

# Newsbytes

The First Watch

April 11, 2018

No. 868

Since 2001

Newzbytes is a ministry of Calvary Chapel of Appleton

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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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## Chief Rabbi: Torah Obligation to Stop Massacre In Syria

By Adam Eliyahu Berkowitz April 9, 2018



“For You, Hashem, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on You.” Psalms 86:5 (The Israel Bible™)

Image :  
<https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/yitzchak-yosef.jpg>

Sephardi Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef on April 12, 2014. (Photo: Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

The Chief Sephardi Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef, released a statement on Sunday condemning alleged chemical weapons attacks by the regime of Syrian President Bashar al Assad as genocide, emphasizing that Jews have a Torah obligation to intervene on behalf of the Syrian people.

“I have said in the past and I will say it again, what’s happening in Syria is a genocide of women and children in its cruelest form, using weapons of mass destruction,” Rabbi Yosef said in the statement. “We have a moral obligation not to keep quiet and to try and stop this massacre.”

The rabbi was referring to an attack on Saturday in which Assad forces dropped barrel-bombs containing chlorine gas on the rebel-held town of Douma killing an estimated 45 civilians.

Assad has been accused many times during the seven-year civil war that has killed an estimated 470,000 Syrians and created a massive refugee crisis. This became an international concern and in a joint Russia-US brokered deal in 2013, Assad agreed to destroy all of his chemical weapons. Assad was subsequently accused on several occasions of using chlorine, mustard gas, and sarin against civilian populations.

Rabbi Yosef emphasized that Jews have a special obligation to stop what he labeled a “genocide”.

“As Jews who have experienced genocide, as Jews whose Torah is a light to the nations, it is our moral obligation to try and stop this murder. It is an obligation no less important than the moral obligation to destroy [the] nuclear reactor in Syria,” he said, referring to an Israeli airstrike in September 2007 that

destroyed an unfinished reactor being built by the Assad regime.

Rabbi Yosef has spoken out against the Assad regime before. During an inter-religious meeting with Palestinian Muslim clerics hosted by President Reuven Rivlin in 2016, Rabbi Yosef referred to the situation in Syria as "a small Holocaust".

"Millions of refugees are homeless, hundreds of thousands of others are starved, under siege," the rabbi said at the time. "They are not our friends, but they are human beings who are suffering a small holocaust."

## Trump threatens Syria strike, suggests Russia shares blame

By ROBERT BURNS, ZEKE MILLER and MATTHEW LEE | Associated Press

WASHINGTON – President Donald Trump on Monday threatened an imminent military strike against Syria, vowing to respond "forcefully" to Saturday's apparent chemical weapons attack on civilians and warning that Russia or any other nation found to share responsibility will "pay a price."

As he began an evening meeting with military leaders at the White House, Trump promised to "make a decision tonight or very shortly thereafter." He said: "We have a lot of options militarily, and we'll be letting you know pretty soon. Probably after the fact."

The White House sharply rejected any suggestion that Trump's own words about pulling U.S. troops out of Syria had opened the door for the attack, which killed more than 40 people, including children.

Trump, asked at midday whether Russian President Vladimir Putin bore any responsibility for the weekend attack, responded: "He may, yeah, he may. And if he does it's going to be very tough, very tough." He added: "Everybody's gonna pay a price. He will. Everybody will."

Then, during the meeting with top military leaders, he said the weekend assault "will be met and it will be met forcefully." Those at the meeting included Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Joseph Dunford.

Amid the tough talk at the White House, the U.S. military appeared to be in position to carry out any attack order. A Navy destroyer, the USS Donald Cook, was underway in the eastern Mediterranean after completing a port call in Cyprus. The guided missile destroyer is armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles, the weapon of choice in a U.S. attack one year ago on an airfield in Syria following an alleged sarin gas attack on civilians.

The Russian military, which has a presence in Syria as a key Assad ally, said its officers had visited the weekend site in a suburb of Damascus, the Syrian capital, and found no evidence to back up reports of poison gas being used. Russia's U.N. ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, accused Washington of deliberately stoking international tensions by threatening Russia in a tone "beyond the threshold of what is acceptable, even during the Cold War."

Trump said there was little question that Syria was responsible for the apparent weekend attack, although the government of President Bashar Assad denied it. "To me there's not much of a doubt, but the generals will figure it out," Trump said.

Emphatic in his condemnation of the apparent gas attack, Trump noted graphic pictures of the dead and sickened, calling the assault "heinous," "atrocious," "horrible" and "barbaric."

Fielding questions at the White House, Trump press secretary Sarah Sanders said it would be

"outrageous" to say that Trump's recent announcement that he intends to remove all U.S. forces from Syria in the coming months had emboldened Assad. "I think that it is outrageous to say that the president of the United States green-lit something as atrocious as the actions that have taken place over the last several days," she said.

Mattis, in separate remarks at the Pentagon, also suggested Moscow bore some blame. He criticized Russia for what he suggested was its failure to ensure the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons arsenal under terms of a 2013 agreement.

Trump said no action was "off the table" and also conferred with Vice President Mike Pence and his new national security adviser, John Bolton. Monday was the first day on the job for Bolton, who has previously advocated military action against Syria.

Trump said, "If it's Russia, if it's Syria, if it's Iran, if it's all of them together, we'll figure it out."

The United States, meanwhile, urged the U.N. Security Council to adopt a resolution that would condemn the continuing use of chemical weapons in Syria "in the strongest terms" and establish a new body to determine responsibility for chemical attacks. The draft resolution, obtained by The Associated Press, was circulated ahead of an emergency Security Council meeting.

An American official said the U.S. was discussing with allies whether they would participate in a retaliatory strike. If Trump decides to proceed quickly, the most likely partner would be France rather than Britain, because of concerns about obtaining permission from Parliament, said the official, who wasn't authorized to discuss the planning publicly and requested anonymity.

Acting Secretary of State John Sullivan spoke by phone Monday with British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson. Sullivan and Johnson agreed that based on reports in the media and from the ground, "this attack bore hallmarks of previous chemical weapons attacks by the Assad regime," the British foreign office said.

The White House deliberations came as Russia and the Syrian military blamed Israel for a pre-dawn missile attack on a major air base in central Syria, saying Israeli fighter jets launched missiles from Lebanon's air space. A group that monitors Syria's civil war said the airstrikes killed 14 people, including Iranians active in Syria.

Syria's state news agency SANA initially said that attack on the T4 air base was likely "an American aggression," but Pentagon spokesman Christopher Sherwood quickly denied the United States was behind the strike and the agency then dropped the accusation, blaming Israel instead.

As U.S. officials consider whether and how to respond, they are looking at what type of chemical agent might have been used. When Trump ordered airstrikes last year after a chemical weapons attack, it was a response to the use of sarin gas, which is banned by the Chemical Weapons Convention that Syria has signed. An attack with chlorine, which can be used as a weapon but is not outright banned by the treaty, could raise precedent issues, as there have been numerous recent allegations of chlorine attacks in Syria that have drawn no response from the Trump administration.

## Iran Threatens Israel: Syria Strike 'Will Not Go Unanswered'

A senior Iranian official threatened Israel with retribution, warning its airstrike on a Syrian air base that killed seven Iranians “will not go unanswered.”

Ali Akbar Velayati, an aide to Iran’s supreme leader, delivered his judgment – in which he called the attack an Israeli “crime” – on arrival in the Syrian capital Damascus on Tuesday.

Iran is one of President Bashar Assad’s strongest backers and has sent thousands of Iran-backed terrorists to back his army in the field.

Velayati was quoted by the country’s state-run news agency IRNA.

Syria and its Russian ally accused Israel on Monday of carrying out the deadly dawn bombing raid on the military airbase, as global outrage mounted over an alleged poison gas attack on the outskirts of Damascus.

A military spokeswoman for Israel, which has hit Syrian military positions several times in recent years, declined to comment. The Jewish State has a longstanding policy of refusing to comment on alleged military actions beyond the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

As Breitbart News reported, President Donald Trump condemned the reported chemical weapons attack in Syria, promising an administration response in the next 24-48 hours.

“It was atrocious. It was horrible,” Trump said. “This is about humanity and it can’t be allowed to happen.”

The president made his remarks during a cabinet meeting at the White House on Monday.

## Why Professing Christ is Becoming a Hate Crime in the West

frontpagemag.com

Raymond Ibrahim .

A grim foreshadowing of the future from the U.K.

What is the source of dhimmitude—which in many ways paralyzes responses to Islam—in the West?

First a definition: “dhimmitude,” which was coined by the late Christian president of Lebanon, Bashir Gemayel, and popularized by writer Bat Ye’or, is a neologism based on the Arabic word, dhimmi—that is, a non-Muslim (generally a Christian or Jew) who falls under Islamic rule and, as a price for maintaining their religion, accepts an inferior social standing. Simply put, the dhimmi must know his or her place and never rock the boat, including by seeking equal rights with Muslims.

While this is the classic and original manifestation of dhimmitude, a new and unprecedented form has arisen in the West: in the Muslim world, where might naturally makes right, Muslim majorities impose an inferior status onto non-Muslim minorities; but in the West, it is the West itself—or at least homegrown elements—that impose an inferior status on a non-Muslim majority.

The question becomes, Why? Why would a stronger civilization impose the unjust and supremacist stipulations of a weaker, hostile civilization, onto itself, and thereby paralyze itself against that same hostile civilization?

The answer is evident in the words of an ancient strategy: “The enemy of my enemy is my friend.” The Western elements that are forever protecting and empowering Islam—and which operate under various names, “Liberals,” “Leftists,” “Marxists,” etc.—ultimately care little about Islam; rather, Islam is for them a tool to combat their real and much closer enemy: Christianity, and the mores and civilization borne of it and culminating in the West.

This is evident everywhere and in a myriad of forms. Most recently, the British government “refused to say whether telling people about the Christian faith could be a hate crime.” Lord Pearson of Rannoch, a UKIP peer, asked the House of Lords if they would “confirm unequivocally that a Christian who says that Jesus is the only son of the one true God cannot be arrested for hate crime or any other offence, however much it may offend a Muslim or anyone of any other religion?” Government spokesperson Baroness Vere of Norbiton responded equivocally, adding that the legal definition of “hate crime” has been the same for the past 10 years.

But as Pearson explained in a later interview, the current definition of “hate crime” is subjective and revolves around whether the “victim” feels offended—thus leaving the door wide open to charging those who proclaim Christ and the Trinity of committing a hate crime, especially vis-à-vis Muslims, who adamantly object to the claim, as Pearson himself acknowledged: “Certainly the stricter Muslims do feel offended by Christianity and our belief in Jesus being the only Son of the one true God.”

Pearson also pointed to a double standard in how “hate crimes” are applied: “You can say what you like about the Virgin Birth, the miracles and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, but as soon as you say ‘come on, is Islam really the religion of peace that it claims to be,’ all hell breaks loose.”

Indeed, and there is a reason for that: unlike Islam—which many Western elite feel no (direct) connection to and thus no threat therefrom—Christianity is the faith of their forefathers; it is ever present in their societies, judging them—and they hate it for it. But rather than seek to suppress it openly, they operate indirectly, including by propping up always angry and easily “offended” Muslims against it, while they play the role of “impartial secularist”—people who will make themselves (meaning others, notably Christians) walk on eggshells lest the “feelings” of the “other” are ever hurt.

From here one understands why liberals and progressives who forever whine against any vestige of traditional (“oppressive”) Christianity habitually make common cause with Islam—despite the latter’s truly oppressive qualities. Feminists denounce the Christian “patriarchy”—but say little against the Muslim treatment of women as chattel; homosexuals denounce Christian bakeries—but say little against the Muslim execution of homosexuals; multiculturalists denounce Christians who refuse to suppress their faith, including by banning Christmas phrases and images, to accommodate the religious sensibilities of Muslim minorities—but say little against the entrenched and open Muslim persecution of Christians.

From here one understands the ultimate reason why domineering Western elements are imposing the unjust and stifling effects of dhimmitude on and thus making the West weak and vulnerable: “The enemy [Islam] of my enemy [Christianity] is my friend.” As this most recent example from the UK shows, Muslims are now even being used to make the central claim of Christianity—which the elite especially despise hearing as it convicts their godless lifestyle—a “hate crime.”

*Raymond Ibrahim is a Shillman Fellow at the David Horowitz Freedom Center*

# A Thief in the Night

by Daniel Payne April 7

A thief in the night is not usually associated with making a delivery. Rather, a thief is usually associated with committing a theft—i.e., taking something away.

The Rapture of the Church is often thought of as the Lord Jesus suddenly appearing like a thief in the night to “steal” or “take” His bride home to be with Him in heaven.

He will catch the world completely off guard when He suddenly returns over earth to seize everyone—who truly believes in, repents, and accepts His sacrifice for their sins—up from the ground and into heaven.

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:3).

Although the Lord Jesus made reference to it in the verse above, the event known as the Rapture of the Church was revealed as a “mystery” solved by the Apostle Paul in his letters written to the churches at Corinth and Thessalonica:

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (I Corinthians 15:51-52).

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

Based on the verses just written in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Paul was most likely continuing with the theme of the Rapture of the Church still in view where 1 Thessalonians chapter five begins:

“But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night” (I Thessalonians 5:1-2).

Although Paul begins a new subject—the Day of the Lord—he was likely illustrating to the Thessalonians what to watch for concerning their meeting with the Lord in the air at the Rapture.

Notice that Paul did not educate the Thessalonians on what to watch for during or at the end of the Tribulation—i.e., for the seven plus years after the beginning of the Day of the Lord.

Instead, Paul instructed the Thessalonians on what to watch for before the Day of the Lord begins.

Essentially, Paul told the Thessalonians that they had no need to be further educated about the times and seasons. At the time Paul wrote this letter to the Thessalonians, presentations of the many signs that will precipitate the Day of the Lord were—and still are—found in the Old Testament as well as the teachings of Christ, etc..

In addition, the Church will not be affected by the times and the seasons that will take place during the Tribulation as she will be taken to heaven at the Rapture just before the Day of the Lord begins.

According to Paul, the Thessalonians already knew about the Day of the Lord. They knew that the exact beginning was unknown and that it would catch the world at large completely by surprise.

The Thessalonian believers also had “no need” to be concerned about “the times and seasons” that take place during the Day of the Lord because they would not be present on earth when they take place.

However, they were told to watch—more on that later.

As Paul describes in his second letter to the Thessalonians, without a single member of the true Church left on earth after the Rapture, the greatest apostasy the world has ever committed will take place. At that time, the Antichrist will also be revealed.

The apostasy also means the “departure”—as *apostasia* is translated in the first seven English Bible translations—and may be a reference to the Rapture of the Church, as the context of “our gathering together unto Him” seems to indicate:

“Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Thessalonians 2:1-3).

At that time, the Lord Jesus will most assuredly oversee the “delivery” of His Tribulation judgment—likely known to the Thessalonians as the time of Jacob’s trouble and Daniel’s 70th week—after He “takes” His bride home to heaven:

“...hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?” (Revelation 6:16b-17).

“For when they say, ‘Peace and safety!’ then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape” (I Thessalonians 5:3).

Sudden destruction will come upon them—the children of darkness—when the Day of the Lord overtakes them like a thief in the night. The Day of the Lord will not overtake believers at all because we are not in darkness; we are sons and daughters of the light:

“But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness” (I Thessalonians 5:4-5).

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (I John 1:7).

As true believers, we have already accepted the Lord’s gift of salvation, and therefore we will not experience the Day of His wrath. God’s Word could not be more clear on this point:

“And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come” (I Thessalonians 1:10).

“For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thessalonians 5:9).

“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall

come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth” (Revelation 3:10).

Paul exhorted the Thessalonians not to focus on looking for the judgment of the Tribulation but instead to focus on being ready for the Rapture.

The only negative for members of the Church corresponding to the return of Jesus is shame associated with not having confidence in living a life fully abiding in Him at the moment He returns:

“And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming” (I John 2:28).

That is how we “purify” ourselves with the hope of His return:

“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” (I John 3:2-3).

Imagine miraculously surviving the horrors of the Tribulation, and achieving victory through the power of Christ by not worshiping the beast or his image, and by not receiving the mark of the beast (Revelation 20:4), and yet being ashamed at His return—does that make any sense?

We—the Church—are told to “watch” for His coming by interpreting the many signs of the upcoming season that is surely about to begin:

“Then He spoke to them a parable: ‘Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near’” (Luke 21:29-31).

“Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).

“Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober” (I Thessalonians 5:6).

For a Thief in the night...