

The Bible in the News - Leviathan Discovery

At the end of 2010, a major oil and gas discovery was made in the eastern Mediterranean, off the coast of Israel. Leviathan is the name for a large sea creature in the Bible (*Job 41:1-7*) and has been used to describe the massive find 130 km west of Haifa. The year before, a smaller gas field 80 km west of Haifa was discovered and named Tamar, the name of three women in the Bible. It is estimated there are 16 trillion cubic feet of gas and 4 billion barrels of oil in the Leviathan field and 8 billion cubic feet of gas in the Tamar field. This is enough energy to provide all Israel's power needs for decades to come! Could this be a fulfillment of prophecies spoken by Moses long ago in Deuteronomy?

Deuteronomy 33:13 & 19

*"blessed of the LORD is his land, with the precious things of heaven, with the dew, and **the deep lying beneath**",*

*"There they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness; for they shall partake of the abundance of the seas **and the treasures hidden in the sand**".*

There is a problem in that Lebanon is also claiming jurisdiction over the field and is making representations to the UN to support its claim. The 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Seas declared that each state has jurisdiction over the sea and sea floor for economic purposes extending up to 370 km from its coast. This includes oil exploration. The argument between Israel and Lebanon is over the dividing line from the shores of these two states.



This is an example of an oil and gas drilling ship similar to those being used in the Mediterranean.

Another aspect of the Leviathan find is other nations may also have claims on it. Cyprus, which is split into two parts, the Greek controlled south and the Turkish controlled north, is a case in point. The south is part of the European Union whereas the north is not. The Greek Cypriot government is now exploring the Mediterranean for oil and gas near where Israel made its discovery. In addition, Turkey, in the last days of September, has also sent a drilling vessel to the Mediterranean about 80 km south of Cyprus.

Israel is using drone aircraft to monitor these developments and protect its interests. As one writer earlier this year commented in the newspaper "Pravda", "Sounds like the groundwork is being laid for some huge war". We must keep watching as developments occur. This could be the catalyst to bring terrible conflict against Israel and consequently the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart

"The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe."

We need God as our "strong tower" that we run unto. Consider the words of Psalm 144:2-8

"My lovingkindness and my fortress, my high tower and my deliverer, my shield and the One in whom I take refuge."

While men's hearts are failing them for fear of what is coming upon the earth, we know what to expect: the return of Jesus Christ. His return will see a much greater political and physical earthquake than has ever been witnessed in the history of mankind:

*"And in that day His feet will stand on
the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
From east to west,
Making a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
And half of it toward the south.
Then you shall flee through My mountain valley,
For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal.
Thus the LORD my God will come,
And all the saints with You. "*
Zechariah 14:3-5

This will be a time of unsurpassed turmoil, but the end result will be the establishment of the kingdom of God. So in this time of trouble let us remember the words of Psalm 46:1:

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."