

*“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up,  
and lift your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh” - Luke 21:28*

# CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

## **A quarter of British Christians ‘do not believe in the resurrection,’ BBC survey suggests**

April 10, 2017 -- *ChristianToday.com* reports: “A quarter of people who describe themselves as Christians in Britain do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus, a survey commissioned by the BBC for Palm Sunday suggests.

However, almost one in 10 people of no religion say they do believe the Easter story, while claiming that it has ‘some content that should not be taken literally’.

And a fifth of non-religious people believe in life after death, according to the poll.

ComRes surveyed 2,010 British adults by telephone, between February 2 and 12, 2017. The research was commissioned by BBC local radio.

The survey suggested that 17 per cent of all people believe the Bible version ‘word-for-word’, while 31 per cent of Christians believe the literal Bible version, rising to 57 per cent

among ‘active’ Christians (those who go to a service at least once a month). (The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the Fundamentals of the Faith, proving that Jesus is who He claimed to be – the Son of God. *“Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of*

*the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive”* – I Corinthians 15:12 – 22. Without the Resurrection, we have no hope. But Now IS Christ Risen – Amen!)

## **Easter 2017, Christians ‘most persecuted group in the world’**

April 16, 2017 -- *Breitbart.com* reports: “In many parts of the world, Christians gathering to celebrate Christ’s resurrection do so with the knowledge that any day their faith could cost them their lives as it has for thousands of their brothers and sisters.

On Palm Sunday, twin bombings by jihadists at two Egyptian churches killed at least 45 worshippers and wounded more than 100 others in the latest of a long string of deadly attacks targeting Christians throughout the world.

The attacks were directed specifically to Christians in their houses of worship to avoid any ambiguity regarding the intent. As has been noted, this was ‘an attack

on Christians simply because they are Christians.’

On Saturday, the Pakistan military said it has thwarted a ‘major terrorist attack’ against Christians planned for Easter Sunday after a successful overnight raid just hours after Christians celebrated Good Friday services.

On Easter Sunday 2016, an Islamist militant took the lives of more than 70 people and injured over 320 more after detonating his suicide vest in a park in Lahore that was full of Christian families celebrating the feast. Among the victims are more than 30 small children, who at the time of the blast were playing sports and outdoor games in the Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park.

During the last calendar year, some 90,000 Christians were killed for their faith across the globe, making Christians by far the most persecuted group in the world, according to a study from the Turin-based Center for Studies on New Religions (CESNUR)...” (*“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I have said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep your also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him that sent me”* John 15:18 – 21.)

### **Spectator: Egypt’s Palm Sunday massacre was ‘attack on Christianity’**

April 11, 2017 -- *Breitbart.com* reports: “Writing for the *Spectator* magazine on Sunday, Damian Thompson pointed out that the twin

bombings of churches in Egypt on Palm Sunday constituted a religiously motivated attack on Christianity that must be recognized and dealt with as such.

Thompson took issue with a tweet by a spokesman for the Egyptian ministry of foreign affairs that the Palm Sunday massacres were ‘another obnoxious but failed attempts against all Egyptians.’

The attacks, which killed 49 and left more than 100 injured, were not ‘against all Egyptians,’ Thompson notes, but directed specifically to Christians in their houses of worship, precisely to avoid any ambiguity regarding the intent. This was rather ‘an attack on Christians simply because they are Christians,’ he noted...” (*“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you”* – Matthew 5:10 – 12. *“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life”* – Revelation 2:10; *“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him”* – James 1:12. The Apostle Paul knew firsthand of persecution. He was imprisoned, beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, hungry, cold, destitute [II Corinthians 11:23 – 28], yet in spite of all of that and more, he *“fought a good fight... finished my course... kept the faith”* – II Timothy 4:7. Jesus stated: *“These*

*things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world”* – John 16:33. See the next four reports on the bombings in Egypt and the continuing violence in Nigeria against Christians, and continue to pray for our Brothers and Sisters around the world.)

### **ISIS claims responsibility for Egyptian church bombings**

April 9, 2017 -- *Israel National News* reports: “The death toll in a pair of church bombings targeting Egypt’s Coptic Christian community rose to 43 Sunday evening, with more than 100 people injured.

At least 27 people were killed and 78 wounded in the first bombing Sunday, which targeted the St. George Church in Tanta, outside of Cairo.

Later, a second bombing hit the St. Mark’s Cathedral in Alexandria, killing 16 and wounding 41.

Egypt’s Interior Minister confirmed that the second attack was carried out by a lone suicide bomber who attempted to break into the church, but ultimately detonated his bomb at the entrance. Three police officers were among the dead.

The ISIS terror group has claimed responsibility for the attacks, following recent threats by the organization to target Christians.

In December of last year a Muslim suicide bomber blew himself up inside a Cairo church, killing 28 and wounding dozens.

In late February, ISIS issued a video message vowing to target Christians, particularly in Egypt, saying Christians were their ‘favorite prey’, while showing footage of the December 2016 church bombing...”

### **ISIS threatens more attacks against Egypt's Christians**

**April 10, 2017** -- *Haaretz* reports: "ISIS threatened Sunday that more attacks against Egyptian Christians are coming after claiming responsibility for two bombings that killed dozens in Alexandria and the Nile Delta hours before.

'Let the crusaders and apostates know that they will pay a huge bill with their son's blood,' read an online statement carried by the group's semi-official *Amaq* news agency.

The statement said the two attacks on the churches, in the cities of Tanta and Alexandria, were carried out by two Egyptians wearing suicide vests.

DPA could not independently verify the authenticity of the statement, but it appeared consistent with previous claims by the group.

The attacks were the latest in a series of assaults on Egypt's Christian minority, which makes up around 10 percent of the population of 92 million and has been repeatedly targeted by Islamic extremists. It comes just weeks before Pope Francis is due to visit Egypt..."

### **Coptic churches in Egypt cancel Easter celebrations, mourning Palm Sunday bombings**

**April 12, 2017** -- *ChristianToday.com* reports: "Coptic churches in the south of Egypt said they would not hold Easter celebrations this year, in mourning of the 45 Coptic Christians killed in the two Palm Sunday bomb attacks.

The Minya Coptic Orthodox Diocese said it would be commemorating Easter 'without any festive manifestations'.

'The Easter mass will be limited to prayers only,' a Facebook statement

by Bishop Makarios of Minya and Abu Korkas said, according to *Ahram Online*.

The Minya diocese, located in Upper Egypt, south of Cairo, hosts the highest Coptic Christian population in the country.

It said the cancellation of services would take effect across all its churches, 'due to the current circumstances the country and the Church are witnessing'.

At least 45 people were killed and more than 100 injured in Palm Sunday bombings on two Coptic churches in Egypt. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attacks..."

### **Nigerian archbishop calls on gov't to protect Christians from 'wanton destruction' from Muslims**

**April 4, 2017** -- *Breitbart.com* reports: "The President of the Nigerian Catholic bishops' conference has appealed to the government to be 'more proactive' in defending Christians from the atrocities being wrought by the Muslim population in north-central Nigeria.

During December, more than 800 people—mostly Christians—died in inter-religious violence in the south of Kaduna state, which forms part of Nigeria's so-called middle belt, where the chiefly Muslim north of the country meets the mainly Christian south.

According to *Vatican Radio*, the Muslim Fulani Cattle herders in the area have recently committed 'atrocities' resulting in the deaths of 'thousands of Christians and the destruction of property worth millions of Naira.'

The Nigerian government claims that the death toll is actually lower than the one given by the Catholic Church..."

### **Londonistan: 500 closed churches, 423 new mosques**

**April 2, 2017** -- *Israel National News* reports: "London is more Islamic than many Muslim countries put together,' says London Islamic preacher Maulana Syed Raza Rizvi.

The city of London – dubbed 'Londonistan' by outspoken journalist Melanie Phillips – now has 423 new mosques, which are 'built on the sad ruins of English Christianity.' So writes Italian journalist and writer, *Arutz Sheva* columnist Giulio Meotti in an article written for Gatestone Institute reported here.

The Hyatt United Church, for instance, on Hamilton Road, was purchased by the Egyptian community and is being converted into a mosque. St. Peter's Church is now the Madina Mosque, and the Brick Lane Mosque used to be a Methodist church. Not only buildings are converted, writes Meotti, but also people: 'The number of converts to Islam [in London] has doubled; often they embrace radical Islam, as with Khalid Masood, the terrorist who struck Westminster.'

'Given the current trends,' he predicts, 'Christianity in England is becoming a relic, while Islam will be the religion of the future.'

It is estimated that by 2020, the number of Muslims attending prayers will top the number of Christians attending weekly Mass, 683,000 to 679,000. Within a generation, the number of churchgoers will be three times lower than that of Muslims who go regularly to mosque on Friday..." **(Two recent Pew Research Center studies state that babies born to Muslims will begin to outnumber Christian births by 2035, and by 2070 they will be the world's largest religious group. In 2015 there were 1.8 billion Muslims in the world, by 2060 that number is expected to grow to nearly 3 billion.)**

# TRAIN UP A CHILD

## **Hamas designs terror inspired 'Snakes and Ladders'**

April 11, 2017 -- *The Times of Israel* reports: "A terrorism inspired children's board game based on 'Snakes and Ladders' that glorifies the Hamas terror group is set to soon hit store shelves in the Gaza Strip.

According to *Middle East Media Research Institute*, 'Reaching Jerusalem' was designed by Muhammad Ramadan Al-Amriti, an employee of the Hamas Interior Ministry who has previously produced and directed videos praising Hamas and terror attacks against Israel.

In a post on his Facebook page, Al-Amriti said the purpose of the game is to teach Palestinian children the proper tenets of Islam and 'that return to the homeland will be achieved only through resistance and jihad.'

In the game, players attempt to reach Jerusalem, which on the board is illustrated by the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, assisted by 'ladders' in the form of Hamas made rockets and underground attack tunnels, the two primary means by which the terror group focuses its efforts on to attack Israel.

Like in the classic game, players must avoid landing on the 'snakes' in order not to be set back, which in 'Reaching Jerusalem' take the form of IDF tanks and helicopters..." **(Proverbs 22:6 states: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." This is seen in the New Testament in the life of Timothy. Paul writes in II Timothy 1:5: "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which first dwelt in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded in thee also." Islam also believes in training up a child – but**

not to follow the Lord. The Islamic State refers to them as "Cubs of the Caliphate" and has released training videos showing them murdering helpless prisoners. How warped can these barbarians be? **Jesus said in Matthew 19:14: "...Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And in Matthew 18:6 He stated: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." See the next two reports.)**

## **New Palestinian textbooks 'teach students to be martyrs'**

April 4, 2017 -- *The Times of Israel* reports: "The Palestinian Authority's new textbooks for first to fourth grades demonize Israel and glorify 'martyrdom,' a report published Sunday claims, citing an 'alarming deterioration' since a previous study.

The report, by the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-se), says that the 2016-2017 elementary school curriculum in the PA 'teaches students to be martyrs, demonizes and denies the existence of Israel, and focuses on a 'return' to an exclusively Palestinian homeland.'

The report by the Jerusalem-based group comes as Israeli officials continue to call on Palestinian officials to halt what they see as the demonization of Israel in textbooks and other materials aimed at children. They say the textbooks are a key source of incitement that drives terror attacks.

Among the textbook materials cited in the report are maps that don't show Israel and passages that appear to glorify attackers..."

## **Feds fund 'how to be a good Muslim' lessons for U.S. schoolkids**

April 7, 2017 -- *WND.com* reports: "A Christian organization has sent a letter to U.S. Department of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos demanding the department pull its support for what it calls 'an Islamic Sunday School program' for public-school students.

If DeVos does not respond within 60 days, the Christian Action Network says it will file a federal lawsuit against the DOE and the producer of the 'Access Islam' lesson plans.

CAN sent the letter to DeVos March 28 claiming the 'Access Islam' program is a gross violation of the First Amendment of the Constitution's 'establishment clause' because it promotes one religion over the others in lesson plans used throughout the country by teachers in grades five through 12.

CAN says it is not aware of any federal funding of comparable programs on Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism or any other major religion. But the 'Access Islam' program teaches students how to convert to Islam and how to practice its 'Five Pillars.'

Produced by an affiliate of the Public Broadcasting System, it also provides extensive interviews with Muslims who speak about the positive aspects of Islam from a spiritual perspective.

'There is not one mention about the history of Islam,' said Martin Mawyer, president of CAN. 'It's all about how to be a good Muslim. I can't find anything on their website that links to programs on how to be a good Christian, Jew or Hindu...'"

# THE BURDEN OF DAMASCUS

## **Syria conflict: 'Chemical attack' in Idlib kills dozens**

April 4, 2017 -- *BBC News* reports: "At least 58 people have been killed and dozens wounded in a suspected chemical attack on a rebel-held town in north-western Syria, a monitoring group says.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that strikes on Khan Sheikhoun by Syrian government or Russian jets had caused many people to choke.

Local opposition activists and news sites posted photos of those they said had died of asphyxiation.

The Syrian government has repeatedly denied using chemical weapons.

If confirmed, it would be one of the deadliest chemical attacks in Syria since the civil war began six years ago..." **(There have been nearly 400,000 lives lost in this six-year civil war, with more civilians being killed than fighters. UNICEF just recently declared that 2016 was the deadliest year for children in the Syrian war – with at least 652 children dying last year. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has carried out numerous inhumane tactics such as chemical weapons, and barrel bombs (nearly 13,000 in 2016 alone), both classified as weapons of terror. President al-Assad had better beware – there is a prophecy in Isaiah that has yet to be fulfilled: "The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap" – Isaiah 17:1. Damascus is widely believed to be the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world, but God's Word declares that will end. See the next three reports.)**

## **UN: Chemical weapons attack victims show signs of nerve agent**

April 6, 2017 -- *Israel National News* reports: "A number of victims of a chemical weapons attack in Syria have symptoms consistent with exposure to a category of chemicals that includes nerve agents, the World Health Organization said Wednesday.

The UN health agency said the deadly attack in Idlib province Tuesday appeared to have involved chemical weapons, pointing to the 'apparent lack of external injuries reported in cases showing a rapid onset of similar symptoms, including acute respiratory distress as the main cause of death.'

'Some cases appear to show additional signs consistent with exposure to organophosphorus chemicals, a category of chemicals that includes nerve agents,' it said.

At least 72 civilians, among them 20 children, were killed in Tuesday's attack in rebel-held Khan Sheikhoun, and dozens more were left gasping for air, convulsing, and foaming at the mouth, doctors said.

Washington and London have pointed the finger at President Bashar Assad's government for the attack, though the regime has denied using chemical weapons.

But WHO said there was good reason to suspect a chemical attack, noting the dozens of patients admitted to hospitals 'suffering from breathing difficulties and suffocation.'

'The images and reports coming from Idlib today leave me shocked, saddened and outraged,' Peter Salama, head of WHO's health emergencies program, said in a statement.

'These types of weapons are banned

by international law because they represent an intolerable barbarism,' he added..."

## **Monitor says Syrian forces use barrel bombs despite U.S. warning**

April 11, 2017 -- *The Jerusalem Post* reports: "The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Syrian government warplanes dropped barrel bombs on rebel-held areas of Hama province on Tuesday, a day after the United States said their use could lead to further U.S. strikes in Syria.

A Syrian military source denied the Observatory report and said the army did not use barrel bombs – drums or cylinders packed with explosives and shrapnel that cause indiscriminate destruction on the ground.

The United States fired cruise missiles at a Syrian air base last week in response to a poison gas attack on a town in northwestern Syria which Washington says was carried out by government forces. The government denies responsibility.

The Observatory said 'a number' of barrel bombs had been dropped on the towns of Taybat al-Imam and Soran north of Hama city in an area where rebel groups spearheaded by jihadist factions launched a major offensive last month.

Observatory director Rami Abdulrahman said the number of barrel bombs dropped by government warplanes was relatively small. UN investigators have recorded regular use of such bombs by government forces in Syria.

White House spokesman Sean Spicer on Monday mentioned barrel bombs alongside poison gas as weapons

that were causing ‘babies and children’ to suffer. ‘If you gas a baby, if you put a barrel bomb in to innocent people ... you will see a response from this president,’ he said...”

### **Syria war: ‘At least 68 children among 126 killed’ in bus bombing**

**April 16, 2017 -- BBC News** reports: “At least 68 children were among 126 people killed in Saturday’s bomb attack on buses carrying evacuees from besieged Syrian towns, activists say.

A vehicle filled with explosives hit the convoy near Aleppo.

The UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group said at least 109 evacuees from government-held towns were killed, along with aid workers and rebel soldiers.

Many more were injured in the attack, the group said.

The explosion shattered buses and set cars on fire, leaving a trail of bodies, as the convoy waited in rebel territory near Aleppo.

Separately, several people, mostly children, are reported to have been injured by shelling in the capital, Damascus...”

### **‘Missile strikes in Syria a serious blow to US-Russia relations’**

**April 7, 2017 -- Israel National News** reports: “The Kremlin blasted U.S. missile strikes Thursday night against a Syrian airbase which Western

intelligence officials claim was used as a staging ground for the sarin gas attack outside of Idlib Tuesday which killed as many as 100 people.

Overnight, two U.S. guided missile destroyers fired 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles at the Al Shayrat airbase in Syria.

‘A total of 59 [missiles] targeted aircraft, hardened aircraft shelters, petroleum and logistical storage, ammunition supply bunkers, air defense systems, and radars,’ said Pentagon spokesman Jeff Davis.

Syrian officials claimed Friday that seven people had been killed in the attack, with another nine wounded.

In a formal statement Friday morning, the Russian Foreign Ministry condemned the strikes as an ‘act of aggression’, and warned that the move damaged U.S.-Russian relations.

‘The very presence of U.S. troops and other countries on the territory of Syria...is a gross, obvious and unwarranted violation of international law.’

‘[This] is a clear act of aggression against a sovereign Syria. U.S. Actions taken today further destroy the Russian-American relations.’...” **(Russia is warming up for Armageddon. Soon a peace program will be contracted for the Middle East nations – Daniel 11: 21, 24. It will be a peace contract for seven years but broken after 42 months – Daniel 9:27. Russia is the nation that then says: “...I will go up to the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell**

*safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations...*” – Ezekiel 38:11, 12. See the next report.)

### **Assad backers Iran, Russia threaten U.S. after missile strike**

**April 9, 2017 -- The Times of Israel** reports: “A command center jointly operated by Russia, Iran, Hezbollah and other groups supporting the Syrian regime issued a statement Sunday condemning the recent U.S. missile strike on a Syrian airbase and threatening to respond if such attacks continue.

‘The aggression against Syria oversteps all red lines. We will react firmly to any aggression against Syria and to any infringement of red lines, whoever carries them out,’ read a statement from the Syria-based joint operations room.

‘The United States knows very well our ability to react,’ said the statement published on the website of *Al-Watan*, a daily newspaper close to the regime.

The threat came in response to a U.S. strike on Thursday, ordered by U.S. President Donald Trump, which was retaliation for a deadly chemical weapons attack Tuesday in the northern Syrian province of Idlib that left at least 86 people dead, including 27 children, and allegedly employed the nerve agent sarin...”

# THE KINGS OF THE EAST

### **North Korea missile test fails before Pence visit**

**April 16, 2017 -- Breitbart.com** reports: “North Korea test-fired a

missile early Sunday, hours before U.S. Vice President Mike Pence arrived in Seoul for talks on curbing Pyongyang’s weapons programs, but U.S. officials said it exploded seconds after launch.

The latest launch came a day after Pyongyang held a defiant massive military parade as fears grew it may soon conduct another nuclear weapons test.

‘The missile blew up almost immediately,’ the U.S. Defense Department said of the early-morning launch from near Sinpo on the North’s east coast.

The type of missile was not clear.

On Saturday North Korea displayed nearly 60 missiles — including what is suspected to be a new intercontinental ballistic missile — at a parade to mark the 105th birthday of its founder Kim Il-Sung.

The North has a habit of firing off missiles to mark major political anniversaries, or as gestures of defiance to top U.S. officials visiting the region...” **(China and North Korea are prophesied to be top contenders and bloody warriors during the battle of Armageddon – Revelation 16:16. Revelation 16:12 pictures Kings coming to the Middle East, primarily China and North Korea to slay a third-part of mankind in atomic warfare. Revelation 9:14 – 18 the Oriental nations from the East join with Russia – the leader from the North – Daniel 11:44 – for the most horrendous war in history. See the next two reports.)**

### **U.S. VP Pence warns North Korea ‘all options are on the table’ in DMZ visit**

April 17, 2017 -- *SpaceDaily.com* reports: “U.S. Vice President Mike Pence used a visit to the heavily militarized border between the two

Koreas Monday to declare ‘all options are on the table’ in dealing with Pyongyang, the day after the North’s latest failed missile test.

Pence’s trip to the flashpoint frontier underscored Washington’s shifting policy towards the isolated state after years of nuclear and missile tests carried out in defiance of the international community.

The visit comes after a huge military parade during which North Korea showcased apparent intercontinental ballistic missiles, and as a U.S. carrier group converges on the Korean peninsula, ratcheting up tensions to their highest point in years.

Washington wants to achieve security ‘through peaceable means, through negotiations. But all options are on the table as we continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of South Korea,’ Pence said at the village of Panmunjom inside the Demilitarized Zone.

Pence, speaking at Freedom House, a few meters from the military demarcation line that he described as a ‘frontier of freedom,’ said America’s relationship with South Korea was ‘ironclad and immutable’...”

### **U.S. said preparing strike to ‘utterly destroy’ North Korean nuclear program**

April 16, 2017 -- *The Times of Israel* reports: “U.S. Vice President Mike Pence will arrive in Seoul Sunday,

flying into a geopolitical maelstrom amid a possible North Korean nuclear test and harsh U.S. warnings about a military response.

Pence’s first visit to South Korea — part of an Asia swing that also includes stops in Japan, Indonesia and Australia — was conceived months ago, but could hardly come at a time of higher tension.

On Sunday, the UK’s *Sunday Times* reported that top military advisers to U.S. President Donald Trump have told their British counterparts that Washington was considering a preemptive strike against North Korea’s nuclear program, and believed it had the firepower to neutralize it.

Citing ‘senior sources’ in the British government, the paper said the U.S. believed it would be able to ‘utterly destroy’ the key installations required to remove the threat the program posed to North Korea’s neighbors and the U.S.

According to the paper, U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis discussed a U.S. strike on North Korea with his British counterpart, Michael Fallon, some two weeks ago, and similar conversations have been held between British officials and Trump’s national security adviser, H.R. McMaster.

‘They’ll do anything it takes. Nothing is off the table. They think they’ve got the capabilities to target things and utterly destroy them. They are confident they know where everything is and can target it efficiently,’ one British official was quoted as saying...”

## **NEWS FROM ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST**

### **Updated Hamas charter still doesn’t recognize Israel**

April 3, 2017 -- *Israel National News* reports: “A Hamas political document leaked on Sunday reveals plans to soften the group’s charter so that it recognizes a Palestinian state

along the pre-1967 borders, but still does not recognize Israel, the *Yediot Aharonot* newspaper reports.

The document was published by the Lebanese news site *Al Mayadeen*. It is due to be officially released in the coming days by Hamas leader and

politburo chief Khaled Mashaal.

Hamas officials told the London-based *Asharq al-Awsat* newspaper last month that the group would release the document as part of its efforts to help its standing in relation to the international community and Arab

countries, chiefly Egypt.

‘It is possible to agree to a state within the 1967 borders, but it does not necessarily include recognition of Israel and does not mean that there is a relinquishment of historic Palestine,’ the new charter states, according to *Yediot Aharonot*.

‘The liberation of Palestine is the duty of the Palestinian people, and the resistance to the occupation is a legitimate right, and armed resistance is a strategic choice. Our right to develop and manage the means of resistance is included in the framework of managing the conflict and not at the expense of the principle of resistance,’ it adds...’ (Israel will always be a Jewish state. Though Satan has always stood against Israel — I Chronicles 21:1 — Yahweh God will send a fire against Magog [Russia] and her Arabic allies — Daniel 11:40; Isaiah 17:1; Ezekiel 38:5-7 and Psalms 83:5-7. In the heat of the battle to destroy Israel — Psalms 83:4 — the enemies of God will be crushed as Jesus, the Son of God sets up His kingdom. Isaiah 59:20 states: “...the Redeemer shall come to Zion” [Jerusalem], sent by His Father — Psalms 2:6 — to reign over the world from Jerusalem forever — Luke 1:32 — 33.)

### **Rouhani: Iran does not need ‘permission to build missiles’**

**April 16, 2017** -- *The Times of Israel* reports: “Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Saturday that Iran does not need ‘permission to build missiles,’ in an apparent response to recent sanctions by the United States on the Islamic Republic’s ballistic missile program.

‘Iran will ask no soul’s permission to build missiles,’ the state-run *Press TV* quoted him as saying.

Speaking at a defense ministry event to show off new Iranian-made weapons, Rouhani claimed that the country’s development of ballistic

missiles and other advanced arms is strictly for defensive purposes.

‘We have repeatedly declared that strengthening the defensive prowess of Iran’s Armed Forces is only aimed at defending the country and will never be used against another country,’ he said...’ (Ezekiel 38:5 predicts that **Russia, the Orient, and Persia [which changed its name to Iran in 1932] will see millions destroyed through atomic warfare in the Latter Years and Latter Days — Ezekiel 38:8, 16. This battle is described in Revelation 9:14 — 18: “Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.”**)

### **Ahmadinejad is back**

**April 12, 2017** -- *Israel National News* reports: “Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad submitted this morning, Wednesday, his candidacy to once again become president of Iran.

Ahmadinejad announced his registration as a candidate in Iran’s presidential election that is to take place in May, according to Iranian state media.

His announcement comes in direct opposition to the instruction of Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who had ordered Ahmadinejad not to run for the presidency again.

So far, 126 names appear on the candidate’s list — 120 men and 6 women.

Ahmadinejad has been notorious for his statements against the Jewish State, having expressed his readiness to ‘wipe out’ Israel...’ (Ahmadinejad, **Iran’s braggart, will be blotted out when Russia, China, and Islamic nations fight Israel and her allies during Armageddon — Revelation 16:16. The battle is described in Ezekiel 39:1 — 5: “...thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel: And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured...”** Soon the war of wars will arrive from the North and East [Russia and China] — Daniel 11:44. The battle is described in Ezekiel 38:1 — 5: “...the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief [Russian] prince of Meshech and Tubal: [Moscow and Tubal, or Tubalsk — Southwest of the Russian capital]: And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet:”)