

# Newsbytes

The First Watch

July 11, 2018

No. 880

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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## Messianic Tipping Point: Majority of Jews in Israel, New Torah Reality

July 09 2018

The Israeli government recently announced that the largest community of Jews in the world is in Israel. This demographic fact has far-reaching Messianic ramifications in Jewish Law, requiring the Jews to reinstate Biblical commandments that have not been seen in two millennia and bringing redemption one rather significant step closer.



80,000 people gather at Kotel (Western Wall) for the priestly blessing on Passover. (Credit: Flash90)

Last week, Immigration Minister Sofa Landver reported to the Knesset’s Committee for Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora Affairs that Israel had taken America’s place as home to the world’s largest Jewish population.

It is difficult to definitively quantify the Jewish population since the definition of who is a Jew varies widely between the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform movements. But the United States has been host of the largest Jewish

population since WWII, with just over four million Jew in 1945. That number grew to 5.4 million in the 1970’s, although the previously rapid growth slowed due to assimilation, intermarriage, and low birth rates. Landver reported that 5.7 million Jews currently live in the US.

The Jewish population in Israel at the state’s inception in 1948 was approximately 650,000, less than six percent of the global Jewish population, and grew over the next ten years to 1.8 million. By 1980, there were 3.2 million Jews living in Israel, rising to 5.8 million by 2010. Landver reported that there are currently 6.6 million Jews in Israel.

“Having a majority of Jews in Israel creates a different halachic (Torah law) reality, requiring Jews to perform certain mitzvot (Torah commandments) they have not had to perform in 2,000 years,” Rabbi Hillel Weiss, spokesman for the nascent Sanhedrin, said to Breaking Israel News. Rabbi Weiss explained that this condition of a majority of Jews in Israel was anticipated in prophecy as the final return of the Jews to Israel. It is referred to as the third inheritance of the land, the first being by

Joshua, the second after the Babylonian exile.

The third inheritance refers to Jews' prophesied return from the exile that followed the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 CE. Jewish tradition holds that this return will usher in the building of the Third Temple, the return of the Davidic Dynasty, and the messianic era.

"But this is not something that will just happen," Rabbi Weiss said. "The Jews returned to Israel in order to pave the way for the moshiach."

When a majority of Jews live in Israel, Jews are required to count the 50-year Jubilee cycle, a mitzvah (Torah commandment) the Sanhedrin reinstated almost two years ago.

"And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a Jubilee unto you." – Leviticus 25:10

The Jubilee (Hayovel in Hebrew) is a Biblical commandment that is observed exclusively in the land of Israel. It is the fiftieth year that comes after a period seven sabbaticals. The year triggers a number of Biblical commandments concerning property rights and returning the land to its original inheritors, the Jews who were allocated the land by lottery. Debts were forgiven and slaves who sold themselves due to debt were set free.

Having a majority of the Jews in Israel will also require the distribution of land and the return of Jewish tribal identity as described by the Prophet Ezekiel.

And it shall come to pass that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you and to the strangers that sojourn among you. – Ezekiel 47:21-22

The Sanhedrin has made an official ruling on how this should be done and is prepared to do so now that the requirement of the majority of Jews live in Israel and the current situation requires it to be done according to Torah law.

"We are required to have twelve tribes," Rabbi Weiss said. "The land will be divided according to the Biblical territories. Every Jew living in that territory will receive an inheritance and be considered as if he is from that tribe."

But when the Sanhedrin declared the beginning of the Jubilee cycle in 2016, they did so on the basis of their ruling that the majority of Jews already lived in Israel.

"We based our decision on the opinion that the Jubilee begins when there are 600,000 Jews in Israel, like the number that returned to Israel from Egypt under Joshua," Rabbi Weiss said. "When those conditions have been met, as they clearly have, then the conditions for counting the Jubilee has also been met."

Rabbi Weiss explained the Sanhedrin's decision to rely upon the number rather than the majority of the total number of Jews.

"The number of Jews outside of Israel is a statistic that cannot be easily established and it is too easily manipulated," he said. "It involves defining who is a Jew, a point that is a source of fierce debate. There are untold millions of people in countries around the world who are just now discovering their Jewish roots and that will change the numbers as well."

"Most of the Jews who do not deny their Jewish identity are living in Israel today, effectively creating

the condition in which there is no Jewish nation outside of the Land of Israel,” he said. “The decision not to accept Israel, not to do mitzvot, not to move towards establishing the Temple, these are conscious decisions to reject the clear reality that we have returned as a nation, which requires Israel to act in a different manner than they have for the last 2,000 years.”

Rabbi David Katz, author of *Laws of Ger Toshav: Pious of the Nations*, is working towards reinstating a classification of non-Jews that is also dependent on this change in demographics: ger toshav (a resident alien).

“Ger toshav is explicitly described in the Torah,” Rabbi Katz said to Breaking Israel News, citing the one of the many verses.

If a resident alien among you has prospered, and your kinsman being in straits, comes under his authority and gives himself over to the resident alien among you, or to an offshoot of an alien’s family.  
– Leviticus 25:47

“It is clearly true that Israel is required to recognize the ger toshav but this will not happen as long as the rabbinate refuses to acknowledge the new reality and continues to enforce the exile paradigm,” Rabbi Katz said. “There are different levels of this classification, including outside of Israel, but the highest level of fulfillment of the ger toshav comes when the Jubilee is declared.”

Rabbi Katz noted an increase in recent years from non-Jews who are interested in being ger toshav. He suggested that this interest seems to be spontaneously generated, as if the sudden change in demographics requiring the return of that Biblical status automatically reestablished it in the hearts and minds of people for whom it is relevant. Though this spiritual cause of the reemergence of ger toshav is appealing, the rabbi prefers a more practical cause.

“The demographics have tilted the scales and made Israel prominent in the world in so many ways,” Rabbi Katz said. “Because the non-Jews are more aware of Israel in a positive way more than ever before. This leads them to want to connect to Israel in a deeper manner, which is ger toshav.”

Rabbi Katz believes that the establishment of Israel was undeniably a part of the geula (redemption) process but he feels that the process has become “stuck” in recent years.

“Everyone agrees that Moshiach ben Yosef is here,” Rabbi Katz said, referring to the first stage in the messiah that Judaism believes pave the way in practical means for the second, more transcendent stage, referred to as Moshiach ben David. “We need to break through this klippah (barrier, literally shell) of exile mentality in order to go to the next level.”

“The statistics will not make these changes,” Rabbi Katz said. “Any change in this approach would have to come from the Temple Mount, not from the exile and not from the political framework which includes the Chief Rabbinate.”

Reported by: Israel Breaking News

# Israel lays down red lines for postwar relations with Syria

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press Jul 5, 2018

JERUSALEM (AP) — As Syrian government forces press on with a furious offensive against rebel-held areas in the country's south, Israel is quietly acknowledging that President Bashar Assad's forces will soon be on its doorstep, laying down red lines for postwar relations with the Syrian leader.

Israel's main concern is to keep archrival Iran, an Assad ally, as far away from its border as possible — along with its proxy, the Lebanese militia Hezbollah.

"Our demand is that the Iranian forces will go out or withdraw from Syria as a whole, and in it specifically southwest Syria," said a senior Israeli military official.

It is a turnaround from a few years ago, when Israeli leaders were publicly predicting Assad's overthrow and some voices even mused about peace with a future democratic Syria.

While carefully refusing to take sides in the Syrian civil war, Israel offered humanitarian assistance to rebels, and it has made a public show of taking in several thousand wounded Syrians for medical treatment.

But there is a sense now in Israel, as in parts of the West, that despite Assad's vicious conduct of the war — with hundreds of thousands killed and millions forced from their homes — his survival may be a less bad outcome than a takeover of Syria by Islamic militants who emerged over time as his most potent rivals.

Israeli leaders have sent a series of messages making clear that they expect Assad and his Iranian-backed allies to honor a decades-old agreement that sets out a demilitarized zone along the frontier and limits the number of forces each side can deploy within 25 kilometers (15 miles) of the zone.

"We have a Separation of Forces Agreement with Syria from 1974," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared this week. "This is the guiding principle. We will adhere to it very strictly and so must others, everyone."

The agreement was signed a year after an Arab-Israeli war in which Syrian forces failed to retake a large part of the Golan Heights area seized by Israel in 1967.

The strategic highland has since been annexed by Israel, bringing some Israeli troops as well as settlements to within a few dozen miles (kilometers) of Damascus. Although Syria has long demanded the area back — and no countries recognize Israel's annexation — the border has mostly been quiet for decades.

Israel and Syria are believed to have come close to a land-for-peace deal in the past, but today the chaos in Syria is widely seen as having justified Israel's continued hold on the Golan.

The agreement was adhered to generally until the Syria war. But Israel has looked the other way amid minor violations of the agreement throughout the fighting — understanding that it would be hard to enforce given the numerous forces active in the area. But as Assad consolidates his gains, Israel wants the agreement strictly enforced once more.

The Israeli military official, speaking on condition of anonymity under briefing guidelines, said that while

there is no love lost for Assad, the Israeli thinking recognizes the emerging reality.

"We are looking for an address, a reliable one. We are looking for security and defense to our territory, interests and people," he said. "If we get that, of course, it's fine with us."

Stephane Cohen, a former Israeli liaison officer to U.N. observers in the Golan, said Syria is expected to honor the 1974 agreement, as it did in the past. "The problem is what that comes with now, which is Iran and Hezbollah and other Shiite proxies. That's the issue," he said.

One complicating factor is that the U.N. peacekeepers have been forced to abandon their positions during the fighting and would need to return to monitor the truce.

Israel considers Iran to be its greatest threat, citing repeated Iranian calls for Israel's destruction, Iran's support for Hezbollah and other hostile militant groups and its development of long-range missiles.

Although Israel has refrained from taking sides in the Syrian war, it has been active in the skies over Syria. It has acknowledged carrying out dozens of airstrikes on suspected arms shipments bound for Hezbollah and is widely believed to have attacked a series of Iranian targets in recent months.

A turning point came in February, when Israel says an armed Iranian drone entered its airspace. Israel shot down the drone, then struck Iranian targets deep in Syria before one of its warplanes was downed.

Then, in early May, Israel attacked what it said was dozens of Iranian targets in Syria in response to Iranian rocket fire aimed at Israel. The rocket fire was retaliation for earlier Israeli strikes.

Since then, Israel has repeatedly said it will not allow Iran, or its Shiite proxies, to establish a permanent presence in postwar Syria. The Israeli military official said the concern is that Iran will use these forces to launch a low-level "war of attrition" with Israel.

A key player could be Russia, which also sent forces into Syria to back Assad. Israel announced Thursday that Netanyahu will travel to Russia next week to meet with President Vladimir Putin, for what is expected to be the latest in a series of discussions about Syria.

For several years, Israel and Russia have maintained a special hotline to prevent their air forces from clashing in the skies over Syria. Israeli officials say the system has worked well.

In new fighting Thursday, Syrian and Russian forces launched a wave of air strikes against rebel-held areas in the southwest and pushed into a major town, resuming a wide-scale offensive after negotiations between Russia and the rebels collapsed.

The government's advance in the southern Daraa province, which began on June 19, has captured wide areas and forced an estimated 330,000 people to flee their homes.

Opposition activists say scores of civilians have been killed and tens of thousands displaced.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported some 600 airstrikes in Daraa province.

State news agency SANA said Syrian troops entered the southern town of Saida after intense clashes with rebels. The Observatory said that with the capture of Saida, that would leave Syrian troops a few kilometers (miles) from the Naseeb border crossing with Jordan, a key goal.

The U.N. Security Council on Thursday failed to agree on any response to the escalating fighting during emergency closed-door consultations.

## Mastercard: Biometrics use set to skyrocket

By Michael Moore 8 hours agoNews

Report sees biometrics taking "centre stage" when it comes to securing online payments.

Biometric technology is set to become an integral part of all online shopping as the need for greater security increases, a new report has claimed.

Research from Mastercard claims that one in four online transactions will need a greater level of authentication and security within the next 12 months.

New EU regulations governing online fraud are set to come into place next September, increasing the number of transactions subject to two factors of authentication by the payer, known as "Strong Customer Authentication" (SCA).

Currently, only around 1-2 per cent of transactions need cardholder authentication to complete a transaction.

"The use of passwords to authenticate someone is woefully outdated, with consumers forgetting them and retailers facing abandoned shopping baskets," said Ajay Bhalla, president global enterprise risk and security, Mastercard.

"In payments technology this is something we're closing in on as we move from cash to card, password to thumbprint, and beyond to innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence. It's far easier to authenticate with a thumbprint or a selfie, and it's safer too."

Mastercard says it is already working with banks and retailers to introduce new technologies that will simplify these changes. This includes Identity Check, which uses a biometric identifier, such as a fingerprint, iris or facial scan to verify their identity using a smartphone when shopping online.

The company is also testing a biometric payment card featuring an in-built fingerprint sensor which is able to verify in-store purchases without the need to upgrade existing payment terminals.

## Haven't We Waited Long Enough? :: By Jan Markell

July 9, 2018

The malady goes by many names: End-time weariness; Rapture fatigue; Israel burn-out. The results are the same: The scoffers and skeptics are gaining too much territory and too many followers. The fact that the King is coming is boring and just old news. What Hal Lindsey wrote in 1969 in his classic "The Late-Great Planet Earth", in the eyes of many, did not come to pass. Thus, there is a collective so-what sigh.

Haven't we waited long enough??

It is the tragedy of my lifetime — and I never thought I would see the day.

## Late-Great Burn-Out?

Recently I read a revealing article in The Guardian recommended by Bill Koenig. It talks about the destruction of the new Christian progressiveness. This article suggests:

- \* “The Late-Great Planet Earth” and the “Left Behind” series prophesied a lot of things that have not yet come to pass. Haven’t we waited long enough? Isn’t it time to move on from their message?
- \* Those who hung onto the words of the popular 1970s Larry Norman song, “I Wish We’d All Been Ready” have also waited long enough. Life has always been filled with guns and war and everyone gets trampled on the floor as the song goes, but so what? Almost 45 years have passed and the world is still groaning. It’s time to move on.
- \* “We’ve been through all of this before” has replaced apocalyptic fervor! There is nothing new under the sun. Your words of warning are now falling on deaf ears.

\* Maybe you evangelicals have sided with the wrong players. Don’t you know that hundreds of innocent Palestinians are being killed daily by apartheid Israelis?

End-time weariness. Rapture fatigue. Late-Great burn-out. The Chosen People have lost their chosenness. The article in The Guardian suggests all this and more!

## The Spoilers: Date-Setters

Add to this mix that some date-setters have been wrong. Edgar Weisenhunt and Harold Camping not only set dates, but re-set dates when nothing happened the first time! Hal Lindsey never said 1988 was the date of the Rapture but that was the accusation. He suggested 40 years after 1948 was an intriguing date. That’s all.

## The Bashers

Then came the bashers who are respected in some circles. Hank Hanegraaff said there was no Rapture to be found in the Bible. Who knew? Well, he’s no Bible Answer Man to me.

Lynne Hybels and World Vision teamed up to condemn Israel as almost barbaric persecutors of the Palestinians in their one-sided “Hope for the Holy Land” tours across America.

What’s in the water Frankie Schaeffer is drinking? When he, like Hanegraaff, joined the Eastern Orthodox Church, he went sideways. He now goes into tirades on MSNBC against what his parents — Francis and Edith Schaeffer — might have believed about the end-times.

He slams his “good friend” Jerry Jenkins for coming up with the “Left Behind” books that belong in the Twilight Zone category according to Schaeffer. What’s in them can only be believed by white evangelicals who support Donald Trump, says Frankie.

Internet broadcaster Rick Wiles consistently says that Dispensationalists and Christian Zionists are the root of the world’s problems and also the church’s problems. We are destroying the world.

## Destructive Social Justice

If your teen or twenty-something kid goes off to a Justice Conference, they will likely hear Marxist Cornell West rather than any pro-Israel speaker. The Catalyst Conferences aren’t much better when it

comes to promoting end-time theology. A persecuted Palestinian might be an honored guest so that the social justice cravings of the Millennials can be satisfied.

Social justice has gained ground over good old-fashioned evangelical support for Israel and her God-given land. The under-age-40 crowd is listening to voices that are not telling the truth. They are hearing that Israel is illustrative of a new form of apartheid; that the Palestinians had their land stolen; and don't you know that the Church is the new Israel? Most reject what their parents grew up on: Israel is the apple of God's eye and the key to the end of the age.

These are just a few of many reasons why this glorious message that years ago had nearly every Christian excited that today might be the day is now a big yawn! It is now a wake-me-when-it's-over sentiment. Add to that the fact that our churches have dropped this message!

Deja vu All Over Again!

So when stunning events take place such as the moving of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, the aligning of the nations in the Mideast that could be a part of the Gog-Magog War, and the convergence of dozens of end-time signs, there is a collective sigh. Some will say it's déjà vu all over again. You said that 40 years ago. Nothing happened.

So the fact that things are all coming together excites only a tiny remnant who will never grow weary of keeping their eyes on the sky! If you are among them, hang in there. He is coming soon and Israel remains the apple of God's eye!