

N E W S B Y T E S

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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

Flash Points 2022: Israel

Matt Ward

The Israel–Iran issue has been largely out of our news feeds during the past twelve months, yet the drumbeat of war between Israel and Iran has not calmed in 2021; it is just that the rest of us have been very much distracted by Covid-19.

With each passing month, Israel’s growing need to defend itself against what it perceives to be an existential threat to its existence in Iran’s burgeoning nuclear program becomes more and more prescient and urgent to the Jewish State.

In 2021, big changes occurred at the highest levels of leadership within Israel. They got a new Prime Minister, Naftali Bennet, and the Israeli Defense Forces got a new Airforce Chief of Staff, General Bar. This now means that the Heads of each of Israel’s three main military branches are on public record as sharing a belief in the need for a pre-emptive strike on Iran and its nuclear program. Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett believes likewise:

“Words won’t stop centrifuges. Iran has reached a watershed moment, but so have we. We will never let Iran have a nuclear bomb. If we use our resourcefulness, we can prevail. And that is what we intend to do.”

Yet increasingly, the options available to Israel are being narrowed. The United States of America is not the friend to the Jewish State that it was just a few years ago. If the election of Joe Biden has proved anything, it is just how much damage a change of administration can do and how it can alter the entire course of a nation’s trajectory in practically every way. This is especially so of its diplomacy, which becomes obvious when this is viewed through the prism of US–Israeli relations.

In recent weeks, Israeli diplomats and spymasters have been feverishly trying to extract from the Biden Administration at the very least a concession, or even the most meager acknowledgment, that military action against Iran should as a minimum be left on the table, as insurance should the current diplomatic course fail.

No such guarantee has been given. There isn’t even a tacit understanding between Israel and the United States over this matter. If Israel is going to attack Iran, they would appear to be very much on

their own. It would seem that they will not be getting any help from Joe Biden. A proactive Israeli–US military policy against Iran seems to be dead in the water.

Israeli Defense Minister Gantz responded to this by explaining the reason for Israel’s increasing urgency:

“Iran is building its military power in the west of the country to attack countries and forces in the Middle East in general and Israel in particular. We are prepared for any such attempt and will do whatever it takes to protect our citizens and assets.” (2)

Israel wants the Biden administration to continue the same policies the previous administration pursued, that of the US tightening economic sanctions while Israel, parallel to this, would continue to pursue its clandestine activities aimed at diminishing Iran’s nuclear program and its ability to ever strike out against Israel or other actors in the Middle Eastern region. That is simply not happening, signaled never so loudly as when the US made the decision to re-join and attempt to renew the deeply flawed JPCOA, the Joint Comprehensive Program of Action. A failed, undermined and entirely duplicitous process that has been widely ridiculed as a realistic method to bring Iran’s nuclear program to heel.

Israel has let the United States know clearly that they do not feel, nor will they be ever bound by, the agreements found through any JPCOA deal, now or future. Top Israeli spymaster David Barnea, head of Mossad, when referencing this issue, said publicly recently as a direct rebuff to the JPCOA that,

“Iran will not have nuclear weapons, not in the coming years, not ever. That is my promise, that is Mossad’s promise.” (3)

Iran knows full well that it is on Israeli notice for some kind of future action or intervention. To counter this, Iran published a list of targets it would attack in Israel should any kind of military intervention against them occur. They published this list on the front page of the Tehran Times. Iran is openly telling Israel where they will strike back should they try to launch some kind of an attack. The article in the Tehran Times was entitled “Just One Wrong Move!” and showed next to the main title a map of Israel with targets marked for destruction highlighted in red the length and breadth of the Jewish country. (4)

The article concluded with a quote from Iran’s former supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, who warned that Iran will “destroy Tel Aviv and Haifa” should Israel strike Iran.

Yet Iran, despite this, is not looking for détente. They are intent upon putting their nuclear program on fast forward. In an Iranian state budget released very recently, Iran seems to have budgeted for a further two years or more of international sanctions, thereby attempting to absorb the economic cost and consequences of further weaponizing their nuclear program. Additionally, extra fast centrifuges are currently being pressed into service for the rapid accumulation of weapons-grade material up to the 60% threshold necessary for rapidly acquiring nuclear warheads.

Fereydun Abbasi-Davani, Chairman of Iran’s Atomic Agency, has even admitted that the late Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, the father of the Iranian nuclear program who has subsequently been assassinated, “...had created a nuclear weapons system for offensive purposes.” (5) Such an admission alone should automatically bring an immediate end to any future JPCOA discussions.

Yet the ridiculousness of continuing to play along with the JPCOA farce only gets worse when one considers the words of a source close to Iran’s Revolutionary Guards who said, “Enemy sabotage, assassinations should be stopped by Iran cross(ing) several scientific lines as soon as possible, to show our capability to defend our people.” (6) It is clear that in saying “scientific lines,” this source is referring to the nuclear threshold.

But the charade continues, and the United States and Biden Administration play along as if completely blind to the strikingly obvious realities that:

- Iran is developing a nuclear weapons program for offensive, not defensive purposes.
- Iran is an existential threat to Israel and other US allies in the Middle East.
- A nuclear-armed Iran represents a serious threat and a direct challenge to US power in the Middle Eastern region.

That the Biden Administration is still engaging with JPCOA at all, let alone continuing to give it any credibility, is derisory. Worse, it is reprehensible and a stain on the good reputation of the United States of America. The Biden administration is willingly and quite knowingly putting the United States into a position where they are helping the Iranian regime acquire nuclear threshold status simply by turning a blind eye. It is what it is; a betrayal of Israel.

At present, the opinion of most analysts is that Israel simply cannot act alone against the full spectrum of threats posed by Iran without active support from the United States. The threats are just too wide and big for Israel to act alone. (7)

This is a view echoed by former Israeli chief of General Staff Eyal Zamir, who states that Israel would be hard-pressed, "...to launch such an operation without coordinating with the Americans." (8)

At present, the United States will not support such action. They won't even countenance it. Which inevitably means that the Jewish State, when it feels it has been backed too far into a corner, will have to act alone. How many times in their past have they been here before? Too many.

It is a deep issue of shame to the United States and the West more widely that it looks like they will make the tiny Jewish State carry the full burden and weight of this matter all on their own. And the consequences thereof.

Yet the reality is that Israel is never alone. They have a Protector who never sleeps nor slumbers. "Behold, he that keeps Israel shall not slumber nor sleep..." (Psalm 121:4).

The LORD promised in his word that once Israel is drawn again and regathered back into the land after being scattered to the four winds of heaven for the final time in history, they will never, ever be displaced again. Not by Iran. Not by Antichrist. Not by anyone. It is unclear at this point how this issue will develop and play out over the next twelve months, but most opinion is that by this time next year, Iran will have achieved nuclear breakout status. Will Israel accept this, or will they act, even if they are forced to go it alone?

Whatever may happen, Israel is now once again back in its ancestral, God-given homeland. And they will stay there forever. Iran won't change that one jot.

Rapture Ready Headlines

Huge Tonga volcanic eruption felt around the world

The massive underwater volcanic eruption in Tonga was so powerful it was recorded around the world and triggered a tsunami that flooded Pacific coastlines from Japan to the United States, scientists said Sunday. Dramatic satellite images showed the long, rumbling eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano spew smoke and ash in

the air, with a thunderous roar heard 10,000 kilometres (6,000 miles) away in Alaska. The Fife weather station in Scotland tweeted it was “just incredible to think of the power that can send a shockwave around the world” after the eruptions produced a jump in its air pressure graph.

The eruption took place at Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha’apai volcano at 04:10 UTC on January 15, 2022, producing a huge shockwave and a 1.2 m (4 feet) high tsunami. The San Francisco Bay Area experienced effects of undersea volcano eruption.

North Korea: We fired tactical guided missiles

North Korea acknowledged on Monday it had fired tactical guided missiles in its latest test highlighting its evolving missile programs, Reuters reported, citing the North’s official KCNA news agency. The report came after South Korea’s military said North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles from an airport in its capital city of Pyongyang.

Communist Takeover: Without Firing a Shot, China Seizes Control of America’s Farmlands

The Chinese Communists have their tendrils in nearly every American industry, from food production to farming, transportation, education, medicines, media, movies, etc.

China’s True COVID-19 Death Toll 366 Times Higher Than Official Figure, Analyst Says

The Chinese regime has likely understated the COVID-19 death rate by as much as 17,000 percent in a systematic data suppression campaign to sustain its political image, according to a U.S. analyst.

By 2024, Meta, Microsoft, Google And Amazon Will Have A Stranglehold On The Internet By Owning A Majority Of The World’s Fiber Optic Capabilities

The world is literally controlled by Silicon Valley tech tyrants on a level that General Motors didn’t even dream about, GM only dominated the automobile business, they didn’t control the whole world. But Amazon, Google, Meta and Microsoft are very close to having their greedy, filthy hands on all of it, and when they do, there’ll be no escaping their grasp. It’s these same people who are right now trying to push you into a Metaverse you’ll never get out of. This is not a rise in technology or advancement in innovation, this is the rise of the spirit of Antichrist.

Report: Putin to host Iranian president in Moscow next week

Vladimir Putin will host Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi for talks in Moscow next week as Russia tries to help salvage a nuclear deal between world powers and Tehran, state television channel Rossiya-1 reported on Sunday. US President Donald Trump pulled Washington out of the deal in 2018. Iran later breached many of the deal’s nuclear restrictions and kept pushing beyond them.

USA Today Goes Pro-pedo. Deletes Tweets, Changes Headline After Twitter Explosion

USA Today might have one or more pedophiles working in its newsroom. The national newspaper published, then deleted, several pro-pedo tweets yesterday about a story that justifies sexual attraction to children. It's the latest pedo scandal to engulf a major news organization.

Church Not in Tribulation, Pt. 2 of 3

Grant Phillips

ONLY HIS ENEMIES WILL BE JUDGED

Every child of God was once in violation of His holiness because of their sins, but all who repent and look to the cross in true belief are saved. Those who recognize they are a sinner needing forgiveness, and rest their faith in Jesus to save them, will be saved. All who turn to Jesus will be clothed in His righteousness.

{I want to interject a definition of the word "repent." There are some folks who do not understand what the word "repent" means.

The Greek word is "metanoeo." It means [1] to change one's mind, i.e., to repent or [2] to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins.

Peter used this word in Acts 2:38, 3:19, and 8:22. Paul used this word in Acts 17:30 and 26:20. They were simply saying, 'Change your mind' or 'change your mind for what is better.' Those who have put their trust in Jesus have changed their minds about Him and now believe.}

For those who are saved: if Jesus paid the debt for our sins, and He did; if He clothed us with His righteous, and He did, we are positionally (the cross) without sin because God looks at us (true Christians) and sees the righteousness of Jesus Christ, His Son. All of this being true, why would He administer judgment and wrath (the Tribulation) upon those He has forgiven and clothed in His own righteousness? Why would Jesus administer His wrath (the Tribulation) upon those He has predestined, called, justified and glorified? (Romans 8:30-39).

Everyone, the Church included, will suffer tribulation (small "t") in this world, but that tribulation is brought on by man, not by God. The Tribulation (large "T") is God's wrath, not on His bride, the Church, but upon the world.

For those who are in Christ: ALL of our sins are paid, and we are clothed with His righteousness. Therefore, there remains no reason for judgment. Jesus took our judgment upon the cross and accepted God's wrath upon Himself for us.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:1).

The bride of Christ, the Church, "does not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" because every true believer is filled with the Holy Spirit of God.

BLESSED HOPE

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works” (Titus 2:11-14).

“Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,” is speaking of when Jesus comes FOR His bride prior to the Tribulation; i.e., the Rapture. It is not referring to Christ’s Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation when He returns WITH His bride, because then it would mean that Jesus has lied and will take His wrath out also upon His bride, the Church. That is impossible. He cannot lie. This “hope” is not a “blessed” hope if we are waiting to be judged by His wrath (Tribulation). Once again, He, Jesus, has already taken our wrath upon Himself.

HOLY SPIRIT REMOVED

Satan would love to have free reign upon the earth ... right now, but the Holy Spirit is restraining him. God will not allow him to be revealed until his set time during the Tribulation.

“And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time” (2 Thessalonians 2:6).

Satan is working in the world now in opposition to God, but until God says so, he is being kept on a short leash. When the time is right, God the Holy Spirit (He who now restrains) will return to Heaven with the Church and work through only a few individuals as He did prior to the Church age.

“For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way” (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

Before Jesus returned to Heaven, He assured the Church through His disciples that the Holy Spirit would be sent to be another helper (of the same kind as Jesus), abide with us forever, and dwell within us. Jesus also promised that He would not leave us as orphans but will come to us.

“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you” (John 14:16-18).

We are also promised the Holy Spirit to be a guarantee that we are always His beloved possession.

“Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee” (2 Corinthians 1:21-22).

“In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory” (Ephesians 1:13-14).

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4:30).

Once the Holy Spirit of God is removed (with the Church), Satan will be revealed in the Tribulation and eventually consumed by God.

“And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming” (2 Thessalonians 2:8).

BRIDEGROOM LOVES HIS BRIDE

Anyone acquainted with the Jewish engagement and marriage can instantly identify with the necessity of Jesus' return for His bride prior to the Tribulation. There is simply no other way it can fit. Why? The Tribulation is a time of His wrath (Revelation 6-18) upon this unbelieving world. Jesus must remove His bride from harm's way first. They will be married in Heaven while Israel and the remaining world are being judged upon the earth during the Tribulation. The Church will return with Jesus at the end of the Tribulation when Jesus will intercede at Armageddon, end the Tribulation, and prepare for the Millennium.

If you are interested in reading an in-depth account of the Jewish engagement and marriage, Zola Levitt wrote an excellent booklet called *A Christian Love Story*. The ISBN is 1-930749-26-0. Every step of this beautiful love story will be fulfilled.

Think about it. There is no way a groom is going to beat his bride to a bloody pulp (the Tribulation), then say, 'Okay Sweetie, now let's get married. Love you.'

Also, in their marriage customs of that day, they were the same as married in their faithfulness to each other when they became engaged. We haven't arrived at the marriage ceremony as yet, but Jesus, our bridegroom, is faithful, and He is not going to leave His Church on earth to suffer His wrath.

JESUS IS HEAD OF THE CHURCH, HIS BODY

“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another” (Romans 12:5).

“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence” (Colossians 1:18).

In Ephesians 5:22-33, the apostle Paul speaks to husbands and wives, then says in verse 32, “This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one.” Jesus and His bride are one. We are the bride and body of Christ. The Church is exempt from the Tribulation since we are His body and His bride. To think He would beat up on His bride, His own body, is foolish, to say the least.