

Newsbytes

The First Watch

June 20, 2018

No. 878

Since 2001

Newzbytes is a ministry of Calvary Chapel of Appleton

www.ccapleton.org

“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

The United States Has the World's Fastest Supercomputer Again

The newly-completed Summit supercomputer is specifically designed to run artificial intelligence software.

Popular Mechanics

The United States has been falling behind when it comes to the fastest computers. Since 2013, the fastest computer in the world has belonged to China, in 2016, China took the Number 2 spot as well, and last year the third fastest computer was built in Switzerland. But that might finally be about to change, as the world's new fastest supercomputer is now online within the borders of the United States.

The supercomputer is named Summit, and resides in a facility at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. It can perform around 200 quadrillion calculations per second, which makes it about a million times faster than a typical home computer and about twice as fast as the current world record holder. It's made of around 37,000 processors, and takes up as much space as two tennis courts.

But what makes Summit so unique is what it's designed to do. Unlike other supercomputers, like the current record holder Sunway TaihuLight, Summit is geared specifically toward artificial intelligence. The computer comes equipped with 28,000 graphics processors, which are optimized for machine-learning algorithms.

Artificial intelligence is being applied in pretty much every field, from image recognition to autonomous driving to video games. Machine learning is also making breakthroughs in science and tech fields, which means a supercomputer that can run the world's most powerful machine-learning algorithms is an invaluable asset.

With the powerful capabilities that Summit can offer, researchers can apply machine learning to problems in astronomy, chemistry, and biology. For instance, Summit could be used to analyze images from telescope surveys to pick out objects of interest. Or Summit could be used for complex DNA analysis or to figure out the structure of proteins.

The goal of both the United States and China, as well as several countries in the European Union, is to build an 'exoscale' computer, capable of one quintillion calculations per second, five times as many as Summit is capable of. The United States' ambitions rest on Summit's successor, a computer named Aurora scheduled to be completed in 2021.

Meet IDF's new incendiary kite-attacking drone

ynetnews.com

With flaming kites from Gaza ravaging Israeli farmland, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems has provided what the IDF hopes will be an answer to the primitive weapon—the 3kg Firefly—also capable of creeping up on enemy positions and exploding.

An Israeli arms company has developed a new drone to counter the threat posed by incendiary kites, hundreds of which have been flown over from Gaza to Israel's southern communities over recent weeks, causing numerous fires that have ravaged farmland and terrorized residents.

The Z'vuv HaEsh (Firefly) drone, which has been developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, will be presented for the first time at the Eurosatory exhibition in Paris next week, where the latest land and airland defence and security gear goes on display.

Its meager weight of just three kilograms does not come and the expense of its abilities to fly and operate in tough weather conditions, including rain and wind.

The Firefly can also be armed with a warhead weighing up to 350g and can remain in the air for up to 15 minutes before crashing and exploding into an enemy outpost or anti-tank missiles depot. Alternatively, it can be flown through a window of an enemy building and detonated there.



Firefly (Photo: Udi Etsion)

Separately assembled warheads can also be converted into observation posts, which can hover for up to 30 minutes, a comparatively long period of time.

“In experiments that we carried out with soldiers, we saw the revolution it represented for them,” explained Gal, a member of the Rafael Land Division.

“The drone enables the platoon leader to always know what is waiting for him over the hill or in the next house, without needing to split up his forces who would then need to cautiously proceed under cover from his comrades,” he added.

While every anti-tank missile costs tens of thousands of dollars, the price of the discreet Firefly stands at a fraction of the price.

The device will be controlled using a tablet by a commanding operator, who will be able to simply mark targets on the screen for the drone to home in on.

The new drone is also kitted with a camera suitable for both night and day, and is able to stabilize itself, saving the operator the trouble of having to get it under control in windy conditions.

Moreover, its electric engine gives it the strategic advantage of silence, enabling it to creep up on its

target until the moment it explodes.

Meanwhile, Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan has reiterated his position that Gazans caught flying the incendiary kites into Israel should receive the same treatment that terrorists receive who launch rockets and mortars across the border.

"Incendiary kites burn our fields but also constitute a real life-threatening danger. Police sappers have shown me kites that were launched from Gaza which were affixed with explosive devices," Erdan said on Saturday. "I expect the IDF to act to take out the cells who fly them."

Despite Erdan's exhortations, however, the IDF has avoided shooting at people responsible for launching the kites in order to avoid an escalation that can ensue from a rising death toll caused by the border violence.

While Erdan has called for the tough measures, the IDF is expected to present a different plan designed to avoid an escalation in accordance with directives from the political echelons, which seeks to avert another round of conflict with the Gaza Strip.

During the end of last week, 50 large fires were registered as a result of the flaming kites in various locations in Israel near the Gaza border.

Enemies of the Chosen

by Terry James

Dynamic issues and events continue to move and shake the world at a torrid pace. Central to all going on that presents danger to the world is the North Korean matter. That's the take by most of the news punditry panels I've heard, at any rate.

The North Korean talks and economic trade talks are at the top of the heap of things to worry about, according to the talking heads. Even Russia and China have for the moment been moved, at least temporarily, to lesser positions in the order of things.

Of course, the specious matter of Russia-Trump collusion is at the very top of mainstream news and entertainment media, as it will be until the next presidential election. But, at least they have to weave the fake news narrative in between the truly historical things this president is bringing to the world diplomatic table.

With that understood, it is nonetheless impossible to consider those things top priority to cogitate upon when the Bible's prophetic focus and the news of the day converge as one. I'm referring to God's chosen nation as being in the reportorial crosshairs every hour of every day.

Israel's enemies seem to be in every direction one looks, as we've covered many times. It is a satanic hatred that rages, just like it continues to rage in the matter of the 2016 presidential election. That election disrupted the new world order builders' plans to continue to move the United States into their globalist plans.

The hatred builds toward a crescendo because the new American president and God's chosen nation are joined at the hip, diplomatically speaking. Never has the Jewish state had such a friend in the White House.

Israel's enemies in the EU made their threatening anger known in recent days.

Spain has, as well as have most all of Europe, in one form or the other, joined in the Boycott-Divestment-Sanction (DBS) movement.

Following a major Spanish city's vote to boycott Israel, the leader of Spain's third-largest party called the Jewish state a "criminal country" during an interview aired by public television broadcaster.

Pablo Iglesias Turrión, leader of the Podemos far-left party, said this in an interview earlier this week on RTVE.

"We need to act more firmly on an illegal country like Israel," said Iglesias Turrión, whose party in 2015 won 20 percent of the votes in the general election just one year after its creation. (Spain's third-largest City Valencia officially declares Israel an illegal country, JEWSNEWS, June 10, 2018)

Israel has only to look northward a few miles to find a threat that is one packed with deadly military virulence.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani warned Friday that Israel "can never" feel safe, as thousands of Iranians marched in an annual day of protest against Israel.

Protesters took to the streets in the capital and other cities for Quds (Jerusalem) Day, held every year since the early days of Iran's Islamic revolution to show support for the Palestinians. Iranian media said millions marched in hundreds of cities. Iran relentlessly encourages the destruction of Israel, and it finances, arms and trains terrorist groups on Israel's borders.

"Israel can never feel that it is in a safe place," Rouhani told reporters in Tehran. (Rouhani says "Israel can never feel safe" as thousands in Iran mark Quds Day, by Agencies and TOI staff, Times of Israel, June 2018)

God's chosen nation has a diminishing number of friends and a burgeoning number of enemies of every sort. The most worrisome of the enemies, to my way of thinking, is the "Christ at the Checkpoint" global effort to, in its own way, destroy Israel.

Known as the CatC movement, the organization has declared its intention to "go global" in its activity in opposition to Israel and to Christians who support the Jewish state. Until recently, the movement has been in the Palestinian-controlled city of Bethlehem.

One enemy against which they have declared themselves is "Christian Zionism." Basically, that includes any Christian who, on the basis of moral and biblical convictions, stands with the Jewish state of Israel.

CatC official Alex Awad said Christian Zionists worship the modern state of Israel instead of God.

He added further the night CatC 2018 began that those of the Zionists in the U.S. are responsible for "electing Trump and dashing hopes for Palestinian peace.... Why should Christian Zionists coming to the Holy Land—where they worship Israel, not Jesus—why should they draw tens of thousands and we not get those kinds of numbers?"

The rhetorical question was posed in the closing hour of the fifth anti-Israel Christ at the Checkpoint (CatC) conference in Bethlehem.

CatC counts among its friends some familiar names, according to the article from which I gleaned the information. For example, the following is stated therein.

At the CatC conference in 2016, the hired gun to assault Christian Zionism was the so-called “Bible Answer Man,” Hank Hanegraaff from the US.

Not only is the ethnicity of today’s Jews dubious, said Hanegraaff, Christian Zionists are directly responsible for what he called Jewish Zionism’s “murder, terrorism and ethnic cleansing in 1948.” Moreover, he asserted, all talk of a third Temple (as per the prophet Ezekiel) is “nonsense.” (For the full article, go to <http://jerusalemjournal.net/news-and-views/7-ways-to-counter-the-global-assault-of-christ-at-the-check-point-conferences-by-brian-schrauger-photo-all-text-edited-out-for-facebook-censor>)

Observers of Bible prophecy from the Pre-Trib view of eschatology shouldn’t be surprised or overly alarmed at these developing, incendiary actions against God’s chosen nation. It should, rather, reassure that Israel’s returning Messiah and King is soon to appear to rescue the believing remnant of that people.

We who are believers this side of the Rapture will return with our Savior and Bridegroom!

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. (Revelation 19:11-14)

(Below: Believers know the answer to this...but at least someone out there is asking the right question! – MD)

When Does Pro-Palestinian End ... and When Does Anti-Israel Begin?

by David Gerstman | 06.15.18
thetower.org

In a 2013 news item on Iran’s annual Quds Day march, the Associated Press reported that newly elected President Hassan Rouhani said at the event that Israel was an “old wound” that needed to be removed.

The AP later provided some context for those remarks, “Rouhani spoke at an annual pro-Palestinian rally marking ‘Al-Quds Day’ — the Arabic word for Jerusalem — and although his remarks appear contrary to his outreach efforts to the West, they should also be seen in the context of internal Iranian politics where softening the establishment’s anti-Israeli stand is not an option.”

Despite the AP’s efforts to downplay the extremism of Rouhani’s comments – that he had no choice but to express his opposition to the Jewish state – it also reported, “In the capital, Tehran, tens of thousands took to the streets, chanting ‘Down with America’ and ‘Death to Israel.’”

In a report about last week’s cancelled soccer match between Israel and Argentina, The Washington Post reported, “The BDS movement aims to pressure Israel into complying with international law vis-a-vis its policies toward the Palestinians by discouraging the purchase of Israeli goods, pressuring

international companies not to conduct business in Israel and urging celebrities not to visit or perform in the country.”

Omar Barghouti, one of the founders of the Boycott, Sanctions, and Divestment (BDS) campaign, has been clear about the goal of his movement. He has said, “A Jewish state in Palestine in any shape or form cannot but contravene the basic rights of the indigenous Palestinian population and perpetuate a system of racial discrimination that ought to be opposed categorically....Definitely, most definitely we oppose a Jewish state in any part of Palestine. No Palestinian, rational Palestinian, not a sell-out Palestinian, will ever accept a Jewish state in Palestine.”

Nor is Barghouti alone among proponents of BDS in calling for an end to the modern state of Israel.

If the Iranian regime were strictly pro-Palestinian, the marchers would be chanting “Two states for two peoples” not “Death to Israel.” If BDS supported peace based on a two-state solution, Barghouti would be talking about “two states, living side-by-side in peace and security,” not about never accepting a Jewish state.

While calling the Iranian regime pro-Palestinian or writing that the BDS campaign is interested in getting Israel to be in compliance with international law, makes them sound innocuous or even praiseworthy, it is also highly misleading. Neither Iran nor the BDS campaign accept the legitimacy of the Jewish state, though they may have mapped out different paths to that end. Both, though, are properly classified as “anti-Israel.”

Using euphemisms to obscure the anti-Israel nature of Iran or the BDS campaign took on additional significant turn earlier this month, when Armin Rosen and Liel Leibovitz reported that the leading United States-based BDS organization has set up its website to allow tax-free donations to a Palestinian group that includes Hamas and other terrorist organizations. While Rosen and Leibovitz noted that there is no way to show that any donations through US Campaign for Palestinian Rights have gone to the terrorist groups, the campaign “is responsible for ensuring that the money doesn’t go to terrorist organizations.” There is no indication that the US Campaign has established any safeguards to prevent this.

Nor is this the first time that BDS has been connected to terror groups.

Former Treasury Department official and current Senior Vice President of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies Jonathan Schanzer testified before Congress in April 2016 and said that the leadership of “three organizations that were designated or shut down, or held civilly liable for providing material support for the terrorist organization Hamas ... appears to have pivoted to leadership positions within the American BDS campaign.”

The examples of Iran and BDS show that when a person or organization claims to be pro-Palestinian, it must be asked if that is really their defining characteristic, or if their professed concern for the Palestinians masks their opposition to Israel.

In his 2009 Quds Day message, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei made this equivalence explicit, “Those who are resisting and suffering innocently in the occupied Palestinian lands are the only ones offering hope about the freedom of Palestine and the annihilation of the usurping Zionist regime.”

The documented ties of the BDS campaign to terror groups show that many who are anti-Israel don’t draw any lines when it comes to the means by which they seek their goal of ending Israel’s existence.

Over a third of Brits think the UK will be cashless in 10 years

Danielle Wightman-Stone | Tuesday, 19 June 2018

New research from Equifax, the consumer credit bureau, has revealed that 37 percent of Brits believe that the UK will be a cashless society within the next 10 years.

The report notes that more than half, 53 percent of 16-34 years olds believe we'll be reliant on digital and card payments by 2028, compared to just 22 percent of those aged 55 or above.

Equifax adds that while 46 percent of people use cash less often than they did three years ago, more than half (54 percent) of respondents said that they use cash either as or more often, and almost three in five (59 percent) think shops, cafes or market stalls that only accept cash are convenient.

However, the research also adds that while the use of cash is declining, respondents in the survey, conducted with Gorkana, said coins are their top payment choice for vending machines (60 percent), parking meters (57 percent), charity donations (53 percent), and buses (52 percent), and paying with notes is the preference for taxis (42 percent).

It also found that while the use of digital payments via contactless cards and online transactions is growing rapidly, some people are still wary about security, with over a quarter (27 percent) of respondents stating that they "don't feel confident" paying via websites or think contactless cards are secure, and 26 percent think it's difficult to track money spent using digital methods.

Sarah Lewis, head of ID and fraud at Equifax, said in a press release: "We're in the midst of an exciting smart payments revolution. We can pay for our lunch with our watches and passers-by are now able to donate to buskers via contactless. This growth of new payment technologies is drawing us closer to a cashless society, but long standing preferences for cash remain in certain situations, particularly among older consumers.

"The shift to digital payments in the new economy raises important questions about the role of different payment methods, and highlights the need to balance the convenience people want with security. As digital and online payments continue to grow, so too does the associated fraud. It's vital that new technology is maximised to give people the reassurance they need as they change the way they spend."