

This Week's Developments

April 25 – May 1, 2021

- Dozens killed in crush at religious festival in Israel
- Suspected drone strike on tanker full of Iranian oil
- HMS Queen Elizabeth to stand up against Kremlin
- Biden signals a new approach towards Turkey
- Biden ready to meet Putin in June, says Moscow
- 2020: Europe's hottest year on record - EU scientists
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Dozens killed in crush at Lag Baomer religious festival in Israel

The Guardian, April 30, 2021



EVENT

At least 44 people have been killed and about 150 injured in a crush at a Jewish religious gathering in northern Israel attended by tens of thousands of people, in one of the country's worst peacetime disasters. The prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, who visited the scene briefly on Friday, said it was "one of the worst disasters that has befallen the state of Israel" and offered condolences to the families. Sunday would be a day of national mourning, he added. Ultra-Orthodox Jews had travelled to the Galilee tomb of the second-century sage Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai for annual Lag Baomer commemorations that include all-night prayer, mystical songs and dance.

COMMENT

These were scenes more reminiscent of Muslim worshippers who crowd together in huge numbers which sometimes result in stampedes and many being crushed to death. So what was this religious festival that attracted tens of thousands of Orthodox Jews? Lag BaOmer is a Jewish religious holiday. According to Jewish tradition it marks the death of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai who died in the 2nd century. He revealed "deepest secrets" of the kabbalah a "landmark text of Jewish mysticism". It is also connected to an ancient Jewish military leader who led a revolt against the Roman empire in 132 AD. Mysticism is the belief that God or spiritual truths can be known through individual insight, rather than by reasoning or study. It even has links to magic. So on the one hand they were celebrating mysticism and the other military might that overcame the Romans. But both are far from scriptural teaching. We can only know God and His ways through his Word the Bible – and nowhere else. We cannot trust in our own strength but in His strength. These sad deaths are a warning to trust in God.

BIBLE QUOTE

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD:
(Deuteronomy 18:10-12)

Three killed in suspected drone strike on tanker full of Iranian oil

The Times, April 26, 2021



EVENT

Up to three people died after an alleged drone attack on a fuel tanker that was helping to deliver Iranian oil off the coast of Syria. The raid follows a series of “tit-for-tat” explosions on Iranian and Israeli ships. Syrian state media, citing the country’s oil ministry, claimed that an “attack by a drone” on Saturday had caused a large fire on the oil tanker in the eastern Mediterranean, near the port of Baniyas. Iranian media tried yesterday to row back on the claims of a military strike, saying instead that a welding accident had caused the fire. However, analysts suggested that may be an attempt to cover a more serious incident that had happened despite Syrian government forces and their Russian allies being in the area. The vessel was initially described as Iranian but has been identified as the Wisdom, a Panamanian-flagged tanker based in Beirut that has been helping Iranian vessels to deliver oil to President Assad’s Syrian regime.

COMMENT

This incident comes three days after a Syrian officer was killed and three soldiers wounded in missile strikes launched by Israel, in response to a surface-to-air missile being fired from Syria toward the southern Negev desert, where the Dimona nuclear reactor is located. The exchange of fire came less than two weeks after Iran accused Israel of “terrorism” following an explosion at the Islamic republic’s Natanz nuclear facility. There are been a number of tit for tat attacks between Israel and Iran on ships in the Mediterranean and the Gulf region. This is possibly just the latest. Talks on the Iranian deal with America are stumbling as Tehran wants all sanctions lifted before a deal is struck. Biden wants Iran’s support for terror groups added to a new agreement. The Bible says a treacherous Iranian deal will unravel and lead to conflict.

BIBLE QUOTE

A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease. Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; (Isaiah 21:2-3)

HMS Queen Elizabeth to stand up against Kremlin in show of British seapower

The Times, April 26, 2021



EVENT

HMS Queen Elizabeth will lead the Royal Navy's new carrier strike group as it sets sail next month on its maiden operational deployment in what is billed as the "largest concentration of maritime and air power to leave the UK in a generation". The £3 billion warship, with eight RAF F35B stealth fighter jets on board, will head the group, which includes six navy ships, 14 helicopters, a company of Royal Marines and a submarine armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles. Part of the carrier strike group (CSG) will peel off and head to the Black Sea to support Nato maritime security operations amid tensions between Russia and Ukraine. HMS Queen Elizabeth will not enter the Black Sea, because of an international treaty prohibiting it from doing so. Units from the strike group are expected to visit more than 40 countries including India, Japan and Singapore, undertaking over 70 engagements, according to the Ministry of Defence.

COMMENT

Ben Wallace, UK defence secretary said: "When our carrier strike group sets sail next month, it will be flying the flag for global Britain — projecting our influence, signalling our power, engaging with our friends and reaffirming our commitment to addressing the security challenges of today and tomorrow. The entire nation can be proud of the dedicated men and women who for more than six months will demonstrate to the world that the UK is not stepping back but sailing forth to play an active role in shaping the international system of the 21st century." Interesting that just as Brexit has occurred Britain is seeking once again to play a global role in the world using ships as a way of projecting power. The Bible says though the the ships of Tarshish will be brought low.

BIBLE QUOTE

For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; ... And upon all the ships of Tarshish [Britain], and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. *(Isaiah 2:12-17)*

Joe Biden signals a new approach towards Turkey

The Interpreter, April 30, 2021



EVENT

Joe Biden fulfilled a campaign promise on 24 April, one that several of his predecessors had demurred on, when he **recognised the Armenian genocide of 1915**. In a carefully worded statement, released on the anniversary of the tragic events, Biden acknowledged the Armenians who were “deported, massacred, or marched to their deaths in a campaign of extermination” in eastern Anatolia, in what is now Turkey. Biden’s announcement came the day after he first made **phone contact with Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan**. Erdoğan declared that Biden’s statement was “**unfounded and unfair**” and would put US-Turkey relations on a difficult road. The Biden phone call to Erdoğan had been a long time coming. It is customary for newly incumbent US presidents to contact world leaders. To whom and in what order they make calls is indicative of foreign policy priorities and **how strongly the US values their relationships**.

COMMENT

Turkey **has in the past** been a long standing ally of the US. And one would have imagined therefore that Turkey would have been **near the top of Biden’s list**. **Obama** not only called Erdoğan but actually **addressed Turkey’s parliament**. **Trump** apparently **spoke to Erdoğan with some regularity** and applauded his strong-man persona. Biden is clearly taking a new approach to Turkey. It is not entirely unexpected that he initially gave Erdoğan the cold shoulder. **In a 2020 interview, he expressed misgivings about Turkey’s increasingly adventurist foreign policy** and about Erdoğan, calling the **Turkish president an “autocrat”**. With Bible in hand we know that **Turkey forms part of the Russian alliance that invade Israel**. We have long expected therefore Turkey to move away from the US and come under Russian influence. We are seeing this happen.

BIBLE QUOTE

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: Gomer, and all his bands; **the house of Togarmah [Turkey] of the north quarters,** (Ezekiel 38:15-16)

Biden ready to meet Vladimir Putin in June, says Moscow

The Times, April 26, 2021



EVENT

President Biden has offered to **meet President Putin face-to-face in June** to defuse escalating tensions between their two nations, a senior Kremlin aide said yesterday. The US leader, who marks his first 100 days in office on Friday, has had to contend with Russia's aggressive posturing towards Ukraine and its brutal treatment of the opposition leader Alexei Navalny, as well as the continued fallout from the alleged Russian hacking of American elections and government agencies. Biden, 78, is expected to **attend the G7 summit** in Cornwall on June 11-13 and then **visit Brussels to meet EU and Nato leaders**. His first overseas trip as president will emphasise America's **close ties** to its traditional allies after the retreat from its global leadership role under President Trump. **That agenda could be overshadowed by a high-stakes meeting with his Russian counterpart**. When Jen Psaki, the White House press secretary, unveiled the itinerary on Friday she added that there would be "further details to share about this trip soon,". That prompted speculation about a meeting with Putin.

COMMENT

The former Russian president and prime minister **Dmitry Medvedev** said in an article published this week by state media that **relations between the two superpowers had "shifted from rivalry to confrontation"**, adding that any improvement in the situation would depend on whether the Biden administration had the "wisdom of compromise". Putin has responded to the offer of a phonecall with a "chilling response" according to some news agencies. Russia launched a supersonic missile the Black Sea this week. The Vulkan firing comes shortly before the arrival of two Royal Navy warships amid deep tension in Ukraine over fears of a Russian invasion. **Whatever Biden does we know it will fail because the Bible says there will be a clash between them...**

BIBLE QUOTE

And at the time of the end shall **the king of the south push at him [Gog]**: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land [Israel], and many countries shall be overthrown: *(Daniel 11:40-41)*

2020 was Europe's hottest year on record - EU scientists

Reuters, April 22, 2021



EVENT

Europe experienced its hottest year on record last year, while the Arctic suffered a summer of extreme wildfires partly due to low snow cover as climate change impacts intensified, the European Union's observation service said on Thursday. As world leaders prepared to brandish their plans to fight climate change at a U.S.-led summit on Thursday, EU scientists issued a stark reminder that the impacts of a warmer world are already here. Europe's average annual temperature in 2020 was the highest on record and at least 0.4 degrees Celsius above the next five warmest years -- all of which took place in the last decade, the Copernicus Earth observation service said. "Temperatures are increasing in all seasons in Europe," said Freja Vamborg, senior scientist at Copernicus. Copernicus' temperature records go back to 1950. But last year was also Europe's hottest on record when checked against datasets beginning in 1850, it said.

COMMENT

Globally, Copernicus Earth said 2020 was one of the world's three hottest years on record, confirming findings released this week by the World Meteorological Organization. The average temperature in Arctic Siberia last year broke records by a large margin at 4.3 degrees Celsius above the 1981-2020 average. The physical earth itself is warning mankind that all is not well. The planet is laden down with sin, corruption and godlessness. Mankind is slowly but surely destroying the earth. We know if Jesus Christ did not intervene by returning to the earth that mankind would one day destroy every living creature on it. We are told this in Matthew 24. No flesh would be saved during the coming time of trouble. But thanks be to God – Christ WILL return...

BIBLE QUOTE

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

(Matthew 24:21-22)

ADDITIONAL AND SUPPORTING ARTICLES

This Week's **DebkaFile Review** (world events through the bi-focals of Israeli military intelligence)

Alexei Navalny ally says Biden must sanction Putin's associates

Russian troops start pulling back from Ukrainian border - ABC News

Pope Francis Calls For Using COVID to Re-Direct World Onto 'New Path' Toward Economic Revolution

Israel May Have Destroyed Iranian Centrifuges Simply by Cutting Power

Iran to enrich uranium to 60% after 'wicked' nuclear site attack - BBC News

Water fight- Israel turns off Jordan's water supply amid drought and 'personal frictions' — RT World News

Iran and China sign 25-year cooperation agreement - Reuters

Iran blamed as Israeli-owned ship said hit by missile near Oman - The Times of Israel

Navalny Joins the Ranks of Russia's Religious Dissidents - The Moscow Times

What Does China's Latest Five-Year Plan Mean for Russia- - The Moscow Times

The revolt of the public- Martin Gurri on a world without trust - Vox