

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

Dry Bones Live: Jewish Growth In The West Bank To Approach One Million



The latest edition of the "West Bank Jewish Population Stats Report," commissioned annually by former Member of Knesset and National Union Party head Yaakov "Ketzaleh" Katz, shows a 2.62 percent growth in 2020, and a 17 percent in growth in the past five years, in the number of Jews who live in Judea and Samaria, more commonly known as the West Bank. According to the report, some 475,481 Jews currently call these regions home.

The statistics do not take into account the more than 325,000 Jewish residents of Old City Jerusalem or the eastern neighbors of the capital city, who are also viewed as living over the so-called "Green Line," or 1949 armistice lines, in towns and neighborhoods established since Israel's victory in the 1967 Six-Day War.

Katz, who began to document West Bank population statistics in 2009, told JNS that "the statistics are important because they show that our presence in these areas in the biblical heartland is irreversible."

Referring to those who believe that Israel must relinquish some land to the Palestinian Authority for "peace" or in order to create an official Arab entity in the West Bank, Katz said that "as long as we are succeeding to bring more Jews to live in Judea, Samaria and to the Golan Heights, this shows that it will be impossible to cram us together into Tel Aviv and its suburbs. And that is the most important message generated from my research."

Based on the report's projections, more than 1 million Jewish Israelis will live in the West Bank by the year 2045.

Baruch Gordon, director of "West Bank Jewish Population Stats" who cumulated the statistics along with Sharona Eshet-Cohen, told JNS that Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) released its end-of-the-year report for 2020, reporting "some 6.9 million Jews in the State of Israel.

Accordingly, the Jewish population of the West Bank, including the eastern neighborhoods of Jerusalem, comprises over 10 percent of Israel's Jewish population. Those that call for erasing the Jewish presence in the West Bank are disconnected from reality. The facts on the ground are irreversible. The percentage of Jews in the West Bank is equivalent to 33 million Americans."

He added that while the CBS indicated that the country's population grew by 1.7 percent in 2020, "in the same period, the Jewish population of the West Bank had a 54 percent higher growth rate."

Despite the statistics, which indicate an increase in actual growth, Gordon said that since 2013 the study shows that the percentage of growth each year has gone down from 4.33 percent that year to only 2.62 percent in 2020.

"Over the last eight years, the growth rate of the West Bank Jewish Population has steadily decreased," he continued. "What's the explanation? When Barak Obama became U.S. president in 2009, [Israeli] Prime Minister [Benjamin] Netanyahu caved to his pressure and imposed a 10-month complete freeze on Israeli construction in the West Bank. While I have much respect for our prime minister, he never reinstated the construction to what it was.

"He continues today with a policy of partial construction freeze on proposed Israeli projects in the West Bank. The partial construction freeze of Mr. Netanyahu stifles the potential influx of young couples," he said.

At the same time, the left-wing Peace Now organization that opposes additional Jewish building in the West Bank and favors evacuations of communities considered more isolated, recently released a study reflecting such construction, titled "Greenlighting De Facto Annexation: A Summary of Trump's Impact on the Settlements."

The report claims that the Netanyahu government, under the influence of the Trump administration, has been advancing construction plans at a very high rate. The study indicates that 26,331 Jewish housing units were promoted in the West Bank in the years 2017-20 compared to 10,331 housing units in the years 2013-16--two-a-half times more in terms of construction.

They also say that the number of tenders in the settlements doubled with tenders published for 2,425 housing units, compared with 1,164 housing units in the previous four years.

Gordon said that he "loves" the numbers shared by Peace Now, adding, "I don't see any reason to doubt them."

However, he explained that their statistics refer to advancements in planning, but not the actual building. "From the time a housing project is 'approved' in the first planning committee, it can take 10 years" before it is built, he noted. "More could have, should have and would have been built if [Netanyahu] were to encourage it," said Gordon.

'Infrastructure being laid to shorten commute times'

Peace Now's director of development and external relations, Brian Reeves, acknowledged to JNS that the advanced units will take years until the building on them is actually finished. He referred to this as "a long-term scheme."

Reeves said "infrastructure is being laid to shorten commute times in and out of the West Bank, which when completed is supposed to dramatically drive up demand in the coming two decades. It's also worth reminding that it's an ideologically driven policy choice to promote settlement expansion, so the market alone isn't in what's driving promotions."

In its report, Peace Now said it hoped that the Biden administration will be "attentive to the peace-seeking majority in Israel and to restore the United States to its status as a constructive intermediary for a two-state solution."

Interestingly, while Katz said that Trump and members of his administration proved to be great friends of Israel, he is optimistic that communities in the West Bank will thrive even further with President Joe Biden in the Oval Office.

"I think the new administration led by a Democratic president will be better for us because with Trump, and with Jared Kushner serving as the president's top adviser and Ambassador Friedman here in Israel, we couldn't say 'no' when they wanted something," he related.

Katz said the Trump administration "blocked Israeli sovereignty in Judea and Samaria in order to sign a normalization agreement with the United Arab Emirates. I'm afraid if Trump would have won and would have brought Saudi Arabia to the table, Israel would have been pressured to carry out another construction freeze in exchange for peace with the Saudis.

He said that with Biden, "it will be much easier for any Israeli government to reject his plans. In other words, with this administration, we can say 'no' when it comes to pushing us back to the '67 boundaries."

God Says Fear Not

By Dennis Huebshman

Raptureready.com

Looking around the world today, anyone who has studied Bible Prophecy would say we are definitely at the end of this age. Changes have taken place that are being blamed on a "pandemic" that are really a prelude to the one-world government, one-world currency, new world order, and the introduction of the ultimate antichrist. We are not in the tribulation 7-year period yet, but it's just a step away.

The first step that will happen is the harpazo, Rapture, or "taking up" of all true believers to meet Jesus in the air. To refresh our minds about this process, we need to re-visit 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-53.

First, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17: “But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers [and sisters], about those who are asleep [have died], that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a cry of command, and with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the Trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then, we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will always be with the Lord.” (ESV)

One point here: this is not the second coming for the Lord to put down the “rebellion” and to rule from Jerusalem for 1,000 years. What is described above is the removal of all believers, not any certain organized evangelical or other religion, from the earth to avoid the coming wrath. That is mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10 and Revelation 3:10, as three promises of the Father to keep us from that 7-year tribulation.

Also, all who have died since Calvary, who received and accepted Jesus as their Savior, will be with Him in the air. Their human remains, no matter how small, will rise up to meet their spirits, and they will receive a new forever immortal body. Those who are alive at the calling up will be transformed into their forever bodies on the way up to meet Jesus.

How long will all this take?

We’re given this answer in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. “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 [of God] will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.”

The term “twinkling of an eye” has been calculated by people definitely more knowledgeable than I, as considerably less than one second. It’s the time that it takes for light to enter the eye and reach the back of the eye. That’s faster than a “blink.” Anyway, some would say this is impossible, but we’re talking about our Creator, and all things are possible with Him.

Luke 21:25-26 states, “And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and on earth *distress of nations* in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”

This world is being programmed for the “reset” and takeover by the new world order. It is satanically inspired, as the Corona Virus was not an overnight phenomenon. There is documentation available that shows this concept has been planned for at least the last decade. Timing and propaganda were key factors, and most of our so-called news networks put out what the liberal left tells them.

Jesus, Paul, Peter, John and others told us about false prophets and antichrists being here in the last days. Fact is, they were present in their day as well, but the atmosphere of today’s world has allowed them to thrive. Worship of Satan has been brought out into the open, mostly over the last decade. In numerous places, there are even “churches” of Satan; talk about a misnomer! Paul tells about a “deluding influence” in 2 Thessalonians 2, and it’s obvious that a degree of it is here right now.

For those who are believers in our Lord and Savior, we are concerned about all the evil influence that is spreading worldwide, but we should not be in total fear or despair. In fact, as Jesus said in Luke 21:28, “Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Every sign and every attitude given has gone beyond the “begin” phase. Weather patterns, plagues of locusts over a large area, worldwide pandemic, people hating anything to do with Jesus, and so-called evangelical churches changing God’s word to fit today’s activities that God called abominations, are now common occurrences. Paul spoke of people being lovers of self, proud, arrogant, abusive and many other negative traits that we see all around us.

Whatever are we to do? How about Isaiah 41:10; “fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”

It’s natural to feel dismayed by all the negativity around us, but inside, we should actually be getting excited. Our Jesus is going to call soon, and all who have truly called on Him to be their Savior will be taken away from all this nonsense. We don’t know the exact day or hour, or even minute, but as it is, He could be here any second now. Don’t forget the speed of “twinkling of an eye.”

Those who have Jesus right now will be taken. Those who wait until the Rapture takes place will enter the tribulation. From the Bible’s description of that time, it will be worse than any other time this earth has experienced.

Sadly, it is estimated that only about 10% of the total world’s population will be raptured. Only about 1% to 2% of the Jewish people are Messianic and will miss the Wrath Period. Join the “limited” total, and be assured a place with the Savior. See Romans 10:9-13 for the process.

No matter what, no one should want to stay and try to accept Jesus later. The cost will be martyrdom in very unpleasant ways.

He’s waiting for your call but won’t wait much longer. This would be the absolute most important decision you will ever make. Call out today, and He promises He will accept all who truly call on Him (Acts 2:21 and Romans 10:13).

Maranatha!

'Dystopia Prime:' Amazon AI van cameras spark surveillance concerns

By Avi Asher-Schapiro

BERLIN, Feb 5 (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Amazon.com Inc's announcement this week that it would be rolling out AI-powered cameras in its branded delivery vans for safety has drawn criticism from privacy advocates and workers concerned with being subjected to surveillance on the job.

The world's largest e-commerce firm said the cameras, which are developed by transportation technology company Netradyne, would improve safety of both drivers and the communities in which they deliver.

But employees like Henry Search, a 22-year-old delivery driver in Washington state, said they saw cameras capturing their work day as an "invasion of privacy".



"We are out here working all day, trying our best already," Search told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a phone interview. "The cameras are just another way to control us."

Privacy advocates warned that equipping Amazon's fleet of about 30,000 delivery vehicles with AI cameras could set a dangerous precedent for privacy.

"This appears to be the largest expansion of corporate surveillance in human history," said Evan Greer, deputy director of tech nonprofit Fight for the Future. "If this becomes the norm, we are talking about the extinction of human privacy."

Amazon has come under scrutiny in the past for accidents involving delivery drivers.

A company spokeswoman said in emailed comments that "this technology will provide drivers real-time alerts to help them stay safe when they are on the road. In an instructional video about the cameras, Amazon's senior manager for last-mile safety Karolina Haraldsdottir said cameras will record 100% of the time, but are not set up to livestream from inside of vans.

They will detect unsafe driving, including when drivers appear distracted or drowsy, she explained, adding that the footage could be used by the company's safety team, or in investigations of theft or accidents.

But Greer said that safety issues could be addressed by slowing the pace of work. "The first thing they (Amazon) should do to improve safety would be not have such outrageous delivery quotas that force people into unsafe conditions," she said.

Another driver in Massachusetts, who asked not to use his name to protect his identity, said he would welcome a camera displayed outside his van to record evidence for any accident.

"But a camera on my face all the time, I don't see how that keeps me safe - it's too much," he said in a phone interview, noting that drivers already use an app called Mentor that tracks the location and movements of the vehicle. Haraldsdottir said that "only a limited set of authorized people" would have access to driver footage from the cameras.

But some drivers worried Amazon might sell or share the footage with third parties, or use the cameras to monitor their performance on the job.

"The footage recorded could be shared with a future possible employer who can then decide to reject you before even knowing you," said one driver from Michigan who asked not to give his full name.

Although he enjoys doing deliveries for Amazon, he said he is currently looking for other work because he does not want to be subjected to surveillance.

Rights activists say Amazon already has an extensive surveillance system in its warehouses to track workers' movements and boost productivity, including navigation software, item scanners, wristbands, thermal cameras and recorded footage.

"There are no laws in place to meaningfully limit what Amazon can do with the footage they collect," said Greer, noting that other surveillance products, such as the Ring doorbell camera system, can share footage with police departments.

'DYSTOPIA PRIME'

Surveillance experts say that the privacy implications of Amazon's camera network for delivery vans extend far beyond drivers.

Andrew Ferguson, a professor of law at D.C.'s American University, said Amazon's private surveillance networks would further entrench the snooping powers of government.

"While the inclination to use AI technology to enhance driver safety is commendable, the failure to think about the privacy and surveillance issues and equities is troubling," he said.

While police may not have direct access to the footage, authorities will be able to access it in the course of an investigation, expanding the reach of police surveillance, Ferguson explained. Last June, Amazon announced a one-year moratorium on police use of its facial recognition software, following criticism that the technology reinforced racial bias.

"Amazon is quite literally building mobile surveillance vans to film our neighborhoods, something that we would be rightly horrified about if our government did it," Ferguson said. "I don't think we want to join dystopia prime."

(Reporting by Avi Asher-Schapiro @AASchapiro, Editing by Zoe Tabary. Please credit the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers the lives of people around the world who struggle to live freely or fairly. Visit <http://news.trust.org>)

Headlines...

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Biden Funds Program To Block Foreign Religious Leaders Who Oppose LGBT Agenda

Biden's executive orders are going to have far-reaching consequences, and the progressives are back in the driver's seat and in control of the internationalist swamp. The United States, under Democratic presidents, is not so much a "beacon of freedom and democracy" as it is a neo-colonial power, pushing the radical LGBT agenda and abortion on nations it considers less evolved. Obama was famously told to take his views and shove off by various African leaders, and now Biden, despite his advanced age, is primed to push even further. This week, President Biden signed an executive order that will promote homosexuality and transgenderism as a centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy.

Iran's IRGC receives 340 new boats, some with drones

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps claimed this week to receive 340 new vessels, mostly the small fast boats it uses in the Persian Gulf and which sometimes harass US ships. The vessels were displayed in Bandar Abbas in Iran. "The exact numbers and status as 'new' should be treated with healthy skepticism," notes H.I. Sutton, an expert on naval issues who writes and maintains a website devoted to this topic.

Great Power Competition Adds To Challenges In Middle East

Marine Corps Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie said in an address to the Middle East Institute that Russia and China are vying for power and influence through all aspects of national power in the region. This is on top of the risks posed by Iran and violent extremist groups. Peace and stability in the Middle East is important to the United States because the health of the global economy depends on the free flow of oil and other commerce from the region and within the region, he said.

US deploys B-1B bombers near Russia after Biden's first phone call with Putin

Biden ordered the first-ever deployment of B-1B Lancers to Norway last week, putting the bombers within potential striking range of Moscow. The bomber deployment, announced on Feb. 2, comes a week after Biden had his first call as president, with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Hezbollah looking to spark escalation for first time since 2006

Lebanon's Hezbollah terror group is looking to initiate a "limited offensive" against Israel for the first time since the Second Lebanon War in 2006, said an IDF intelligence report published Tuesday.

5.7-magnitude earthquake jolts Philippines

Manila: An offshore earthquake measuring 5.7 on the Richter scale jolted the Davao Oriental province of the Philippines on Monday morning, authorities said. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said the quake, which struck at 8 a.m., hit at a depth of 44 km, about 211 km southeast of Governor Generoso town in the province, reports Xinhua news agency.

Magnitude 5.5 earthquake rattles northeastern Taiwan

A magnitude 5.5 earthquake struck off the northeast coast of Taiwan at 12:56 a.m. this morning (Feb. 9), sending shockwaves across the country, according to the Central Weather Bureau (CWB).

House Dem's gun control bill mandates national registry, licensing, gov't training and \$800 insurance

A gun control bill that would create a national firearm registry, require licensing and psychological evaluations, government training and insurance was quietly introduced by a Democrat lawmaker in the House of Representatives last month. Even displaying an antique firearm in a person's private home would necessitate a federal gun license, in addition to another license under the legislation.