

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

Happy 73rd Birthday, Israel!



Israel: The Necessary Superpower



On Tuesday, Israeli commandos attached limpet mines to an Iranian cargo ship in the Red Sea, the MV Saviz, which was reportedly a covert forward base for the regime's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps.

According to the United States Naval Institute, the Saviz, which had barely moved position for three years, may have been used to feed intelligence to Iran and its Houthi

proxies in Yemen for nefarious purposes, including numerous strikes on maritime vessels in the area.

The ship was only lightly damaged in the explosion, and there were no casualties. The most interesting fact was that Israel notified the United States that it was responsible. This indicated the attack was a message to the Biden administration that, if the United States won't stop Iran in its tracks, Israel is prepared to attack it on its own.

Such a message was deemed necessary because of intense alarm that President Joe Biden appears to be determined to empower Iran and other bad people in the Middle East.

In particular, he is determined to rejoin the 2015 nuclear deal, which would allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons with only a short delay and with the lifting of sanctions funneling billions of dollars into terrorism against Israel and the West.

The administration had insisted that Iran must comply with the deal's conditions before any sanctions were lifted. Yet on Wednesday, the U.S. State Department said it would lift sanctions that were "inconsistent" with the 2015 deal in order to "return to compliance."

This week, when American diplomats sat down with Iranian intermediaries to start negotiations over a revamped deal, the Iranians predictably crowed that they had achieved victory.

With equal malevolence, the Biden administration also announced this week that it will resume funding the Palestinians in Judea, Samaria and Gaza to the tune of \$235 million, as well as giving \$150 million to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

Aid to both had been stopped by former President Donald Trump because of the Palestinians' support for terrorism and UNRWA's malign role in perpetuating the war against Israel by creating the uniquely self-replicating status of Palestinian "refugee."

Yet both the Iranian and Palestinian regimes have responded to Biden's "goodwill" gestures by repeatedly insulting the United States or attacking American allies in the Gulf.

The more sweeteners America offers these regimes, the more they display their contempt and thus weaken it further by demonstrating its ineffectuality to the world. And the more they humiliate America, the more it offers them.

Either the Biden administration is so blinded by left-wing romanticization of the developing world that it's incapable of understanding the lunacy of all this or these baleful developments are what it actually wants.

After all, a number of its officials have a history of extreme hostility to Israel. And that's an almost infallible marker of resentment or aggression towards the West, of whose interests in the region Israel is the most important defender and guarantor.

Either way, people who think like this are so determined never to acknowledge the real threat to the West that they use Israel and the Jewish people instead as scapegoats.

Predictably, therefore, such people have accused Israel of aggression in attacking the *Saviz*, ignoring the fact that its presence in the Red Sea was an aggressive act against Israel and Western interests.

Israel's attack on the ship also sent a message to the Arab world. They are aghast that America is now locked into a deadly spiral of appeasement and aggression with the Arabs' Iranian foe.

Far worse still has been the potential game-changer deal struck between Iran and China. This will undercut any sanctions against Iran, and will strengthen both these enemies of the free world in their aim of disempowering America and bringing the West to its knees.

Biden should have responded by telling China it must choose between trading with either Iran or the United States. But instead, his administration is adopting its customarily dishonest strategy of striking tough poses against rogue states while taking no significant action against them.

The implications for the West of the Iran-China deal are obviously terrifying. But they are also causing some observers to wonder whether we are about to witness a shift in global power from America to Israel.

On the face of it, this is absurd. One might assume that tiny, beleaguered Israel couldn't possibly take over the role of mighty America in leading the free world. However, once you look at the broader picture it's not so far-fetched.

Israel is now a military superpower. It has the world's most technologically advanced military and is one of its top weapons exporters. Its legendary military and security derring-do derives from its culture of risk-taking, creativity and thinking out of the box--characteristics shared by no other country.

Moreover, it's appeared for some time that, that given the lemming-like cultural tendencies of the West, Israel may become the "last man standing" in upholding and defending western values.

American society is fracturing and may already be beyond repair. The Democrats and the rest of the liberal elite are remorselessly pumping out the message with which countless children and students are being indoctrinated--that white people are racist, that America was born in sin, and that it is fundamentally so evil it must be transformed altogether.

Ranged against those who think like this are millions of other Americans who perceive that their country and culture are being destroyed, and whose anger as a result is at boiling point. The likely outcome is deepening divisions, increasing violence and--if the state of California is any guide to Democratic rule--dogmatic intolerance, public squalor and rank administrative incompetence.

Western Europe is in no better condition, with countries steadily surrendering to Islamist intimidation and cultural encroachment. The European Union's vaccine debacle illustrates its defining combination of dictatorial tendencies, centralizing paralysis and uselessness in defending the fundamental interests of the people.

Appeasement is a symptom of profound cultural demoralization, caused by a loss of national self-belief and faith in the future. That process has been going on in the West ever since the Holocaust delivered the devastating message that there was something rotten at the very heart of Western high culture.

The most important proof of this demoralization is the birthrate in America and Europe, which is either below or barely the rate at which the indigenous population can reproduce itself. In other words, the West is literally dying out.

By contrast, Israel is emerging from the pandemic at a world-beating rate--its economy strong and resilient, and crucially, its birthrate healthy and high.

This is because Israel actually believes in itself. Sure, it has a ludicrously dysfunctional political culture, currently illustrated once again by its post-election gridlock and absence of a functioning government. It is also disfigured by deep social divisions between secular and religious communities, and subversive elements who regard the very idea of a Jewish state as anathema.

But the vast majority of Israel's public understands that its core value is the preservation of life and liberty and doing good in the world. It is a society built on redemption and hope, and in dramatic contrast to the death-spiral gripping America and Europe, it is relentlessly focused on its survival.

The Arab world has come to understand that all this is of priceless value--not just for Israel but for itself, too. It sees that Israel actually takes out its enemies. It is increasingly realizing that the country most likely to defend Arab interests against Iran is not America but Israel, the Arabs' new and unlikely ally.

As America falters and Western societies break apart, might this become Israel's century?

Russia calls US an adversary, warns its warships to avoid Crimea

by Reuters

Tuesday, 13 April 2021 12:44 GMT

- * Moscow calls US 'an adversary' not a partner
- * Warns U.S. warships to stay away from Crimea
- * Moves 15 ships to Black Sea for drills
- * Shrugs off U.S. warnings of consequences for actions (Adds Ryabkov quotes, details)

By Andrew Osborn and Alexander Marrow

MOSCOW, April 13 (Reuters) - Russia on Tuesday called the United States an adversary and told U.S. warships to stay well away from Crimea "for their own good", calling their deployment in the Black Sea a provocation designed to test Russian nerves.

Moscow annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and two U.S. warships are due to arrive in the Black Sea this week amid an escalation in fighting in eastern Ukraine, where government forces have battled Russian-backed separatists in a conflict Kyiv says has killed 14,000 people.

"The United States is our adversary and does everything it can to undermine Russia's position on the world stage," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov was cited as saying by Russian news agencies.

"We do not see any other elements in their approach. Those are our conclusions," the agencies quoted him as saying.

The comment suggests that the veneer of diplomatic niceties that the former Cold War enemies have generally sought to observe in recent decades is wearing thin.

U.S. President Joe Biden said in March that he thought his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin was a killer who would "pay a price" for alleged meddling in U.S. elections - an accusation that Moscow denies.

Ryabkov's remarks suggest Russia will in turn robustly push back against what it sees as unacceptable U.S. interference in its own backyard.

"We warn the United States that it will be better for them to stay far away from Crimea and our Black Sea coast. It will be for their own good," said Ryabkov.

The West is sounding the alarm over what it says is a large unexplained build-up of Russian forces close to Ukraine's eastern border and in Crimea, which NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg on Tuesday called on Moscow to unwind.

Russia has said it moves its forces around as it sees fit, including for defensive purposes, and has regularly accused NATO of destabilising Europe by moving its military infrastructure closer to Russia's borders.

'STAY AWAY'

Ryabkov was cited as shrugging off U.S. talk of consequences for any "aggressive" Russian actions and as saying that Moscow had studied U.S. tactics towards Russia and adapted accordingly.

U.S. military support to Kyiv was a serious challenge for Russia, he added, accusing Washington and NATO of turning Ukraine into a "powder keg" with increasing arms supplies.

Washington says Ukraine needs a strong army to defend itself from potential Russian aggression.

"Any threat to us merely confirms our belief that our course is the right one," Ryabkov was quoted as saying, warning U.S. warships in the Black Sea to keep their distance, given what he said was the high risk of unspecified incidents.

"There is absolutely nothing for American ships to be doing near our shores, this is purely a provocative action. Provocative in the direct sense of the word: they are testing our strength, playing on our nerves. They will not succeed," Ryabkov said.

The Pentagon has declined to discuss the ships' deployment, saying only that the U.S. military routinely sends vessels to the region.

Russia's Black Sea Fleet is based in Crimea and it has powerful missile and radar facilities on the peninsula.

Russia confirmed on Tuesday it was continuing to move 15 navy vessels to the Black Sea from the Caspian Sea to take part in drills. (Additional reporting by Maxim Rodionov; Editing by Jon Boyle and John Stonestreet)

The Race Is About Over

April 16, 2021

By Dennis Huebshman

If you feel as if you're running in circles, and trying to put round pegs in square holes, join the club. As much as I wish I could say it's going to get better here on earth, the Bible doesn't back this up. Yet, for a believer in Jesus, it's a time to get excited, and a time of preparation for His calling us Home. (all emphasis mine)

Starting with 1 John 2:15-17; *"Do not love the world, or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) For all that is in the world – the desires of the flesh, and the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not from the Father, but is from the world. (17) And, the world is passing away along with its desires, but who ever does the will of God abides forever."*

Moving to 1 John 2:22-23; *"Who is the liar, but he who denies that Jesus is Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. (23) No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also."*

We're told that we must follow God's commandments, yet exactly what are His commandments? There are people today that say we must follow the 10 Commandments that were given to Moses by God. While this would be admirable, how many people violate the fourth commandment which states, "Keep the Sabbath Day holy."?

In Matthew 22:36-40, Jesus was asked by a religious lawyer, *"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? (37) And He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. (28) This is the great and first commandment. (39) And, a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (40) On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets'."*

Our Savior gave these two commandments which encompass all the ten. If we have Jesus in our hearts and follow His will, the so-called “pleasures” of this earth are meaningless compared to what lies ahead for us.

As Paul said in Philippians 1:20-23; *“as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always, Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or death. (21) For to me to live is Christ; and to die is gain. (22) If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose, I cannot tell. (23) I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.”*

As stated in the past, the actual act of dying isn’t something I look forward to, but death itself does not cause me fear. We are assured that all who truly call on Jesus to be their Savior will have eternity with Him in Heaven. Our last breath taken here will find us immediately in His presence. Even better yet, His coming to call His flock – all true believers – up to meet Him in the air is closer than we can even imagine. The trumpet of God will sound, a shout from an Arch Angel, and we’ll be in the presence of Jesus. We will have a brand new eternal immortal body, and a mindset such as His which will be free from temptation to sin.

We are seeing definite dividing lines between the prince of this world (satan) and our Blessed Savior. Satanic worship is out in the open as never before, and people are actually proud to call themselves disciples of Lucifer. There’s even tennis shoes that have been manufactured with the claim they have a drop of human blood in the soles. While there is controversy as to the actual manufacturer, it’s said that 666 pairs have been made at a cost of over \$1000 per pair. It’s a definite “In Your Face God” issue.

The question remains, how much longer, Father, are we to endure such evil? As much as those of us who are already saved have a desire to leave here and be with Jesus, God has a desire to add as many souls as possible before He starts the 7-year wrath/tribulation. (2 Peter 3:9) If He had sent Jesus for the righteous about 35 years ago, I would have been counted with the lost. It took Noah 100 years to build the Ark, but when it was done, God Himself closed the door. I believe He is giving the world a bit more time for those on the “edge” to reach out and be saved.

However, the moment will come when He says, “enough already”. He will take last minute calls for souls to be saved, just as He did the Thief on the cross who accepted Jesus. Then, this world will enter the most terrible 7-year period of time ever. People today who refuse to accept the Savior are referenced in 1 Corinthians 1:18 and 2 Thessalonians 2. The word of the Lord is foolishness to them, and God will send them a strong deluding influence. They will eventually end up at the great white throne and spend eternity in hell.

For the saved, it will be as Revelation 2:17 says; *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give him some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.”*

The “hidden manna” represents the true word that only true believers can and will understand. The white stone was added to a garland wreath that was given to victorious athletes in the first century. This was for their admission to the celebration following the games. Our “new name” represents a personal message from Jesus for each soul that arrives, and only the one receiving it will know the meaning.

To conquer the lure of this world, it’s as simple as A,B,C. First, admit we’re all sinners in need of a Savior to rescue us from all the evil here. Next, believe that Jesus died for our sins, and was raised on the third day to conquer sin and death for all who would receive and accept His gift. Finally, call on the

name of the Lord, and you will be saved. This is found in Romans 10:9-13, and don't add to, or take away from, any of the steps.

God has given us His promise that all who receive and accept His Son will have an eternal home in Heaven, in a place prepared by the hand of the Savior Himself. (John 14:1-3)

Being a true, fair and just God, all who refuse the gift given by Jesus; one third of the Trinity; will appear at the great white throne of Revelation 20:11-15, and receive their final sentence to the lake of fire forever. This was originally made for Satan and his fallen angels (demons), as given in Matthew 25:41.

It's up to each and every person to receive or reject the Savior. It goes beyond my comprehension that anyone would purposely choose eternal condemnation over eternal paradise. However, there are more in that category than on the straight and narrow path. (Matthew 7:13-14)

Today is not too early to call on Him, as tomorrow may just be too late. No matter what you have done in the past, you will be forgiven if you sincerely call on, and ask Jesus to be your Savior. Then, just as Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "Today you will be with Me in paradise". You may not leave earth today, but if you do this promise is yours. Hope to see you at "Home".

Come Lord Jesus!