

Today's News in Light of the Bible

PROPHETIC Newsletter

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I am excited to share with you this month how world events continue to point us to the return of Jesus Christ!

God promised that the world will turn against Christians, as we see in the article about Apple. And, in the New Testament, there are numerous passages that warn of wars. Iran and Russia remain constant threats!

What can we do? We can PRAY! And we can continue to share prophetic Biblical teachings.

In the enclosed *What the Bible Says*, we start a series exploring the eight night visions of the Prophet Zechariah.

Our ministry needs support. Would you send your best gift possible to us this month? We would greatly appreciate and immediately put to good use any amount you give!

Until He returns,

Ed Hindson

Apple Promises Discrimination



In a shocking display of disregard for a vast percentage of the world's population, Tim Cook, the CEO of Apple, reportedly told the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) that Apple practices censorship of speech and news content based on the preference of Apple executives. Cook's remarks came at an event sponsored by the ADL who presented Cook with their "Courage Against Hate" award. In his remarks Cook defended the banning of certain speech and news media on Apple platforms when they violate the "values" of the company.

In a startling contradiction and an attempt to confuse the public, Cook – who is openly homosexual – referred to not banning certain content as "a sin." Further complicating the issue, Cook failed to define what he referred to as "those who seek to push hate, division, and violence" but said they "have no place on our platforms." Cook bragged

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that “from the earliest days of iTunes to Apple Music today, we have always prohibited music with a message of white supremacy. Why? Because it’s the right thing to do.” Obviously, such expressions of hate should be censored, but this highlights the hypocrisy of Apple’s selective censorship.

What Cook failed to mention is that Apple will continue to sell millions of dollars worth of countless examples of hip hop and rap music that openly promotes violence against women, sexism, flagrant use of the N-word, glorifies gangs, gun violence, narcotics trafficking, hatred toward police, and drug use.

This ambiguousness and hypocrisy doubtlessly – purposefully – leaves the proverbial door wide open for a variety of censorship and banning of any ideas of which Cook does not personally approve. Cook did state that he believes “the most sacred thing that each of us is given is our judgment, our morality, our own innate desire to separate right from wrong.”

Noted evangelist Franklin Graham responded directly to Cook in a Facebook post, asking the question, “who defines morality?” Graham pointed out that Cook’s comments “should concern all of us.” Graham added “as sinful human beings, we don’t get to define morality or sin according to our own desires, preferences, or agendas. Tim Cook can’t; I can’t; and you can’t. Sin and morality has been defined by the God of the universe. God and God alone. God’s Word, the Bible, is the standard by which questions of good and evil, and right and wrong, are determined.”

Graham’s comments illustrate the great danger that exists when Apple has admitted

to blatant censorship of ideas on what has become almost indispensable element of technology.

Keep in mind that many people – especially the younger generation – only interact with world news and current events through their smart phones and computers.

If Apple continues to censor news according to the personal preferences of their liberal executives, free speech and the ability to spread the Gospel are potentially in serious danger.

Thus, Apple’s support of the anti-Christian left is obvious and their lack of consideration toward Christianity should not surprise us since the Bible clearly teaches that there will be apostasy during the end times that will be widespread. This departure from Christianity will be so significant that 2 Thessalonians 2:3 refers to it as the “great apostasy” (NKJV).

Interestingly the NASB refers to this time as “apostasy” while the NIV and ESV use the term “rebellion.” This differentiation is accurate as an apostasy is a rebellion. Apostasy is a willful “falling away” or an abandonment of the truth.

The end times will include a wholesale rejection of God’s revelation, as an already fallen world continues in “falling [further] away.” This is doubtlessly what we can see with Apple’s outright admission of censoring views with which they do not agree.

We should not forget that roughly a year ago Apple removed Easter from their popular calendar app. It was only after public outcry that the most sacred Christian holiday was returned to Apple’s calendar. Therefore, future censorship of Christian content by Apple should be expected.— PNL

PRAY: Pray that God would make Himself known to Apple’s CEO in a real and personal way that would convict him of his desire to censor Christian thought and content. Pray for God to strengthen those who confront Apple on their discriminatory practices.

Iran Can Extend Range of its Missiles

In another round of slightly veiled threats directed toward much of the rest of the world, Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, a senior commander in Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), announced that Iran has "the capability to build missiles with higher ranges" beyond the current limit of 2,000 kilometers, or just over 1,200 miles. The remarks came days after the U.S. and Iran traded accusations over Tehran's latest ballistic missile test and amid accusations that Tehran tested a missile capable of striking European countries! United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo directly accused Iran of test-firing a medium-range ballistic missile capable of carrying "multiple warheads." Pompeo said this test was a violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231, adding the missile "allows it to strike parts of Europe and anywhere in the Middle East." Without denying the accusation, Iranian officials have stressed the precision-striking power of the country's arsenal. Britain's U.N. ambassador, Karen Pierce called Iran's actions "part and parcel of Iran's destabilizing activity in the region." U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis recently said the threat from Iran "is certainly significant regionally, and it could grow beyond that if it's not dealt with."

It is significant that these threats come on the heels of U.S. President Donald Trump's reactivation of economic sanctions on Iran and pulling the U.S. out of the multilateral Iran nuclear deal because the deal did not ban Iran from testing ballistic missiles. Iranian

officials have since said that Iran has no plans to develop nuclear weapons, and in a recent news release, it called America's withdrawal from the nuclear deal as "unlawful." Referring to the achievements of IRGC, General Hajizadeh emphasized that the most advanced equipment is being used in the air and space sectors of the Iranian military, saying that despite the long-

term sanctions against Iran over the past forty years, the country is self-sufficient in military technology, and stands ready to defend itself from its enemies. The Iranian government has ruled out any negotiations with the United States over its military capabilities, particularly its

missile program run by the IRGC. Hajizadeh also recently threatened that U.S. bases in Afghanistan, the UAE and Qatar, and U.S. aircraft carriers in the Gulf were within range of Iranian missiles.

With the seemingly never-ending escalation of the tensions between Iran and the United States, we cannot help but be reminded of numerous scriptural passages. Daniel and Jesus both warned of continual wars and rumors of wars until the return of Christ (Daniel 9:26; Matthew 24:6).

The Old Testament minor-prophet Joel also frightfully predicted that the world would be engaged in such a great degree of warfare that humans would need to turn their everyday tools into weapons of war (Joel 3:9,10). With the threat of Iran extending the range of their



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Russia Warns U.S. Against Sending Missiles to Europe



In a recent statement designed to intimidate the United States, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov has warned that the planned U.S. withdrawal from a Cold War nuclear arms treaty could critically undermine stability in Europe. Ryabkov was expressing Russia's expectation of U.S. deployment of new missiles in Europe after Washington withdraws from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF).

Toward the end of 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump declared his intention to withdraw the U.S. from the 1987 INF treaty over Russian violations of the treaty including providing the formidable Russian S-300 missile system to the beleaguered Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad. Moscow has denied this action as breaching the pact and accused Washington of violating it. Ryabkov warned that if the U.S. stations the currently banned missiles in Europe, Russia will have to mount an "efficient response," adding that "no one will benefit from those developments." At a press conference Ryabkov announced that Russia would be open to talks on the issue with Washington but added that Moscow was skeptical about assertions that no new missiles

would be deployed in Europe. Ryabkov said the United States could potentially deploy intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe "within years," that would allow the U.S. "to strike at targets deep inside Russia." According to Ryabkov, such a missile deployment would fuel a dangerous arms race. In support, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that Russia would be forced to target any European countries that agreed to host intermediate-range missiles from the U.S.

In a series of somewhat mixed messages, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has said he did not believe there would be new deployments of U.S. missiles in Europe, while U.S. national-security adviser John Bolton, who seemed to leave the option open, said Washington was a long way from making decisions about deploying any such missiles. In a show of defiance over the situation Russia recently sent two nuclear-capable long-range strategic bombers to the nation of Venezuela. Russia is a major political ally of Venezuela, which has become increasingly isolated in the world under growing sanctions by the U.S.

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Suicide and Overdoses Help Cut U.S. Life Expectancy

Reporting customarily at the end of a calendar year for the previous year, it was recently revealed that the United States experienced a surge of deaths in 2017 with suicide and overdoses increasing at an alarming rate. This helped to further an ever declining life expectancy for Americans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently announced that overall, there were more than 2.8 million U.S. deaths in 2017, or nearly 70,000 more than the previous year. Shockingly, this represents the most deaths in a single year since the government began keeping records more than a hundred years ago. For decades, U.S. life expectancy was on the upswing, rising a few months nearly every year. Now the trend has been moving the other way. U.S. life expectancy fell in 2015, stayed level in 2016, and declined again in 2017, according to the CDC. Experts acknowledge that such an increase is partially reflective of an aging population. However, deaths among younger age groups, particularly middle-aged people, have had the greatest impact on life expectancy calculations. CDC officials did not speculate about what is ultimately behind the decline in life expectancy, but Dr. William Dietz, a disease prevention expert at George Washington University, believes a sense of hopelessness is the ultimate factor.

Dietz suggested that financial struggles, a widening income gap and divisive politics are all casting an ominous shadow over many Americans. “I really do believe that people are increasingly hopeless, and that leads to drug use, it leads potentially to suicide,” Dietz said. Supporting this contention is the unfortunate fact that drug overdose deaths also continued to climb, surpassing 70,000 last year, in the midst of the deadliest drug overdose epidemic in U.S. history. The death rate rose 10 percent from the previous year, smaller than the 21 percent jump seen between 2016 and 2017.



Also, suicide rates have been disturbingly increasing. In 2017 there was over 47,000 deaths by suicide according to the American Foundation for the Prevention of Suicide. This is the highest rate of suicide deaths since 1975. Interestingly, while the rate of death by accidental drug overdose was on the rise, suicide by drug overdose has been trending downward according to the CDC. The CDC report found that West Virginia was the state with the highest rate of drug overdose deaths and Montana was the state with the highest rate of suicide deaths.

Scripture indicates that death entered the human experience as a result of the sin of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12-21). Additionally, from the time of creation until the flood of Noah, humans lived exceptionally long lives. For example, Adam lived to the age of 930 years (Genesis 5:5), his son Seth lived 912 (Genesis 5:8), Methuselah lived to be 969 years old (Genesis 5:27, and his son Lamech lived 777 years (Genesis 5:31), Lamech's son Noah lived to be 950 years old (Genesis 9:29), and his son Shem lived 600 years (Genesis 11:10). By the time the Psalms were written, the life expectancy of humans was closer to what it is today (Psalm 90:10).

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intercontinental ballistic missiles, and the likely proliferation of their nuclear weapons capability, the grim predictions of the prophet Joel no longer seem so difficult to imagine and

the rumors of war Daniel and Jesus warned of come readily to mind. With such potential for tensions to escalate we should be in serious prayer.—PNL

PRAY: Pray for the Lord to continue to protect the world from the threat that Iran poses. Pray for the Christians in Iran to be strengthened to act as a light of God's truth in that part of the world.

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and the European Union. Venezuelan Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino Lopez indicated that Russia would continue to send military aircraft and warships to Venezuela. This is a disturbing situation that mirrors Russia's relationship with Syria and even their relationship with Iran. Russian support of these countries also draws Israel into the cross-hairs. Such actions and rhetoric from Russia should concern us and should be taken seriously.

In many ways this situation brings to mind numerous scriptural passages such as those that warn of wars and threats of wars (Matthew 24:6; Mark 13:7). As the nation of Syria has demonstrated, the eventually of Israel being

surrounded by her enemies (Ezekiel 38-39) is also a factor to be considered. We must also be mindful of the threat of nuclear war (2 Peter 3:10-11; Revelation 18:10). Before we dismiss this situation as mere political posturing, we must remember the Bible clearly teaches that at least one more major war will occur in the future as the last days approach. This war will be so severe that 1/3 of the people on earth will die (Revelation 9:14-15). In terms of the contemporary population this could mean the death of over 2 billion people. Given the potential implications of growing tensions between the U.S. and Russia we must lift this situation up in prayer.—PNL

PRAY: Pray that the U.S. and Russia will seek to resolve their political differences and military interests rather than continue down a path of ever increasing military conflict. Pray for God to impart wisdom to the leaders of these nations and pray for His hand to guide the affairs of state.

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The longer humanity exists the greater our sin becomes. Sin is a disease that separates us from God. When there is a separation between humanity and God; who gives us life (Psalm

36:9), then life ebbs as the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Sadly then it should come as little surprise to us to learn that our life expectancy is on the decline. Still, we should pray.—PNL

PRAY: Pray and confess our individual and corporate sin to God that He would forgive our sin and increase our lives that we might use them to serve Him. Pray that God would reveal Himself to those who do not know Him as Savior before it is too late.