

Newsbytes

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"Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him." Tozer

Iranian commander: We can destroy Israel 'in under 8 minutes'

If supreme leader gives order, Revolutionary Guards 'will raze the Zionist regime' quickly, says senior adviser of elite al-Quds unit

BY TIMES OF ISRAEL STAFF May 22, 2016

A senior Iranian military commander boasted that the Islamic Republic could "raze the Zionist regime in less than eight minutes."

Ahmad Karimpour, a senior adviser to the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' elite unit al-Quds Force, said if Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei gave the order to destroy Israel, the Iranian military had the capacity to do so quickly. "If the Supreme Leader's orders [are] to be executed, with the abilities and the equipment at our disposal, we will raze the Zionist regime in less than eight minutes," Karimpour said Thursday, according to the semi-official Fars News Agency.

A senior Iranian general on May 9 announced that the country's armed forces successfully tested a precision-guided, medium-range ballistic missile two weeks earlier that could reach Israel, the state-run Tasnim agency reported.

"We test-fired a missile with a range of 2,000 kilometers and a margin of error of eight meters," Brigadier General Ali Abdollahi was quoted as saying at a Tehran science conference. The eightmeter margin means the "missile enjoys zero error," he told conference participants.

Iran in March tested ballistic missiles, including two with the words "Israel must be wiped off the earth" emblazoned on them, according to the US and other Western powers. Under a nuclear deal signed last year between world powers and Iran, ballistic missile tests are not forbidden outright but are "not consistent" with a United Nations Security Council resolution from July 2015, US officials say.

According to the UN decision, "Iran is called upon not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology," until October 2023. Khamenei has repeatedly threatened to annihilate the Jewish state, and in September 2015 suggested Israel would not be around in 25 years. In a quote posted to Twitter by Khamenei's official account on September 9, 2015, Khamenei addressed Israel, saying, "You will not see next 25 years," and added that the Jewish state will be hounded until it is destroyed.

"After negotiations, in Zionist regime they said they had no more concern about Iran for next 25 years; I'd say: Firstly, you will not see next 25 years; God willing, there will be nothing as Zionist regime by next 25 years. Secondly, until then, struggling, heroic and jihadi morale will leave no moment of serenity for Zionists," the quote from Iran's top leader reads in broken English.

In November 2014, Khamenei stated that the "barbaric" Jewish state "has no cure but to be annihilated." A plan titled "9 key questions about the elimination of Israel" was posted on his Twitter account, using the hashtag #handsoffalqsa, in reference to the tensions on the Temple Mount. The sometimes grammatically awkward list explained the how and why of Khomeini's vision for replacing Israel with a Palestinian state.

Nearly 100 schoolchildren ‘possessed by the devil’ have ‘contagious visions’ of man in black trying to kill them

by Utopia: the Collapse

May 2016 – PERU - The mass case of ‘demonic possession’ has caused some pupils to suffer from seizures while others have fainted at the school. Almost 100 schoolchildren are thought to have been ‘possessed’ by the devil - and see visions of a man in black trying to kill them. In what has been described as a mass case of demonic possession, the pupils in Peru are experiencing seizures alongside their horrifying hallucinations. Experts have struggled to explain the strange goings-on, which also include widespread convulsions and fainting at the school, reportedly built on a Mafia graveyard.

According to local reports, as many as 80 students at the Elsa Perea Flores School in northern Peru’s Tarapoto have been experiencing the supposedly contagious ‘condition’ since last month. A pupil, not named in local media, described their experience: “It’s disturbing for me to think about it. It’s as if someone kept on chasing me from behind. It was a tall man all dressed in black and with a big beard and it felt like he was trying to strangle me. My friends say I was screaming desperately, but I don’t remember much.”

Another schoolgirl said she had trouble breathing and was desperately holding her neck as if someone was strangling her. According to her friends, she kept screaming: “Take it out.” Another anonymous girl, aged 13, told local media: “Several children from different classrooms fainted at the same time. I got nauseous and started vomiting. I heard voices. A man in black chased me and wanted to touch me.” –The Mirror

Growing interest in the occult in society: Father Gary Thomas, exorcist for the Diocese of San Jose (CA) — whose 2005 training in the rite of exorcism in Rome led to Matt Baglio’s 2010 book, “The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist” and the 2011 movie, “The Rite,” starring Anthony Hopkins — likes to quote Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI: “As faith diminishes, superstition increases.” So when we’re looking for cultural factors that have fostered increasing interest in, and practice of, Satanism and other occult activities, we have to begin with the decline in Christian belief in the West.

Fr. Jeffrey Grob, exorcist for the Archdiocese of Chicago, described this to me in a recent telephone interview as a “disenchantment with organized religion.” Americans are impatient people and “even Catholics,” he explained, “may go to healers or botanicas” or dabble in Santeria, “seeking alternatives to God for an instant fix.” Msgr. Patrick Brankin, exorcist for the Diocese of Tulsa, agrees that the decline in Christian faith and concomitant rise in secularism is fostering demonic activity: “in the last few years, we’re seeing more demonic activity,’ he said, a trend he attributes to an increasingly secular society that has turned to Ouija boards, witchcraft, astrology, fortune telling and other occult practices that ‘open the door to the demonic.’”

All three exorcists believe that there has been a marked rise in the number of people who are dabbling in the occult — whether Satanism, paganism, idolatry or something else — compared to 25-30 years ago. In “The Occult Roars Back: Its Modern Resurgence,” Richard Kyle, Professor of History and Religious Studies at Tabor College in Kansas, quotes several academic experts who have written about the causes of the sharp increase in interest in the occult. Jeffrey Russell, for example, noted that, historically, “interest in the occult has grown significantly in periods of rapid social breakdown, when establishments cease to provide readily acceptable answers and people turn elsewhere for assurance.” -Aleteia

There's No Place To Hide From Surveillance Technology In 2016

prophecynewswatch.com

We find ourselves now in a surveillance state brought about by the ever-presence of modern technology, new precedents in what the government is allowed to track, corporate interests and even the tendency to overshare on social media. Indeed, more than a few convictions have been won through investigation into a person’s phone records, including text conversations and GPS histories.

Liking and sharing on Facebook articles that are regarded as subversive may be enough to get you flagged for a

watch list. If this sounds like a paranoid conspiracy theory, then consider what retired NYPD detective Patrick J. Brosnan recently suggested to WPIX news, that a smartphone is a combination "homing device" and "confession," citing that there have been several cases where "...information obtained from the phone, established innocence or guilt."

The silver lining may be in the first half of that statement, that phone records have been used to establish innocence. It's difficult to build a case that a suspect was at the scene of a serious crime when their phone records say otherwise.

But how long until you let slip that you may have made a mistake in filing your taxes? Or that you let a friend have a glass of wine without knowing that they were under 21? Suppose you visit a relative that the police are keeping tabs on for suspicion of drug distribution. If you think that you have nothing to hide, you're probably wrong.

The Washington Post reports that you may have already been assigned a threat score, rated green, yellow or red. You might wind up with a certain threat score based on a career in the military, posting material on Facebook that could be seen as threatening, suffering from certain medical conditions, or simply being a friend of a friend of a known criminal.

Android users can access Google Location Settings via the settings page and turn Reporting and Location History off and delete their logs, but you have to turn this feature off on every one of your Google accounts.

This is not an "out," however, it is only one small brick in the surveillance wall. If you drive a car, you are subject to automatic license plate reading cameras. If you live in the city, there are sidewalk and public space cameras, not to mention cameras on public transportation. There is tracking for credit cards and rewards cards.

Nielsen is permitted to sell information about your TV viewing habits. Your webcam can be hacked to show what you're doing in the privacy of your home. Web browsing cookies can be used against you. For the most part, your data is only used to decide which advertisements to show you, but it's not at all uncommon for any of these data-collectors to let law enforcement take a look at your information.

Simply put, there is no "off the grid." It is nearly impossible to live a normal life without ever setting foot in a public space and without ever using any sort of technology.

If you're wondering how we might reverse the tide of surveillance, it's simply too late for that. New initiatives towards surveillance passed with little resistance under George W. Bush, given the impact that 9/11 had on American culture, and were expanded upon under Barack Obama.

There have been some small efforts to combat omnipotent surveillance, such as the end of the Patriot Act, but all that can really be done at this point is to stay in the know. Avoid talking about any sort of illicit or subversive activity in text chats or online, and opt out whenever you can.

This is easier said than done, but: give the government as few reasons as possible to mark you as a threat, because there's no hiding from the surveillance state in 2016.

In Search For Cures, Scientists Create Embryos That Are Both Animal And Human

npr.org

A handful of scientists around the United States are trying to do something that some people find disturbing: make embryos that are part human, part animal.

The researchers hope these embryos, known as chimeras, could eventually help save the lives of people with a wide range of diseases.

One way would be to use chimera embryos to create better animal models to study how human diseases happen

and how they progress.

Perhaps the boldest hope is to create farm animals that have human organs that could be transplanted into terminally ill patients.

But some scientists and bioethicists worry the creation of these interspecies embryos crosses the line. "You're getting into unsettling ground that I think is damaging to our sense of humanity," says Stuart Newman, a professor of cell biology and anatomy at the New York Medical College.

The experiments are so sensitive that the National Institutes of Health has imposed a moratorium on funding them while officials explore the ethical issues they raise.

Nevertheless, a small number of researchers are pursuing the work with alternative funding. They hope the results will persuade the NIH to lift the moratorium.

"We're not trying to make a chimera just because we want to see some kind of monstrous creature," says Pablo Ross, a reproductive biologist at the University of California, Davis. "We're doing this for a biomedical purpose."

The NIH is expected to announce soon how it plans to handle requests for funding.

Recently, Ross agreed to let me visit his lab for an unusual look at his research. During the visit, Ross demonstrated how he is trying to create a pancreas that theoretically could be transplanted into a patient with diabetes.

The first step involves using new gene-editing techniques to remove the gene that pig embryos need to make a pancreas.

Working under an elaborate microscope, Ross makes a small hole in the embryo's outer membrane with a laser. Next, he injects a molecule synthesized in the laboratory to home in and delete the pancreas gene inside. (In separate experiments, he has done this to sheep embryos, too.)

After the embryos have had their DNA edited this way, Ross creates another hole in the membrane so he can inject human induced pluripotent stem cells, or iPS for short, into the pig embryos.

Like human embryonic stem cells, iPS cells can turn into any kind of cell or tissue in the body. The researchers' hope is that the human stem cells will take advantage of the void in the embryo to start forming a human pancreas.

Because iPS cells can be made from any adult's skin cells, any organs they form would match the patient who needs the transplant, vastly reducing the risk that the body would reject the new organ.

But for the embryo to develop and produce an organ, Ross has to put the chimera embryos into the wombs of adult pigs. That involves a surgical procedure, which is performed in a large operating room across the street from Ross's lab.

The day Ross opened his lab to me, a surgical team was anesthetizing an adult female pig so surgeons could make an incision to get access to its uterus.

Ross then rushed over with a special syringe filled with chimera embryos. He injected 25 embryos into each side of the animal's uterus. The procedure took about an hour. He repeated the process on a second pig.

Every time Ross does this, he then waits a few weeks to allow the embryos to develop to their 28th day — a time when primitive structures such as organs start to form.

Ross then retrieves the chimeric embryos to dissect them so he can see what the human stem cells are doing inside. He examines whether the human stem cells have started to form a pancreas, and whether they have begun making any other types of tissues.

The uncertainty is part of what makes the work so controversial. Ross and other scientists conducting these experiments can't know exactly where the human stem cells will go. Ross hopes they'll only grow a human pancreas. But they could go elsewhere, such as to the brain.

"If you have pigs with partly human brains you would have animals that might actually have consciousness like a human," Newman says. "It might have human-type needs. We don't really know."

That possibility raises new questions about the morality of using the animals for experimentation. Another concern is that the stem cells could form human sperm and human eggs in the chimeras.

"If a male chimeric pig mated with a female chimeric pig, the result could be a human fetus developing in the uterus of that female chimera," Newman says. Another possibility is the animals could give birth to some kind of part-human, part-pig creature.

"One of the concerns that a lot of people have is that there's something sacrosanct about what it means to be human expressed in our DNA," says Jason Robert, a bioethicist at Arizona State University. "And that by inserting that into other animals and giving those other animals potentially some of the capacities of humans that this could be a kind of violation — a kind of, maybe, even a playing God."

Ross defends what his work. "I don't consider that we're playing God or even close to that," Ross says. "We're just trying to use the technologies that we have developed to improve peoples' life."

Still, Ross acknowledges the concerns. So he's moving very carefully, he says. For example, he's only letting the chimera embryos develop for 28 days. At that point, he removes the embryos and dissects them.

If he discovers the stem cells are going to the wrong places in the embryos, he says he can take steps to stop that from happening. In addition, he'd make sure adult chimeras are never allowed to mate, he says.

"We're very aware and sensitive to the ethical concerns," he says. "One of the reasons we're doing this research the way we're doing it is because we want to provide scientific information to inform those concerns."

Ross is working with Juan Carlos Izpisua Belmonte from the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, Calif., and Hiromitsu Nakauchi at Stanford University. Daniel Garry of the University of Minnesota and colleagues are conducting similar work. The research is funded in part by the Defense Department and the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM).

(Well now...what happens when humans are no longer made in God's image? Can you say j-u-d-g-m-e-n-t? And below, another Kumbaya-tic moment from the Southern Baptist Convention where the brain drain is complete....MD)

SBC's Floyd: Doctrine of Unity Demands Decree Against Dissenters

Posted on May 18, 2016 by Bud Ahlheim

In what might be appropriately compared to that time back in the 16th century when a certain pope, riled by the outrageous Biblical truths being spouted by an up-start academic German monk, issued a papal cease and desist order, Ronnie Floyd, President of the Southern Baptist Convention, has written a perhaps kinder, gentler entreaty with the same goals. Silence the detractors for the sake of power ... err ... unity!

Floyd, soon to complete his second and final term at the helm of the SBC, wrote yet another blogged diatribe about his hallowed doctrine of unity. It's over on the Baptist Press, in case you want to read it. Be aware that Floyd's plea isn't theologically rooted either in the doctrine of the unity of the Trinity, nor, even, the doctrine of the unity of the church. Floyd touts the doctrine of denominational unity, a tenet unfounded, as you know, in actual Scripture.

"Unity demands we accept one another in love."

That's how he starts. Well, umm, actually Ronnie, the overwhelming impact of Christ's grace in saving me, giving me a new heart, and generating fruit of the Spirit in my life is what prompts me to love my perhaps otherwise unlovable neighbor. Unity has nothing to do with it. In fact, "unity" is never on my mind as either a concern or a motive for my Christian love. Then again, I'm not enthroned over a denomination that seems to be looking up as the drain drags the clog further down.

Floyd needs unity, wants unity, craves unity because he thinks the magical potion of "come together, kum-ba-ya-ism" will be a tourniquet for the massive bloodletting of members from the ranks. That wound of bloodletting has only widened under Floyd, by the way.

In his blog, Floyd goes on to blindly pass right over the actual reason the bloodletting continues. The hemorrhaging is being catalyzed by the perpetual proclamation of little more than a prosperity gospel from pulpits, the so overly-contextualized Gospel that it's surprising that the name Jesus even remains in it, and the self-righteous SBC presumption that we will do a job Jesus reserved for Himself – namely, build the church.

"Southern Baptists are no longer in a battle for the Bible, but in a battle with one another. The very soul of our convention is at stake."

Ooohhh, that sounds so foreboding. The soul of the convention is at stake.

"The soul of the convention?" Gimme a break. Believe it or don't – and apparently Ronnie "don't" – Jesus is incredibly more interested that His Gospel – the real one, not the one contextualized to nearly obscuring the divine – be proclaimed, in its' fullness, to souls that He may just save. Those are the souls matter.

But Floyd is absolutely mistaken that we aren't any longer "in a battle for the Bible." That's the error. And it's an error of ... well ... Biblical proportions.

IT IS ALWAYS ABOUT THE WORD, Ronnie. Always. Just pretend that your life as a believer is always in an "Eden" moment, because in some way, by some means, the enemy is incessantly attacking that Word ... and your obedience to it. In the sense that the SBC did, indeed, stand firm on our convictions regarding Scripture he is correct. The results precipitated the "conservative resurgence" which swept through affiliated Baptist colleges and seminaries, insuring professorial compliance with our Statement of Faith, particularly on Scripture.

Yet Ronnie Floyd would have you, and me, rest on the laurels of a "been there, conquered that" battle as if the war itself were over. That war rages on. We know that because Jesus hasn't returned yet. So the Word is still being attacked and the battles yet continue.

Floyd's assumptive statement about that "battle" being over leads to his complaint that now we are "in a battle with one another." Hopefully, those battlers unnamed by Floyd are battling against his claim that the battle over the Bible is won. It assuredly is not. While he does name the foes in this unity-threatening battle, he defines it with a sense of ultimate, potential demise. "The very soul of our convention is at stake."

But here's the problem. Floyd, like so much of the SBC, disregards Scripture. While affirming its authority, infallibility, and inerrancy, he, and so many SBC pastors and leaders, deny its sufficiency.

We give it lip service but you can look at the very things we do that deny the sufficiency of Scripture to see that the enemy is winning that battle. When you plant 1,000 new churches and lose a quarter million members in a single year, explain to me how that momentous victory in the battle for the Bible works out. It doesn't.

If we believed in the sufficiency of Scripture, we would actually trust Christ when He said, "I will build my church." Instead, scour the SBC web world and you will find enough church plant models and church growth procedures to shoot out of Floyd's baptistry confetti cannons for a month of Sundays. We have presumed to do Jesus' job because we just don't think He'll do it right, I suppose.

It's a simple formula you find in Scripture. We share the Gospel. God saves whom He will through its proclamation ... all to accomplish the words of Jesus, "I will build my church."

Instead, we skip right past the Gospel. We fold it, spindle it, mutilate it, contextualize it and THEN – and only

THEN – we engage the culture with THAT “gospel,” which is not the Gospel. It’s a man-made, user-friendly appeal to join our family, or get in our club, or become a member. We’ll do it our way, though “our way” is failing dramatically. (Thank you all the same but the Gospel ain’t an order down at the BK.)

Floyd proceeds to lay out an agenda for his doctrine of unity . Among his unity-inducing points is this comment:

“A runaway, unaccountable church lay leader, pastor, or a leader in our convention poses a major threat to unity among us. ”

SILENCE THE DISSENTER! So let it be written. So let it be done. I’m thinkin’ Pope Leo felt the same way about that Luther fella. Whaddya think?

Who is Floyd talking about here? Anyone who challenges him? Anyone who speaks up? (kinda like in this very article you’re reading) Floyd doesn’t state whom he’s referring to, but anyone anywhere in the denomination that threatens its unity is suggestively being called anathema.

But it’s evidence that Floyd and others worship the idol of unity, rather than trust the One True God. In calling out dissenters, those “unaccountable” voices Floyd bemoans, he’s engaging in nothing less than a reverse form of disunity. By attacking those who speak up, Floyd himself engages in defiant acts of disunity he himself bemoans. (Sounds kinda medievally popish.)

Nowhere in Scripture are we told that we must achieve, attempt, or ensure the unity of the church. While the unity of the SBC may be, and probably ought to be, regularly, healthily assailed with “examine yourself” critiques, denominational unity is not a Scriptural goal. Obedience to Scripture, and thus to God, is the goal.

As a denomination, we should be focused on the singular mission Christ gave all believers. And, that mission is NOT to build the church or the denomination. It is to proclaim the Gospel. This is why member churches are cooperating, isn’t it? (Instead, during Floyd’s tenure, the SBC had to yank nearly 1000 folks from mission fields. But I don’t think I’m supposed to mention that, FYI.)

I learned this little secret from Scripture … Jesus ensured the unity of His church – the true church – back there when He prayed for it in John 17. We don’t need to fret over it. It’s a done deal.

Of course, Jesus was not praying for unity within the SBC because truly that is of little import to Him. We would, instead, do well to serve Him well which means “do all that I have commanded.” But the SBC is bleeding members like a stuck pig and … trusting Jesus just ain’t working! We’re losing members! (We’re losing members because of a watered down Gospel proclamation, not because of a lack of unity.) We aren’t obeying. We aren’t trusting Jesus. We aren’t trusting the Word. We are trusting in – as Paul says in 1 Corinthians – the “wisdom of the world” to fix our woes with such things church planting models, church growth mechanisms, and a myriad of multiplication maneuvers. All things founded in the world’s wisdom. And that wisdom is folly to God, as you know and as you can see within the SBC.

The Gospel alone is the power of God for salvation. If lost souls being saved is our true desire – rather than back-slapping church growth statistics – then it’s the Gospel we must proclaim.

This is the downgrade folks. A return to the primacy of, and obedience to, the sufficiency of Scripture is the fix for it because the disregard of those very things ARE the downgrade. (Toss in a well-needed dose of Biblically commanded discernment and things might begin looking rather hunky-dory.)

As for “dividers” in the church, let’s define from Scripture who they are.

I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. Romans 16:17

Dividers are those teaching contrary doctrine. It may be properly exegeted to also include those in pulpits and ecclesiastic leadership who simply teach NO doctrine. Of note, Floyd, who has shown an eagerness to hold hands with those of blatantly unbiblical beliefs, thinks, though, that someone raising their voice in concern is a dissenter, a divider.

Based on his own behavior when compared to Scripture, though, Floyd is actually the divider, because rather than “exposing them,” Floyd holds hands with heresy. Rather than “avoiding” true dividers, Floyd bemoans those who just may be, simply like Luther, begging, pleading, and praying for a return of the denomination to the Word of God and strict obedience to its commands. Such voices can only be considered divisive if you don’t agree to the sufficiency of Scripture and wish to obey it.

Methinks Floyd has identified the wrong foes, and aligned himself, and the SBC, with the wrong “friends.” Scripture is sufficient. It’s been sufficient for Christ’s purposes for two millennia. The SBC ought to repent, believe, and obey.

The Kingdom of God is, indeed, at hand … but the SBC is wandering aimlessly in a doctrine-free desert with a leader exuding pride over winning a “battle for the Bible.” It’s not enough to affirm a bold statement about Scripture in the BF&M. That’s not the victory we need. The one we need comes only from “trust and obey.”