

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

Let's open with the absurd...

Greta Thunberg is Christ's successor, Church of Sweden proclaims

By Monica Showalter americanthinker.com

If there's anything out there that explains why the Church of Sweden boasts the lowest church attendance in all Europe, against some tough continental competition, it's because of claptrap like this, as the Washington Examiner reports:

The Church of Sweden declared teen star climate activist Greta Thunberg to be an appointed successor to Jesus Christ in a 2018 tweet that resurfaced in the wake of her speech before the United Nations.

"Announcement! Jesus of Nazareth has now appointed one of his successors, Greta Thunberg," the tweet said on Dec. 1, 2018. The account, operated by the Limhamns Church, had previously tweeted several sentiments of climate activism.

Here's the beyond-stupid tweet, dated Dec. 1, 2018 via Microsoft Translate:

Door Number One! (with an appropriate snowflake icon)

Announcement! Jesus of Nazareth has now appointed one of his successors, Greta Thunberg.

So not only has global warming become a religion, with young Greta as its god, it's kind of sidelined the Christ thing even in Christian religions. Since this has been going on awhile, it might just explain why most Swedes have become global warming skeptics, too, as I noted here. If Greta is the religion, and religion is already a loser, maybe there's something off about global warming, too. If not that, well, there's science, which again and again shows that man-caused global warming is a fraud.

The Swedish Church, though, is not alone.

Who should we have now but the Catholic Maryknolls. Greta's not Christ successor, she's more like the Virgin Mary.

And as Billy Dale says, there's more:

Here, the Swedish teen activist is St. Joan of Arc. In other pictures she's the little child that shall lead them. Elsewhere, she's the new Jonathan Edwards, proclaiming sinners in the hands of angry God, which kind of works, actually.

The religious imagery portraying her as a saint in an icon format is very strong in these two Reuters photos

here and here. Here's mine:



Greta Thunberg ✓
@GretaThunberg

The U.K. Telegraph's Madeline Grant has a good one about how she's the "first saint of our cruel new environmental religion." Thunberg, with her apocalyptic warnings and Pippi Longstocking plaits, has become a global icon in a matter of months. More striking than the ubiquitous crowds accompanying her, however, is their quasi-religious reverence. She is portrayed as a child-prophet, a modern-day Joan of Arc in her ability to inspire a movement. Senior broadcasters call her "Greta" as though they enjoyed a direct connection with the teenager.

A seemingly hyperbolic comparison, but there are religious echoes to Thunberg's doomsday activism, and parallels with the child saints credited with supernatural qualities and praised for their innocence and moral clarity. Thunberg describes her autism as a "superpower". She depicts a fallen world, whose only hope of salvation lies in

Utopian retreat to a pre-industrial past. Her followers' calls for "climate justice" and reparations to poorer countries ring with self-flagellation.

What's creepy here is how unlike Greta with the saints and God she is being compared to. She's a cosseted teenager from a very rich country who's been told it's fine to act out her anger in a spoiled brat manner, as she did with her United Nations speech, and she's being exploited by both her parents and the shadowy left wing green activists who are promoting her to make a buck. There's no suffering and redemption in her story, unlike those of Jesus or the real saints.

Actually, she's having the time of her life. Climate change activism has been good for her. She says she went into global warming activism because it helped her, with her Aspergers handicap, to make friends. The incentive to stay with it for her is finally being able to make friends. Now Thunberg's on an around-the-world tour up and down the Western hemisphere, getting to see what's every Swedish kid's dream -- the rainforest and other stuff. Oh the places she will travel, she's on the grand tour actually. She's shouting and scolding as she goes, drawing crowds and applause, even lately declaring that indigenous people should have voices in the climate change scam - while hogging the microphone. Life's pretty good for the Swedish teen and it will probably stay good. Now she's being proclaimed by all the lefty churches as the Second Coming, the embodiment of God Himself, or some kind of saint.



Which raises questions about what's gotten into the religion-hostile left. With no God to speak of, they go looking for replacements. Presumably, they suffer and seek redemption. What's suffering to a greenie leftist? Nothing less than the election of President Trump. They suffer. They seek redemption. Greta serves that savior role, because climate change activism their substitute for religion. No wonder Greta is a savior to them. It all adds up to the moral bankruptcy of the left and the religions that have adopted it. What a pathetic heresy.

← THIS PHOTO ADDED BY MD

Big Tech & Big Brother Are Going To Join Forces To "Secure Elections"

by Tyler Durden

Security teams for Facebook, Google, Twitter, and Microsoft met with the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security and the Director of National Intelligence's office to coordinate a strategy to "secure" the 2020 elections. And by "secure" they mean to manipulate the results of the election in any way possible to get the outcome they desire.

According to a report by RT, the big tech platforms met with government officials at Facebook's Menlo Park headquarters on Wednesday, the company has confirmed, boasting that Big Tech and Big Brother have developed a "comprehensive strategy" to get control of previous election-related "vulnerabilities" while "analyzing and getting ahead of new threats." Those vulnerabilities and threats are the free thinkers who don't buy the official narrative and dissent against the ruling class.

Expect the censorship, social credit scores, and gun control talk to ramp up as the political class realizes people may not be as easily enslaved as they have imagined. Facebook has scrambled to get in front of the 2020 election after being blamed for Trump's 2016 electoral victory over merely allowing the "Russian trolls" to buy a bunch of ads. Most of those ads appeared after the vote and had nothing to do with the election. Google, on the other hand, actively attempted to manipulate and rig the election in favor of Hillary Clinton, and the evidence of that indiscretion is rapidly becoming overwhelming. Google's potential to sway elections has been the subject of Senate hearings, and yet the company has remained silent on addressing the problem. Subsidiary YouTube, meanwhile, conducted another round of mass censorship last month even while declaring it was an open platform for controversial ideas.

Facebook insisted last week it had tightened its rules for verifying purchasers of "political" ads, for real this time, after the 2018 contest showed they could still be duped into running obviously-fake ads "paid for by" the Islamic State terror group and Cambridge Analytica.

For all intents and purposes, this meeting was to make sure certain ideas are censored so that only government-approved opinions can be made available as information. The electoral meeting of the minds came less than a week after the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Projects Research Agency (DARPA) declared war on deepfakes and other potentially discord-sowing information (like memes), promising to neutralize all "malicious" content within four years – if not for this election, then certainly for the next. Until DARPA is ready to censor information and punish people for "wrong thinking", there's Microsoft's ElectionGuard software. The company announced in July, that they would provide this software to all the nation's voting machines, free of charge and out of "the goodness of their hearts" (and the Pentagon-owned contractor that helped develop the program's heart).

Darkness Descending

By Geri Ungurean September 29, 2019 raptureready.com

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isaiah 40:8). Unless you have your head deeply hidden in the proverbial sand – you MUST be somewhat alarmed at the blatant satanic powers at work in the earth and in the church.

But I do believe that Satan instructs his minions to work hardest in our churches. He wants to cast doubt into our minds about the reliability of God's Word – just as he did in the Garden of Eden.

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:16).

When mankind feels that they can do a better job than the One who created all there is in the Universe, that's when Cults are born – that's when preaching becomes the words of men and not of God; and that is what we are seeing with the apostate movements masquerading as Christianity.

Sometimes It is too heavy to carry

We must remember that God is always in control. Sometimes it doesn't feel like He is, but we must not rely on our feelings and emotions. We stand on the Word of God. And we come to Him in prayer and talk to Him about our fears and anxieties.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

In order to learn from Him, we must read His Word which He left for us.

Jesus is our Rock

When we read the news more than we read the Word of God, we will ultimately find ourselves in shifting sand. Just as Paul said that his flesh warred against his spirit, we have these same battles raging in us.

So, what to do? Jesus would have us praying to Him and reading His Word.
In these last days, this is more important than ever before!

“And Peter answered Him and said, ‘Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.’ So He said, ‘Come.’ And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, ‘Lord, save me!’ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, ‘O you of little faith, why did you doubt?’ And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, ‘Truly You are the Son of God’” (Matthew 14:28-33).

When Peter was focused on Jesus – he walked on the water. As soon as he focused on his circumstances, looking down at the water, he began to sink.

When we stand on His Word, we are standing on the Rock of our Salvation.

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

The Storms of Life

Think back to a time when your child became frightened. Perhaps it was a terrible storm raging outside. Do you remember how the child would look into your eyes, as if they wanted to see how you were reacting to the thunderous booms and the lightning strikes.

You would draw them close to you and speak words of comfort. You would assure them that they were safe with you.

Can you imagine how much the Lord wants to hold us right now? We are His children and the apple of his eye! In order for us to feel His warmth and closeness, we must go to Him in prayer – talk to Him and tell Him how we are feeling. We must read His Word.

His Word brings Him to us and us to Him. It wraps us in His unfailing Love.

The persecution will increase. We were forewarned. Sometimes, just saying the name of Jesus over and

over during these times will calm us and bring us back to truth. That truth is this:

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:37-39).

“Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you” (Deuteronomy 31:6).

Some interesting tidbits in here:

Russia’s Eastern Mediterranean strategy explained - analysis

For its decisive military support to Assad, Russia has been rewarded with military facilities in Syria that are crucial for logistics and from which it can project power into the Middle East.

By DOUGLAS J. FEITH, SHAUL CHOREV September 26, 2019 17:15

Russia is taking advantage of the power vacuum created by America’s desire to disengage from the Middle East. As president, Barack Obama launched the policy of “pivoting” away from the region, and President Donald Trump is carrying that policy forward. As a result, Russia is emerging as a dominant military and political force in the region.

For its decisive military support to Assad, Russia has been rewarded with military facilities in Syria – the Tartus naval facility and the Khmeimim Air Base – that are crucial for logistics and from which it can project power into the Middle East, the Balkans and farther west along the Mediterranean. In conflict, Russia is positioned to execute an area-denial strategy against the United States.

In Syria, Russia’s military decisively affected the civil war and also tested and demonstrated capabilities that showed off Russian boldness, lethality, flexibility and reach. Its attacks included the first combat use of various types of Russian precision-guided munitions.

Russia is also using Syria as testing ground for its electronic warfare capabilities. In April 2018, the US Special Operations Command chief commented, “Right now in Syria we are operating in the most aggressive EW [electronic warfare] environment on the planet.” Our adversaries, he added, “are testing us every day, knocking our communications down, disabling our EC-130s, et cetera.”

Russia attacked Syrian rebel targets from the Caspian Sea and Eastern Mediterranean using Kilo submarine-launched and surface-ship-launched cruise missiles. It struck Raqqa in Syria from a submarine in the Mediterranean. It sent a private contractor military force – referred to in press reports as “paid Russian mercenaries” or “little green men” – to fight for the Assad regime. Its manned aircraft bombed Syria from a base in Iran. During the summer of 2018, to support Assad’s attack on Syria’s last major rebel base, Russia deployed a substantial naval force into the Mediterranean, including a Kuznetsov-class aircraft carrier.

Through maritime operations, Russia has extended the range of its military influence. The Russian presence creates new “rules of the game” throughout the Middle East, affecting the US and Israel’s ability to operate freely.

Russia’s basing arrangements in the Levant will allow it to stage, repair and operate autonomous

underwater systems. It already has advanced surveillance, reconnaissance and operational capabilities for interdicting undersea communications cables. Its Syria-based submarines in the Mediterranean not only can launch cruise missiles at land targets, but also threaten undersea infrastructure. Britain's chief of defense warned in December 2017, "There is a new risk to our way of life that is the vulnerability of the cables that crisscross the seabed. Can you imagine a scenario where those cables are cut or disrupted, which would immediately and potentially catastrophically affect both our media and economy, as well as other ways of living?"

RUSSIA HAS multiple reasons to intervene in the Eastern Mediterranean: to aid Syrian regime allies of longstanding, to bolster its new alliance with Turkey and Iran, and otherwise to gain leverage against the United States. Among its main interests, however is increasing world energy prices. As has been true for decades, the Russian economy is largely the business of exporting oil and gas. Russia and President Vladimir Putin depend for their existence on high prices for energy. It is surprising how many articles are written about Russia's Middle East policies or its other foreign policies that fail to mention this point.

A key to understanding what Russia is doing in the Eastern Mediterranean region is to recognize that it wants to have the power to influence the energy-related decisions of Saudi Arabia and other important producing states. This helps explain why it is wrong to assume that Russia shares US interests in Middle East stability. On the contrary, Russia often favors instability precisely because it contributes to upward pressure on energy prices.

Russia also has a major interest in arms sales. Because Russia's business interests receive too little attention, they warrant emphasis, though Russia's policies are not driven solely by such considerations.

When Russia helped save the Assad regime, it ensured the success of Iran's pro-Assad investment and effectively aligned itself with the Shi'ite axis of the Iranian regime, the Syrian regime and Hezbollah. This gives it leverage both with the axis and with the opponents of that axis: Turkey, Saudi Arabia and other Sunni-run states, as well as Israel.

In Israel's intensifying clash with Iran in Syria, Russia occupies a strategic position. Israel has used its aircraft in Syria to keep Iranian forces away from the Israeli border. Russia, however, is the dominant military power in Syria, so Israel needs its cooperation, or at least its acquiescence, in the campaign to keep Iran at bay.

Accordingly, from the head-of-government level on down, Israel has cultivated close communication with Russia regarding Syria. Russia is not actively restraining Iran, but neither is it preventing Israeli strikes against Iranian forces in Syria. Russia appears to want to avoid any confrontation between its own forces and Israel. Israeli and Russian military commanders have arranged to de-conflict their operations. Russia is improving Syria's air defenses. It has delivered S-300 air defense missile batteries and is training the Syrians to use them. Meanwhile, Russian soldiers are presumably manning these batteries. The S-300 could threaten Israeli aircraft and, if upgraded to the longer-range S-400, the danger would increase. Putin has said he wants all foreign troops to leave Syria. This seems to apply to Iranian and Turkish but not Russian troops.

US OFFICIALS worry about Russia's increasing military power in the Eastern Mediterranean, though Trump has not demanded that Russia remove its forces from Syria. It would serve US interests if Russia were successfully pressured into leaving Syria now that ISIS is largely gone.

Some US officials, though not publicly, have suggested that Israel should apply such pressure. Their implication is that Israel should focus less on cooperating with Russia in Syria and more on making it uncomfortable for Russian forces to entrench there.

Criticism along these lines is not US policy, but it creates an irritant in the US-Israeli relationship. Each country would benefit from a clearer understanding of the other's strategic concerns.

Israeli officials say they are not in a position to treat Russia as an enemy. A major dispute with Russia would make it harder, if not impossible, for Israel to strike Iranian forces in Syria – and that is Israel's main interest there, an interest that the United States shares (whether or not publicly stated). The Israelis do not want Russia defending Iranian forces in Syria. They do not want Israeli forces fighting Russian forces, nor do they want Russia deploying its most advanced air defenses in Syria.

During the Cold War, when Israel worked with the United States in direct opposition to the Soviets and their clients, the strategic environment was different. Unlike now, the Middle East was a high US priority. The United States maintained a strong military posture there, dominated the Mediterranean Sea and actively worked to contain Soviet influence.

After the Cold War and especially since the George W. Bush administration, US policy toward the region changed. The bywords for US strategy became "pivot" and "disengagement." Trump shares his predecessor's desire to disengage from the Middle East and keep American involvement in Syria to a minimum. The United States has no plans to restore its Cold War-era military strength in the Mediterranean. US officials are not pressing Russia to withdraw its forces from Syria. Under the circumstances, it is not realistic to expect Israel do so.

IT WOULD be a mistake, however, to fail to recognize that many US officials view Russia with intense and well-grounded concern. That Russia for its own reasons gives Israel a free hand against Iran in Syria should not blind anyone to the disturbing essence of President Putin's aggressive activities.

Examples abound. They include Russia's seizures of territory in Georgia and Ukraine and brazen assassinations of anti-Putin critics – journalists and politicians – perpetrated at home and abroad. Russia directs cyber operations against the United States and exerts itself to influence US elections. Putin has invested heavily in modernizing Russia's nuclear forces, strategic and tactical. His government is producing nuclear-capable missiles prohibited by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which is why the US government withdrew from the treaty in August 2019.

Russia is also conducting explosive nuclear testing in violation of its promise to adhere to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban. Russian military aircraft "buzz" – that is, challenge in close encounters – US ships and aircraft. These tactics were commonplace during the Cold War and both sides agreed to formal measures intended to limit the risks of such behavior. Russia has announced that it has successfully tested hypersonic weapons that can defeat current US missile defenses. Having invaded Ukraine to seize the Crimean Peninsula, Russian naval forces blocked the Sea of Azov.

Israeli officials can pursue necessary cooperation with Russia in Syria while still reassuring the United States that they take Russian provocations seriously. And they can reassure their American friends that Israel values its ties to the United States above its other international relationships. Pragmatic, unsentimental Israeli officials may not be accustomed to ritualistic pledges of friendship and loyalty of this kind, but it would be a mistake to underestimate their importance.

Strategic alliances are not self-perpetuating. It takes conscious effort by alliance supporters to preserve trust between the partners at the official level and, in democratic countries, to preserve crucial popular support. It can be fatal to take these matters for granted. If the alliance is not explained, reaffirmed and put into action over and over again across the years, it will lose support in the government or in the population in general. New officials and legislators come into office continually and have no knowledge of how the alliance proved itself mutually valuable in the past. Senior officials – longtime veterans of close allied cooperation – often assume that the alliance's premises are so well and widely known that they go

without saying. That is a dangerous mistake, however. If its principles and benefits are not continually restated and celebrated, an alliance can easily become vulnerable to domestic attack, with allies disparaged for free riding, weakness or lack of loyalty.

A senior US statesman once likened maintaining a strategic relationship to fighting weeds in a garden – constant attention is required to keep the irritants from taking over. The high value to both parties of the US-Israeli defense partnership amply justifies the garden-tending work.