

# Newsbytes

The First Watch

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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

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## What is Going On? ::

By Daymond Duck

raptureready.com

I am not sure that it is accurate to say that one passage in the Bible is more important than others (ALL of it is the Word of God), so I will just say that Daniel's Prophecy of Seventy Weeks is as important as it gets (Dan. 9:24-27).

The seventieth week (the Tribulation Period; a week of years; seven years) will begin when the Antichrist confirms (signs or approves) a covenant with many for seven years of peace in the Middle East.

It is a debatable issue, but I believe that can only happen after the Rapture of the Church (I Thess. 1:10, 5:9; II Thess. 2:7-8).

Since the fall of 2017, the news has carried reports about Pres. Trump's Middle East Peace Proposal.

Over and over again, Trump Administration officials have said things like, “It is almost complete,” “It is being finalized,” “It will soon be released,” “It is being discussed with Arab officials,” etc.

Pres. Trump's Proposal is not likely the covenant the Antichrist will confirm because part of it may be subject to negotiation, but the completed document could possibly wind up being that covenant.

On March 13, 2018, Pres. Trump's negotiating team brought together diplomats from Israel and several Arab nations.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the situation in Gaza and issues that needed to be discussed before Pres. Trump's Peace Proposal is released.

The discussion lasted for six hours and it was reported that things went surprisingly well.

But the next day, DebkaFile reported that Pres. Trump has decided to remove his Peace Proposal from his immediate agenda.

No reason was given in the lone article that I read, but the article did say that Pres. Trump's Middle East Envoy, Jason Greenblatt, spread the word that Pres. Trump's plan might be revived in a year or two.

What is going on? Is God delaying the covenant and Tribulation Period? Have Pres. Trump's Faith

Advisors advised him to withdraw? Is this a Trump negotiating tactic? Is the DebkaFile report fake news?

Time will tell and the truth will prevail.

But for whatever it is worth, Pres. Trump's withdrawal from the peace process or his delaying it suits me just fine.

Pres. Trump said Israel will have to pay a price for his moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem. That could be a big mistake.

Hopefully, with the improving relationship between Israel and the Arabs, it is off the table.

I know that many are anxious for Resurrection Day and the Rapture to take place, to see our loved ones again, receive our new bodies and more, but the U.S. should have no part in the division of Jerusalem, scattering the Jews, etc. (Joel 3:2).

We know that the end of the Tribulation Period will finish Israel's transgression, make an end of Israel's sins, make reconciliation for Israel's iniquity, bring in Israel's everlasting righteousness, seal up Daniel's vision and prophecy, and anoint the most Holy (Dan. 9:24).

We know that Jesus is coming back as King of kings and Lord of lords, but none of us are anxious for the Tribulation Period to begin.

We long for world peace under the reign of Jesus as He sits on the throne in Jerusalem, but we shudder to think about what will happen to this world first.

Anyway, it is possible that the world is under a pause of undetermined length in the Peace process.

Let's watch for more information.

Here it is. Since writing this article, I have read that Pres. Trump has delayed his Peace Proposal indefinitely until Mahmoud Abbas is no longer in office. Mr. Abbas is in his 80's (83 I think) and there have been reports that he is not well.

On the other hand, as this article is being written, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman is in Washington hoping to influence Pres. Trump to restart the Peace process.

There is no question about the peace process winding up with a peace treaty. The questions are what will it say and how long will it take?

Prophecy Plus Ministries, Inc.  
Daymond & Rachel Duck

# Christianity is a Dying Religion for Millennials in Europe

newsweek.com

Cristina Maza

3.23.18

Europe's youth don't practice Christianity anymore, according to a new European social survey. The Continent was once the home of the majority of the world's Christians, but today many people between the ages of 16 and 29 claim they have no religious affiliation. In general, a high percentage of young people throughout Europe never attend religious services, never pray and don't identify with any religious group. In fact, there are only three countries in Europe where more than one in 10 young people said they attend a religious service weekly: Poland, Portugal and Ireland.

Young people in the Czech Republic are the least religious of all, according to the survey. A full 91 percent of young people from the formerly communist country say they don't identify with any religion, and 70 percent said they never attend a religious service. In countries like Estonia, Sweden and the Netherlands, between 70 and 80 percent of all young people say they have no religious affiliation.

"Overall, in 12 out of our 22 countries, over half of young adults claim not to identify with any particular religion or denomination," the report, authored by London's Benedict XVI Center for Religion and Society at St. Mary's University in the United Kingdom reads. "In 19 of them, over a third do."

The data reflects an ongoing trend among the overall population. In 1910, over 66 percent of the world's Christians lived in Europe, according to the Pew Research Center. In 2010, that percentage had shrunk to a little under 26 percent.

That doesn't mean the number of Christians worldwide has dropped during that period. In fact, the number of Christians worldwide quadrupled in those 100 years. A 2011 demographic study of more than 200 countries revealed that there are 2.18 billion Christians of all ages scattered across the globe. Around a third of the world's roughly 7 billion inhabitants are Christian. But by 2010, Christians were spread out more evenly across the Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia.

Some countries in Europe, however, are holding on to their Christian faith more than others. The most religious countries in Europe are Ireland, Lithuania and Poland. In Poland, for example, only 17 percent of young people do not identify with a religion. Around 47 percent of young Poles attend mass every week.

## Saudi Arabia opens airspace to Israel for first time ever

independent.co.uk

Saudi Arabia opened its airspace for the first time to a commercial flight to Israel with the inauguration of an Air India route between New Delhi and Tel Aviv.

Flight 139 landed at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport after a seven-and-a-half hour journey, marking a diplomatic shift for Riyadh that Israel says was fuelled by shared concern over Iranian influence in the region.

"This is a really historic day that follows two years of very, very intensive work," Israeli tourism minister Yariv Levin said, adding that using Saudi airspace cut travel time to India by around two hours and would reduce ticket prices.

Riyadh has not formally confirmed granting the Air India plane overflight rights. While the move ended

a 70-year-old ban on planes flying to or from Israel through Saudi airspace, there is no indication that it will be applied for any Israeli airline.

The Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner entered Saudi airspace at around 16.45GMT on Wednesday and overflew the kingdom at 40,000ft for about three hours.

It came within 37 miles of the capital Riyadh, according to the Flightradar monitoring app. It then crossed over Jordan and the occupied West Bank into Israel.

The airliner had earlier flown over Oman, according to Flightradar. Officials from Oman, which also does not recognise Israel, could not be reached for comment.

Israel's flag carrier El Al, excluded from the Saudi route, says its Indian competitor now has an unfair advantage.

El Al currently flies four times a week to the Indian city of Mumbai. Those flights take around seven hours and 40 minutes, following a Red Sea route that swings toward Ethiopia to avoid Saudi airspace.

If El Al planes were to fly on to New Delhi, a destination El Al has said it might be interested in, they would require another two hours – and significantly more fuel.

Interviewed on Israel's Army Radio, Mr Levin voiced confidence that El Al would eventually be allowed to use Saudi airspace.

"You know, they said the Saudis wouldn't let any flight pass. So here, the Saudis are permitting it. It is a process, I think. Ultimately this [El Al overflights] will happen too," he said.

Asked if any other foreign airlines might follow Air India by opening routes to Tel Aviv over Saudi Arabia, Mr Levin said he has been in negotiations with Singapore Airlines and a carrier from the Philippines, which he did not name.

"They are certainly showing readiness and desire to fly to Israel and I don't know if they will also receive permission like the Indian airline," he said.

## Israel slams 'sham' UN Human Rights Council after 5 new anti-Israel resolutions

US threatens to quit UNHRC as Nikki Haley says it 'lacks credibility needed to be a true advocate for human rights'; PA commends motions as rejection of 'arrogance and occupation'

timesofisrael.com

24 March 2018

Israel on Saturday slammed the UN Human Rights Council as a "sham" after it passed five new anti-Israel resolutions, saying the body was being used by "bloodthirsty dictatorships" to mask their own abuses.

The council "is a sham, a mockery of the noble purposes it pretends to represent," tweeted Foreign Ministry spokesperson Emmanuel Nachshon.

"It is an exclusively anti-Israel platform, manipulated by bloodthirsty dictatorships hiding their own

massive human rights violations by attacking Israel,” he wrote.

Nachshon’s comments come after the United States warned Friday that it was losing patience and again threatened to quit the council after the Geneva-based body adopted five resolutions condemning Israel, one of which called on Israel to relinquish the Golan Heights strategic ridge to war-torn Syria.

Israeli Prime Minister said in a tweet Saturday night that the motions were “More resolutions detached from reality by the circus of the absurd known as the Human Rights Council.” He called to change its name to “The Council for Resolutions Against the Only Democracy in the Middle East.”

Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman said in a tweet that Israel “has no business being in the UN’s Human Rights Council.” He said its “presence there gives legitimacy to...anti-Semitic resolutions, and the farce must end.”

The United States and Australia voted against all five resolutions.

US Ambassador Nikki Haley said in a statement that the council was “grossly biased against Israel,” noting that it had adopted only three resolutions separately targeting North Korea, Iran, and Syria.

“When the Human Rights Council treats Israel worse than North Korea, Iran, and Syria, it is the council itself that is foolish and unworthy of its name,” said Haley.

“Our patience is not unlimited. Today’s actions make clear that the organization lacks the credibility needed to be a true advocate for human rights,” she said.

Haley has over the past year repeatedly warned that the United States was ready to walk away from the 47-member body established in 2006 to promote and protect human rights worldwide.

The Palestinian Authority, meanwhile, welcomed the new resolutions. Ramallah spokesperson Yusuf al-Mahmoud commended nations who voted in favor of the measures “for their ability to stand in the face of injustice, arrogance and occupation and to reject the language of threats and coercion.”

He said the resolutions “reflect an international position in favor of a just and fitting solution to the conflict.”

The five resolutions were presented by the countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation under the council’s “Item 7” which requires a report on Israeli actions in the West Bank each time the panel convenes.

In condemning the Council, B’nai B’rith International noted that one of the resolutions, “which seeks to call into question the legitimacy of sales of military equipment to Israel, provides new evidence that the Council is entirely indifferent to the rights and well-being of those on one side of the conflict — the citizens of the State of Israel defending their right to life, the most basic human right of all. This resolution passed with 27 votes in favor, four against and 15 countries abstaining,” it noted. “We condemn Belgium and Slovenia as the only European Union members of the Council choosing to vote in favor of this outrageous resolution.”

Israel is the only country that has a dedicated agenda item at the council, a mechanism that the United States and some European countries have criticized.

In February, Haley criticized a report by the UN’s high commissioner for human rights on 206 companies with ties to Israeli settlements. Israeli officials have described the report as a “blacklist” and

said it is part of an effort to boycott the Jewish state.

"This whole issue is outside the bounds of the High Commissioner for Human Rights office's mandate and is a waste of time and resources," Haley said in a statement at the time.

The report was in response to a resolution adopted in 2016 by the UN Human Rights Council that called for the creation of a database of all companies doing business with the Israeli settlements, which the United Nations considers illegal under international law.

The latest threat to quit the council came after US President Donald Trump appointed UN-skeptic John Bolton as his national security adviser.

Since Trump took over at the White House, the United States has quit the UN cultural agency UNESCO, cut UN funding, and announced plans to quit the UN-backed Paris climate agreement.

Times of Israel staff contributed to this report.

## Christians Boycott 'Blasphemous' Sweet Jesus Ice Cream Chain



(PHOTO: LIFE PETITIONS)

Ad for Sweet Jesus ice cream chain based in Toronto, Canada.

Some Christians are calling for the boycott of a Canadian ice cream chain called "Sweet Jesus," saying it mocks the Christian faith in its ads and uses upside down crosses on the labels of the ice cream cups. The chain is expanding to the U.S.

"We, as Christians, are deeply offended by the name of a new ice cream chain of stores calling themselves Sweet Jesus. This is a mockery of taking the Lord's name in vain and also highly offensive to Christians," reads an online petition on Change.org, urging the Toronto-based founder Andrew Richmond to change the chain's name.

The chain has a branch at the Baltimore–Washington International Airport, and plans to open in other U.S. locations, including at the Mall of America in Minnesota, according to the LifeSite website, on which another petition has been launched.

"One ad on the company's website shows a nativity scene, but instead of Baby Jesus, there's an ice cream cone," reads that petition. "Many of their ads are replete with cherished Christian and Catholic symbols that are used to mock faith, including a rosary, a crucifix with a corpus, and angels."

It adds, "There are also satanic symbols interspersed throughout their ads, such as upside-down crosses, lightning bolts, skulls, roaring wildcats, and images that suggest vampires and blood."

One ad states: "Thou shalt not take the Lord's name in vain, but God [expletive] that's delicious."

The petition on Change.org says that if the mocking and blasphemous name of Sweet Jesus is allowed, it might lead to something more. "We are calling on not just Christians, but anyone who is against religious discrimination to take a stand against this brand until the name is changed so as not to be offensive to and until such time as it does not discriminate against any religion."

"If anything could qualify as 'hate speech,' this is it!" says another petition on the Canadian site CitizenGo. "Even if this were some innocent faux-pas, it would still be unacceptable! However, this is anything but a mere mistake. Both in their promotional materials and menu selection, it is plain to see that [owners] Richmond and Todai have every intention of mocking Christ and Christianity."

In October, Jeff Young, chief development officer of Monarchs & Misfits, the parent company of Sweet Jesus, said, "The initial consumer response has been tremendous, which validates our strategy of developing franchise units in super-regional enclosed malls in Canada. Positioning the brand in malls takes advantage of built-in traffic with an impulse purchase item, as well as smooths out the sales fluctuation of a seasonality product."

It added, "Our development strategy is to target super-regional enclosed shopping centers and very selective high street storefront locations. Over the next 12 to 18 months, we'll probably open another 20–25 units."

***Canada is more secular and anti-Christian than America for now. They may find that expanding into the US is not what they bargained for. Regardless, eventually it is the Lord with Whom they will have to do. Psalm 73:17 comes to mind.....Mare***