

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

Abbas, in meeting with Putin, says Moscow must be part of peace process



Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas met with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Sochi resort in Western Russia on Thursday, and said that solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be “impossible” without the participation of Moscow in the peace process.

“It is impossible to solve the Palestinian issue without Russia’s meaningful participation in the peace process. That is what we have been emphasizing at all international meetings,” Abbas said in his meeting with Putin, according to the official Russian State news

agency Tass. *(Alexei Druzhinin/Sputnik, Kremlin Pool Photo via AP)*

Putin said Russia “will continue to give its full support to the resumption of direct dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis.”

“The peaceful coexistence of the two states — Palestine and Israel — is an indispensable condition to ensure genuine security and stability in this region,” Putin said.

Abbas, according to a report in the official PA news site Wafa, also reiterated that he is still willing to participate in a three-way summit with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Moscow.

“We are ready to accept this invitation at anytime,” Abbas said.

“We had planned to meet in Moscow, but he didn’t show up,” Abbas said earlier this month, referring to Netanyahu in the context of Russian efforts to set up such a meeting last year.

Netanyahu and Abbas have repeatedly declared their willingness for face-to-face talks, and blamed each other for dodging the proposed September 2016 meet-up in Moscow.

On Tuesday, in a press conference with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Abbas said he was willing to meet with Netanyahu under the auspices of US President Donald Trump, who he met earlier in the month.

Before their closed-door meeting, Abbas and Putin participated via video link in an inauguration ceremony of a Russian-sponsored \$40 million cultural and economic center in Bethlehem. The center is named after Putin.

“The opening of the complex is not only a notable milestone in the development of the Russian-Palestinian relationship, but also evidence of the strong friendship between our countries and our nations,” Putin told the inauguration ceremony.

Ziyad al-Bandak, the director of the new center, told Wafa that the complex is 15,000 square meters and has six floors.

He said that there is a sports and youth department that consists of judo, karate and Roman wrestling rooms, and a cafeteria. Another section is a music complex and contains a training and teaching hall.

Trump is slated to visit Israel and Bethlehem later in May, and is expected to separately meet Netanyahu and Abbas and use the visit to advance his goal of mediating negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. It is speculated that he may also seek to bring Netanyahu and Abbas together in the course of his May 22-23 visit, but no such plans have been confirmed.

Abbas Foreign Affairs Adviser Nabil Shaath told The Times of Israel on Monday that while the Palestinians are embracing a new round of US-backed talks, they are still committed to working with the wider international community to attain their goal of an independent Palestinian state based on 1967 borders.

We warned about this guy earlier this Spring... stand by! : --- MD

Macron to Lobby Germany for Closer EU Integration on First Day as President

breitbart.com

Emmanuel Macron plans to use his first full day as president of France to fly to Berlin to lobby for greater Eurozone integration. Macron wants a common budget and a joint finance minister for all 19 states to have adopted the euro.

In a gesture which will be interpreted by many as a demonstration that Macron’s priorities lie with the European Union rather than France, the new president will meet with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in the hopes of persuading her that greater European integration is in both of their countries’ interests.

“The truth is that we must collectively recognise that the euro is incomplete and cannot last without major reforms,” Macron said in a speech delivered in Berlin in January.

He continued: “It has not provided Europe with full international sovereignty against the dollar on its rules. It has not provided Europe with a natural convergence between the different member states.”

Arguing that a dysfunctional euro and ongoing trade surpluses were to Germany’s benefit, Macron said that lack of trust between France and Germany was acting as a roadblock to reforms which would increase solidarity between the 19 eurozone states.

“The euro is a weak deutsche mark,” Macron insisted. “The status quo is synonymous, in 10 years’ time, with the dismantling of the euro.”

Macron plans to tackle the problems with the euro, as he sees them, with major reforms at the European level. Amongst his planned reforms is the creation of a common eurozone budget managed by a joint finance minister, and the creation of a ‘two tier’ EU, with the Eurozone countries moving ahead of the other member states.

If enacted, the reforms would constitute the biggest step so far toward integration of European states into one entity.

Many of the new president’s proposals are still nothing more than vague outlines. But Sylvie Goulard, one of Macron’s foreign policy advisers, says Macron is deadly serious in his ambitions.

A series of domestic economic reforms, including a €60 billion cut in public spending over five years, a pledge to keep the country’s deficit to under three per cent of GDP, and a cut in corporation tax from the current rate of 33.33 per cent to 25 per cent seem to have been designed with Berlin, rather than the French people, in mind.

Macron’s hope is that building economic credibility at home will help to persuade Germany to back him on the European stage.

“France must carry out structural reforms: it’s good for us and will reassure our partners, and chiefly Germany,” he said in February. “If we don’t have a brave plan of structural reforms, the Germans won’t follow us.”

But he may have a more difficult time persuading the people of France to back him. Only two candidates in the first round of presidential voting – Macron and Republican candidate François Fillon – made a case for structural reforms during the election campaign.

“The good news is that Macron and Fillon won 50% of the vote, but the bad news is that 50% of the French people still have no idea about what needs to be done, and that poses questions about what happens next,” French economist Charles Wyplosz said.

“France has been in the slow lane for decades, losing political influence in Europe, largely because there have been these arrangements where everyone has these privileges that they have been skilled at protecting. Macron has to confront powerful forces that often by putting 2 million people on the streets have won every battle in the last decade.”

Macron will be officially sworn in as president on Sunday morning after walking up the red carpet to the Élysée Palace. Amongst his first acts as president will be naming his prime minister, being briefed on the nuclear deterrent by the outgoing Socialist leader François Hollande, and making his first speech.

On Monday, he flies to Berlin to meet with Mrs. Merkel, who has welcomed his victory over Front National leader Marine Le Pen in last week’s election.

Macron carries “the hopes of millions of French people and also many in Germany and across Europe,” Merkel said.

Pope plans Pentecost celebrations with charismatics and Pentecostals



This is the logo for the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal to be held in Rome May 31 to June 4. (CNS/courtesy Catholic Charismatic Renewal)

VATICAN CITY Pope Francis has invited thousands of Catholic charismatics and members of Pentecostal and Evangelical churches to Rome to celebrate Pentecost and mark the 50th anniversary of what became the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. The pope will lead a prayer vigil June 3, the eve of Pentecost, at Rome's Circus Maximus, an open field that was the site of

an ancient Roman stadium used for chariot races. Participants will join the pope the next morning for Pentecost Mass in St. Peter's Square.

In 2014, Pope Francis had invited charismatics and Pentecostals to Rome in 2017 to mark the 50th anniversary of the Catholic charismatic movement, which traces its origins to a retreat held in 1967 at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. The anniversary event is being organized by the Vatican-based International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services.

The jubilee celebrations will begin in Rome May 31 with prayer meetings, a youth festival, meetings for theologians and workshops.

"Pope Francis asked us to plan a jubilee that is as inclusive as possible," particularly by including other Christians who also emphasize the importance of baptism in the Holy Spirit, said Michelle Moran, president of International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services.

It's here! Listen to the Mother's Day edition of our new podcast.

According to Moran's office, the Catholic charismatic renewal is present in more than 200 countries and has reached an estimated 120 million Catholics.

Meeting with charismatics and Pentecostals in 2014, Pope Francis admitted he was not always comfortable with the way they prayed, but he knelt onstage as they prayed for him and over him by singing and speaking in tongues.

"In the early years of the charismatic renewal in Buenos Aires, I did not have much love for charismatics," the pope had explained. "I said of them: They seem like a samba school."

But little by little, he said, he came to see how much good the movement was doing for Catholics and for the church.

Would You Let Your Company Chip You?

prophecynewswatch.com

Remember scenes from movies like Mission Impossible or Minority Report where people are subjected to microchip implants?

Well, it's not just in the movies anymore--it's real. Ask the employees of the Swedish company Epicenter, based in Stockholm, where it's routine to have your hand implanted as part of your new employee on-boarding process.

The company gives its workers the choice of an implant that will operate printers and open doors--you can even buy items from the vending machine with it.

Apparently, it is an extremely popular undertaking that so far, about 150 of the 2,000 employees have opted for.

Epicenter CEO and co-founder Patrick Mesterton says, "The biggest benefit I think is convenience," as he waves his own hand to unlock a door. "It basically replaces a lot of things you have, other communication devices, whether it be credit cards or keys."

Mesterton was one of the first to get chipped and lead by example, but even he initially had doubts and struggled with the decision. "Of course, putting things into your body is quite a big step to do and it was even for me at first," he said.

He finally decided to offer the chip program because he said that people have had many other devices like pacemakers and artificial knees implanted, so the chips are really no different.

Jowan Osterlund is jokingly called the "body hacker" by Epicenter employees; he comes over from company Biohax Sweden every month to chip employees.

The "chipping" day has become so popular that employees have actually turned it into a party.

These types of microchips are by no means new; they've been used for pets for years, and companies routinely use the same technology to track packages and deliveries.

However, this tech has not been used as a human implant before. Epicenter joins a few other global companies in taking the plunge with its employees.

Here's how they work: they use Near Field Communication (NFC) just like a mobile payment does. When the chip gets close to the reader, data interchange flows from the chip to the reader via electromagnetic wave. The chips cause no health issues and are biologically safe, but opponents of the human use of the technology says that it causes privacy and security issues.

The chips generate data, so it is much easier for employers to track everything about their employees--how often they come to work, what time then start and stop, how many bathroom breaks you take, and what they are buying while in the workplace.

Opponents of the practice say that employees are blindsided about being on the cutting edge of something new, but they're not thinking through all the future implications and what those could mean for them.

Any device can potentially be hacked, and some companies worry about hackers gaining access to their facilities and data via the chips.

Many Christians fear that such technologies are a precursor to what is often called "the Mark of the Beast" - where no man may buy or sell without an identifying mark in their right hand or forehead.

What happens when for "security purposes" such chips become mandatory to work at certain companies or government agencies.

It is not hard to imagine what starts off as a method of convenience growing into something much more controlling.

Jerusalem Fifty Years Later

By Hillel Fendel and Chaim Silberstein / KeepJerusalem.org - 18 Iyyar 5777 – May 14, 2017 0

Things that are “historic” are generally relegated to the history books. And yet, in our very own generation, in just two short weeks from now, we of this generation – today’s Jewish people in its entirety – will be privileged to share in an incredibly historic milestone: The 50th anniversary of the liberation and reunification of Yerushalayim under Israeli sovereignty.

Who could have dreamt, on June 1, 1967, that such a thing might actually occur? Over 450,000 Egyptian, Syrian and other Arab troops were amassed along Israel’s borders; Arab leaders promised “total war... annihilation... extermination of the Zionist existence...”; and Egypt had choked Israel by closing the Straits of Tiran to all ships to and from Eilat.

And yet, within a week, Israel had wiped out the threats, tripled its size, and liberated its holiest sites: the Temple Mount; the Western Wall; the Machpelah Cave; the Tombs of Rachel, Joseph, and Joshua; the roads traveled by Abraham, Jacob, and David; and much more.

Nevertheless, Israel’s enemies have not given up, continuing to fight on various fronts. Their latest foray on the diplomatic front occurred last week, on Israel’s 69th Independence Day, when UNESCO passed a resolution entitled “Occupied Palestine.” The resolution denies Israel any sovereign claim to its own capital city and speaks of the “cultural heritage of Palestine and the distinctive character of East Jerusalem.”

Falsely terming Israel Jerusalem’s “occupying power,” the resolution states that “all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel [that] have altered or purport to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and in particular the ‘basic law’ on Jerusalem, are null and void and must be rescinded forthwith.”

In sum: UNESCO, the UN’s prestigious Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, has decided that 3,000 years of Jewish history and religion in Jerusalem are null and void, while the Johnny-come-lately, on-again off-again Muslim claim to the Holy City should be uncritically accepted.

As we have explained in these columns in the past, Jerusalem and Islam are very scantily bonded. Only a small minority of informed observers can recite in their sleep the fact that Jerusalem is mentioned not even once in the Koran; most of the world still does not know this. And how many people, not including readers of this column and their immediate social circles, know that praying Muslims turn their back on the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem in order to kneel toward the Saudi Arabian city of Mecca?

Consider also these facts:

The Supreme Moslem Council (i.e., the Waqf, which has overseen Temple Mount activities on behalf of Islam for hundreds of years) has itself boasted proudly that the site is none other than that of King Solomon’s Temple. On page 4 of ‘A Brief Guide to the Haram Al-Sharif’n –a booklet it disseminated from the 1920s through the ‘50s – the Waqf states that the Mount’s “identity with the site of Solomon’s Temple is beyond dispute.” It then quotes the biblical book of Samuel II indicating that it is also the spot, “according to universal belief, on which ‘David built there an altar unto the Lord...’ ”

During Jordan’s illegal annexation and rule of eastern Jerusalem (1948-67), Amman remained Jordan’s national capital, while Jerusalem was relegated to second-rate status, with little investment in infrastructures such as water supply and sewerage. No Arab ruler other than Jordan’s King Hussein

ever visited the Holy City.

The PLO was founded in 1964, yet its charter did not even mention Jerusalem. Neither did the Fatah Constitution, drafted during Jordanian rule.

Historically, the Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem was not even built until 74 years after Muhammad's death. Even then, its construction had nothing to do with sanctity or spirituality, but rather because the builder wished to detract from Mecca's centrality in Islam. When Muslims later conquered the Holy Land, they ignored Jerusalem and established their capital in Ramle.

Jerusalem was, of course, not known as Al-Quds (City of the Sanctuary) during Muhammad's times. When Islam finally did get around to calling Jerusalem by that name, it was because of the Holy Temple, our Beit HaMikdash. The Muslim name for what is supposedly their third-holiest city – Al-Quds – is actually an abbreviation of the Arabic term for the Holy Temple, Bet Al-maKDeS. How ironic is it that the name the Arabs use for Jerusalem for the purpose of "Arabizing" it is actually one that perpetuates its Jewishness?

But back to UNESCO: It is important to note, as Prime Minister Netanyahu has emphasized, that the resolution's passage should not be regarded as merely a diplomatic setback. In fact, the relatively narrow margin by which it passed is "a tremendous diplomatic achievement," according to Carmel Shama-HaCohen, Israel's representative in UNESCO.

"Support for Israel almost doubled," the former Likud MK said. "Our diplomatic efforts have borne fruit, and we have support now even in Africa, South America, and eastern Europe. Just a few years ago, only the U.S. supported Israel [on similar votes]. Those who initiated this vote against us came away shocked. They thought the European Union was in their pocket, only to find five countries that voted against them for the first time."

Nearly 50 years have passed, and the miracle of united and Jewish Jerusalem is well entrenched. Yet as in anything of value, we must not rest on our laurels; the challenges are great and we must meet them with our best efforts. We wish to invite our readers, both in Israel and abroad, to make a special effort to visit Jerusalem during the week of the 24th of May (28 Iyar) and share in the momentous anniversary celebrations.