

ISRAEL INTERCESSORY PRAYER ITEMS

July 10-17, 2020

1. ALIYAH UPDATES:

Israel is expecting a quarter of a million Olim (immigrants) in the next 3-5 years, Jewish Agency Chairman Isaac Herzog told the Knesset's Immigration and Absorption Committee, a wave of immigration following the global Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. Committee chairman David Bittan stated at the Knesset session on Monday (Jul 6) that "relations with the Jews of the Diaspora are important and vital, both for Aliyah (immigration) and for the identification of Diaspora Jewish leaders with the State of Israel," and emphasized the necessary assistance to the small communities, especially in the fields of education, communal activities and security. He noted that the large communities have been severely affected by Corona-related mass deaths, profound damage to the community and its educational activity and the wave of anti-Semitism, and therefore a significant wave of immigration is expected in the next year and a half.

Four million Jews have immigrated to Israel through the Jewish Agency in over 70 years from 45 countries, and Israel should now expect a particularly large wave of immigration in the next 3-5 years of some 250,000 immigrants, most of them young and freelance professionals. The Jewish Agency's call center is flooded with inquiries, an increase of 50% from English speaking countries and 70% from French-speaking countries.

In 2019 35,000 immigrants arrived in Israel, including 24,651 from the former Soviet Union block, 3,963 from European countries, 3,539 from North America, 1,746 from Latin America, 663 from Ethiopia, 422 from South Africa, 318 from other countries in the Middle East, and 189 from Australia and New Zealand. The increase in immigration has been recorded over the past decade, and in 2009 there were only 16,000 immigrants.

The number of immigration cases opened in the past three months, with North America registering 573% in file openings, 269% in France, and 99% in Latin America. Nefesh B'Nefesh, which facilitates Aliyah from North America and the UK, saw a 100% increase in North American interest in Aliyah in May in comparison to numbers from May 2019, the highest recorded month of Aliyah applications that Nefesh B'Nefesh has experienced in the past 18 years, since its founding.

The city of Arad, situated in the south of Israel, is preparing for some 10,000 Olim (new immigrants) who will arrive in the city in the coming future, as the Jewish state prepares for a massive wave of Aliyah following the global upheaval generated by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. More than a third of Arad's 27,500 residents have immigrated to Israel in the last twenty years, most of them from the countries in the former Soviet Union areas. The Knesset's Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora Committee toured the city on Sunday, and Committee head David Bittan emphasized that preparations should be made for the expected wave of immigration, especially in 2022, by preparing and coordinating government ministries, local authorities and the Jewish Agency.

Lord God, we bless You for verses like Ezekiel 36: 24-28 which sets out this sequence of events very clearly and we praise You that this is ultimately for Your holy name's sake (Ezek. 36:22-23). Thank You that the head of the Jewish Agency just said Israel could see upwards of 250,000 new immigrants over the next five years – and many will be part of the younger generation (Isa. 43:5-7). Inspire Israel's leaders and its people to prepare for this influx today (Psa. 107:31-38; Isa. 57:14). Lord, use the current chaos in the nations – the rise of anti-Semitism, the Covid-10 pandemic and the riots and goals to overturn Western democracies – to drive Your people home (Jer. 16:16). Wake up liberal Western Jews who think that what happened in Europe in the 1930s cannot repeat itself now. Shake their very roots

over their refusal to learn the lessons of history (Eccl. 1:9). Bring home many wealthy Jews to contribute to this nation's economic recovery (Isa. 60:9). Bring home many poor and needy Jews, and let Israel welcome them generously (Jer. 31:8-9). Provide all the finances and all the papers that are needed for Jews to make Aliyah (Isa. 60:8-11). Concerning salvation, Lord, only You know which Jews will not be alive to enter 2021. Please have mercy and reveal Your Son to them before they enter their eternal state (Isa. 42:6-7; John 6:44).

Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Behold, I will save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west; I will bring them back and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be My people and I will be their God in truth and righteousness.'" (Zechariah 8:7)

2. DETAILS ON ISRAEL'S ENTEBBE RESCUE REVEALED FORTY FOUR YEARS LATER – (by Pramit Pal Chaudhuri)

On July 4, 1976, Israeli commandos rescued hostages from an Air France flight that was hijacked by a group of Arab and German terrorists and diverted to Entebbe, Uganda. Mossad agent Avner Avraham and special forces officer Rami Sherman recently spoke about what they experienced.

En route to Entebbe, British-Israeli nurse Patricia Martel deliberately cut herself and, bleeding profusely, claimed she was having a miscarriage. The hijackers let her off when the plane stopped in Benghazi in Libya to refuel. Sherman said, "She flew back to London from Benghazi and was immediately met by agents of MI6 and Mossad. They gave her thousands of photographs. She identified the terrorists, told how many there were and what kind of weapons they had."

Avner Abraham recalled that Uganda's brutal ruler, Idi Amin, had received Israeli military training when he was a soldier. One of his former trainers got on the line and "spoke with him on the telephone five times" to glean what was on his mind. An Israeli engineer showed up with blueprints of the airport terminal where the hostages were being held. His company had won the tender to construct the building. Another enterprising Israeli, using a small Cessna propeller plane, flew repeatedly over the airport taking photographs and flew back home to deliver them.

During the raid on Entebbe, another Israeli commando detachment raided a nearby Ugandan airbase and destroyed 11 MiG fighters parked there to assure they would not be scrambled in pursuit.

Abba, thank You for this very successful raid that took place 44 years ago! Your handprints are over every detail of the successful evacuation of Your people from Uganda. We thank You for the release of the new information that has come forth. We bless You for Your faithfulness to Israel and its people and its land!

"You are my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob. Through You we will push down our enemies: through Your name we will tread them under that rise up against us." (Psalm 44:4-5)

3. ISRAEL NATIONALIZES EL AL – 17 YEARS AFTER PRIVATIZATION – After 17 years almost to the day following the 2003 privatization of Israel's national carrier El Al, El Al's board of directors decided on Monday afternoon to adopt the Finance Ministry's rescue plan, according to which the company will receive a \$250 million loan with a state-provided 75% loan guarantee, along with the issuance of \$150 million shares to the general public. The state will pledge to buy the shares that the public will not buy, which would facilitate the de facto nationalization of the company.

The deal is conditioned on El Al signing collective bargaining agreements with its employees that reflect efficiency measures required by the Finance Ministry, as well as the approval of the government and the Knesset Finance Committee.

Calcalist pointed out Tuesday that the move was made necessary because El Al's controlling owner, Knafaim Holdings, which is controlled by the Borowitz family, does not have the will or the ability, or a combination of the two, to inject new capital into El Al. But in order to emerge out of its current slow slide into an open grave while all around the airline industry is fighting for its life, El Al cannot continue carrying a heavy debt on its back. And so, the Israeli government is giving it a life saver: \$150 million through shares to a company worth about \$70 million, plus \$250 million in a loan, now start swimming.

Presently, El al is worth about 14% of its value three and a half years ago, and is mired in labor disputes, which it solves and reneges on periodically. But Israel must have a national carrier, if only because no one else would fly out to rescue those Israelis who get stuck on a mountaintop in Peru or in a swamp in Bangladesh. On July 1, El Al Israel Airlines canceled all its flights and suspended operations indefinitely, having reported massive losses over the first half of 2020 and with its pilots refusing to fly over a labour crisis. CEO Gonen Usiskhin ordered all of El Al's aircraft to return to Israel.

Lord, we pray that El Al Airlines will be saved and re-established in strength and vigor. Aliyah must continue as Your Word prophecies. We bless the government as it makes decisions to rebuild the financial foundations of this important organization. We pray for rapid restoration of flights. We pray for resolution to labour disputes. We pray for successful sales of shares on the Stock Exchange.

"He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him." (Psalm 91:15)

4. ISRAEL POST ELECTION UPDATES:

Israel currently faces the biggest deficit in history with \$16.9 billion. In June 2019, the deficit was \$6.5 billion. The causes for this are the government's expenses due to the coronavirus pandemic and the reduction of tax-generated income. The accumulated deficit of the government for the past 12 months is \$26 billion, which is 6.4% of the Israeli Gross Domestic Product. With 6 months remaining to the year's end, Israel still does not have a budget as PM Netanyahu is pushing to approve a budget until the year ends, and Alternate PM and Defense Minister Benny Gantz is pushing for a two-year budget, saying this would encourage stability.

PM Netanyahu told Israelis in remarks broadcast to the nation Thursday (Jul 9) night that it is "essential" to pass a one-year budget by the end of next week in order to get the economy on its feet. Netanyahu presented an economic plan which he said will include grants – not loans – to provide support to some 400,000 independent business owners; the prime minister said the money "will be transferred into your bank accounts by next week, with no red tape!" Those Israelis who are not self-employed, and who are not yet back at work Netanyahu said, will continue to receive unemployment benefits in their bank accounts through June 2021. Netanyahu warned that Israel is in a brutal second wave of the novel coronavirus, one that is showing no mercy, and which will kill Israelis if they are not careful to protect themselves with the guidelines provided by the Health Ministry. He underlined that the government is doing everything possible to avoid another general lockdown, but warned that if Israelis do not abide by the Health Ministry guidelines and the morbidity rates continue to rise, there may be no other choice, because it may become a matter between "life and death – literally survival – and the economy."

Israel's Defense Minister / Alternate PM Benny Gantz entered quarantine on Wednesday (Jul 1) after it was learned that he was exposed to COVID-19. Gantz came into contact with an individual about a week and a half ago who later was diagnosed with coronavirus. The defense minister had not been ill during that time.

"Gantz feels good and will continue to manage the ministry's matters and the rest of his public work from isolation," The minister's office said in a statement. Gantz decided to enter quarantine until a coronavirus test and an epidemiological survey are completed.

IDF Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi entered quarantine Thursday (July 9) after confirming a member of the military with whom he met last week had been diagnosed with COVID-19. A number of senior military officers also entered a 14-day quarantine at that time as well, the IDF said. In addition, 10,000 active soldiers and civilian contractors have been placed in quarantine. The IDF decided it will not lock down any bases, but has reduced weekend leaves to once every three weeks.

Direct Polls on Thursday (Jul 9) night published the results of a poll that asked respondents their opinion about the best man to take Israel out of its current economic crisis; who is responsible for the eruption of a second coronavirus wave in Israel; and who is responsible for the economic crisis that followed the coronavirus restrictions. The poll asked the public who would be the most fitting person to rescue Israel from the coronavirus crisis and the economic uncertainty:

- 50% see Netanyahu as the culprit who bears the central responsibility for the second wave outbreak.
- 41% of Israelis point to 'the general public who do not follow the guidelines are responsible
- 58% said Netanyahu was responsible for the economic crisis by not promoting adequate compensations for the affected sectors and individuals.
- 34% blame the Finance Ministry officials and the tax authority who delay the payments the government committed to making.
- 9% place the blame on additional factors.

A key member of PM Netanyahu's defense team, Attorney Michah Fettman, on Wednesday (Jul 1) morning resigned from the team, ten days ahead of the next hearing of the prime minister's criminal cases at the Jerusalem District Court. Fettman joined Netanyahu's defense team several months ago. His firm's website describes him as "one of Israel's leading white-collar law lawyers," representing celebrity clients in lawsuits involving "bribery, fraud, breach of trust, financial misconduct, antitrust violations, manslaughter, and negligent homicide." Fettman resigned from the team after the Permits Committee at the Prime Minister's Office did not allow Netanyahu to receive a \$10 million gift from his associate, American businessman Spencer Partridge, for the purpose of financing his legal defense. The media surmises that Fettman's resignation is one of Netanyahu's maneuvers in trying to postpone the hearings in his trial.

Lord, PM Netanyahu has looked very frustrated and exhausted lately. Strengthen him until Your time for him to lead Israel's government is over (Psa. 80:17). Encourage and remind him of his stated goal to establish sovereignty in Judea-Samaria and the Jordan Valley (Mark 10:9). We pray that he will walk in honesty and integrity as he enters the trial meetings in the months ahead. Remind Defense Minister Benny Gantz that he does not represent the majority of Israelis and that he needs to co-lead with PM Netanyahu, instead of resisting everything Netanyahu tries to do (Amos 3:3). Please heal any mistrust between these men that has been placed there by the enemy's manipulation, or has been exaggerated by other people (2 Cor. 2:10-11). Clear away all extraneous noise between government ministers and let them truly hear one another. Bring the government in line with Your priorities for Israel today, and eliminate all else (Psa. 40:8). Work in Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi's heart so that he humbles himself to see how much he needs experienced advice in his new, very crucial, role (Prov. 1:5; 9:9). Lord, turn Benny Gantz's heart to see that a

short term budget is what is needed today (Prov. 21:1). Anoint Finance Minister Katz to know what to do and what not to do in this crisis (Luke 19:15). Surround each responsible leader with capable and wise advisors (Prov. 8:14; 11:14). Let there be a budget to meet short-term needs yet have long-term vision (Job 42:12; Isa. 46:10).

“First of all, I exhort that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

5. ISRAEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATES:

The Israel Health Ministry reported 1,262 new coronavirus cases on Wednesday (Jul 8), bringing the number of active cases to 15,138 on Thursday (compared with 11,856 active cases on Monday morning). 115 patients are in serious condition (compared with 89 on Monday), of whom 41 are intubated (compared with 32 on Monday). The death toll is 346 (compared with 332 on Monday). 412 patients are being treated in hospitals (compared with 332 on Monday).

The Health Ministry reported Wednesday (Jul 8) morning that there were 1,320 new cases of the novel coronavirus in the past 24-hour period – the highest total since the start of the outbreak in the Jewish State in March. But the new cases have raised the total number of Israelis currently ill with the virus to 14,516. The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Israel since the start of the pandemic rose to 33,175. There was also a spike in the number of seriously ill patients to 113 by Wednesday evening, with 39 requiring ventilator support, and another 82 patients in fair, or moderate condition. Six more deaths were recorded by Wednesday evening since Tuesday morning, raising the death toll to 344. There have been 12 deaths in the past two days.

PM Netanyahu met Wednesday (Jul 8) night with Health Minister Yuli Edelstein and National Security Council chief Meir Ben-Shabbat to discuss rising COVID-19 morbidity data ahead of a decision to impose a lockdown on at least nine Israeli cities. Netanyahu directed the Ministerial Committee on Declaring Restricted Zones be convened immediately as soon as the Health Ministry finalized its recommendations. Although the Prime Minister’s Office did not reveal which cities and/or towns are on the list for lockdowns, the following communities are under consideration: Jerusalem, Bnei Brak, Ashdod, Modi’in Illit, Ramle, Beit Shemesh, Kiryat Malachi, Lod and Ra’anana. The city of Beitar Illit was already declared a restricted zone on Tuesday, and placed under a seven-day lockdown effective Wednesday afternoon.

The Health Ministry is considering the possibility of shortening the mandatory quarantine period for Israelis who have been potentially exposed to the coronavirus. The period under consideration is seven to 10 days, down from the current 14-day period. Health Ministry officials are also discussing the possibility of abandoning the requirement of testing those who are asymptomatic, and cutting the authority of family doctors who refer patients for COVID-19 tests.

Coronavirus has claimed the lives of at least 2,200 Jews outside of Israel, the USA, and the former Soviet Union. Jewish Agency figures showed that 33 Jews had died from the virus in Middle Eastern countries (predominantly Turkey), 50 from Mexico, 40 from Chile, 70 from Argentina and 100 from Brazil. Other Jewish communities hit hard included those in Italy, France, South Africa, and Austria. The Jewish Agency has provided \$9.6 million in interest-free loans to Jewish organizations in 23 countries, while receiving requests for double that amount.

In a historic move, the United Arab Emirates's (UAE) leading technology company Group 42 (G42) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with two Israeli hi-tech companies: Rafael Advanced Defense Systems (Rafael) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). The three companies plan on exploring collaborations in research and development in order to offer effective solutions against COVID-19. The companies, which celebrated their cooperation in a virtual signing ceremony, intend to use each one of their fields of expertise and technologies to develop medical initiatives to combat coronavirus. UAE's G42 has been working hard since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic to provide effective solutions relating to the deadly virus, including a recent end-to-end detection solution found in cooperation with Oxford Nanopore Technologies.

The truth of how dangerous this virus is and how it spreads is still clouded with much confusion. Please bring clarity to Believers as how to pray (Rom. 8:26; 1 Cor. 14:15). We thank You for working all things for good to those who are the called – and that means this nation and the Jewish people as well as all born-again believers (Rom. 8:28-30; Psa. 135:4; Isa. 41:8). Thank You Lord for guarding Israel from the worst effects of this plague (Jer. 31:10). Lord, miraculously bring Israel's leaders into one accord over a godly plan to deal with this crisis. Pour out Your wisdom and insight on them to create a simple, but effective, plan (Prov. 19:21). Surround Health Minister Edelstein with the godly advisors he needs to fight this war (Prov. 24:6). Clear away all the confusion that has risen in dealing with Israel's "second wave" (Isa. 61:7). Aid Israel's economic renewal in all areas (Jer. 32:41-44). Move on Israelis to act more responsibility towards their neighbours (Lev. 19:17-18).

I call heaven and earth to witness this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore, choose life, that both you and your seed may live.” (Deuteronomy 30:19)

6. ISRAEL TERROR ATTACKS UPDATES:

Kibbutz Migdal Oz, just south of Efrat, was attacked on Tuesday (Jul 8) night by an Arab terrorist who threw a firebomb at its southern gate, the 16th time such an attack has occurred in the past two months. Footage of the attack taken by a security camera shows a car with an Israeli license plate stopping near the gate. A man emerges from the car, ignites the bomb and throws it, and then quickly returns to the car which speeds away toward the nearby Arab town of Beit Fajr. The attack caused no damage or injuries. Kibbutz Migdal Oz, in Gush Etzion, shares a joint route with Beit Fajr, which is under the control of the Palestinian Authority (PA). Many terrorists and attacks have emerged from Beit Fajr.

PM Netanyahu announced last Sunday (Jul 5) that Mossad director Yossi Cohen's tenure would be extended by six months. PM Netanyahu asked Cohen to extend his term at the helm of the intelligence agency “due to the security challenges facing the state of Israel.” Cohen agreed to the request and will begin his sixth term in office in January 21, 2021. If Cohen is interested in entering politics after his service is over, this will delay the start of his pre-politics “cooling off” period. Cohen's name has been casually mentioned as a possible heir to Netanyahu.

The IDF reported that in 2019 there were 290 firebomb incidents and 1,469 stone-throwing incidents committed by Palestinians in Judea-Samaria. The Israel Security Agency reported 1,327 Palestinian terrorist acts in 2019. However, according to the State Department's Israel 2019 Human Rights Report, published in March, Palestinians committed 101 acts of violence against Israeli civilians in Judea-Samaria, “primarily stone-throwing.”

We ask You, Lord, to station Your angelic hosts throughout Israel (2 Kings 6:16-17; Psalm 35:5-6; Malachi 1:5). Protect Your people, we pray. May each Israeli turn to You for their protection and covering. Use the tension and fear to draw each Israeli to Yourself, we pray. Lord, keep security forces alert in Jerusalem's Old City, at checkpoints, and elsewhere

(Psalms 121:4). Help the security forces, many of whom are only teenagers, to be quick to know who are the perpetrators of violence and who are the innocent caught in the wrong place and the wrong time (Jeremiah 31:10). Remove all distractions from Israeli security forces. (Psalms 48:12-13) We trust in You to constantly watch over Israel (Psalms 37:40). Especially, protect the residents of Judea-Samaria who face so much violence on a daily basis.

“The God of my Rock, in Him will I trust. He is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, my refuge, and my Savior. You save me from violence.” (2 Samuel 22:3)

7. JUDEA-SAMARIA UPDATES:

British PM Boris Johnson has expressed to PM Netanyahu that he is concerned about Israel’s plan to annex parts of Judea-Samaria. On a phone call Tuesday (Jul 7), Johnson said annexation would hinder the prospect of peace in the region and asked the Israeli PM to return to negotiations with the Palestinians. During the call, Netanyahu said Israel was prepared to start talks on the basis of the Trump Peace Plan. Expressing his concerns even prior to the call, Johnson wrote an article for the Israeli Yediot Aharonot newspaper last week, warning that annexation would breach international law and endanger Israeli security. He implored the Israeli government not to advance annexation but to hold talks with the Palestinians instead. In any event, the two leaders agreed to strengthen ties between the UK and Israel in all areas.

Any changes to Israel’s eastern border would impact relations between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, France and Germany, the countries’ foreign ministers said on Tuesday (Jul 7). Such a move “could also have an impact on relations with Israel,” they warned. The ministers held a video conference and at its conclusion they determined that they would not recognize any extension of Israeli law in Judea-Samaria unless the Palestinians agreed to it.

As Israelis are fighting among themselves over applying Israeli sovereignty in Judea and Samaria, an Arab “construction race” has been launched in areas intended for Israeli sovereignty inside Area C, according to a new petition filed by Regavim with the Jerusalem District Court. The petition focuses on Kfar Nahlin, near Rosh Tzurim in Gush Etzion. Since the Trump Peace Declaration, the village has begun an intensive construction race to seize additional land erect new buildings as well as extensive infrastructure work. The residents of Kfar Nahlin, located in Area B and bounded by a natural river channel, a few months ago began to seize land outside the village – in Area C, which, according to the Oslo agreements, is under the full authority of the State of Israel. However, it appears that the Trump administration’s reported insistence that a hefty portion of Area C remain empty of new Israeli construction, the Arabs have been racing to fill up the gap: so far, according to Regavim, as many as 20 villas, homes and permanent buildings have been built there expeditiously in recent weeks.

Israeli Forces along Jordan River May Face Enemies from East and West – (by Brig.-Gen. (res.) Oded Tira in Jerusalem Post. The writer is a former commander of the IDF Artillery Corps.)

Israel must maintain a strategy that will guarantee its security from the east. To do this, three capabilities are required: 1) The ability to eradicate terrorist infrastructures in Judea and Samaria at their very inception. 2) The ability to fight terrorism when it does succeed in operating from there, and to strike it in its home base. 3) The ability to stop the incursion of expeditionary and other forces from east of the Jordan.

The whole world has begun to adopt the characteristics of guerrilla warfare. In order to prevent Israel from being potentially paralyzed by short-range rocket fire from the east; terrorist attacks into the coastal plain; or the sabotaging of Israeli forces moving toward the Jordanian border, we must control the relevant territories.

When we plan our defense along the Jordan River against forces from the east, we cannot neglect the main enemy, which will be located west of our forces, that is, behind us, in Judea and Samaria. In order to prevent the establishment of a terrorist infrastructure there, the IDF must have freedom of movement and be present throughout the entire area.

Israel's Security Imperatives in the Jordan Valley – (by IDF Maj.-Gen. (ret.) Yaacov Ayish in Real Clear World. The writer, former head of the IDF General Staff Operations Branch, is Senior Vice President for Israeli Affairs at the Jewish Institute for National Security of America (JINSA).

Israeli sovereignty over the Jordan Valley is critical to Israel's ability to defend itself by itself. The benefits outweigh the potential costs, and the move would not preclude a future agreement with the Palestinians. The valley is a natural barrier and Israel's longest border, separating Jordan from Israel and the West Bank. Compared to the pre-1967 armistice lines, it provides Israel with much-needed strategic depth, allowing IDF forces to more efficiently neutralize threats in Palestinian Authority territory.

By applying Israeli law to the Jordan Valley, Israel would be able to permanently contribute to Jordan's stability and its own. IDF forces already routinely thwart arms smuggling and other terrorist activities along the Jordan River. Continued Israeli presence will prevent the valley, and by extension the West Bank, from devolving into a terrorist haven akin to Gaza. Such a scenario in a territory adjacent to Jordan, whose population is majority Palestinian, would dangerously undermine Jordanian security.

Critics have cautioned that applying Israeli law to the valley could harm the country's security by destabilizing Jordan. The move will certainly create challenges for King Abdullah. Yet Jordan still relies on security and intelligence cooperation with Israel, as well as supplies of water and natural gas. With Syria and Iraq as neighbors, Jordan also needs a stable border - something only permanent Israeli presence in the Jordan Valley can provide.

As Syria's violent unraveling and the turbulent power changes in Egypt show, no Middle Eastern country is impervious to sudden, violent changes. Israel must have defensible borders. The valley can provide those. Until Palestinian leaders decide to pursue a lasting solution, Israel must act to secure its interests with American coordination.

Lord, as You spoke several times to Joshua, so speak to Israel's current leaders – especially PM Netanyahu – to be strong and courageous and bring Your people in to possess the land which You swore to give to their forefathers (Deut. 31:23; Josh. 1:6, 9). Let Israel do this regardless of what the USA administration finally decides (Psa. 118:8-9). May PM Netanyahu obey Your Word and not be swayed by the threats of man (Ezek. 36:27-28). Yeshua, You who are the Captain of heaven's hosts, just as You did with Joshua, reveal Yourself to Netanyahu and give him Your strategy to implement this (Josh. 5:13-6:5). With all the conflicting reports, we ask for Your will, and not man's, to be done (Psa. 33:10-11). Lord, the land You promised Abraham is a lot more than what is presently being considered (Gen. 15:18-21). We trust it will come under Israel's sovereign rule and ask that it would happen sooner than most imagine (Isa. 48:3). Father, cut off 'the spirit of the 10 spies' which has infiltrated the Israeli government, media and people so that all they see and talk about are the giants. Let them look to You (Num. 13:30-33; 14:6-9).

“But, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to My people of Israel, for they are soon to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. And I will multiply men on you, all the house of Israel, even all of it, and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be built:”
(Ezekiel 36:8-10)

8. GOLAN HEIGHTS/SYRIA/LEBANON/IRAQ/TURKEY UPDATES:

Syria

Russia, Turkey, and Iran held a virtual meeting last Wednesday (Jul 1) to coordinate efforts in Syria. They have been holding similar meetings since 2017 as part of what is called the Astana process. Their goals have increasingly converged and their statement this week appeared aimed at undermining the US role in eastern Syria and isolating USA partner forces. In October 2019, Turkey threatened USA forces in Syria and ordered the USA to leave, attacking the SDF until Russia and the Syrian regime brokered a ceasefire with Ankara that saw Russia deploy forces to areas formerly under USA influence. President Trump has vowed to withdraw from Syria, but has been critiqued for abandoning USA partners who sacrificed thousands of lives fighting ISIS.

Iraq

Iraqi PM Mustafa al-Kadhimi has caved to the threats of pro-Iranian militias and on June 29, 2020, allowed the release of 14 terrorist operatives who launched rocket attacks on USA targets in the country. Kadhimi had promised Americans a month ago in the first round of Iraqi-USA strategic talks to stop the attacks on USA military in Iraq. As soon as they were freed, the 14 went to the center of Baghdad to celebrate, where they trampled images of Kadhimi and set fire to Israeli and USA flags. The obvious conclusion is that the pro-Iranian militias can effectively veto any political decision that they do not approve.

Iran's financial support for Shi'ite proxy paramilitary groups in Iraq has been drastically cut in recent months, said three Iraqi paramilitary group commanders. Since the coronavirus hit earlier this year, Iran has reduced its monthly payments to each of the four top militia groups in Iraq to \$2-3 million from \$4.5-5 million.

Turkey

Turkey, a member of NATO, tested the Russian-made S-400 air defense system on US-made F-16 jets during a drill in November 2019. The use of the S-400 against the F-16s was already reported last year, but the new details from Russian media appear to cement the claim and infer that something more was going on in those tests. Russia has an interest in knowing how well its air defense performs against USA warplanes. Russia's S-400 is the top tier of its numerous air defense systems. Some of these systems have been called into question due to mistakes. S-200s used by the Syrian regime shot down a Russian airplane by mistake in 2018. Iranian models of Russian systems have scored big in 2019 with the shoot-down of a US drone, but the Iranians also shot down a civilian jetliner in January.

Thank You, Lord, for protecting Israel by making the IDF a "new sharp threshing instrument". Continue to increase the success of Israel's security forces to gather accurate, actionable intelligence. We trust in You to protect Your nation, yet since You have said that You will do this through Israel's armies, we ask You to supply all that is lacking in finances, manpower, weapons, etc. (Mic. 4:11-13).

"Fear not, you worm Jacob, and you men of Israel; I will help you says YHWH, Your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make you a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth. You shall thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and make the hills as chaff...and the stormy winds shall scatter them, and you shall rejoice in YHWH, and glory in the Holy One of Israel." (Isaiah 41:14-16)

9. GAZA UPDATES:

Palestinians in Gaza fired three rockets at Israel on Sunday (Jul 5). One rocket was intercepted by Israeli air defense and Israel responded with airstrikes on Hamas targets. It was the third such incident in a month. The IDF attacked Gaza terror targets later Sunday night in retaliation for rocket fire earlier in the evening. Israeli combat helicopters targeted a Hamas military post in the area of Zeitoun, east of Gaza City in central Gaza. Additional attacks were carried out in the neighbourhood of al-Tofa'a't.

A senior member of Hamas has called on Palestinian militant groups to join forces, abandon peace negotiations, and engage in armed resistance against Israel. Speaking to Lebanese TV last Thursday (Jul 2), Mahmoud al-Zahar, a co-founder of Hamas said that the Palestinians should follow Gaza's example in reclaiming Israel as solely Palestinian, through violent means. "In the Gaza Strip there aren't any Jews. There is no occupation. There is independence. This emphasizes the fact that the land of Palestine isn't completely liberated," al-Zahar said.

Sa'adi al-Ghrabli, a Hamas terrorist who was sentenced to life in prison for a 1994 terrorist attack, died in an Israeli hospital Wednesday (Jul 1) morning of terminal cancer. Al-Ghrabli, 74 and the father of 10 from the Gaza Strip, was serving a life term for the brutal murder of David Mashali. This was the fifth time he was imprisoned in Israel for acts of terrorism. The Israel Prison Service (IPS) stated that al- Ghrabli had first been treated at its medical facility and was transferred on Sunday to Kaplan Hospital, where he died.

Keep the soldiers in the Gaza area alert and clear as to their orders (Psa. 144:1). Bring the new leadership into a godly unity to know what to do and how to defeat Gaza's terrorists (Psa. 133:1). Lord, continue to expose the way that terrorists are obtaining their rockets and weapons (Psa. 139:11-12). Use the coronavirus...use the rain and the wind...use Your divine confusion... to confound Hamas!

"Strengthen the weak hands, and the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance...He will come and save you'." (Isaiah 35:3-4)

10. PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY UPDATES:

At a joint press conference last Thursday (Jul 2), Fatah's Jibril Rajoub and Hamas' Saleh al-Arouri vowed to work together to resist Israeli sovereignty moves and "topple" the USA peace proposal. Here was one of PA President Abbas' most senior colleagues, grandly declaring that Fatah was henceforth partnering with Hamas, ready to work in "100% harmony" with an Islamist terror organization committed to the destruction of Israel. The media event was a stinging blow to the lingering hopes of those who insistently regard Abbas as a potential peace partner with whom Israel might be able to reach a dependable peace agreement. It was confirmation for the consensus view in Israel that it dare not risk relinquishing adjacent territory to the Palestinians under his rule. The Fatah-Hamas pledge of partnership by Rajoub and al-Arouri, who has a \$5 million USA bounty on his head, was approved in advance by Abbas and it was shown on both PA and Hamas TV.

At least four banks in Judea-Samaria have ignored a directive from the PA to accept money for payment of salaries to the accounts of terrorists and families of killed terrorists. All the banks are refusing to allow these groups to use their ATM cards. New Israeli anti-terror legislation has made any bank transaction connected to the payment of rewards for terrorism a criminal offense. However, one of the first decisions of Israel's new Alternate Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Benny Gantz, was to temporarily suspend the force of the new law criminalizing the banks participation in the payment of the terror rewards. As a result of this decision, the PA could pay the salaries, via the banks, with impunity.

Over the last few weeks, coronavirus infections have skyrocketed across Palestinian controlled areas in Judea-Samaria, with more than 4,000 new cases and an additional 15 deaths. Palestinian PM Shtayyeh said Monday (Jul 6) that 82% of the cases were linked to weddings and funerals. Hebron accounts for 75% of all active cases and more than 2/3 of all deaths. Hebron's mayor, Tayseer Abu Snaine, said a group of conservative Muslims, Hezb ut-Tahrir, has called on people to defy restrictions on group prayers, accusing the PA of "using coronavirus as a pretext to fight Islam." The majority of active infections are in the Hebron district followed by Bethlehem, followed by Nablus (Shechem).

Mapping the routes of the coronavirus infection tells us a story with diplomatic and security implications. According to a report by Israel's Corona National Information and Knowledge Center, based on epidemiological questioning of confirmed carriers, **an infection outbreak in Jaffa a month ago led to the spread of the virus to Bedouin population centers in the Negev. From there, the virus spread to the Mount Hebron region in Judea-Samaria and then to Hebron, Ramallah and Nablus.** From there, it spread to Israeli Arab towns in the Wadi Ara region. In half the cases investigated in Wadi Ara, the source was the Bedouin villages in the Negev. The infection routes illuminate a network of connections that should also be troubling from a security viewpoint. These corona routes inform us that the pre-1967 Green Line has essentially been erased as Arab Israelis and Palestinians are voting with their feet in favour of one open space for familial and commercial relations.

Exploiting the furlough of Israeli Civil Administration inspectors during the coronavirus shutdown in March and April, convoys of Palestinian Authority municipal garbage trucks have dumped more than 10,000 cubic meters of refuse from the towns of Ramallah and El Bireh into the Binyamin Region's Tarrifi Quarry, just outside the Jewish communities of Kochav Ya'akov and Psagot in Judea-Samaria. A spokesperson for the IDF Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) said it is well aware of the illegal dumping and vowed to take action.

Israeli military forces arrested two senior Hamas commanders early Thursday (Jul 9) in a pre-dawn raid on their homes in Ramallah and El-Bireh. Both cities are located in Palestinian Authority-controlled areas of Samaria. The two terrorists are long-time veterans of the Israeli prison system, having both been arrested multiple times by Israeli forces over the past 20 years.

76% of Palestinian Christians gave the Palestinian Authority failing marks for how schools teach the history of Christians, according to a recent survey commissioned by The Philos Project. Christians are a dwindling minority, accounting for a mere 1% of the Palestinian population in Judea-Samaria and Gaza. "The history that we learn [in school] starts with the Islamic conquest of the land. Anything before will focus on the pre-Israelite era," said Khalil Sayegh, a Christian from Gaza and Philos Advocacy Fellow. "This leads to Palestinian Christians looking like foreigners." Furthermore, "Crusader," "infidel," and "foreigner" are all epithets Sayegh experienced in grade school. In the survey:

- 43% of Palestinian Christians said that they feel most Muslims do not want them in the land
- 66% say they have little trust in the PA government
- 16% trust in the judiciary
- 22% have confidence in the police

Encourage Israel to expose this dark but obvious truth about the PA (John 3:20-21). As this unity is not true unity – use it to further confound Hamas and the PA (Psa. 40:14). Strip Abbas totally and finally of his false label of being a "moderate" (Psa. 55:21). Show the Trump administration that Israel really does not have a peace partner (Psa. 59:7). May this public agreement to use terrorism to prevent the Trump "peace" plan, stop the American team from pressuring Israel to do anything that endangers Israelis (Deut. 19:14; 27:17). Impart wisdom to all IDF leaders to know what they will need to do to defend this nation (Prov. 20:18; 24:6). Make the IDF's rules of engagement be very clear and simple to all soldiers in the field (Matt. 5:37). Give the IDF flexible plans – to defend or attack as each situation

calls for (1 Sam. 17:36; Isa. 12:2). May Your Spirit use believers in the IDF as vessels for His gifts to be operational (Judg. 6:34). Keep the IDF reservists trained and available as needed (Psa. 44:5; Zech. 10:3, 5). As You declared in Jeremiah 12:14-17, the only hope for individual Palestinians is salvation, so we ask You to draw multitudes of Palestinians to embrace Messiah Yeshua at this time (John 12:20-21). Give courage, wisdom and safety to the true Body of Messiah among the Palestinians (Rev. 2:13).

"The God of my Rock, in Him will I trust. He is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, my refuge, and my savior. You save me from violence." (2 Samuel 22:3)

11. THE LIGHT SHINES INTO THE DARKNESS *(This weekly commentary documents incidents where God shines his light into the darkness and exposes pending attacks, injustices and terror incidents. It also documents situations where the goodness of God breaks through into evil circumstances)*

Social workers in Israel have launched a strike Monday (Jul 6) for an indefinite period. "We are cruelly and violently attacked, and no one comes to our defense. We are expected to somehow cover our expenses with the pitiful salaries we are paid, and we work under insane pressure. A thousand positions for social workers are going unfilled because no one is interested in the job due to the excessive work, the violence, and the pathetic wage scale," the Social Workers' Union chairperson said in a statement. Social workers in Israel function in all kinds of community support positions including case management and community outreach as well as administration, service delivery and clinical support as well. Departments likely to be affected include the Social Services, Education and Health Ministries as well as local governments, prisoner rehabilitation, legal assistance, the court system and more.

Recent years have seen more and more Hebrew language schools opening in Judea-Samaria Palestinian cities.

Recently a Samaritan woman reported about the private Leadership School in Nablus where her son learns Hebrew. She said she registered her son at this school because "I see his future with Israel and I wanted him to know the language well." The boy stated: "I love my school...The problem is the teachers. They teach us Hebrew, but also teach us that we need to shoot at Jews." His mother continued: "Because the school is in Nablus, the curriculum is from the Palestinian Ministry of Education. In the math, language, and other textbooks, the content is anti-Israel. We need to swallow this and try to speak the truth at home."

An Israeli official flagged a possible security risk on Monday following a USA move to allow American providers to sell clearer satellite images of Israel and the Palestinian territories. Under a 1997 USA regulation, satellite images of Israel used in services like Google Earth could show items no smaller than 2 meters (6.56 ft.) across. The curb, Israel had argued, would help prevent enemies using public-domain information to spy on its sensitive sites. The USA said on June 25 it would allow enhanced resolutions of 0.4 meters because "a number of foreign sources" are already producing and disseminating sub-2 meter imagery of Israel." Israel emphatically says, "We would always prefer to be photographed at the lowest resolution possible." Israel worries that Hezbollah and Hamas could use commercial satellite images to plan rocket strikes on key civilian and military infrastructure.

The leadership of the Israel Defense Forces have announced a decision to cancel a major military drill planned for September due to severe budget constraints. Thousands of reservists were set to participate in the exercise, which was intended to test the troops' speed and ability to transition from routine to wartime operations in the event of a multi-front conflict. A new budget has been under discussion between the IDF and the Finance Ministry for some time; the military has been operating without a formal budget since the start of the year due to the lack of a formal government to formulate and approve one.

Dozens of Muslim Bedouins on Sunday (Jul 5) came to pay their final respects to Jewish hero Michael Ben Zikri, 45, who died on Friday (Jul 3) after rescuing a Bedouin mother and three of her children from drowning in a lake near Ashkelon. President Reuven Rivlin will honor Michael Ben Zikri, 45, with a posthumous civilian award after his family ends the shiva, the traditional mourning period observed after one's death. The award is the first of its kind and will be given to Israelis who, through their actions, inspire society. Ben Zikri was swimming with his own family when he noticed the woman and her children — ages 14, 10 and 7 — drowning. His brother-in-law said Ben Zikri rushed into the water and managed to rescue them all before he was too exhausted to save himself. Ben Zikri was hailed a hero in the Arab world after the Foreign Ministry shared his story on its social media accounts in Persian and Arabic. He was upheld as a symbol of co-existence.

Agnes Callamard, UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, said Monday (Jul 6) that the January USA drone strike in Iraq that killed Iranian general Qassem Soleimani and nine other people represented a violation of international law and the UN Charter. The USA had accused Soleimani of masterminding attacks by Iranian-aligned militias on USA forces in the region.

Amal Sumarin, her sons and their attorney arrives for a court hearing regarding the JNF-KKL appeal to evict them from their family home at the District Court in Jerusalem on June 30, 2020. The Jerusalem District Court rejected a petition filed by an Arab family last week claiming ownership over a house located within the City of David neighbourhood/archeological site in the eastern part of Jerusalem, perhaps ending a nearly 30-year legal battle over the property. The court ordered that the Sumarin family, currently residing in the building, must evacuate the premises by August 16. The decision follows years of litigation in which Israeli Municipal and District Courts confirmed that the family has no legal rights to the property and that Himanuta, a subsidiary of Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael-Jewish National Fund, which engages in real estate transactions on their behalf, are the rightful owners of the property. Nachi Eyal, one of the directors at Himanuta, applauded the Jerusalem District Court's decision. He explained to JNS that for years, the family was unable to prove legal ownership. "At one stage, the Sumarin family brought documents trying to prove ownership, which a forensic expert declared to be forged," he said. Eyal added that "following the expert's decision, the family then withdrew the case, trying to avoid the outcome of a judgment rejecting their ownership claim based on the determination that the documents were in fact counterfeit." A group of more than 30 left-wing organizations in Israel and abroad have formed a body called the "Sumarin Coalition" in an attempt to stop law enforcement from removing the family. The coalition is urging its supporters to send letters to the KKL-JNF requesting that they allow the family to stay, saying they would be rendered homeless. However, Eyal explained that during the court proceedings, it was proven that the Sumarin family actually has significant assets and owns a residential building in Jerusalem with six apartments. "This clearly shows the falsehood of the campaign, which paints the picture that the family is being thrown into the street with nowhere to go. But that's not the case," he said.

Lord, let Your light shine into the darkest areas of the earth. Expose all plots to harm Your people...both Jews and Christians. Thank You that there is increasing coordination between the agencies who are in charge of security and protection. We bless the security forces and police forces around the world...they have an impossible job to protect all the people all the time. Give them much wisdom and great alertness, we pray!

"For His eyes are on the ways of man, and He sees all their goings. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." (Job 34:21-22)

12. ANTI-SEMITISM UPDATES:

Foodbenders, a Toronto health food restaurant, has lost business and is now facing legal action after using the hashtag “#zionistsnotwelcome” in social media posts. Foodbenders’ social media posts have said “police brutality is an Israeli export” and “Zionists are Nazis,” and included hashtags such as #intifada. Following complaints, Instagram shuttered the restaurant’s account. After facing harsh criticism, Kimberly Hawkins, the owner of Foodbenders, claimed on social media that she does not believe “criticism of the Zionist political ideology, Israel or the Greater Israel Project, or pointing out its racist supremacist foundations amounts to criticism of the Jewish people or even Israeli citizens. Some people do believe this and may interpret these criticisms as anti-Semitic, and others will deliberately conflate the two to label you as racist with the primary goal of silencing discussion on Israel.” Taking legal action, the International Legal Forum (ILF) has filed a complaint with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario charging that based on the guidelines of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism, Hawkins should be charged with anti-Semitic discrimination.

Chief Justice of South Africa Mogoeng Mogoeng, who has been facing criticism for attacking the ruling ANC party's one-sided approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, said he will not retract his statements, according to a report Saturday (Jul 4). Responding to the criticism, Mogoeng said, "Even if 50 million people can march every day for the next 10 years for me to retract and apologize for what I said - I will not do it. I will not apologize for anything. There is nothing to apologize for. There is nothing to retract. I can't apologize for loving. I cannot apologize for not harboring hatred and bitterness. I will not."

One in five (20%) British believe to some degree that Jews created the Coronavirus (COVID-19) to collapse the economy for financial gain, an Oxford University poll that was discussed in the Knesset’s Committee for Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora Affairs shows. The research, titled “Oxford Coronavirus Explanations, Attitudes, and Narratives Survey,” polled a representative sample of 2,500 English adults from May 4 to May 11, 2020. Presented with the statement “Jews have created the virus to collapse the economy for financial gain,” 5.3% of the respondents “agreed a little,” 6.8% “agreed moderately,” 4.6% “agreed a lot,” and 2.4% “agreed completely,” while some 80.8% did not agree with it at all.

The National Council of Young Israel (NCYI) on Thursday (Jul 9) called on elected officials and leaders in the African-American community to condemn the linkage of the Black Lives Matter movement to the anti-Semitic BDS movement, after protesters chanted anti-Israel and anti-Semitic phrases at a march that took place this week in Washington, DC. Cries of “Black lives matter!” and “Palestinian lives matter!” were heard, and many attendees loudly criticized Israeli PM Netanyahu. The NCYI President stated, “While we absolutely agree that the issue of race in America is something that must be duly addressed on a national level, it is sickening to see that the Black Lives Matter movement has been co-opted by people who wear their anti-Semitic beliefs on their sleeves. By poisoning protests with anti-Israel declarations and anti-Semitic remarks, some of the individuals who so desperately seek justice and an end to racism are themselves engaging in abhorrent and hypocritical behavior that fans the flames of bigotry and hate.”

Calls have been made to end Israel's existence at a series of rallies held across America and Canada. The Pro-Palestinian group Al-Awda held a 'Day of Rage' in Brooklyn, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami and Toronto between July 1 and 4, at which numerous calls were made for a new intifada or uprising against the State of Israel. Speakers at the events linked the Palestinian cause to others globally, including Black Lives Matter. At the Brooklyn event, a speaker named Jamie, who is a pro-North Korean activist, told the crowd: "The DPRK [Democratic People's Republic of Korea] also refuses to recognize Israel and calls it an imperialist satellite of the United States... I believe that within our lifetime, Palestine will be yours again and Korea will be one again! The United States of America and all of its puppet governments will be no more!"

If Gov. Chris Sununu, a Republican, signs the measure into law, New Hampshire would become the 14th state to require genocide prevention education in public schools, according to the Anti-Defamation League's New England regional office, which supported the bill. The bill will enable all students to acquire knowledge of civics and government, economics, history, and Holocaust and genocide education, according to state Sen. Jay Kahn, a Democrat and lead sponsor of the bill. The House approved the bill this week in a 299-17 vote as part of several other pieces of legislation. The state Senate had passed the measure unanimously in March.

In its most recent audit on anti-Semitism, the ADL documented 2,107 incidents across the USA in 2019, the highest since the group began tracking incidents in 1979. Of the total, 411 of the incidents were in K-12 schools, representing a 19% increase from the previous year.

The Anderson County Review's Facebook page on Friday posted a cartoon showing Kansas Governor Laura Kelly, a Democrat, wearing a mask adorned with a Star of David, in front of a picture of Jews being hoarded onto the trains during the Holocaust, with the caption: "Lockdown Laura says: Put on your mask ... and step onto the cattle car."

Since the Jewish people's return is for Your holy name's sake, we ask that whatever it takes – with as much mercy as possible – draw Your captive people back home (Ezek. 36:23-24). Thank You for the new ministers in many of the Israeli ministries related to Aliyah, with a heart to help Your people return. Allow their love of Aliyah permeate into all areas of the new government (Gal. 5:9). Please provide all the finances they need (Psa. 50:10-11; Hag. 2:8). Teach the worldwide Church of their spiritual obligation to help finance the Aliyah (Rom. 15:27). Lord, speak to the Gentile members of Messiah's Body as they are the only group in all history who would even be looking for the hand of Israel's God! Let unsaved Jews realize that today it is safer for them at home than in the nations (Jer. 31:10). Use the coronavirus pandemic to help Jews who are afraid to return to overcome their fears (Jer. 51:8-10). Place a huge burden for Aliyah on every Israeli embassy worldwide (Prov. 13:17; 25:13). Provide all necessary proofs of Jewishness to everyone who wants to return (1 Chr. 9:1; Neh. 7:5).

"Thus says the Lord YHWH, Behold, I will lift up My hand to the Gentiles, and set up My standard to the people: and they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." (Isaiah 49:22)

13. IRAN UPDATES:

Seven Explosions in Iran

- **On Friday (Jul 10) morning**, a huge explosion was heard west of Tehran. Some social media users have reported hearing the sound of an explosion west of Tehran and in Garmdarreh and Shahr-e Qods." Garmdarreh is a city in the Central District of Karaj County, Alborz Province, Iran, 21 miles west of the capital. Qods is the capital of Qods County, Tehran Province, 23 miles west of Tehran. There are military and training facilities in the area of the blast which could be the target of sabotage
- **On Tuesday (Jul 7) morning**, a huge explosion occurred at a cutting factory in Baghershahr, south of Tehran, killed two and injured several others. Iranian social media suggest the source was exploding oxygen tanks. The explosion in Baghershahr is the sixth major event inside Iran since June 26.
- **On Monday (Jul 6)**, there was an explosion at a factory south of Tehran in which two people were killed.
- **On Saturday (Jul 4)**, an explosion reportedly damaged a power plant in the Iranian city of Ahvaz, near the Persian Gulf and the Iraqi border.
- **Last Thursday (Jul 2)**, a massive explosion took place at a building that houses centrifuges at the Natanz nuclear facility. Iranian media said the attack appeared intentional and Iran admitted that Natanz incurred

“considerable” damage from the fire after previously downplaying the fire. High-resolution commercial satellite imagery shows that the Iran Centrifuge Assembly Center (ICAC) at the Natanz Enrichment Site has suffered significant, extensive, and likely irreparable, damage to its main assembly hall. This new facility, inaugurated in 2018, was critical to the mass production of advanced centrifuges. The destruction of the ICAC must be viewed as a major setback to Iran's ability to deploy advanced centrifuges on a mass scale for years to come.

- **On June 30**, an explosion occurred at the Sina At'har Medical Clinic in Tehran, killing 19 and wounding 14.
- **On June 26**, an explosion was reported at a gas storage facility near Tehran where Western intelligence services believe Tehran carried out nuclear tests. It is in the area of a major Iranian military and weapons development base in Khojir, east of Tehran; the explosion turned the skyline bright orange

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said last Friday (Jul 3) that he has received a letter from Iran that triggers the dispute mechanism in the 2015 nuclear deal, citing concerns that Britain, France and Germany are not living up to their side of the agreement. On January 15, the European countries triggered the accord's dispute resolution mechanism themselves, but later suspended the action.

The Mossad spy agency recently foiled planned or attempted Iranian attacks on Israeli diplomatic missions in Europe and elsewhere. The names of the countries where attacks were prevented remain under censorship, but cooperation with them helped to thwart the attacks.

Israel's Defense Ministry has announced the successful launch of a new spy satellite that the ministry said would provide high-quality surveillance for its military intelligence. Israel has been building up its surveillance capabilities to monitor enemies such as Iran, whose nuclear program Israel sees as a major threat to its security. The Defense Ministry said the Ofek-16 satellite was launched at 4 am on July 6 from central Israel by a locally developed Shavit rocket. It described the Ofek as an “electro-optical reconnaissance satellite with advanced capabilities.”

USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced Wednesday (Jul 1) that USA forces seized a boat on June 28 carrying Iranian weapons to Houthi rebels in Yemen. The weapons included 200 rocket-propelled grenades, 1,700 assault rifles, 21 surface-to-air and land-attack missiles, and several anti-tank missiles.

19 USA airmen died and 400 were injured in the terrorist attack at Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on June 25, 1996. USA District Court Chief Judge Beryl Howell ruled in Washington last week that the backers, planners and supporters of the bombing - Iran and its terrorist arm - should pay out \$819,120,000 to 14 airmen and 41 of their family members who suffered that day and have been suffering since. In 2018, the same judge awarded \$104.7 million to 15 servicemembers and 24 relatives hurt in the Khobar Towers bombing. Iran historically has not responded to such lawsuits and a monetary payout is not likely, barring seizing of assets or state funds by the USA or international governing bodies.

Iran has detained or intimidated dozens of devoted Christians in recent days as part of government efforts to halt the spread of Christianity in the Islamic nation. Among those captured are many former Muslims who became believers in Christ, according to Christians familiar with the situation. At least 12 Iranian believers were taken into custody by officers of Iran's feared Revolutionary Guard in three cities. The first arrests began Tuesday (Jun 30) evening, in western Tehran's Yaftabad district when security forces broke up a house church meeting. Ten intelligence agents – eight men and two women – raided the home of a recent Christian convert, where around 30 Christians had gathered. The Christians were also ordered to write that none of their property had been confiscated, even after the confiscation of their mobile phones, and despite their protests. The agents then drove the six detained Christians, as well as some of whose names were not on the list, to their homes in Tehran and Karaj to especially for Bibles, other Christian literature,

and communication devices. During the operation, the Christians were beaten, as well as some of their non-Christian family members. The three Christians – named Sohrab, Ebrahim, and Yasser were released the next days on bail of 30 million tomans (\$1,500) each. Of the other detained Christians, two were freed on bail set at 50 million tomans (around \$2,500).

Iran's leaders seek Israel's destruction, but You say it will never happen (Jer. 31:35-37). Thank You! Father, confound all their counter strikes, whether directly, via proxies or by cyber warfare (Ex. 15:3). Thank You that Iran's nuclear program has been set back because of these explosions (Psa. 55:9). Let these incidents pressure Iran's leaders into making major geo-political mistakes (Psa. 129:5). Use these explosions to shake the current Iranian leadership's grip on power (Jer. 49:38b). Bring deep division and confusion in the midst of Iran's leadership (Psa. 55:9). Lord, use their hate and arrogance against Israel to bring the regime to ruin (Num. 24:9a). Send confusion and shame on Iran and its regional proxies: Hezbollah in Lebanon; mercenaries in Syria; the Shiite militants in Iraq; Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad in Gaza (Psa. 71:13). Any gap in intelligence that Israel has about Iranian plans – please fill it in today (Deut. 33:29). Meanwhile, please create gaps in Iran's intelligence about Israeli plans and abilities (Gen. 11:7). Thank You for Israel's successful launch of another spy satellite – Ofek-16 (Psa. 33:13). Thank You for Israel's success in attacking Iranian weapons shipments and weapons depots in Syria. Provide protection and guidance as Israel's planes and pilots pre-empt Iranian threats (Prov. 21:31). Bless the Iranian Church with wisdom to know how to pray for their nation (Ezek. 22:30-31). Lead them to pray prophetically for the leaders who will replace the current ones (Rom. 13:1-4).

“So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the spirit came into them, and they lived, and stood up on their feet, an exceedingly great army.” (Ezekiel 37:10)

14. MESSIANIC CHANNEL SHELANU CONSIDERING LEGAL ACTION AGAINST CHAIRMAN OF ISRAEL’S BROADCASTING COUNCIL

- The directors of GOD TV’s Messianic channel Shelanu are considering legal action against Israel’s media oversight council for falsely and publically accusing them of using deception to obtain their broadcasting license. Shelanu’s license was revoked after the chairman of Israel’s Council for Cable and Satellite Broadcasting wrongly stated the channel had presented its target audience as Christians when its actual purpose was to reach Jewish audiences with the Gospel.

Suspending Shelanu’s license last week, Biton said the channel could reapply through Israeli satellite company HOT, with whom it originally had a seven-year contract to broadcast. Biton said Shelanu would have to be “truthful” about its intentions in the new application. However, HOT decided not to proceed with a new application and Shelanu has been taken off the air.

In a press statement Monday, GOD TV Israel Regional Director Ron Cantor said: “We are considering taking legal action against Chairman Asher Biton for knowingly deceiving the public in saying that Shelanu’s license, that he himself granted, was to target an audience that was Christian and not Jewish. The July 2019 and March 2020 license both clearly state in section 1.2 that “The channel is intended for the audience of viewers in Israel...It says NOTHING about our audience being Christian, as he maintains.”

Acknowledging that Biton himself had been targeted and pressured by anti-Messianic groups like Yad Lachim, Cantor said he had nevertheless “told all Israel and many in the international community that we used deceptive tactics to get the license, when in fact we were upfront with HOT executives from day one.” Cantor stated that no legal action will be

taken if Biton issues “an apology and clarification that there was no stipulation that our content was only supposed to be for Christians.”

Preaching the Gospel is only illegal in Israel if it is to minors or if material goods are given in exchange for conversion to Christianity. Shelanu will continue to publish content on the internet.

Abba, give the Shelanu leaders much wisdom as what to do. May they not violate any of Your principles and commands in Your Word as they pursue retribution. Bless this organization and cause them to be exemplary witnesses of You and Your Son, Yeshua!

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts." (Zechariah 4:6)

15. ISRAEL GOOD NEWS ITEMS:

A new advanced Israeli reconnaissance satellite took off, reached earth orbit, and sent its first data transmissions on Monday (Jul 6). Ofek 16 was launched on a Shavit rocket manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries. Defense Minister Benny Gantz stressed that technological and intelligence advantage was crucial for Israel's security and that only 12 other countries were capable of launching satellites.

The Foreign Ministry on Sunday appointed Ishmael Khaldi as Israel's first Bedouin ambassador, to represent the country in Eritrea. He previously served as Israel's vice-consul to San Francisco and at Israel's embassy in the UK.

The global university index system Shanghai Ranking ranked Haifa University above not only all other Israeli universities but also renowned higher learning institutes across the world for educational studies. The index grades and prioritizes universities around the globe based on a variety of factors, including Nobel Prize winners, published research, and more. The northern school in Israel, located on Mount Carmel in Haifa, **ranked in the top 76-100 universities in the world for education studies above schools such as Cambridge University and Oxford University in England, and Yale University and Brown University in the United States.**

The Israeli start-up ‘Emeo Team’ on Friday launched the Emeo, the first-ever digital practice saxophone, which allows saxophone players to practice and play anywhere, as long as the device is hooked up to their computers or smartphones. The device has already received international acclaim, with famed Italian jazz saxophonist Rosario Giuliani saying, "It is an incredible invention that you can play everywhere." The Emeo connects to the devices using USB, MIDI, and Bluetooth and offers a cutting edge solution to the problem of the inherently loud volume of the saxophone, limiting sax players greatly in the manner in which they may practice and play. The device is not intended to replace the various types of regular saxophones, but rather that the Emeo offers a comfortable solution for practicing conveniently. It is available for pre-order, and the devices are expected to be sent out throughout August.

The Israel Postal Service has unveiled its first-ever mobile phone plan. The plan, called “Mobile Post,” costs NIS 16 per month – just under \$5 – and includes 3,000 minutes of nationwide phone calls, 60 minutes of international calls, 3,000 text messages and 11 gigabytes internet use. Golan Telecom won the tender for the plan, which is sold at 90 branches of the Israel Postal service around the country. Beginning this week, Israelis will be able to switch to the new plan by going to the post office to register and pay a one-time fee of NIS 19 for a new SIM card. A Golan Telecom representative will contact the new customer to complete the deal.

Israel is a world leader in digitization, cyber and medical technology, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Deputy Secretary-General Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen said on Sunday (Jul 5). Speaking at an online conference hosted by The Jerusalem Post/Maariv group marking 10 years since Israel joined the OECD, Knudsen said, "The Israeli level of development and digitization is twice that of other OECD countries."

The COVID-19 crisis has triggered a surge in global demand for breakthrough technologies to combat the pandemic, reinvigorate the economy, and address other societal challenges. It also reiterated the need for an effective global digital tool to find innovative solutions and create collaborations among entrepreneurs, companies, and investors. This was the setting for the signing on July 7 of an agreement between 'Start-Up Nation Central' (SNC), an independent non-profit organization that builds bridges to Israeli innovation, and 'Innovation to Industry' (i2i), a tech ecosystem builder that supports and connects innovation stakeholders in Taiwan. Under the agreement, i2i will launch a "Global Finder" in Taiwan - an online innovation discovery and ecosystem development tracking platform modeled after the successful Start-Up Nation Finder. The platform will include a mapping of nearly 30,000 tech companies, hundreds of incubators, over 200 VCs and other stakeholders active in Taiwan's ecosystem, enabling them to expand their business opportunities with the world.

Thank You, that You continue to bless Israel. Thank You that You have chosen to bless the world through the Jewish people. May the world see these inventions and discoveries as a fulfillment of Your promise to Abraham!

"The LORD had said unto Abram, 'Get out of your country, from your kindred, and your father's house, unto a land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great. And you shall be a blessing...and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed'" (Genesis 12:1-3)