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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

Cold War 2.0: Russia ‘to revive the KGB’ after Putin wins biggest majority

Posted on September 20, 2016 by Utopia: the Collapse

September 2016 – MOSCOW – Russia plans effectively to revive the KGB under a massive shake-up of its security forces, a respected business daily has reported. A State Security Ministry, or MGB, would be created from the current Federal Security Service (FSB), and would incorporate the foreign intelligence service (SVR) and the state guard service (FSO), under the plans. It would be handed all-encompassing powers once possessed by the KGB, the Kommersant newspaper said, citing security service sources.

Like the much-feared KGB, it would also oversee the prosecutions of Kremlin critics, a task currently undertaken by the Investigative Committee, headed by Alexander Bastrykin, a former university classmate of President Putin. The Kremlin has not commented. The MGB is expected to be in operation before the 2018 presidential elections, which could see Mr. Putin secure a fourth term of office that would keep him in power until 2024.

Mr. Putin served as a KGB officer in Soviet-era East Germany, and is also thought to have been responsible for keeping tabs on dissidents in his hometown of Leningrad, now St Petersburg. He headed the FSB from July 1998 to August 1999, before becoming prime minister, and has often quipped that there is no such thing as a former KGB officer. “The KGB was one of the strongest special services in the world – everyone recognized this,” Sergei Goncharov, who served in Russia’s now disbanded Alpha counter-terror unit in the 1990s, told state media. Mr Goncharov also said the creation of the MGB would provide Russia with a “strong fist” overseen by a unified leadership.

Kremlin critics were horrified by the possible rebirth of an organization synonymous in Russia with political oppression. “It’s time to get out [of the country],” wrote Elshad Babaev, a Twitter user. “Anyone who can should take the opportunity.” The KGB was just one of the many incarnations of the Soviet Union’s feared secret police service, which was founded in 1917 as the Cheka.

The MGB is not a new designation. It was the name of the state security apparatus for eight years during Joseph Stalin’s bloody rule. It was renamed the KGB after Stalin’s death, and disbanded in 1991, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, when its powers were distributed among a number of newly-created security services. The Kommersant report came less than 24 hours after Mr Putin’s ruling United Russia party strengthened its grip on the Duma, the lower house of parliament, taking three-quarters of its 450 seats, its largest ever majority. The two anti-Putin parties on the ballot – Parnas and Yabloko – failed to overcome the 5 per cent threshold to enter Parliament.

Dmitry Gudkov, the only liberal opposition politician to hold a seat before, was defeated by a United Russia candidate. “The question now is ... how to live with a one-party parliament,” he said. The election was marred by allegations of vote-rigging and widespread apathy. The turnout in Moscow was just 35 per cent, the lowest since Mr. Putin came to power in 2000. “A record low turnout. Democrats get less than 3 per cent. The MGB is to be recreated. Welcome to the brave new world,” said Vladimir Kara-Murza, the deputy leader of Parnas. –Telegraph

Syria conflict: Russia fears collapse of ceasefire

17 September 2016

What's left of Syria after five years of war?

Russia's military says rebel groups have increased attacks in Syria despite a ceasefire and has urged the US to act or be responsible for its collapse.

Russian generals said attacks by rebels, some US-backed, had increased sharply over the past 24 hours.

Gen Viktor Poznikhir said the rebel groups had "not met a single obligation" of the truce. Later Syrian state media said US-led coalition forces had struck government positions, killing dozens of troops.

They quoted a statement by Syrian army general command as saying coalition jets had bombed a Syrian army position near Deir al-Zour in eastern Syria, and that this was allowing so-called Islamic State (IS) to advance.

The air strike killed Syrian soldiers who had been preparing for an attack against IS, and was "conclusive evidence" that the US and its allies support the jihadist group, the statement said. At least 60 soldiers were killed, according to the government, although activists the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights put the death toll at at least 80.

A Russian defence ministry spokesman said the attack was on Syrian troops surrounded by IS fighters and was carried out by two F-16 and two A10 aircraft flying in from Iraq. The truce does not cover attacks by the US-led coalition on IS and other jihadist groups. The US has not yet commented. It denied a Syrian accusation in December last year that it had attacked a government army camp in Deir al-Zour.

'Repeated messages'

Russian General Vladimir Savchenko said "the situation in Syria is worsening", with 55 rebel attacks over the past 24 hours, leading to the deaths of 12 civilians. Gen Poznikhir said Russia, an ally of the Syrian government, was doing all it could to rein in Syrian troops.

"If the American side does not take the necessary measures to carry out its obligations... a breakdown of the ceasefire will be on the United States," he said.

"The United States and the so-called moderate groups they control have not met a single obligation they assumed in the framework of the Geneva agreement."

Numerous ceasefire breaches by Syrian government troops and rebel groups have been reported. The terms require moderate rebel groups to separate themselves from jihadists.

Gen Poznikhir said: "Our repeated messages to the American side are left without a response. There is doubt that the US is able to influence the moderate opposition they control."

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and US Secretary of State John Kerry spoke by telephone on Saturday.

Mr Lavrov said he had urged the publication of the Syria ceasefire document, echoing a call from Mr Putin, and for US military officials to be deployed to monitor the truce.

A US National Security Council spokesman later said: "While there have been challenges on both sides, violence is considerably lower and the cessation is broadly holding.

"What we're not seeing is humanitarian aid getting through and it will be hard to build confidence on the ground until that occurs."

Aleppo aid

In televised remarks during a visit to Kyrgyzstan, President Vladimir Putin said Moscow was keeping to its obligations under the truce, and the Syrian government was "fully abiding" by the agreement.

Mr Putin said the apparent US policy of shoring up the rebels was "dangerous" but he said that the US seemed to be trying to maintain the rebels' military capability in its conflict with the government, adding that this was a "dangerous path".

"What we're seeing now is not the separation of the terrorists from the healthy part of the opposition but an attempt by these terrorists to regroup," he said. Previously Moscow has threatened to resume air strikes on "moderate" rebel groups if this separation did not happen.

If the ceasefire holds for seven days, the US and Russia have agreed to plan joint attacks on the Jabhat Fateh al-Sham group, which was previously known as the al-Nusra Front, and on IS.

The UN says it is still waiting to be able to deliver aid to the besieged city of Aleppo. Some 20 trucks have been waiting since Monday for safe passage from Turkey into Syria and on to rebel-held east Aleppo. However, the UN says it has not yet received permits from the Syrian government to allow the trucks into opposition areas, where at least 250,000 people are in desperate need of food and medicine.

This was meant to be a trust-building exercise, but nearly a week after the truce began, the blame game has begun. There was deep scepticism from the rebels about details in the plan which called for their separation from extremist groups. That is why they never formally accepted the deal.

It was always a major sticking point. Were US backed groups supposed to surrender territory to Jabhat Fateh al-Sham? Or were they required to fight them? It was never clear. Either way, the stipulation would leave them far weaker on the battlefield. But refusing and standing in the way of much-needed humanitarian aid would not have been popular.

Now this weekend, the main rebel groups are due to meet to discuss their position. Their mistrust of the government and its Russian allies runs deep. They see the obstruction of aid deliveries on the border as a stalling tactic, and one which they have seen before.

If aid doesn't reach besieged areas soon, the ceasefire's days are numbered. And co-ordinated strikes against IS won't happen.

The following article is another interesting take on a subject of interest to prophecy watchers.

Bill Salus is the only one I have ever read who believes that Psalm 83 is a separate war with Israel unrelated to any we have seen or are spelled out directly such as Ezekiel 38-39. I haven't found anyone in prophecy circles who teaches what he teaches. That doesn't mean he's wrong necessarily but it opens the door for other reputable prophecy writers to give their 2 shekels on this subject. Terry James is a solid pre-tribber so I include this for your perusal.....MD

The Damascus/Psalms 83 Question

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Most of the following worries in the Middle East center around a number of factors: 1) Israel's impatience with threats from its enemies; 2) Iran's bellicose posturing in threatening to use its missiles; 3) the Syrian regime's feared ability to wage biological and chemical warfare; and 4) (of particular concern for many Bible prophecy students) the so-called Psalms 83 war.

I term it "so-called" because I remain unconvinced that the Scriptures involved indicate a prophesied war—for reasons I will address in due course. Other factors just mentioned dominate news coming out of the region where Armageddon is foretold to bring the world together for the final and most horrific war of the age.

Israel has good reasons to be short of temper and of patience, although the leadership has shown remarkable restraint to this point. The Jewish state has been threatened with annihilation by all leaders of the Arab League at one point or the other. With the record of that leadership's predecessors attacking viciously in the relatively recent past, Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu can hardly disregard current Arab League semi-encirclement, the ring of hatred having tightened rapidly with the Muslim Brotherhood-spawned Arab Spring uprisings and now the tremendous growth of ISIS.

The Persian branch of Islamist rage has superseded the Arab rage to the point that Iran now threatens to produce weapons that can indeed do what Arabs from Nasser to Sadat and beyond could not. There remains concern that Bashar Al Assad has weapons of mass destruction in the form of biological and chemical agents that his Syrian regime might rain down on Israel's citizenry, should the dictator begin to lose in his effort to stay in power. He has shown he can and will wage such warfare upon his own people.

The Iranian leadership, as well as Russia, and to some extent, China, continues to back Al Assad. The Russians and China do so for the most part by refusing to allow U.N. action against the Assad regime in the Security Council, where each holds veto power. Russia has given somewhat stronger backing by moving some naval military assets into the waters nearby.

Iran, on the other hand, backs Assad with threats of military action, all the while displaying a growing missile arsenal—even demonstrably proving it now has an intercontinental ballistic missile that is capable of reaching the U.S. homeland. Iran's apparent determination to stand by the Al Assad regime's refusal to give up power is doubly troubling. Reports of weapons of mass destruction hidden away in Syria's military arsenal, if more than rumors, make the threat of a Middle East conflict of major magnitude a real possibility. Iran apparently possesses the technological knowledge and hardware to assist Assad in raining terror upon Israel in order to divert attention from his own possible overthrow. He might choose all-out war if he is about to go the way of Saddam Hussein, Mubarak, and Gaddafi.

Enter one more worry voiced by many emailers of late: the Isaiah 17:1 prophecy, which follows: “The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap” (Isaiah 17:1). The Syrian capital city is, like so many other prophetic indicators today, front and center in the news headlines. The question is: Will we soon witness the complete destruction of Damascus as given in the Isaiah 17 prophecy?

Further: Might an attack on Israel on that city bring about the Psalms 83 war, bringing all of Israel’s enemies into coalition that will declare that war on the Jewish state? As stated many times in this column, most every major Islamist terrorist organization is headquartered in this, the longest continuously inhabited city in world history. A single strike of a relatively low yield nuclear weapon could do the job in a single flight of an Israeli fighter-bomber. The heads of the terrorists’ hydra-headed serpent could be lopped off in that single blow.

My belief is that the Psalms 83 matter is a prayer for God’s protection, and that it will be answered when the “many people with thee” of the Ezekiel 38-39 Gog-Magog war will be destroyed, except for one-sixth of those forces. My assessment is that whether the Psalms 83 Scripture indicates an actual war or is an imprecatory prayer for God to vanquish Israel’s surrounding enemies, the attack on Damascus—if the destruction does come from an Israeli attack—and such a war won’t happen until after the Rapture of the church.

Such an event would take the world out of the time of “business as usual,” as Jesus prophesied in Luke 17:26-30 and Matthew 24:36-42, 44, in my opinion.

Such an attack and a war would be catastrophic to the world’s economy, and in other ways that are almost incalculable. Sudden destruction comes, according to Jesus’ words in those passages, similarly to the situation in the cases of the Flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah—that is, after Noah and Lot were safely out of range of harm at the time judgment fell. It fell immediately after they were safely in the ark and in the city of Zoar.

He said that as it was at that time, so will it be at the time He intervenes again into the affairs of men in a catastrophic way. Again, Luke 21: 28 are applicable. “And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

When Leaders Reject God’s Word

By Daymond Duck raptureready.com

Syria captured the city of Ramoth-gilead from the Northern Kingdom called Israel. The king of Israel, a wicked man named Ahab, wanted it back. He thought he saw the opportunity to retake it when the godly King Jehoshaphat visited him from the Southern Kingdom called Judah (I Kings 22).

While King Ahab and King Jehoshaphat were talking King Ahab asked King Jehoshaphat if he would join him in a war against Syria to retake Ramoth-gilead. In essence, King Jehoshaphat replied, “I will help you, but I want you to seek the will of the Lord first.”

The wicked King Ahab called in about 400 false prophets and asked them if he should go to war. They answered, “Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.”

The godly King Jehoshaphat did not believe the false prophets so he asked King Ahab “Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him?” King Jehoshaphat didn’t want the advice of godless men. He wanted the advice of God (the truth whether he liked it or not).

King Ahab replied, “There is one man, Micaiah ...but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but

evil.” King Jehoshaphat told King Ahab he shouldn’t say that. And to satisfy the good King Jehoshaphat, Ahab sent for the prophet Micaiah.

While they were waiting for Micaiah to arrive, King Ahab’s false prophets assured him that the Lord would deliver Ramoth-gilead into his hands.

When Ahab’s servant reached Micaiah he told Micaiah what the false prophets said and urged him to “speak that which is good.” That is to say, “If you want to get along with King Ahab, prophesy good things instead of bad things.”

Micaiah’s response was, “As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak.” His prophecy would be what the Lord told him to say not necessarily what King Ahab wanted to hear.

As the story nears the end, Micaiah told King Ahab, “I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd.” He also told King Ahab, “the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.”

Micaiah prophesied four things:

- 1) Israel would be defeated;
- 2) King Ahab would die;
- 3) God had put a lying spirit in the mouth of his false prophets, and;
- 4) God had pronounced judgment upon King Ahab instead of blessing.

Micaiah was slapped in the face by one of King Ahab’s prophets and he was cast into prison to receive nothing but bread and water until King Ahab returned from the battlefield.

The godless king rejected the advice of God’s man. He did what the lying spirit in the mouths of his false prophets advised him to do. He was killed and his body was brought home to be buried in Samaria.

On Aug. 29, 2016, John McTernan and Georgann Ryan wrote an insightful article (Europe: The Substitution of a Population) that triggered this message.

McTernan and Ryan suggested that huge numbers of Europeans have rejected the Bible (like King Ahab did when he rejected the advice of God’s man), aborted their babies and promoted the homosexual lifestyle. God didn’t want them to kill their children, become gay and things like that, but they did it anyway.

They could have had multitudes of babies that grew up as their children and grandchildren. Most of these descendants would have lived peaceful and productive lives among their ancestors. But their descendants didn’t get to grow up because they were killed or never born.

God gives people time to repent, but when they won’t repent His judgments begin to fall. He opened the borders of Europe and replaced the millions of unborn babies with millions of grown Muslims to live among the Europeans causing them to fear terrorism, persecution, rape and death.

Let’s take this a step farther. How did George Soros get so much power, influence and wealth? Could he have all of his power, influence and wealth without God’s approval? Is it possible that God raised up an atheist to give bad advice to world leaders that have rejected His Word of Truth?

We ask why do foreigners that illegally enter the U.S. draw bigger checks than people who were born and raised here? That is not fair.

Why can foreigners that have illegally entered the U.S. get free healthcare when many of our veterans are dying before they can get in to see a doctor? That is not the right way to treat people who have fought for this country.

Why is same-sex marriage taught in U.S. schools when most Americans don't agree with it? That is not normal.

Why is America turning against Israel when God said He would bless those who bless Israel and curse those who curse Israel? We should want God's blessings.

Do we really think an atheist (someone who doesn't believe in God) would advise world leaders to be fair, normal, treat people right and do God's will?

It may be far-fetched, but world leaders have rejected God's prophets (like King Ahab did) so I believe God has raised up a godless men like George Soros (like Ahab's demon-possessed prophets) that is tickling their ears with words (lies) that they want to accept.

And just as sure as the advice of the godless prophets led to the destruction of King Ahab, the advice of the godless George Soros and others will lead to the failure, perilous times and tribulation.

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I need to add one more thing to this: Europe killed 6 million Jews a generation ago; this summer the number of Muslims in Germany reached 6 million – that's no "coincidence" – MD