

Dear Lovers of Truth,

For a number of years now we have been witness to the disintegration of **Syria, Iraq and other parts of the Levant**. The defeat of **Isis and its Allies** is perhaps the best example of a **“Pyrrhic Victory”** in the whole history of warfare. **Syria lies in ruins!**

King Pyrrhus of Epirus gained a victory over the Romans in 279 BC at the battle of Asculum in Apulia. The Epirus forces, although they won the battle, suffered extremely severe losses of the elite of their army.

Videos of Syria show ghost cities of shattered, empty buildings, deserted streets with scattered shards of concrete blocking the roads, while very few surviving, isolated men wander aimlessly among the devastated ruins, resembling ***“the ruined city of Dresden after WW2”*!**

Only Damascus has escaped relatively intact! But how long can this protective cocoon last? Already the **UK** is calling for **“military action against Damascus”** in retaliation for the **poison gas attacks** blamed on the Syrian Government forces!

Although **Isaiah Ch. 17** primarily applies to Sennacherib’s invasion in the time of King Hezekiah, its application to **“the time of the end”** fits well into the present scene when all the nations mentioned in this chapter have joined the **“latter-day Assyrian” [Iran]** in calling for ***the destruction of Israel!***

Isaiah 17 [LXX] 1 The word against Damascus. Behold, Damascus shall be taken away from among cities and shall become a ruin; abandoned forever, 2 To be a fold and resting place for flocks, and there shall be none to go after them. 3 And she shall no longer be a strong place for Ephraim to flee to, and there shall be no longer a kingdom in Damascus, or a remnant of Syrians for thou art no better than the children of Israel, even than their glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

Damascus revived after its episode with the Assyrians to be the menace it has been to the survival of the State of Israel since establishment in **1948 – 70 long years**. **Latter-Day Ephraim** is **“the West Bank” (which Israel calls ‘Samaria’)** which, under Palestinian leader Abbas, is in the process of combining with murderous **Hamas**.

With hostilities drawing to a close in Syria, **the Hezbollah** are returning to their home base in **Lebanon** in readiness for an attack on **Israel**. However, the following article indicates that there are quite a few obstacles in their pursuit of yet another **Pyrrhic Victory**.

Russian Defence Minister, Shoigu Assures Israel: No Unsolicited Wars Will Flare in Areas under Russian Army Control | Debka 27-Oct-17

Rare insights into Moscow’s Middle East strategy were offered to Israeli leaders by Russian Defense Minister Gen. Sergey Shoigu, No. 2 in the Kremlin hierarchy, during his first visit to Israel on October 16-18.

Although formally a guest of Israel’s Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman, his mission was to set Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and the Israeli Defense Forces high command straight on Russian strategy in Syria - most particularly with regard to Iran.

DEBKA Weekly’s military and intelligence sources can reveal here for the first time some of the key points the Russian visitor made in those briefings.

Most importantly, **Israel must understand that wherever Russia has a military presence, warfare cannot break out against its will**. With the weight of a world power behind him, the Russian minister emphasized that **should Iran, Syria or Hizballah decide to make war on Israel, Moscow would not allow it to happen**. Local minor infractions may occur- such as the Syrian missile attack on Israeli jets on the day Shoigu landed in Tel Aviv - but **Moscow is resolved not to allow such incidents to burgeon into a full-blown or even a limited conflict**.

Israel had gained a protective shield from the presence of Russian army, air force and navy in Syria, Shoigu insisted, and its leaders ought to rely on those forces to prevent the outbreak of a comprehensive war offensive led by Iran.

The second key point repeatedly made by the Russian minister was that **Moscow would not allow Israel’s borders to heat up as fronts of aggression, a scenario which has given Israeli leaders sleepless nights**.

****He avoided elaborating on this pledge and ducked pressing Israeli questions for details. ****

Consequently, it was **not clear** whether his assurance applied to the **Lebanese as well as the Syrian border and therefore covered potential Hizballah aggression from Lebanon as well as Syria**.

This most troubling point was still vague when Shoigu ended his visit. He was a bit more forthcoming on other areas of concern.

Russia was not aware of the presence of Iranian troops in Syria, aside from a small number of officers, he said, and challenged Netanyahu and Eisenkott for proof to back up their claim. **He also knocked down a report that Iran was about to set up an air and sea base in Syria. Russia would not permit this, he said.**

As for Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan's repeated threat to invade Syria and conquer its northern regions, especially embattled Idlib, **Shoigu said firmly Moscow would not allow the Turkish army invade Syria - and certainly not seize control of Idlib.**" he said. There will be no Turkish conquests deep inside Syria," he said.

His words were quickly borne out, say DEBKA Weekly's military sources. Ankara refrained from following through on its announcement of a major Turkish operation in Idlib, and limited itself to posting eight lookout points just inside its northern border. There were no signs of preparations for a large-scale incursion.

On the Kurdish question, the Russian minister spoke at length on the Kurds of Syria. Moscow, he said, had an interest in safeguarding the status of the three Kurdish enclaves of Hasake-Qamishli, Kobane and Afrin, which must continue to exist and enjoy a large measure of autonomy within the Syrian state.

Shoigu disclosed that Moscow had also given Jordan a commitment to safeguard its border with Syria, similar to the one he now offered Israel.

The Russian minister finally outlined the Kremlin's plans for Syria's political future. He spoke of the de-escalation process ongoing at present between the various military forces operating in the field - both on behalf of the government and the rebels, through the creation of separation zones. Moscow sees this process as evolving into the gradual dying-down of war hostilities, making way for a process of "transition."

During that stage, Moscow would compel President Bashar Assad to sit down with the Syrian opposition and accept a power-sharing arrangement.

Were Netanyahu and Eisenkott persuaded that Moscow could be relied on to take care of **the threats building up from Israel's northern borders?** The Russian minister will no doubt have reported to Putin that the Israelis were not happy about being left up in the air over **Hizballah, the cause of their main security headache.** They see **Iran's Lebanese proxy popping up everywhere in Syria and free to do as it pleases.**

THE POROUS LEBANON-ISRAEL-GAZA BORDERS

The future, however, is in God's hands! Israel's border with **Lebanon**, like that with **Gaza**, is riddled with tunnels constructed by Israel's fanatical Arab enemies. They are, in most cases, well-constructed. In Gaza, Hamas surreptitiously used thousands of tons of concrete which had been marked for housing construction. Hamas used these tunnels effectively during its last war against Israel – but suffered counter-attacks from the IDF which now has Israeli-designed and manufactured machinery capable of exposing and permanently sealing these tunnels.

Surely **Israel's God-given ingenuity** will have devised a **counter-measure** to these tunnels. After all, **tunnels can be used in both directions.** A small cruise missile, or laser guided rocket – even a motorised robotic wheel-chair containing captured Arab ordnance marked "Return to sender" could cause havoc on the Lebanese or Gaza end of a tunnel or two.

MUSINGS ON 'THE LAST DAYS'

(a) **Psalm 83, Isaiah 11, Joel 2 & 3, Zechariah 12 & 14** speak of a huge combined Arab force attacking **Israel in the Last Days** – each predicting a tough outcome for **Israel.** (b) Not-only-but-also, **Daniel Ch. 11:40+** (*'kings of the north and south'* conflict) finishes in **Israel (Ch.12).** Could this be a "pincer movement" (a + b) - orchestrated by **Iran (Ancient Persia)?**

Habakkuk Ch. 3.3 is emphatic that **"God came from Teman (the South), and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah! His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise."**

This verse sums up **Deuteronomy 33:2+** used by Moses as a blessing on **Israel's ultimate destiny! Mount Paran (synonym for Mt Sinai)** is in the area where most of the wilderness wanderings and camps were situated. It is east of Idumea, south of Palestine and is now part of Saudi Arabia and is also known as **'Jebel Musa' (Mount of Moses)** by the Arabians.

It appears that the same scene is indicated in **Isaiah 63:**

1 Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

Could this mean that (a) Those Arab nations in **Psalm 8, Isaiah 11, Joel 2 & 3, Zechariah 12 & 14** are successful in conquering *half Jerusalem* when (b) **Jesus**, (leaving His gathered elect in Mt Paran), **comes from destroying the king of the north** (who will have conquered *Arabia, Egypt & Sinai Peninsula in the south*) **to deliver Israel and re-assemble the elect there?**

The time-frame left for the picture to clarify is diminishing rapidly! **Our main objective is to be ready to meet our Lord Jesus, no matter what the sequence of events may be!**

Yours in the Master's Service, *Art*