbollah. Iran who back Hezbollah have withdrawn their Ambassador.

Syria Following the destruction of a chemical plant in Syria by Israel and the destruction of a convoy carrying arms to Hezbollah Syria has now threatened retaliation. Northern Israel is on alert for rocket attacks and the population have been queuing for gas masks. However, were Syria to launch a chemical attack it knows it would trigger a massive response.

Iran Western governments have expressed consternation of the disclosure that Iran is substantially increasing its production of enriched uranium, a key component of nuclear weapons.

Tunisia For the second time in a month vandals have desecrated Jewish graves in Tunisia, smashing and overturning tombstones. On a previous occasion 68 graves were ransacked and looted. Human skeletons were found outside their graves.

The Islamist influence in Tunisia, now rising, has led to the assassination of the governments leading critic. The country is dividing rapidly into factional inter fighting.

The Arab Spring is bringing vast problems all around the Middle East. Moderate Muslims are distancing themselves from fundamentalists, and there is trouble on every hand – not least for the minorities. In **Egypt** women are suffering unprecedented sexual and verbal harassment, Christians are persecuted and the government threatens to round up all who oppose it. In

Syria Christians and Jews alike fear that Mr Assad's impending fall will bring a blood bath for them.

Western governments have played into the hands of Jihadists and terrorists in Syria by backing the rebels and as in Egypt and Libya, to name but three; we're fast learning that the dictators have given way to worse.

Breaking news Avigdor Lieberman said 'A peace with the Palestinians is not currently possible, it is unrealistic'. In the midst of the current social tsunami sweeping the Middle East peace with Palestinians is a magic solution not possible. *The conflict*, he said, 'should be managed not solved!'

There is trouble brewing in Jordan according to today's news. The Muslim Brotherhood is gaining ground amid fears that they will seek the overthrow of King Abdullah. Bulgaria has deported a Hamas group who have entered the country for a meeting to promote the Palestinian cause without official recognition. Before leaving they stated, 'Other countries will be receiving visits shortly.'

Everything I have written points to the near return of the Lord, if you are reading this and not yet trusting in Christ, 'It is time to seek the Lord' tomorrow could be too late.

David Hoyle