

ISRAEL INTERCESSORY PRAYER ITEMS

March 27 – April 3, 2020

1. ALIYAH UPDATES:

Fourteen Ethiopian families - totaling 72 new immigrants - landed at Ben-Gurion Airport on Tuesday (Mar 24). The immigrants are first-degree relatives of Beta Israel members from Gondar and Addis Adaba already settled in Israel. They are members of the Falash Mura community, Ethiopians whose Jewish ancestors converted to Christianity generations ago, often under social, financial or political pressure.

On Sunday (Mar 22) evening, a group of 26 Russian Jewish immigrants sponsored by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem (ICEJ) arrived on a flight from St. Petersburg and immediately went into a two-week self-quarantine due to the COVID-19 threat. This flight marks the 30th anniversary of the ICEJ's sponsorship of Jewish families making Aliyah from the former Soviet Union.

Aliyah (immigration to Israel) continued in the past weeks with 961 immigrants arriving in Israel since the beginning of the month, despite the global Coronavirus crisis and the closure of borders and skies in many countries. In accordance with the government's decision, anyone who holds a valid visa to immigrate to Israel is entitled enter Israel under the Law of Return, even though the borders are currently closed to foreign nationals. However, the Ministry of Health has instructed that all Olim enter a 14-day quarantine upon arrival to ensure they are not infected with Corona. Immigration and Absorption Minister Yoav Galant stated Tuesday that "the State of Israel is the home of every Jew anywhere. Even these days, we are continuing to absorb Aliyah."

The year 2019 saw a peak in Aliyah, with 34,872 Jews coming to Jewish State, a 20% increase over the 29,800 that came in 2018, and while many things have come to a complete halt in wake of the spread of Corona, Aliyah persists. Israel welcomed more than 255,000 Olim from 150 different countries in the past decade. Since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, 3.3 million people have made Aliyah, making up 42 percent of the total population.

Thank You Lord for the nation of Israel being willing to send planes at its own expense to bring this precious ones back home (Isa. 60:8). Continue to use the land and nation of Israel to draw Your people back to You (Jer. 31:3). At this time of fear and rising anti-Semitism, place in the hearts of Your people in exile the urge to return to Zion (Psa. 137:4-6; Jer. 50:4-5).

"When YHWH brought back the captivity of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, 'YHWH has done great things for them'. YHWH has done great things for us, and we are glad." (Psalm 126:1-3)

2. ISRAEL ELECTION UPDATES:

Israel's High Court of Justice Thursday (Mar 26) ordered a vote on the future of Knesset speaker Yuli Edelstein which saw him step down, as Blue and White leader Benny Gantz filled his shoes and signaled the formation of a "national emergency government" with PM Netanyahu. The move came as a surprise after months of deadlock and three elections in under a year yielded no agreement between the two main parties to form a unity of right and left-wing factions that seemed the only choice in light of continued narrow election results. "Democracy has won," Gantz said

Thursday as he was slated to become foreign or defense minister in a government led by Netanyahu until September 2021 when the left-wing MK will become Prime Minister. Left-wing allies of Gantz were baffled by the move that was supported by 74 MKs and foreshadowed a coalition government comprised of Likud, Gantz's Israel Resilience, Labor, Yamina, Shas, and United Torah Judaism--the majority of which are right-wing and religiously orthodox. Former Gantz ally, Yair Lapid, whose 'Yesh Atid' made up part of the Blue and White coalition, was furious with the move by Gantz. He reported, "There is no way to understand it." (**Note:** Right-wing leaders in the Knesset also questioned the High Court of Justice's executive intervention in foreclosing Edelstein's speakership and the sudden emergence of Gantz as a speaker now willing to join with Netanyahu in an about-face few could have predicted. See the items below to discover the events that led up to this momentous shift by Gantz.)

What preceded the new coalition...

After Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein refusal to obey the High Court of Justice's decision that he must set a date for a Knesset session intended to replace him, the five High Court justices unanimously ordered Edelstein to convene the plenary by Wednesday (Mar 25) and hold the debate requested by the center-left-Arabs bloc of 61 MKs, which will result in his replacement. Edelstein replied to the High Court's call by saying that "with all due respect, to the extent that the honorable Court sets an ultimatum before myself and the Knesset, requiring me to hold the debate 'no later than March 25, 2020,' I am unable to comply. After all, this would mean that the Knesset's agenda is determined by the Supreme Court and not by the Speaker of the Knesset, to whom this role is assigned...Due to the special circumstances, at this stage I find it difficult to set an exact date, but I intend to add the issue to the Knesset's agenda as the political situation becomes clear. Hopefully, this will happen in the shortest period of time."

A massive convoy set out Tuesday (Mar 24) in protest over the High Court of Justice's demand that Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein convene the Knesset by Wednesday. The protesters showed up in their cars to say the High Court had crossed a red line by unlawfully interfering in the Knesset's agenda and by ruling in direct contravention of the Basic Law of the Knesset. The convoy, comprised of more than 100 Israeli flag-carrying cars led by the Zionist watchdog Im Tirtzu, set out from the Latrun Interchange and ended at the Supreme Court building in Jerusalem. Due to the current health crisis, the organizers coordinated with the police and adhered to the health ministry regulations.

- "We're sick and tired of the High Court stealing our democracy," said Avner Saadia, one of the protesters. "We are sick of voting for our elected officials, and finding out that the High Court is really the one in charge."
- Nechama Miller, another protester, added: "The High Court is trampling on basic democratic values like the separation of powers."
- Im Tirtzu CEO Matan Peleg stated: "The High Court justices have turned themselves into all-powerful rulers who can act however and whenever they please. Time after time, the High Court acts as a political actor with utter disregard for Israeli democracy, which endangers the future of the State of Israel. The time has come to end this judicial dictatorship."

Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein (Likud) resigned on Wednesday (Mar 25) morning. In a speech at the plenum, Edelstein said: "The High Court's decision is wrong and caustic, and brings about a dangerous time of darkness. I will not allow Israel to deteriorate into anarchy, nor will I support a civil war." The resignation will take effect in 48 hours, which will delay the election of a new speaker to Monday (Mar 30). Blue&White and the High Court thought they had Edelstein boxed in with their anti-democratic move to illegally overthrow him and insert Meir Cohen, their puppet from Yesh Atid, in his place. But Edelstein potentially outmaneuvered them. By quitting, Knesset law automatically hands over the speaker position to the most senior serving Knesset member. In this case that is none other than Labor party chairman Amir Peretz. On Friday, Peretz takes up the role, but the Knesset only reconvenes on Monday. So now Blue&White needs to kick out Amir Peretz. But the only way they can get Peretz out is by forcing him to declare a vote that would kick himself out of his newly acquired position. A position he might possibly want to keep on his way to getting himself

appointed president of Israel. And it's unlikely he wants to see Meir Cohen in that job. (**Note:** Edelstein's resignation thwarted the possibility of holding a vote for a new Speaker until Monday, which leaves Blue&White only two weeks to try to form a government.)

Further Note: Israel will have a center-right-religious unity government, led by PM Netanyahu, and joined by Benny Gantz as Foreign Minister or Defense Minister. The Blue&White party has already collapsed and split up. Yair Lapid is going to head the Opposition. The coalition will consist of 78 MKs: 58 members from the Right-wing bloc; 3 from Labor; 17 from Gantz's Hosen (Resilience) faction in Blue&White, along with Telem's Tzvika Hauser and Yoaz Hendel (it is unclear if Yaalon is joining them), and possibly Orly Levy. Until the government is officially formed, Benny Gantz has been appointed the Knesset Speaker, after which it will be returned the Likud.

Lord, we have seen that, as a politician, Benny Gantz is very double-minded and hence unstable (Jam. 1:8). Yet since you have raised him up for this day, we ask You to make him someone who can both work with PM Netanyahu and work for what is best in Your sight for this nation (Job 32:8). Lord, thank You for answering our specific requests to see both Blue&White broken up, as well as to not see Avigdor Liberman in the government (Dan. 2:21)! We are grateful that the anti-Zionist Joint Arab List will also not be in the government (Prov. 16:5). Many of the current ministers who are in the transitional government face an unknown future. Please give them courage to do what is best for Israel today and tomorrow (Ezek. 20:40; 48:19). Lord, please control the distribution of ministry portfolios so that the best people for the job obtain them and that they are not just given out as political quid-pro-quo (Prov. 19:6; 29:4). Lord our Healer, protect the ministers from being infected by the COVID-19 (Psa. 121:3-4). Guard all whom You have raised up to lead at this time against all manipulation (Num. 23:23). Lord Yeshua, we are so thankful that regardless of what happens in Israel's political scene, the government is already on Your shoulders (Isa. 9:67; Dan. 7:13-14; Matt. 28:18; Phil. 2:9-11)!

"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)

3. ISRAEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATES:

As of Friday (Mar 27) morning, Israel had 3,035 people diagnosed with the coronavirus - 49 in serious condition. Two Israelis died overnight, aged 93 and 76, bringing the total to 10. The three people who died on Thursday were aged 91, 89, and 83. Israel is testing more than 5,000 people a day.

The whole country of Israel is on lockdown. The only people on the street are police officers and IDF troops. It's World War C - the coronavirus crisis. On Wednesday (Mar 25), Defense Minister Naftali Bennett warned: "We are in accelerated growth in patients in serious condition; the number of positive tests is increasing. Severe morbidity levels are approaching. Within 10 days there will be a significant rate of serious patients, but this is not a matter of fate. We can work to change the situation." IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Aviv Kohavi ordered the military to move to a higher state of readiness, one normally reserved for preparation for an enemy attack. The IDF Home Front Command was ordered to establish quarantine facilities in hotels across the country and provide essential services such as food and medicine to Israel's elderly, in an effort dubbed "Operation Save Grandma."

While a vaccine against the coronavirus is expected to take a year to develop and test, scientists around the world are racing to develop new treatments. Dr. Rivka Abulafia-Lapid, a senior lecturer on virology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said, "Israel already has 11 different drugs for trial [on COVID-19 patients]." She is "very optimistic" that the world is six months away from an effective treatment.

Students and faculty in science departments at Israeli universities are volunteering in droves to test people, conduct analyses of samples, and assist lab workers, paramedics and army teams. In addition, more than 2,000 students from Israel's medical schools have volunteered. Students are helping at drive-in, swab-sample collection stations, and are also on board ambulances and army vehicles traveling to collect samples from people quarantined or shut up at home.

‘Teva’ has announced it will donate more than 6 million doses of hydroxychloroquine sulfate tablets to hospitals across the USA before March 31. The tablets are approved by the USA FDA for the treatment of malaria, lupus, and rheumatoid arthritis. They are currently under investigation to determine their efficacy against the coronavirus and USA officials have asked for their immediate availability and use. Over 10 million tablets are expected to be shipped within a month. Another Israeli drug cited as possibly helpful is ‘remdesivir’, an experimental antiviral from Gilead Sciences; this may be available in the near future.

Israeli ‘medtech’ and ‘biotech’ companies are working to find new solutions to the coronavirus challenge.

- Israeli-American **RADLogics Inc** is a software analytics company that specializes in visual analysis of medical scans to detect early signs of lung cancer. Two months ago, RADLogics' products in China started revealing something small and patch-like in the lungs of patients, a phenomenon unique to coronavirus patients. It was also found in asymptomatic carriers. The company adjusted its products for the specific identification of coronavirus, and now it offers a new identification avenue that can provide results within seconds instead of hours.
- Tel Aviv-based **Sight Diagnostics Ltd** developed a portable device that enables blood tests and blood counts with results in minutes rather than hours. Sheba Medical Center at Tel HaShomer announced it will use the device to treat patients in isolation.
- Biopharmaceutical company **Kamada Ltd** is collecting blood and plasma from Israelis who have recovered from the virus, and using a purification process to achieve a specific concentration of antibodies for treating serious coronavirus cases. This is not a vaccine, but rather an expensive, one-off treatment for severe cases.
- Israel-based **EarlySense Ltd** has developed a non-invasive patient-monitoring system, placed under the mattress, that takes a patient's vitals around the clock, 100 times a minute, to identify changes in a patient's condition. It can also be used to track asymptomatic carriers in home-quarantine.

Researchers from over 20 labs at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology are working to combat the spread of the coronavirus. These emergency projects focus on detection and diagnostics, vaccine development, therapeutic treatments, and methods for remote care and monitoring of patients, including robotic solutions.

The Israeli Health Ministry announced Sunday the launch of a new smartphone app to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus - by enabling users to know if they were in close proximity to anyone who has been diagnosed with the virus over the previous 14 days.

Israel's Mossad intelligence service on Thursday (Mar 26) helped bring another 400,000 coronavirus test kits to Israel in addition to the 100,000 it brought in last week.

The Sheba Medical Center at Tel HaShomer in the Tel Aviv area has prepared an isolated underground emergency care ward for critical Covid-19 cases in just 72 hours. The ward includes 45 beds for patients who will require ventilators and urgent care. The emergency hospital facility that has never been used before has a completely separate infrastructure for electricity, oxygen lines, monitors, and more. The hospital has also prepared and trained specialized teams with the required protective gear to treat coronavirus cases.

Israel's first designated hospital for treating coronavirus patients received its first patients Thursday (Mar 26). The Sharon Hospital in Petah Tikva was converted into a 200-bed facility in less than two weeks after all its patients were transferred to other hospitals and the 1,400-strong staff received training in treating coronavirus patients and self-protection against infection. Most of the treatment will be administered remotely, through five command and control centers with closed-circuit cameras. 37 coronavirus patients are already hospitalized in the facility, five of them in serious condition.

With the assistance of several foreign governments, Israeli diplomats on Thursday (Mar 26) continued to bring home hundreds of Israeli backpackers who were stranded abroad. More than 600 Israelis came back from India, 200 [Arab Israeli] students from Jordan, 150 Israelis from Central Europe and another 150 from Costa Rica. Israel managed to get tourists out from all parts of Bolivia, and even those that were unable to board last week's El Al flight from Peru will return to Israel soon. El Al is reportedly preparing flights to Australia, Brazil, and another to India and perhaps Thailand, to bring more Israeli travelers home.

Israel's national airline made the dramatic decision to stop all regular flights beginning Thursday night, due to the economic crisis facing the company. The halt is expected to remain in force until at least April 4. Cargo flights will continue to take place, but at the bottom line, the company needs a loan of hundreds of millions of dollars in order to be able to survive this crisis. At this point, the company still operates about 10 daily flights to the United States, Canada, France and the United Kingdom.

In the UK, 22 Jews have died after contracting the coronavirus as of Tuesday (Mar 24). The number of fatalities is close to 5% of the confirmed national death toll, while Jews make up only 0.5% of the UK's population.

Hunting Down the Gear Israel Needs to Fight the Coronavirus (by Ronny Linder)

Sarel - Logistic Solutions and Products for Advanced Medicine buys medical equipment for most of Israel's government hospitals and the emergency stores of the Health Ministry, the Israel Police and other state security services. For the past two months, Sarel CEO Avi Buskila has been working overtime to buy medical equipment at a time when global supply chains are collapsing and countries are competing for a limited supply of masks and test kits. Buskila says what he and his team are doing is tantamount to an arms race with other countries to get their hands on critical gear.

"It's true that we have emergency warehouses and military stores with hundreds of respirators and masks, but I don't think that anyone anywhere was prepared for an onslaught of these dimensions....For almost 60 days we've been working day and night....No one alive today has ever witnessed anything like it. An epidemic on this scale last happened 100 years ago."

"Every day, purchasing is becoming more difficult. We encounter counterfeit items, such as fake N95 masks or overalls that are not water impermeable, so we don't buy anything without checking it out first....For every deal, you have to check that you're not being swindled, since many people say they have something, want a deposit and security, and in the end, you find out that they weren't really leveling with you....You're no longer working with your regular supplier who you can trust at their word."

Lord, we ask You to protect, physically and in all other ways, all responsible government leaders as they come together to sift through the information and format strategy (Psa. 84:9; 89:18). Lord, we also ask You to protect, physically and in all other ways, all Israel's medical personnel who are on the front lines – whether out in the streets and homes, or in the hospitals (Psa. 84:11; 89:18). Guard over the medical equipment and provide all the finances are needed (Psa. 132:13-15). Provide all the support-people needed by the doctors, nurses and hospitals (1 Chr. 12:1). As more tests are done, more people are found to be infected. Please guide Israel's government and other officials as how to disseminate this information without causing panic, unfounded fears and unnecessary pressure. Yeshua, give Messianic Jews wisdom to know how to meet and minister to one another and to unbelieving Israelis (Heb. 10:25). Provide Believers with wisdom and grace to minister to those who are in need of You (2 Cor. 1:3-4). Precious Shepherd, by Your Spirit, lead the Body in Israel, as well as worldwide, to know exactly how to pray in this battle against COVID-19 (1 John 5:14-15).

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for You are with me; Your rod and staff comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. Surely goodness and covenant-love shall follow [lit: pursue] me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of YHWH forever.” (Psalm 23:4-6)

4. KINNERET WATER LEVELS REACH 16-YEAR HIGH - The Sea of Galilee, located in northern Israel, is the Jewish state's largest source of freshwater. The lake's water levels are measured daily reached a record high of 686.6 feet this week.

This marks the highest level recorded at the lake since July 2004, nearly 16 years ago. The lake's water levels may see a further increase, due to melting snow from mountains in the Golan Heights. This could create a major flood risk for the surrounding communities, in which case, authorities plan to open an emergency dam that will divert water from the Sea of Galilee to the Jordan River.

This development comes as a surprise after years of dangerously low water levels in the lake. One Water Authority official said, “We get less and less rain on average in recent years, and before last year there were five years of severe drought, mainly in the north and the Sea of Galilee.” In 2018, Israel's Water Authority was concerned about the Sea of Galilee's perilously low water levels. At that time, the lake was near the “black line,” the level at which low quality, silty water begins.

Lord, thank You for how much water You have poured out on the Kinneret (Sea of Galilee) this season (Psa. 147:7-8). We ask that the Sea of Galilee be filled before the summer season comes (Zech. 10:1). Yeshua, You walked on that sea (Matt. 14:25). Lord, please walk in the Galilee again and reveal Yourself to many (Isa. 9:1-2).

“Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the Lord your God, for he has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before.” (Joel: 2:23)

5. ISRAEL TERROR ATTACKS UPDATES:

Late Sunday (Mar 22), "IDF troops spotted a number of suspects hurling rocks at Israeli vehicles driving on the highway. The troops fired towards the suspects after they hurled a rock and were preparing to hurl additional rocks. One of the

suspects was killed by the fire and another was injured and escaped." Pictures from the scene showed a vehicle with a smashed windshield and a large rock.

No other country in the developed world is shot at as often as Israel - making it a forge of innovation for air defense systems. 1,300 rockets were fired from Gaza at Israel last year, according to the military, while a handful of missiles came from Syria and southern Lebanon. Later this year, Israel's military will become the first in the world to demonstrate a laser weapon for bringing down rockets. Col. Gil Dolov, deputy commander of Israel's Air Defense Array stated, "The big question, the one that worries us, is whether we can stay ahead of our enemies. Right now, we are in a good position and we are at least one step ahead." Since it came online in 2011, Israel's Iron Dome has successfully intercepted more than 2,000 incoming rockets.

Abba, we thank You for the induction of new recruits into the IDF last Sunday. Give the commanders wisdom as to where to place each one when it is time for them to be assigned to their units (Prov. 21:31). Place Messianic believers in the IDF with other believers for prayer and encouragement (Mark 6:7). Remove all fear of man from Israel's security forces and pour out Your fear...the 'fear of God' (Psa. 56:4; 96:4). We ask You, Lord, to station Your angelic hosts on all of Israel's borders and if needed, for them to be revealed to both Israel and Israel's enemies (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).

"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)

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

Syria

Reports from the Idlib region in Syria say that regular combat between Turkish forces and forces loyal to Assad has almost completely stopped, except for sporadic ambush strikes on the main highway by radical militias against Assad's forces. The main concern now in Idlib is of an outbreak of the coronavirus. It is practically impossible to enforce quarantine orders in the area because a large portion of the people there are refugees who live in temporary shelter and densely packed neighborhoods, many of which have no running water for washing. Moreover, there are no clinics or other medical facilities where infected people could receive proper treatment. In addition, the Turkish military is worried that the virus could hit Turkish troops and the militias operating under its patronage in Idlib province as well as in western parts of the Kurdish provinces in northern Syria.

The rebel pocket in Syria's Idlib province has shrunk to half the size it was in April 2019, as Bashar al-Assad is determined to do away with what he and his allies see as "Jihadistan." The rebels now control only 3,000 square km of Idlib, down from 7,000 last April. There are now 9,000 Turkish soldiers in Idlib, but it is not clear how much longer they will stay. Russia wants to do away with what it sees as a terrorist nest in Idlib. The jihadist groups have their backs to the wall and are ready to fight to the bitter end, at great cost to opposing forces. Assad wants to reclaim as much Syrian territory as possible, but emptied of people who oppose him. Turkey does not want more refugees. Likewise, the EU trembles at the prospect of several million new refugees heading for its borders.

Lebanon

The Israel Defense Forces said it shot down a drone that was flown by the Hezbollah terror group into Israeli airspace from Lebanon on Thursday (Mar 26) morning. The military said the small drone was retrieved by Israeli troops. The IDF refused to comment on the nature of the device, and whether it carried explosives, implying it was a reconnaissance drone. The IDF reported that it was on high alert on a number of fronts, without elaborating.

President Trump succeeded in pressuring the government of Lebanon to bring about the release of Amer Fakhoury, a USA citizen and former officer in the South Lebanese Army, despite Hezbollah's objections. His release is seen in Lebanon and the Arab world as an American victory over Lebanon and Hezbollah, and proving that the USA knows how to protect its citizens.

Iraq

Two rockets slammed into Baghdad's Green Zone early on Thursday (Mar 26). An Iraqi security source told AFP the intended target appeared to be the USA embassy, a few hundred meters south of where the rockets hit. It is the 26th such attack targeting installations in Iraq where foreign troops or diplomats are based since late October.

Lord, use the harsh impact of the CV-19 plague on Iran as another tool to cut off its financial aid and other means of support from its proxies in the Middle East, especially Palestinian Islamic Jihad in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon (Num. 24:9b; Joel3:9-17). Give discernment to the IDF commanders to see what is urgent and what is important (1 Kin. 3:9). Lord, even in this time of only having a temporary budget, we ask You to provide all the finances that are needed to see the 'Momentum' plan come to pass (Hag. 2:8). May the next prime minister and defense minister work in one accord with Kochavi (Psa. 133:1). Prepare the next generation of IDF soldiers who will be entering the army this year (Deut. 20:1-4).

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, neither dismayed. For YHWH your God is with you in all places where you go." (Joshua 1:9)

7. GAZA UPDATES:

Last Friday (Mar 20), Gazan Imam Jamil Al-Mutawa delivered a sermon broadcast on Hamas' Al-Aqsa TV, saying that COVID-19 is a "soldier" of Allah, which severely affected the USA, Israel, Iran, Italy, and China, while leaving the Palestinians and Gazans unaffected. "Look how empty the [Israeli] cities are. Look how empty their streets are and look how crowded this mosque is." He prayed for Allah to continue unleashing the virus against the people behind the 'Deal of the Century'.

Hundreds more coronavirus testing kits and 1,000 protective medical gear kits were delivered into Gaza last Friday (Mar 20) through the Erez border crossing by the Defense Ministry's COGAT (Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories) unit.

Gaza's Health Ministry said Sunday (Mar 22) that two Palestinians who had traveled to Pakistan and have been held in quarantine on their return tested positive for coronavirus. Authorities in Gaza said 2,700 Palestinians are in home-isolation, mostly people who had returned via Egypt. Hamas announced on Wednesday (Mar25) seven new cases of coronavirus in Gaza. The newly infected persons were all Hamas security men who had come into contact with the two Palestinians who had returned from Pakistan and tested positive for COVID-19 on Saturday. The ministry emphasized that all the new cases have been in a quarantine facility at the Egypt-Gaza border and had not come into contact with

the general population. "The Health Ministry unequivocally affirms that no cases have been recorded inside the Strip and what was uncovered was in one of the isolation centers," it said.

The Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) slammed the human rights NGO B'Tselem for alleging Thursday (Mar 26) that the IDF demolished a coronavirus treatment center built by Palestinians in the Jordan Valley. "We are sorry to see a human rights NGO choosing to exploit a global crisis to spread fake news."

Harriet Sherwood wrote in the Guardian last Sunday (Mar 22), "An Israeli blockade [of Gaza], in place since 2007 although eased in recent years, has limited the import of medicines and other essential items." The IDF's COGAT unit responded, "As opposed to the arguments in the article, there hasn't been any restriction on importing medical equipment and medicine to the Gaza Strip, except for items considered as dual-use equipment. The State of Israel promotes, beyond the letter of the law, the import of medicine and medical equipment for dozens of medical institutions in the Gaza Strip."

Lord, we have heard the threats from Hamas to fire rockets from Gaza and force Israelis to be in close contact with each other in bomb shelters. Deal with these demonic threats; if they happen, give the IDF courage to strike back – hard and fast (Psa. 68:1; 30b). Keep the soldiers in the Gaza area alert and clear as to their orders (Psa. 144:1). Lord, expose the way that these terrorists are obtaining their rockets and weapons (Psa. 139:11-12). Supernaturally stop the balloon attacks, we pray! Use rain and wind to confound Hamas!

"Behold, all those who were incensed against you shall be ashamed and confounded; they shall be as nothing. And those who fight with you shall perish. You shall seek them, and shall not find them; men warring against you shall be as nothing, and as ceasing." (Isaiah 41:11-12)

8. PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY UPDATES:

The Palestinian Authority announced 13 new coronavirus cases, bringing the total in Judea-Samaria to 77. PA spokesman Ibrahim Milhem said all of the new cases are in the Jerusalem-area village of Biddu, where a woman died Wednesday from COVID-19. A number of the new cases had been exposed to that woman.

With concerns over the spread of the coronavirus in the Palestinian territories, cooperation with the Palestinians is at its tightest ever. Israel and the Palestinian Authority understand that they're staring into this abyss together and acting accordingly. Israel also has a supreme interest in ensuring that the disease doesn't hit Gaza. (**Note:** The Palestinian Authority said Saturday (Mar 21) that four new cases of coronavirus have been diagnosed, three in Ramallah and one in Hebron.)

A reliable Palestinian public opinion poll taken last week shows that 68% in Judea-Samaria, Gaza, and east Jerusalem support - while 30% oppose - "cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians to prevent the spread of coronavirus." At the same time, 47% of Palestinians "believe a foreign power or other force is deliberately causing the spread of coronavirus."

For the first time in years, the Palestinians are no longer condemning cooperation with Israel as a "treacherous" form of normalization. Israeli and Palestinian health and security officials suddenly found themselves holding several meetings a day as they set up a joint "operations room" to combat the virus. PA spokesman said, "When it comes to health issues, there's no room for controversy. It would be foolish and irresponsible for anyone to oppose medical

cooperation between the Palestinians and Israel in fighting against the pandemic, which does not recognize borders and does not distinguish between a Palestinian and an Israeli. This is the time to lay aside any differences and conflicts and join forces."

The official Palestinian Authority (PA) daily Al Hayat Al Jadida criticized Hamas for not closing the mosques in the Gaza Strip to prevent the spread of Coronavirus, but yet on the same page reported criticism of Israel for closing the Al-Aqsa Mosque (on the Jewish people's Temple Mount) to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus, a situation the Palestinian Media Watch (PMW), which reported on the articles, described as an "absurd contradiction." One article reported the condemnation of Israel by the Islamic Waqf Council which accused Israel of exploiting the Coronavirus to harm Muslim worshipers by closing the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Waqf's stand contradicted the instructions of the PA Ministry of Religious Affairs, but the official PA daily still printed the accusations against Israel. Meanwhile, a front-page editorial slammed Hamas for not closing mosques to contain the spread of the virus in Gaza.

Greek authorities arrested three Palestinians for setting ablaze the Swiss-run 'One Happy Family' community center at a refugee camp on the island of Lesbos earlier this month. One Palestinian man, 59, has a Greek passport and lives in Mytilene, the capital of Lesbos. The two other Palestinians live in Athens and traveled to Mytilene. Police arrested the Palestinians after viewing CCTV video footage from nearby businesses.

The IDF Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) reported on Wednesday that over 3,000 coronavirus test-kits and 50,000 masks were delivered to the Palestinian Authority to aid in the fight against the coronavirus. The medical gear was donated by the World Health Organization.

According to official Palestinian reports, the actual expenditure by the Palestinian Authority on salaries to incarcerated terrorists during 2019 was 517.4 million shekels (\$148 million). This is in comparison to 502 million shekels in 2018. The Palestinians keep paying salaries to all terrorists arrested in Israel and to the families of dead terrorists in spite of the growing international attention to the "Pay for Slay" phenomenon. In 2018, Israel adopted a law requiring the deduction of the amount the PA paid as salaries to terrorists and their families from the taxes it collects for the PA. Following the outbreak of the coronavirus, the PA asked Israel to deliver the withheld funds. Clearly, if the PA lacks the financial resources to combat the epidemic, they can stop paying salaries to terrorists

Thank You, Lord, for all of Israel's various security forces (Ezek. 37:10). We thank You for the new cooperation that is happening during this COVID-19 crisis. May the IDF and police not become lax during this lull in terrorism. While we know that ultimately it is You who guards this nation (Jer. 31:10), we often see in Your Word that You guarded Israel by helping Israel's army to defeat its enemies (Isa. 41:10-16). Awaken all Jewish residents ['settlers' in the world's jargon] in Judea-Samaria to be super alert and to live under Your divine protection (Psa. 18:2-3; 140:7). Provide safety and security – especially on the roads – to all who travel. Continue to allow Israel's intelligence gatherings to be supernaturally sharp (Job 12:22; 28:11b). Expose and overthrow all of the enemies' plans against Your people (Psa. 33:10-12).

"And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that YHWH fought against the enemies of Israel." (2 Chronicles 20:29)

9. 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)*

The Darkness

The Joint Arab List has been given the chairmanship of the committee dealing with compensating terror victims. The Knesset Labor, Welfare and Health Committee deals with many issues related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the rehabilitation of disabled IDF veterans and of families of victims of war and terror. It also controls the IDF soldiers' pay regulations. And, as of this week, chairmanship of the committee has been awarded to the Joint Arab List. The committee is expected to include four Blue&White members, four Likud, two from the Joint Arab List including the committee chairman, and one representative each from all the other Knesset factions. The Arab list has yet to make a decision on which of its MKs will chair the committee. (**Note:** This is madness at its height! Meir Indor, from the 'Almagor Terror Victims Association', says the decision to grant the Labor, Welfare and Health Committee to a Joint Arab List representative was a "black day" for Israeli victims of terrorism.)

The Gray

A Jewish rabbi is expecting the Messiah to be revealed around Passover this year in a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, citing a prophecy about a global pandemic from the main text of the mystical Kabbalah. In a lecture last month, Rav Yaakov Yagen identified page 172:b of the Zohar as an end-times Messianic text pointing to a soon fulfillment for Jews expecting a savior king. "At the end of days," Yagen paraphrased, "one virus that the people are going to have some sort of control over" is going to be followed by "another virus that is going to be similar but worse than the first virus," both of which will be "God's way of purifying the world so Messiah can come." In lieu of a current third temple, Yagen's second prediction seemed rather strange and portentous. "So according to the Zohar, we are at the end of the days. Not the days leading up to but we are at the end of the end of the days leading up to Messiah," he said. "So, God willing, this Passover, we won't have to book hotels and we will all be in Jerusalem and the Temple where we will all merit bringing the Passover offering."

- Another rabbi last month mystically interpreted the etymology of coronavirus as pointing to the need for God to be "crowned" in the temple in Jerusalem as the only cure capable of staying the plague.
- And another, Rabbi Nir Ben Artzi, predicted a global pandemic five years ago, is now predicting that "miracles and wonders...seen during the holiday of Passover" will serve as a divine stamp of approval on a cure that comes out of Israel.
- The New York Times has also reported that cutting edge vaccine technology now involves the injection of synthetic DNA to supposedly increase disease resistance, leading some prophecy students to wonder whether the "mark of the beast" in Revelation 13 will not be sold as a cure to a global pandemic.

The Light

It's taken months of hard work, but this year the 'Orthodox Israel Coalition' (Mizrachi) and 'Eretz Hakodesh' groups in the United States have dramatically increased the number of delegates they will send to the World Zionist Congress – an important event that takes place every five years. In 2015, the Orthodox Israel Coalition (Mizrachi) equaled the Conservative movement's voter share with 17 percent of the delegate mandates. But this time, The OIC won 18 percent, and the new religiously Orthodox Eretz Hakodesh group won 16 percent of the vote. As part of that sector, the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) coalition also won more than triple the votes in this year's election – 10,313 mandates and eight percent of the vote — than it did in 2015, when the ballots numbered 2,738. Between all the Orthodox and right-leaning groups, their percentage is over 50 percent representation with some 62,000 votes to the Reform/Conservative/Progressive's 54,098 votes, out of approximately 123,000 votes. (**Note:** The Congress oversees the distribution of some \$5 billion in funds over a five-year period in Israel and the Diaspora. In addition, the Congress appoints board members to other Jewish organizations, such as the Jewish Agency for Israel, the Jewish National Fund (JNF) and the World Zionist Organization.)

An Israeli man imprisoned in Thailand will be allowed to serve the remainder of his four-year-sentence in Israel after Israel's President Rivlin successfully lobbied the Thai authorities on his behalf. Nati Hadad was arrested in 2017 and sentenced a year after for running an illegal medical clinic ('Koh Samui Search and Rescue' medical center) and a firearms offense. Hadad has two years of his sentence remaining which he will now serve in Israel after first petitioning Rivlin to assist him a year ago. The President had first asked the Thai king for a royal pardon in June 2019, citing Hadad's "critical medical and mental state," who had reportedly attempted to commit suicide in prison. Rivlin thanked the Thai king and credited Member of Knesset (MK) Ayelet Shaked who was the Justice Minister when Israel launched the process of returning Hadad.

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!

"YHWH discovers deep things out of darkness, and brings the shadow of death to light." (Job 12:22)

10. ANTI-SEMITISM UPDATES:

German police have raided premises nationwide linked to an anti-Semitic, far-right movement called Reichsbürger (Citizens of the Reich). Neo-Nazi propaganda and firearms were seized in the raids in 10 of Germany's 16 states. Reichsbürger is estimated to have 19,000 members in Germany.

Lord, use the rise in anti-Semitism to stir up the Jews to come home (Jer. 16:16). Lord, use the rise of anti-Semitism to stir up Your Church to see the signs of the times (Mark 13:33). Then let them hear You guide them to help carry and pay for the Jews to return (Isa. 49:22; 60:3-11. Encourage new immigrants [olim] to talk to their families about coming home. Help the olim with an ability to learn Hebrew quickly and painlessly. We again ask that the next government will open wide doors for the return of all of Jews (Isa. 62:10). Make the next government willing to do whatever is needed to help the new olim to be rooted, grounded and fruitful in Israel. He shall cause those who come from Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit. (Isa. 27:6)

"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)

11. IRAN UPDATES:

Iranian President Rouhani said Wednesday (Mar 25) that the UN Security Council is weighing plans for the removal of all sanctions on Iran amid the outbreak of the coronavirus. He said a foreign official from a non-permanent member of the Security Council informed him that a plan for lifting the sanctions is going to be mooted. "We are also trying to have our blocked money unfrozen," Rouhani noted.

The USA Department of State has added Asaib Ahl al Haq (League of the Righteous), an Iranian-backed Iraqi Shia terror group, to its list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Additionally, the group's leader, Qais al Khazali, and his brother, Laith

al Khazali, have been listed as Specially Designated Global Terrorists. The League of the Righteous "and its leaders are violent proxies of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said.

Fatah Mohammed Abdullah, 35, a British-Iranian living in Newcastle, has admitted to inciting people to commit terror attacks in Germany and buying explosive equipment. He bought more than 8,000 matches, fireworks, fuses, explosives precursors, and a remote control detonator. His intention was to help Omar Babek and Ahmed Hussein commit acts of terrorism, a Liverpool crown court heard last Friday (Mar 20). Charges state that in 2018 he encouraged others to drive a car into a crowd, attack people with a meat cleaver, and set off bombs. He also searched for guides to explosives online and tested a remote detonation system.

The USA State Department announced sanctions on Thursday (Mar 26) against "20 individuals and entities that violate Iraqi sovereignty and exploit Iraq's economy to funnel money to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF)." They "help provide the financial support that enables the IRGC-QF to transfer lethal aid to Iranian-backed terrorist groups such as Kata'ib Hizballah (KH) and Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH)."

Robert Levinson, a retired FBI agent who went missing in Iran 13 years ago, has died in Iranian custody, his family said Wednesday (Mar 25). Levinson disappeared in March 2007 while on Kish Island, a tourist spot off the coast of Iran, during an unauthorized trip for the CIA to gather intelligence on Iran's nuclear program. Levinson was last viewed alive in a 2010 hostage video in which he wore a prison-style orange jumpsuit. Robert C. O'Brien, who was the State Department's hostage envoy before becoming national security adviser, said USA officials believe Levinson may have died "some time ago." "The United States calls upon Iran to release all Americans who remain wrongfully detained in that country," O'Brien added.

A 40-year-old Norwegian citizen of Iranian descent has been charged with helping Iranian intelligence to carry out a plot on Danish soil to kill an Iranian opposition activist, Prosecutor Lise-Lotte Nilas said Wednesday. Nilas said it was "completely unacceptable that foreign intelligence services plan killings on Danish soil, and it is unacceptable that people help foreign intelligence services operate in Denmark."

A court in Koblenz, Germany, on Monday sentenced German-Afghani military translator Abdul Hamid S. to prison for treason for handing over state secrets to Iran's intelligence agency in return for payment. Abdul met with agents of the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence between 2013 and 2017 in various European cities. He delivered site plans of the German armed forces, as well as analysis material from the German defense department. Between 2007 and 2017, German authorities conducted criminal investigations into Iran for 22 cases of espionage.

Iran and the Coronavirus

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei refused USA assistance Sunday to fight the coronavirus, citing an unfounded conspiracy theory that the virus could be man-made by America. "Who in their right mind would trust you to bring them medication?" Khamenei said. "Possibly your medicine is a way to spread the virus more." He also alleged that the virus "is specifically built for Iran using the genetic data of Iranians which they have obtained."

At least five foreign countries' first cases of coronavirus were directly imported from Iran. The Iranian regime ignored repeated warnings from its own health officials, and denied its first death from the coronavirus for at least nine days. The regime continues to lie to the Iranian people and the world about the number of cases and deaths. As Iranian regime officials ask for more funds, it is important to note that since 2012, Iran has spent over \$16 billion on terror abroad. Regime officials stole over a billion euros intended for medical supplies, and continue to hoard desperately needed masks, gloves, and other medical equipment for sale on the black market. (**Note:** USA sanctions do not target

imports of food, medicine and medical equipment, or other humanitarian goods. Iranian documents show their health companies have been able to import testing kits without obstacle from USA sanctions since January. Iranian supreme leader Khamenei works tirelessly to concoct conspiracy theories and prioritizes ideology over the Iranian people.)

A team of nine doctors deployed to Iran by international medical humanitarian organization 'Doctors Without Borders' (MSF) is expected to head back home without even starting its relief operations aimed at containing the coronavirus outbreak. It is not clear whether MSF's donated medical items were turned back as well. Earlier this week, two shipments of medical supplies arrived from France. The MSF team, comprised of nine emergency and intensive care unit medical doctors and logisticians, was planning to set up a 50-bed inflatable field hospital in Isfahan, one of Iran's worst-affected areas. "Expelling MSF will be a decision based on wisdom because their presence is a cover for nonhumanitarian activities," said Hossein Shariatmadari, a close aide to supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei. "The question is why our officials allowed the group to enter in the first place."

Iranian media reports nearly 300 people have been killed and more than 1,000 sickened so far after ingesting methanol - industrial alcohol - in the mistaken belief that it protects against the coronavirus.

Senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps commander, Brigadier Hossein Asadollahi died this past weekend of the COVID-19 coronavirus. Asadollahi was responsible for transferring missiles to Iran's Lebanese proxy group, the Hezbollah terrorist organization that has been fighting on behalf of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad almost since the start of the civil war in 2011. The nation's Health Ministry spokesperson, Kianush Jahanpour, expressed outrage at the huge funeral held in Asadollahi's honor, deeply upset at the obvious risk due to the coronavirus pandemic. (**Note:** Asadollahi was a key commander of the Iranian forces fighting on behalf of the Syrian regime. He served for decades in the IRGC, and once was responsible for maintain order in Iran's capital city of Tehran, as head of the IRGC's 27th Mohammad Rasulullah division, which he commanded for a number of years.)

Iran's health ministry said this week that a person is dying of coronavirus every ten minutes as caseloads continue to rise and hospitals reach a breaking point. After weeks of skewed numbers and accusations of downplaying or covering up the coronavirus prevalence in Iran, the Tehran government is finally voicing the horrifying extent of the problem in its borders. Meanwhile, according to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Iranian regime officials have pocketed more than \$1 billion in humanitarian funds meant to be used to help the country fight the spread of coronavirus. European countries intended for more than \$1 billion cash for medical supplies to go to the Iranian people, who have been ravaged by the virus. But American officials say regime leaders instead pocketed the money and are now using it to protect themselves from the virus as it spreads throughout the population. Iran has been among the hardest hit by the virus, and its government's response has drawn international criticism, especially from the Trump administration. Secretary of State Pompeo accused Iran of mass corruption as the regime continues to spread propaganda, including accusations that the USA manufactured the coronavirus and is using its tough global sanctions campaign to prevent Iran from accessing medicine and humanitarian aid. Pompeo this week issued a series of new allegations about Tehran's mishandling of the coronavirus outbreak. "Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei's fabrications regarding the Wuhan virus are dangerous and they put Iranians and people around the world at greater risk," Pompeo said.

Father, thank You for all the problems Iranian leaders need to deal with at this time (Psa. 35:26). Increase all their problems until they see that Allah is not God and cry out to You (Matt. 5:44). Send deception on them and force them to make major errors in judgment (1 Kin. 22:19-23). Cause all their demonic plans to fail and openly bring them to shame. Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek Your name, YHWH. (Psa. 83:16) Stir up the Iranian people to overthrow their wicked leaders (Hag. 2:22). Abba, may all their proxies somehow become contributors to the Iranian regime's downfall. We bless You for the miraculous work You are doing in building Your church in Iran (Matt. 16:18).

Give the body of Messiah in Iran wisdom and an anointing to know how to intercede for their nations, their government and their relationship with Israel (1 Tim. 3:1-4; Gen. 12:3).

"Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered: let them also that hate Him flee before Him...Rebuke the company of spearmen...scatter the people that delight in war." (Psalm 68:1, 30)

12. UNITED NATIONS UPDATES:

Fatou Bensouda, the International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor, announced Sunday that the decision on whether to launch a full-scale investigation into alleged war crimes by Israel will be delayed for at least a month, citing the global coronavirus pandemic. Bensouda was slated to file her brief on the matter on March 30.

Abba, bless all the nations that support Israel...we pray that the Canadian government will be pro-Israel in all future resolutions. (Num. 24:9). Confront all lukewarm nations. (Rev. 3:15-16). Father, wake up Believers in these nations to see the curse this brings on their country and let them stand in the gap before You, crying out for mercy (Hab. 3:1-2). We thank and praise You for Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon. May his faithfulness to truth bring him to a place of influence and authority to You and to this nation (Neh. 7:2; Prov. 20:6).

"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the peoples all around... And in that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all peoples. All who lift it shall be slashed, and all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it." (Zechariah 12:2-3)

13. ISRAEL GOOD NEWS ITEMS:

Hillel Furstenberg, 84, and Gregory Margulis, 74, have won the 'Abel Prize' for mathematics, the equivalent of a Nobel, it was announced Monday (Mar 23). While there is no Nobel for mathematics, the Abel has been given out annually by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters since 2003. Furstenberg, a Berlin native, was on the faculty of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem from 1965 to 2003. Margulis, a Moscow native, took a position at Yale in 1991.

A new ground-breaking cancer treatment developed by Israeli scientists, which fights malignant brain tumours using electric pulses, has become available to patients in Israel. This FDA-approved treatment comes in the form of a device that delivers Tumour Treating Fields (TTFields) for glioblastoma (GBM), an aggressive form of brain cancer. TTF Fields use alternating electric fields specifically tuned to target cancer cells. Once electric fields enter the cancerous cell, they attract and repel charged proteins during the division process of the hostile cell, preventing the tumour's growth while causing minimal harm to nearby healthy cells. The device, a helmet-like object called 'Optune', is designed for adult patients who were recently diagnosed with GBM and is administered to brain cancer sufferers going through chemotherapy treatments. Optune was developed by Israeli biotech company Novocure. According to Novocure, TTF is approved in certain countries in Europe and in Canada for treating adults with glioblastoma and in the USA for mesothelioma, two of the most difficult cancer types to treat.

In "Story Time with President Rivlin," Israeli President Rivlin read Lea Goldberg's Hebrew book *Dira Lehaskir (Room for Rent)* to children who are homebound due to the coronavirus pandemic, in a video posted on social media and YouTube last Thursday (Mar 19). "We'll meet again next week," the president hinted.

Israel ranks 14th among 153 countries in the annual UN 'World Happiness Report' published last Friday (Mar 20). In a newly-added ranking of cities around the world, Tel Aviv was number 8. The report was based on data compiled before the coronavirus pandemic.

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)