Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has announced that he believes Iran should be given a broad-ranging package of incentives by the international community in an effort to end the current impasse over its nuclear programme. The package could include security guarantees for the Iranian regime, along with a more prominent position in negotiations on Middle East issues. While Lavrov's proposals are not new, these offers were part of the original package of incentives offered by Javier Solana on
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, it is surprising that Russia would offer them now considering Iran's track record in defying United Nations resolutions.

Quote: *""I think the 'Six' could make the following step: directly put concrete offers on the negotiating table, give Iran security guarantees and ensure a more distinguished place in negotiations on the situation in the Middle East," Lavrov said. Lavrov did not specify what security guarantees might be offered but said a combination of negotiations and incentives could help solve the row over Iran's nuclear programme and wider Middle East problems.*

Lavrov's suggestion comes as Lebanon teeters on the brink of a civil war, after the Iranian-backed Hizbullah terrorist organization mounted a coup in the capital Beirut last week. It also follows increasing anti-Semitic statements emanating from Iran, calling for the destruction of the state of Israel. Last week the European Union condemned remarks made by the Iranian President, in which he likened the Jewish state to a
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stinking corpse
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that was doomed to disappear. And as US President Bush arrives in the Middle East for Israel's 60th anniversary celebrations, Ahmadinejad has threatened that the regional Arab nations stand ready to
destroy
the Jewish state at their first opportunity...

Quote: *""The Zionist regime is dying," Ahmadinejad said in a speech in the northern city of Gorgan, referring to Israel. "The criminals imagine that by holding celebrations... they can save the Zionist regime from death." "They should know that regional nations hate this fake and criminal regime and if the smallest and briefest chance is given to regional nations they will destroy [it]," said Ahmadinejad, who often rails against Israel and the United States.*

As we can see, just as the Bible prophesied, Iran is fast becoming a major player on the world stage, and especially in regard to its staunch opposition of Israel. The book of Ezekiel predicts that in the latter days, following the regathering of the Jewish people to the land, an Islamic alliance would launch a massive invasion of Israel. This Islamic alliance will be made up of many peoples, but several of these nations are specifically mentioned by name. They are Iran, Sudan, Libya and Turkey. And the Bible states that the leader of this Islamic alliance, who it is believed may come from a country in the Caspian and Black Sea areas, will act as a guard to these Arab nations that make war on Israel. Russia's proximity to this region, along with its active support for the present Iranian regime, leads many to believe this could be the country that will act as a protectorate to the nations that invade Israel in the latter days. And so Lavrov's desire to offer Iran security guarantees and a greater say in Middle East politics is quite significant.

Ezekiel 38:3-7
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 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: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: [and] many people with thee. Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them.

Despite the Iranian government's opposition to Israel and despite the constant threat of war over Iran's nuclear programme, God is working miracles in this nation. Iranian Muslims are seeing visions of Jesus Christ appearing to them, and many are getting saved as a result. One Iranian exile who is now living in my own country had such an experience. This man and his father had a very good business in Iran. He had a vision of the Lord calling him, saying to follow Jesus Christ. He questioned why he would do that, seeing he had such a good business and needed nothing. The Lord said, "But I know you are miserable inside, and I can give you joy that you have never experienced before". He became a Christian and a Fatwa was issued against him. So he left his business in Iran and fled for England, where he began preaching the gospel to fellow Muslims. Around 600 Muslims got saved, and he had to flee to Northern Ireland. He now he lives in my country where he continues to witness to others about Jesus Christ. We may be having him at our house to give his testimony some day, and if he permits, I may be able to upload his testimony to the website. So as you can see, while Western nations may be for launching a war on Iran as soon as possible, we need to remember the many Christians who are in Iran and other Islamic nations, who need our prayers and support. Praise God that the gospel knows no borders, and that God is not limited by the will of man. You too can have this joy, by trusting in Jesus Christ for salvation today.

John 15:10-11
If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and [that] your joy might be full.

Source Reuters , AFP , Haaretz