

ISRAEL INTERCESSORY PRAYER ITEMS

June 5-12, 2020

1. ALIYAH NUMBERS INCREASE DRAMATICALLY - Nefesh B'Nefesh, the organization which facilitates Aliyah from North America has recently reported record-breaking numbers of interested Olim [Jews who make Aliyah]. May 2020 showed a 100% increase in North American interest in Aliyah in comparison to numbers from May 2019. While April showed a 50% increase in Olim who applied for Aliyah from April 2019, May 2020 is the highest recorded month of Aliyah application that Nefesh B'Nefesh has experienced in the past 18 years since its founding.

In May, over 800 families and singles submitted online applications, out of a total of 1,178 Aliyah applications which were downloaded and started since the beginning of the month.

In comparison, only 424 Aliyah applications were submitted in May 2019. The average age of May's applicants was 28, and about two-thirds of the submitted applications were for an expected Aliyah date within 2020. The organization also had a 127% increase in incoming calls over May from potential Olim, in comparison with the same month in 2019. Aliyah interest for 18-22 year olds has nearly doubled from the past year.

Two-thirds of the applicants stated that they want to make Aliyah in summer 2020. Over half of the applicants come from New York, New Jersey, California and Florida which have all been badly hit by corona outbreaks, and now, the riots.

Nefesh B'Nefesh has also pivoted all of their Aliyah programming to digital platforms, allowing for the influx of potential Olim across North America and beyond to easily access webinars, general information and FAQs on Aliyah at their convenience and from the safety of their own homes.

This new style of programming began with the Nefesh B'Nefesh Virtual Mega Event held on March 15th in place of the organization's annual fair which generally takes place in person in the tri-state area.

Since then, the organization has hosted over 80 online events, which have reached some 4,000 participants on Zoom and over 10,000 views on Facebook Live, as well as hundreds of personal meetings with potential Olim, setting a new precedent for how the organization can reach individuals abroad considering Aliyah, as well as Olim already in Israel, in order to address their Aliyah needs.

Thank You, Father, for the increasing interest of Jews in exile about making Aliyah (Jer. 50:4-5). As American Jews see a war zone outside their homes, turn their hearts to Israel (Psa. 137:4-6). Bless You for the new Aliyah & Immigrant Absorption Minister Pnina Tamano-Shata (Psa. 75:6-7). Use this Ethiopian woman as a bulldozer to clear away all stones of stumbling from Your people's return (Isa. 62:10). Surround her with like-minded people to encourage her to make the way straight for Your people to be restored to their God-given heritage (Jer. 3:18; 50:19). Return the Jewish Agency to once again fully support Aaliyah and stop it from diverting funds or efforts to make it easier for Jews to live in exile (Jer. 51:9-10). Pour out fresh revelation on the Church to understand that this movement of Jews coming home is for Your glory (Ezek. 36:23-24) and in preparation for the return of Your Son (Psa. 102:16). Move on churches to open wide their financial treasuries to help (Isa. 60:5-11). Warn the Christian Church of the dangers of not helping: For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you [Israel in the day of your restoration] shall perish. (Isa. 60:12a). Place a spirit of intercession upon more Christians for Aliyah (1 Pet. 4:7).

"And the Lord your God will bring you to the land that your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it, and He will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your fathers." (Deuteronomy 30:5)

2. REMEMBERING A GREAT SIX DAYS IN ISRAEL (June 5-10, 1967)

The Six-Day War between Israel and its three neighbours (Egypt, Jordan and Syria) ended with a United Nations-brokered cease-fire. The outnumbered Israel Defense Forces (3 to 1) achieved a swift and decisive victory in the brief war, rolling over the enemy coalition that threatened the Jewish state and more than tripled the amount of territory under Israel's control. The greatest fruit of victory lay in seizing the Old City of Jerusalem from Jordan; thousands of Jews wept while bent in prayer at the Second Temple's Western Wall.

Rabbi Yisrael Ariel was one of the soldiers who liberated the Temple Mount in the Six Day War. He describes how Rav Tzvi Yehuda Kook arrived on an army jeep, as the Jordanian soldiers were running away. The Jews then hung the Israeli flag on top of the Dome of the Rock, and then he saw thousands of Jordanian soldiers surrender, with their hands up in the air, to three or four IDF soldiers. And so, on June 7, 1967, Israeli soldiers retook Jerusalem and the IDF paratrooper's corps commander, a colonel named Mordechai (Mota) Gur, a native of Jerusalem, seared into our national memory the declaration: "Har Ha'Bayit B'yadeinu" which means, "Temple Mount is in our hands".

The sacred compound was under the administration of the IDF chief rabbi, Shlomo Goren, who organized regular prayer services on the Temple Mount, in the area where Jews are permitted to set foot according to halacha. He argued that praying by the Western Wall was a new custom, begun in the 16th century. Before that, Jews used to pray on the Temple Mount. Praying by the Kotel, which was built by King Herod to support the foundations of the Temple, was connected to the Exile. Now that we've been redeemed, he said, it's time to come back to the Holy Temple. Rabbi Goren even planned a Pascal sacrifice for the seder night of 1968. He stated that "You don't need a rebuilt Temple to fulfill the commandment of the Pascal sacrifice; you just need a lamb and a fire and a nice, rotating spit."

But then the Israeli government, led by General Moshe Dayan in his capacity as Defense Minister put an end to all this before the high holidays of 5728. Citing security threats, Dayan invited a Jordanian-sponsored Muslim charity called the Waqf to take over the holy compound – and they obliged quite happily.

Jews—or Christians, for that matter—could no longer pray on the Temple Mount, only Muslims. Since that time, for long stretches, the compound was verboten to religious Jews altogether. Meanwhile, the Muslims increased their control over the Temple Mount, and physically dug up and trashed precious archaeological remnants of Jewish presence there. And they hired gangs of security guards to monitor those Jews who did make it to the mountaintop. Israeli police, its border patrol, and the clandestine police were turned into an arm of repression against Jews on the Temple Mount. One of the rules they enforced was a preference given to Muslims on their religious holidays.

Dayan wrote in his journal in 1967 that the real reason he turned over the Temple Mount to the Muslims had nothing to do with security threats. Instead, he scribbled that the last thing he needed was a Jewish Vatican in the middle of Jerusalem. Dayan feared the direction Rabbi Goren was taking the country. Dayan expected that a man of Rabbi Goren's stature could lead the nation to redemption. He was the perfect religious Jew, if you will – a man of Torah scholarship, a man of courageous halachic decisions, and a military general. He and his ilk had to be stopped.

Summary of the Six Day War - In 1967, Syria intensified its bombardment of Israeli settlements across the border. Egypt, in cooperation with Syria, mobilized its forces and demanded the withdrawal of the UN Emergency Force from the

Israel-Egypt cease-fire lines of the 1956 conflict. The UN peacekeepers left on May 19, and three days later Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping. On May 30, Jordan signed a mutual-defense treaty with Egypt and Syria, and other Arab states, including Iraq, Kuwait, and Algeria, sent troop contingents to join the Arab coalition against Israel.

With every sign of a pan-Arab attack in the works, Israel's government on June 4 authorized its armed forces to launch a surprise pre-emptive strike. On June 5, the Six-Day War began with an Israeli assault against Arab air power. In a brilliant attack, the Israeli air force caught the formidable Egyptian air force on the ground and largely destroyed the Arabs' most powerful weapon. The Israeli air force then turned against the lesser air forces of Jordan, Syria, and Iraq, and by the end of the day had decisively won air superiority.

Beginning on June 5, Israel focused the main effort of its ground forces against Egypt's Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula. In a lightning attack, the Israelis burst through the Egyptian lines and across the Sinai. The Egyptians fought resolutely but were outflanked by the Israelis and decimated in lethal air attacks. By June 8, the Egyptian forces were defeated, and Israel held the Gaza Strip and the Sinai to the Suez Canal.

Meanwhile, to the east of Israel, Jordan, believing false reports about Egypt's victory over Israel, began shelling Israeli troops near Jerusalem and in Judea-Samaria on June 5, provoking a rapid and overwhelming response from Israeli forces. Israel overran Judea-Samaria and on June 7 captured the Old City of East Jerusalem. The chief chaplain of the Israel Defense Forces blew a ram's horn at the Western Wall to announce the reunification of East Jerusalem with the Israeli-administered western sector.

To the north, Israel bombarded Syria's fortified Golan Heights for two days before launching a tank and infantry assault on June 9. After a day of fierce fighting, the Syrians began a retreat from the Golan Heights on June 10. On June 11, a UN-brokered cease-fire took effect throughout the three combat zones, and the Six-Day War was at an end. Israel had more than tripled its size in the six days of fighting.

The UN Security Council called for an Israeli withdrawal from all newly acquired territory, but Israel declined, permanently annexing East Jerusalem and setting up military administrations in the new territories. Israel let it be known that Gaza, Judea-Samaria, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai would be returned in exchange for Arab recognition of the right of Israel to exist and guarantees against future attack. Arab leaders, stinging from their defeat, met in August to discuss the future of the Middle East. They decided upon a policy of no peace, no negotiations, and no recognition of Israel, and made plans to zealously oppose Israel into the future.

Egypt, however, would eventually negotiate and make peace with Israel, and in 1982 the Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egypt in exchange for full diplomatic recognition of Israel. Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994.

Thank You, Lord, for the amazing victory You orchestrated in 1967. We pray that You will rectify the very bad decision made by Moshe Dayan in the past. Have mercy on the secular Jews who to this day oppose all observant Jews. May the Temple Mount be restored soon to be a place of unrestricted prayer for Jews and Christians.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May they prosper who love you. Peace be within your walls, Prosperity within your palaces.'" (Psalm 122:6,7)

3. TERROR ATTACKS UPDATES:

IDF soldiers foiled an attempted stabbing attack Wednesday night (Jun 3) at the Hashmonaim checkpoint near Modi'in Illit. A Palestinian Authority terrorist attempted to stab a security guard at the checkpoint. IDF soldiers who were at the scene intervene and stopped the terrorist, without having to use weapons. The attacker was arrested and taken for questioning. No injuries were reported.

Five Jordanians are on trial in Jordan for plotting suicide attacks against Israeli targets in Judea-Samaria on Tuesday (Jun 2). The plot was foiled in February. One suspect visited Gaza in 2007, where he was trained to make explosive vests and bombs. He returned to Jordan in 2010 and in 2017 he recruited four others with whom he plotted to infiltrate Judea-Samaria and carry out attacks "with bombs against buses and trains and with explosive vests against other Israeli targets."

An assailant attempted to run his car over IDF soldiers who operated near Halamish settlement in Judea-Samaria last Friday (May 29). In response, the troops fired and neutralized the assailant.

An IDF soldier was arrested Monday night for posting a death threat against PM Netanyahu. The Police stated that the Lahav 433's cyber unit arrested a 21-year-old suspect from the north of the country on suspicion of publishing a post threatening to harm the prime minister. The soldier said on social media that "there is a solution and it is to take down Bibi. It unjustly happened in the past to a prime minister." He was relating to the 1995 assassination of Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin. "But now that we have a prime minister who is taking down his citizens. Apparently, this [an assassination] will happen again, and rightly so, and the cops who are his slaves should also be stoned to death. This is the solution," the suspect added. The soldier has reportedly previously posted violent messages against Netanyahu and the government.

On Monday (1 Jun), PM Netanyahu announced that he had filed a police complaint concerning recent death threats made against him and his family. "A few days ago, I filed a complaint with the police about a series of threats to murder me and my family," Netanyahu tweeted Monday. "Today, unfortunately, I had to file another complaint against a vile man who detailed how he intended to murder my family." The tweet included a screenshot of one of the threats, which called for Netanyahu, his wife, and two sons to be beheaded, and then have their bodies hung from the balcony of the prime minister's residence on Balfour Street in Jerusalem. "When will the media and the left, who do not stop for a moment trying to topple a right-wing prime minister, finally condemn the unruly and incessant incitement against me and against my family?" he also tweeted. Last month, left-wing activist Haim Shadmi was questioned under caution by police for allegedly threatening Netanyahu's son, Yair.

Former Likud Knesset Member Rabbi Yehuda Glick was attacked in eastern Jerusalem Wednesday (Jun 3) after visiting the mourning tent family of Iyad al-Halak who is the 32-year-old special needs Arab man mistakenly killed by Israeli Border Guard Police on Tuesday (Jun 2). Israeli Defense Minister and Alternative Prime Minister Benny Gantz apologized for the tragic error. Glick was evacuated to Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Medical Center, where he was listed in good condition. The former MK told Israeli media that he wanted to express his thanks "to Magen David Adom, and to the police and firefighter rescue crews" who he said came immediately to help evacuate him and rendered first aid on the scene prior to rushing him to the hospital. One suspect was arrested by police on Friday evening. The court ordered the police to release the suspect to house arrest. Al-Halak's father thanked the two for their visit and said, "We all want to live together in peace."

Abba, we thank You for Israel's amazing defence force! 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 police; 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).

"Moreover, I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore..."
(2 Samuel 7:10)

4. ISRAEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATES:

Israel's Health Ministry reported Thursday (Jun 4) evening that 118 new cases of coronavirus had been detected in the last 24 hours. 291 people have died from Covid-19. There are 23 patients on ventilators, down from 140 six weeks ago. 87 schools have closed after students or staff members tested positive.

A sharp rise in the number of coronavirus patients in Israel, particularly among students and teachers, is causing health and education officials to consider shutting down the school system for the rest of the academic year. Schools resumed operations in mid-May as part of the gradual re-opening of the economy after seven weeks of countrywide lockdowns and due to the flattening of the COVID-19 curve. Three people died of the disease overnight Tuesday (Jun 2), bringing the country's death toll to 290. It was the largest spike in fatalities in the past month. This is in addition to the 19 new cases from educational institutions that were confirmed on Wednesday, June 3, raising the total number of recent cases in the country's classrooms to 244 and leading to the closure of an additional six schools. So far, 43 schools have been shut down temporarily, and some 10,000 Israelis are in quarantine.

MK Sami Abu Shehadeh, a member of the Balad faction in the Joint Arab List, the faction that wants to see the Jewish State being dismantled (the Haneen Zoabi people), on Wednesday (Jun 3) night tweeted: "I received a few minutes ago the results of the coronavirus test I did today – the result is positive. I appeal to anyone who was in my immediate area to go into isolation and be tested. I ask everyone to follow the Health Ministry's instructions." So the Knesset traced his steps and found that on Monday Abu Shehadeh participated in the Knesset plenary debates, the Joint Arab List MKs' meeting, and the joint meeting of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee with the Interior Committee. That's a lot of MKs. **So the Knesset cancelled all its scheduled events for the rest of the week** (which is basically just Thursday, since Friday is Israel's Sunday). Also, the House's 700 employees were told to stay home. The Knesset Sergeant-at-Arms Yosef Grif will now go over the Knesset Cams' recordings from the past week to identify which MKs and others MK Abu Shehadeh had been in contact with, and they will be required to go into a quarantine.

On Monday (Jun 1) evening, PM Netanyahu's office announced that an office worker there had been diagnosed with the coronavirus and a similar security cam investigation was underway to detect who had come in contact with him. The man, a maintenance worker, was in the prime minister's office on Saturday night. Ministers Israel Katz and Yoav Galant were also in the building then, and may also be required to go into isolation.

Augmented reality superimposes digital content, such as 3-D images or visual instructions, onto a user's view of the real world. This can be done through mobile devices and wearable headsets such as Microsoft's 'HoloLens'. The coronavirus pandemic has increased interest in remote assistance and training because employees and customers are less willing to be in close contact.

- Since March, Sheba Medical Center in Israel has used five HoloLens 2 headsets to train 60 physicians, biomedical engineers and nurses on how to operate ventilators for Covid-19 patients. The HoloLens headset uses optical projection to create digital hologram-like objects that users can see and interact with.
- Medical workers wearing the headset can see a hologram-like rendering of a ventilator superimposed on their real-world view. The headset includes built-in instructions that guide the worker through the process of operating the ventilator in front of them. The headset can also be used as a way for doctors in other parts of the hospital to give remote assistance without needing to be physically present but still being able to see what is happening in a patient's room.

Israeli researchers have determined in a new study that the initial symptom of loss of taste (ageusia) and smell (anosmia) is the strongest predictor of a positive test result for COVID-19, the disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, the novel coronavirus. The paper, entitled 'Who should we test for COVID-19? A triage model built from national symptom surveys was published May 21, 2020 in the online medical journal 'MedRxiv', and listed confusion as the next strongest predictor, followed by fatigue and then diarrhea. Fever, headache and cough came later, as opposed to their initial appearance as primary symptoms when COVID-19 first began to terrorize the world last December. The researchers noted, in fact, that "the extended features model" they created in the course of their work "suggested that while dry cough has an essential role in predicting COVID-19 diagnosis, moist cough does not and thus may help distinguish between cases of COVID19 and other infections."

Lord, anoint the new Health Minister Yuli Edelstein, with wisdom from above (Jam. 3:17). Standing in the gap, and based on James 1:5-6, we ask for wisdom for all in the health and economic areas that need to give input and make final decisions, including Netanyahu and Benny Gantz. Give courage to Israel's new Finance Minister Yisrael Katz to make all necessary decisions, even if they are not what this nation wants to hear at this time (Luke 16:11). We thank You for all Israeli health workers and bless them. We thank You for guarding Your people from the worst effects of this plague (Ex. 8:22; 9:6). Lord, You have allowed this virus crisis for Your Kingdom purposes. May all that You have in Your heart be accomplished both here in Israel and globally (Psa. 103:19; Isa. 55:11). Humble humanity. Let those who see themselves as "gods" realize that through a very little, unseen virus, the whole world has been turned upside-down (Psa. 9:19-20; 76:12; Isa. 31:3).

"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)

5. JUDEA-SAMARIA UPDATES:

It could take up to several months before the joint USA-Israel mapping committee concludes its work, which the White House has declared a precondition before it would give a green light for applying Israel law in parts of Judea-Samaria. The mapping committee is tasked with delineating the exact borders of these areas, a mission that requires meticulous, on-the-ground work. However, a key member of the committee, the USA National Security Council's Israel and Palestinian affairs director Scott Leith, has not been able to travel to the region since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. It is unlikely that the committee could complete its work by the proposed July 1 date. An official from the settlement movement who met with PM Netanyahu on Tuesday (Jun 2) said he left the meeting under the impression that moves toward applying Israel law would not be taking place "as soon or in the scope" that had initially been pledged.

Further Note: As he prepares to ask the Knesset to vote on a plan for Israeli annexation of parts of Judea-Samaria, PM Netanyahu explained that MKs will only have to vote on the issue of sovereignty, not on the issue of a Palestinian state. Under the Israeli coalition government agreement, Netanyahu can bring annexation to the vote from 1 July, provided he has USA approval. Earlier this year the Trump administration published a plan for peace that allows not only for extended Israeli sovereignty in parts of Judea-Samaria, but also for a Palestinian state.

If Israel proceeds with its plan to apply Israeli law to the Jordan Valley and Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, the European Union will take punitive measures of relatively little economic significance, European diplomats have said. According to the European envoys, the internal working guidelines of EU institutions; the historical relationship between Israel and Germany, as well as other EU member nations; and Europe's interest in maintaining good relations with Israel will ultimately prevent the EU from responding harshly. At a meeting of EU foreign ministers three weeks ago, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell tried to publish a joint statement warning Israel against applying Israel law, but Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Austria blocked the move. "Every major decision about European foreign policy requires consensus of all 27 member nations," one diplomat observed. "Because of the serious disagreements ...there will not be any agreement about sanctions." The envoys also said they did not expect the EU to cancel its partnership with Israel on the Horizon 2027 research initiative because Israel's research and development capabilities were "too good" to give up. Ultimately, the diplomats assessed, Europe's response will be largely verbal and symbolic.

Sovereignty over the Jordan Valley Is Key to Israel's Security – (by Brig.-Gen. (ret.) Amir Avivi in The Hill. The writer has more than 30 years of military and national defense experience, concluding his service as Head of the Auditing and Consulting Department of the Israeli Defense Establishment, including the Israel Defense Forces, the Ministry of Defense and Israeli Military Industries).

In order to thrive, and not just survive, Israel must have a minimally defensible eastern border, located in the Jordan Valley, and it must retain control of the eastern mountain ridge.

- Yitzhak Rabin, architect of the Oslo Accords, included full Israeli security control over Jewish cities in Judea and Samaria, and full freedom of maneuver for Israelis along the main roads of the area, within those parameters.
- The Trump peace plan, with its endorsement of Israeli sovereignty over the Jordan Valley, accurately reflects the Rabin parameters. It also calls for a two-state solution and a demilitarized Palestinian state, with Israeli security control over the entire area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.
- The Trump peace plan was coordinated with Sunni states, Israel and the USA administration. That coordination is the result of the Sunni view that an alliance with Israel is an existential imperative in their fight against Iran - something that is of far greater significance to them than the Palestinian-Arab cause.
- Jordan, despite its rhetoric, is unlikely to cancel its peace treaty with Israel. It is Israel and the USA that stabilize Jordan, not the other way around. There is no Jordanian interest in having a Palestinian military presence on their western border.
- The Palestinian public in Judea and Samaria, for its part, has demonstrated that it is primarily interested in its economic wellbeing. The Palestinian-Arab street has shown little appetite to return to the days of the Second Intifada.

Lord, please push Israel to do this during this current window of opportunity (Deut. 9:3). Bring all leaders of the Jewish communities in Judea, Samaria and the Jordan Valley into one accord on this and let them support this being accomplished quickly (Judg. 1:1-3). Overrule the map which will determine Israel's current borders under the Trump plan (Psa. 74:17). Let Israel move ahead with this even if America might want to delay it (Eccl. 3:1). Concerning whose land this is, let more Israelis perceive the truth and stand with it (Deut. 19:8). God of Israel, give courage to Israel's leaders to use the Bible to back up their claims (Isa. 55:11). Prepare the IDF for all demonstrations and possible riots

that might be a fruit of this (Psa. 144:1). In case of riots, may the security forces quickly pick out the leaders and deal with them (Zech. 12:6). Be with the IDF against the inevitable flare-up along the Gaza border. For YHWH is our defense; and the Holy One of Israel is our king. (Psa. 89:18) Anoint Israel's security forces abilities to obtain actionable accurate intelligence (Judg. 7:9-11). Help Israeli Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi to comprehend the legal issues at the bottom of this extension of sovereignty in order that he can give clear directions to Israeli embassies on how to respond to the rejection from the nations on Israel possessing its God-ordained land (Obad. 1:17). Let Israel's legal right to this land be shouted from the rooftops (Psa. 40:10). Bring down all the counsel of the nations against this move (Psa. 33:10-11). Help every born-again believer be totally convinced of Israel's right to this land (Psa. 105:8-11).

"Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies. Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence." (Psalm 27:11-12)

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

Syria

At least nine people were killed in Israeli airstrikes that targeted Syrian defense factories near Masyaf in northwest Syria on Thursday (Jun 4) night. The airstrikes were conducted by IDF aircraft from over Lebanese airspace. The strikes targeted four defense factories belonging to the Iranian Revolutionary Guards in an area where surface-to-surface missiles are manufactured.

Last Sunday (May 31), an Israeli airstrike in eastern Syria near the Iraqi border on Sunday targeted three military vehicles belonging to Iran-backed fighters. Five foreign fighters were killed in the strike. (Note: Israel has reportedly carried out hundreds of airstrikes in Syria since the Syrian Civil War broke out in 2011, targeting Iranian and its allies, including Lebanese-based Hezbollah. Around two weeks ago, unidentified warplanes struck a base in eastern Syria, killing seven Iran-backed militiamen. Earlier in May, the monitor group reported that Israel launched airstrikes in Syria that killed 14 Iranian and Iraqi fighters, and injured others.)

This week, Israel revealed a towering building along Damascus' airport road known as "The Glass House"; it is the Islamic Revolutionary Guard's intelligence headquarters in Syria. The building also contains a medical intensive care unit and a control room with banks of screens broadcasting live feeds from Iranian drones in the skies above Syria.

At the beginning of May, the Assad regime dispatched major military reinforcements to the city of Daraa in southern Syria amid reports of a military operation to be carried out with Iranian backing. In response, a new uprising broke out in Daraa, suggesting that Iranian and other affiliated militias would face heavy resistance. On July 31, 2018, with official Russian sponsorship and guarantees, Daraa residents and the regime had reached an agreement that ended military operations in the province. Russia sent dozens of military police as observers to ensure the implementation of the agreement. Now, two years after the deal, the Syrian regime is trying to disavow these agreements and is attempting to regain Daraa province by force. Moscow appears to have become a spectator rather than a guarantor. Meanwhile, Iran has continued to build up allied forces and expand its military bases in the south and has taken no note of what the Russians do or say in terms of agreements with the Israelis and Americans. Iran has set up Shia Military Brigade 313, headed by Ibrahim Merji and based in Izra', which is linked to the IRGC. It is composed of 1,200 fighters and is designed to help Iran impose its control over Syria's southern border to threaten Israel.

A USA court has ruled that Iran and Syria are liable for compensation for American citizens wounded and killed in seven attacks by Palestinians in Israel, including the killing of USA Army veteran Taylor Force. Congress later approved the Taylor Force Act, which withholds funding to the Palestinians that was used to reward the families of attackers.

Judge Randolph D. Moss in USA District Court in Washington ruled that Americans were eligible for damages from Iran and Syria because they provided "material support" to Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Video last week from the Kurdish area of Afrin in Syria captured the moment that eight women were liberated after being held in a secret prison by a Turkish-backed Syrian group. The area has been occupied by Turkey since January 2018. Turkey has been accused of systematic human rights abuses throughout areas it runs in northern Syria. More than 300,000 people, mostly Kurds, have been displaced in ethnic cleansing, as Turkey has systematically resettled mostly Arab refugees in Kurdish homes. The Kurdish population of Afrin - once 90% - has fallen to 30%.

Russia has started recruiting fighters in eastern Syria - including from the Islamic Jihad's Al-Quds Brigade, made up of Palestinians in Syria - to join Gen. Khalifa Haftar's forces in Libya. A similar transfer of 600 mercenaries from Syria's Homs province took place earlier.

Since intervening in 2012 to help the Assad regime battle against a nationwide armed uprising, Iran has deployed several thousand Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) officers and units of its regular military to advise and support Assad's ground forces.

- Iran also facilitated the deployment to Syria of tens of thousands of fighters from Lebanese Hezbollah, fighters from several Iraqi Shia militia groups, and Afghan and Pakistani Shia militiamen.
- Iran has used its intervention in Syria to secure its supply routes to Hezbollah and to develop military production facilities to help Hezbollah upgrade the precision of its more than 100,000 Iran-supplied rockets and short-range ballistic missiles aimed at Israel. Israel has responded with regular bombardment of Iran-controlled installations in Syria.

Iran's apparent drawdown of its military presence in Syria likely reflects Tehran's calculation that the Assad regime is secure. Iran's drawdown from Syria is likely also a function of pressure from Russia and the Assad regime itself. Russia sees Iran as an obstacle to efforts to compel Assad to reach a political settlement with the opposition and to attracting reconstruction funds - all vital to Russia's ability to wind down its own involvement in Syria. Several potential donors - particularly the Persian Gulf states - are reluctant to invest in Syria's rebuilding if Iran remains present there.

Lebanon

Two IDF tanks and Israeli soldiers engaged in a rare confrontation Tuesday (Jun 2) with armed Lebanese troops while operating along the northern border near the Jewish community of Kibbutz Misgav Am, in a Lebanese area south of the town of al-Adisa. For the first time since the 2006 Second Lebanon War, the tanks crossed the border security fence and moved towards Lebanon, but remained on the Israeli side of the so-called "Blue Line" — an internationally recognized border, albeit one that is unofficial. Lebanese troops were positioned very close to the tanks, including one aiming an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) directly at one of the tanks, but did not engage. The confrontation came after a suspected infiltrator crossed the security fence along Israel's northern border with Lebanon near Mount Dov, also known as Sheba's Farms. He was returned Tuesday to the International Red Cross in Lebanon via the Rosh Hanikra border crossing. The suspect was wounded by IDF gunfire; he received medical treatment at a hospital in Haifa and was released after he was questioned by security personnel. The infiltrator was allegedly a shepherd of Syrian ancestry; he was taken to Rafik al-Hariri Hospital in Beirut to continue treatment.

France is steadfast in its refusal to designate Hezbollah a terrorist organization, despite the growing wave of condemnations for the group in Europe and elsewhere. In April, Germany banned Hezbollah and dropped the distinction between the Iranian proxy's "political" and "military" wings, declaring the group as a whole terrorist. The UK, the Netherlands, the United States, Australia, Canada, the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council have already done it. The Austrian parliament is pushing for it. **(Note:** Of course, there hardly is a thing called Lebanon any more,

never mind a stable Lebanon. And the distinctions between Lebanon and Hezbollah are evaporating rapidly, especially when it comes to the Lebanese army. This was seen during the above posturing between the IDF and the Hezbollah-controlled Lebanese Army near the Blue Line in northern Israel.)

Once upon a time, an incautious word against Hezbollah could merit a death sentence. Nowadays, ridiculing the "Axis of Resistance" has become a Lebanese national pastime. In recent days, a flood of videos and articles have boldly questioned how Lebanon benefits from Hassan Nasrallah's promises of breakfasting in Jerusalem, while penniless citizens struggle to obtain breakfast in Beirut. "The image of the Israelis packing their stuff and getting on planes and ships is in front of my eyes," Nasrallah blustered in his latest fusillade of lies. Social media activists are incessantly denouncing Nasrallah as a traitor for selling out his nation to Iran. Hezbollah's very existence guarantees that Lebanon will never receive sufficient international financial support, which represents its only possible exit from the current catastrophic impasse. Moreover, by training and arming anti-state insurgents in Bahrain, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq and Syria, Hezbollah objectively poses a far more immediate threat to Arab regional stability than to Israel.

Abba, enable the IDF Chief of Staff Avi Kochavi to focus on the existential threats to this nation and not be diverted and/or diluted by other issues that are not as important (Prov. 20:18; 24:6). Grant to him and the IDF's Iran Command the depth of intelligence that enables them to pre-empt all of Iran's demonic schemes against Your nation (Dan. 1:17). We thank You for the report of another successful Israeli Air Force strike against Iranian missile depots in Syria (Isa. 31:5). Make the communications between Defense Minister Gantz and all the top IDF commanders be very clear and precise (1 Cor. 14:8). With Lebanon's leaders under intense pressure – show the IDF what they will do (Isa. 44:7). Lord God of all, please have mercy on the Iranian and Lebanese people at this time (Gen. 18:25). We continue to ask for angelic protection for Israel – in line with Your Word (Psa. 35:5-6).

"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. TEMPLE MOUNT UPDATES:

Turkey, which is increasing its real estate holdings and its influence on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem's Old City, is threatening to depose the Jordanians from their role as the custodians over the Muslim holy sites on the Mount. At the same time, old rivals Jordan and Saudi Arabia could be headed toward rapprochement due to their shared animosity toward Turkey. The Jordanians and Saudis have been dueling for control of the Muslim holy sites for 100 years. The Hashemite dynasty, which now controls Jordan, ruled Saudi Arabia until 1924 and was kicked out by the House of Saud. The Hashemites lost their custodianship of Mecca and Medina and have never forgiven the Saudis for it. Jordan's current about-face may stem from its tardy realization of Erdogan's growing power in eastern Jerusalem.

The Turkish government aid organization TIKA, which has been investing heavily in eastern Jerusalem in recent years in an attempt to increase Turkey's influence, recently renovated a building near the Temple Mount and the Western Wall for use as an Islamic center known as the "Khan Abu Khadija." The center hosts Arab tourists, including some with links to the Muslim Brotherhood and Turkey. In addition, TIKA has been providing money to shuttle tens of thousands of Arabs from the Galilee to visit the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Israel and Saudi Arabia have been reportedly engaged in secret talks since last December, through American mediation, over including Saudi representatives in the Islamic Waqf Council at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Up until a few months ago the Jordanians - who hold special and exclusive status in managing the Waqf - adamantly

objected to any change in the Waqf Council. Amman, however, has since changed its position amid intensive Turkish interference in east Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. The Jordanians decided, in contravention of the Oslo Accords, to include Palestinian representatives in the Waqf Council. But the Palestinian officials who joined the Waqf opened the door for the Turkish government to establish a presence by funneling tens of millions of dollars - under direct order from Turkish President Erdogan - through Islamist-Turkish non-profit organizations. Consequently, the Jordanians have told Israel and the USA that they are now prepared to soften their position on incorporating Saudi representatives to the Waqf, on condition that Jordan retains its exclusive status on the Mount and that Saudi Arabia applies diplomatic pressure to expel the Turkish Islamist organizations operating under Palestinian auspices.

While Israel, the United States, Saudi Arabia and Jordan are holding talks about including Saudi representatives in the Islamic Waqf, which administers the Temple Mount compound, new details are emerging about a new Islamic center located near the mount and the Western Wall that is funded by Turkey. The center is known as the “Khan Abu Khadija.” The center’s building was renovated by the Turkish government aid organization TIKA, which has been investing heavily in eastern Jerusalem in recent years in an attempt to increase Turkey’s influence there. The new center hosts Arab tourists in eastern Jerusalem, including some with links to the Muslim Brotherhood and Turkey. TIKA has been providing money to shuttle tens of thousands of Arab visitors from the Galilee and the Triangle region of Arab towns east of Netanya to Al-Aqsa Mosque. On display at the center are study guides about the “true heritage” of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa, some published by TIKA, alongside PLO and Turkish flags and pictures documenting dawah (community charity that aims to bring people closer to Islam) activity on behalf of Palestinian residents of Jerusalem. The center also features pictures of Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who was accused of committing genocide against the Armenian people and was a staunch opponent of Theodor Herzl’s vision of a Jewish state, along with pictures of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The center regularly screens a film that includes clips of an Erdoğan speech in which the Turkish leader refers to “occupied Jerusalem.”

Father, we ask You to deal with Turkey and its evil leaders. Protect the Temple Mount area from further corruption and contamination. Give the Israeli government much wisdom as how to deal with this situation. We pray that the Temple Mount will become a place of unrestricted prayer for Jews and Christians in the near future.

“Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts...as in the day of trial in the wilderness (Psalm 95:8). Lord, instead may Your people say, Oh come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before YHWH our Maker, for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. (Psalm 95:6-7)

8. GAZA UPDATES:

Iran financially and militarily supports a number of proxies in Gaza such as Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the Popular Resistance Committees. Iran has also established social welfare programs and charities throughout Gaza to influence the hearts and minds of its residents. During the first week of Ramadan, Harakat al Nujaba, an Iranian-backed Iraqi paramilitary group, distributed food baskets and other Ramadan gifts to the families of prisoners and those who have been killed fighting against Israel. Another Iranian-funded organization in Gaza is the Palestinian-Iranian Friendship Association (PIFA), which also has branches in Lebanon and Syria.

Strict border restrictions in place for years have largely kept Covid-19 at bay in Gaza. In addition, Gaza's garment industry, which has been mostly dormant for more than a decade, has been rejuvenated by the crisis, churning out protective equipment like face masks and surgical gowns for Israel, the country most Gazans regard as the enemy.

Factory owner Hassan Shehada told ITV News, "Both sides will re-think. We want to eat and they want safety and security. I am hopeful things will get better."

Lord, You see how Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad have now joined hands to war against Israel. Arise and deal with this wickedness against Your people (Prov. 11:21; 16:5). Yeshua, heal the children near the Gaza border from trauma. We thank You for the lull in rocket and balloon attacks in these past weeks. We bless You for the protection of life that You have provided over the years from thousands of rocket attacks against Israelis in the south (Jer. 31:10). Yet many suffer from all sorts of physical and emotional traumas. Please bring peace to them (Num. 12:13). Confuse and disrupt all planned attacks (Psa. 129:5). Protect and encourage IDF soldiers on duty, many who are very young. Give the IDF wisdom to know how many soldiers and what equipment needs to be stationed near Gaza. Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war. (Prov. 20:18)

"The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace." (Psalm 29:11)

9. PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY UPDATES:

Earlier this month, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas declared an end to long-standing coordination between his governing Palestinian Authority and Israeli officials. Palestinian officials at the main offices that handle travel requests stopped processing applications for hospital visits in Israel. Emergency transport by ambulance is also affected. Outside the Palestinian civil affairs office, many complained that making it harder for them to see doctors or visit family was not a welcome change. Judea-Samaria has enjoyed a decade of relative stability, in part thanks to employment, trade and security ties with Israel. Salaries paid to Palestinian workers in Israel, topping \$280 million a month, make up one of Judea-Samaria's largest sources of income.

The Palestinian Authority has lost its ability to operate in more than 2/3 of Judea-Samaria after President Mahmoud Abbas' decision to end security coordination with Israel. In addition to operating in Area A, which is subject to Palestinian civil and security control, the PA was operating in Areas B and C with Israeli coordination, allowing Palestinian forces to make arrests and cordon off inter-Palestinian disputes. Israel informed the PA that without security coordination, its officials and security personnel would not be allowed to move outside Area A. The decision might also affect the movement of President Abbas.

The Palestinian Authority on Wednesday (Jun 3) said it will no longer accept tax revenue transfers from Israel as it pushes to end coordination with Israel. In 2019, tax revenues transferred to the PA by Israel accounted for 60% of the Palestinian budget. The PA lacks an international port of entry, meaning all goods entering and exiting Judea-Samaria must pass through Israel. According to the 1994 Paris Protocol, Israel is responsible for levying taxes on imports and exports before transferring the funds to the PA. The PA's decision also calls into question a recent \$250 million loan by Israel to the PA to help it weather the financial damage of the coronavirus crisis.

The EU on Tuesday (Jun 2) ordered its representatives in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem to investigate whether EU funds are reaching organizations affiliated with Palestinian terrorist groups. The move follows a report by NGO Monitor exposing an EU letter assuring Palestinian NGOs that even if they are affiliated with EU-designated terrorist groups or employ individuals from these groups, the EU will still provide them with funds and legitimacy. The EU Commissioner for 'Neighbourhood and Enlargement' said the EU "will have to conduct an in-depth review, and if there is any concern we will act immediately....This [funding terrorism] will not be tolerated. And if it happens, it will have to be rectified." EU

Ambassador to Israel Emanuel Joffe said Tuesday, "If there is evidence of improper use of EU funds, we will investigate them."

Foreign Affairs Minister Ine Eriksen Soreide said Thursday (Jun 4) that Norway will withhold half of the year's funding to the Palestinian Authority's education system until it stops using textbooks that promote hate and violence. In May, the European Parliament passed resolutions that condemn the PA for continuing to teach hate and oppose EU aid to the PA being used for this purpose.

Israel has suspended the order forbidding PA banks through to process salary payments to security prisoners and the families of dead terrorists. The order, issued a month ago by the Commander of the Central Command, resulted in the banks freezing the accounts of terrorists and their families, a move which later exposed them to a wave of lawsuits. **And so a notice of the suspension of the order for 45 days was sent to the Palestinian Authority Wednesday (Jun 3) night, following the decision of the Defense Minister and Alternate Prime Minister Benny Gantz.** The decision had been made in light of the recommendation of various components in the defense establishment to re-examine the order and obtain a legal opinion on the significance of the order, in light of the sensitivity and tension on the ground. (**Note:** The former Defense Minister, Naftali Bennett, who had implemented the stoppage of funds to terrorists who had been released from prison, was incensed at this move by Gantz. He claims that these payments reward murderers of Jewish people to commit more murders.)

The Abyss that Divides the Israeli Leadership from the PA Leadership – (by Lt.-Col. (res.) Maurice Hirsch in Jerusalem Post)

- On June 1, 2001, as scores of Israeli teenagers went to the popular Dolphinarium nightclub on the Tel Aviv beach, a Palestinian terrorist blew himself up, murdering 21 kids and injuring over a hundred more. The Palestinian Authority declared the suicide bomber to be a "martyr."
- Becoming a "martyr" represents the highest religious achievement that can be attained by a Muslim. His death is celebrated as a "wedding" in which the "martyr" marries 72 dark-eyed virgins in paradise. A video clip often broadcast on official PA TV declares that "Life is insignificant...God, grant us martyrdom."
- PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas is directly responsible for paying monthly cash rewards to the families of dead terrorists and to imprisoned terrorists. In 2010, he approved a salary hike for terrorist prisoners including a 300% rise - from NIS 4,000 per month to NIS 12,000 per month - for prisoners who serve more than 30 years in prison for murder. In 2007, 2009 and 2013, Abbas approved a hike in the monthly allowances paid to the families of dead terrorists, including suicide bombers.
- Raed Al-Houtari, who sent the suicide bomber to the Dolphinarium, was arrested in 2003 and sentenced to 22 consecutive life sentences. Al-Houtari has so far received \$215,761, and he will continue to receive a monthly salary from the PA for the rest of his life because he is a mass murderer.
- The PA leadership sanctifies death, murder and hatred. The Israeli leadership prioritizes life and is even willing to help those who hate us, as it did by granting a NIS 800 million loan to the PA during the coronavirus crisis.

The Real Palestinian Tragedy Remains Their Policy of All or Nothing – (by Prof. Eyal Zisser in (Israel Hayom. The writer is a lecturer in the Middle East History Department at Tel Aviv University.)

The USA peace plan offers a coherent, well-ordered worldview about how Israel can ensure calm regarding security issues, economic stability, and also a shared future and coexistence for Israelis and Palestinians living west of the Jordan River. In contrast to the past, this plan does not come with meaningless bombastic declarations about a historic breakthrough.

What it does is lay down the path for a long, slow, and exhausting journey in the right direction - a journey at the end of which both sides will realize some of their goals and be able to coexist in peace. It appears that this time, the Arab world and some of the Palestinians themselves aren't rushing to join Abbas' war for the umpteenth time.

The real Palestinian tragedy remains their policy of all or nothing. Their lack of ability to correctly read the map of the region, along with their inability to reach a compromise, have been hallmarks of the Palestinian movement. A compromise like this one might not fulfill everyone's dreams, but it could promote their interests much better than the path of violence to which the Palestinians still adhere. The Palestinians have tried violence countless times in the past, and every time, this path has brought disaster down upon their own heads.

Give Israel's security forces discernment to know the "sheep" Palestinians vs. the "goats" who want to see all Israel destroyed (Psa. 55:21; 83:4; 140:2). Also give the IDF discernment concerning the Palestinian security forces with which they work (Psa. 41:9). May the IDF and the security forces protecting the various Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria work as one (Psa. 44:5-7). Help Palestinian Believers to know how to pray for their deceived neighbours (2 Kin. 6:17a). According to Jeremiah 12:14-17, the only Palestinians who will escape Your judgment and remain in this land are those who know You personally. So Lord, please save many Palestinians today. He makes peace in your borders... (Psalms 147:14a) Lord, watch over this word (Jer. 1:12).

"Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies. Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence." (Psalm 27:11-12)

10. 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)*

Yoel Har-Even, head of the international division at Tel Aviv's Sheba Medical Center, said the hospital has received inquiries about Covid-19 treatment from countries such as Bahrain and Indonesia, which do not have diplomatic ties with Israel, as well as majority-Muslim countries such as Jordan, Egypt and Azerbaijan. Those contacts are part of an increasingly public, years-in-the-making rapprochement between Israel and some of its Arab neighbours.

Israel's digital diplomacy team on Sunday celebrated a milestone in its social media campaign to the Farsi-speaking world, and specifically Iran, when it reached 500,000 followers of its Instagram account. Israel has an extensive following in the Arabic-speaking world as well. More than 1.5 million Arabic speakers from 22 Arab countries follow Israel in Arabic on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, with content viewed hundreds of millions of times annually. The use of social media enables Israel to share a message of diversity, peace, and coexistence, as well as information on current political and security developments with millions of Arabs around the world. Israel's Foreign Ministry maintains more than 800 online channels in 50 languages.

The USA Federal Communications Commission Chairman asked Twitter in a tweet why Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's tweets against Israel don't violate Twitter's guidelines about glorifying violence. He highlighted an assortment of Khamenei's tweets calling for "firm, armed resistance [against Israel]." The Iranian people are banned from using Twitter.

While Christians were murdered by jihadists in the Middle East and millions of people were being brutally oppressed in China, journalists fed an unwholesome obsession with Israel. Collectively they promoted the messages that there is

something particularly loathsome about how Israel is behaving toward Palestinian Arabs, and that the latter are the world's quintessential victims of injustice and oppression. As a result, meeting the needs of the Palestinian Arabs, whose leaders have refused to negotiate in good faith and incited against Jews for decades, has become the primary moral - and strategic - imperative embraced by a large swath of American elites.

- Over the past five years, the Washington Post published 756 articles mentioning Gaza, compared to 164 articles about the Uighurs and 161 articles about Tibet.
- Over the same period, the New York Times published 412 articles mentioning the Uighurs, 491 articles mentioning Tibet, and more than 1,500 referring to Gaza.

Defense Minister Benny Gantz, in consultation with IDF Chief of Staff, Maj. Gen. Aviv Kochavi, on Sunday announced the appointment of Brigadier General Ofer Winter to commander of the 98th Paratroopers Division, a.k.a. the Fire Brigade. Winter spent the past year and a half in the post of Secretary to the Minister of Defense. He took office in October 2018 and in that short span worked under three different defense ministers: Avigdor Lieberman, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Naftali Bennett. The IDF's 98th Paratroopers Division is a reserve-service infantry division, subordinate to the Central Regional Command.

- **(Note:** On July 9, 2014, as Commander of the Givati Brigade, Winter issued a message to his soldiers before engaging in the battle of Gaza, saying: "History has chosen us to be at the forefront of fighting the fierce terrorist enemy, who curses the God of Israel. [...] I raise my eyes to the heavens and call out with you, 'Hear, oh Israel, the Lord Is our God, the Lord Is One.' Please bring us success as we are going to fight for your nation of Israel against the enemy who despises your name." The commander's message was published in the general media and sparked controversy as to whether a religious commander should involve God in his leadership of his soldiers. During the ensuing operation, the brigade unveiled terrorist tunnels and infrastructure used by Hamas, and participated in the battle of Rafah. Gantz was part of the IDF brass that delayed Winter's professional progress, pinning him for the misdeeds of a subordinate but, everybody knew, teaching him a lesson for that Shema Israel thing.)

Gantz and his successor, Chief of Staff Gadi Eizenkot, were determined to bury Winter's career, and it was the new IDF chief, Aviv Kochavi, who recognized his considerable skills and demanded his return to active command duty.

Ten years after the May 31, 2010, raid on the Mavi Marmara, a Turkish ship trying to breach the maritime blockade on Gaza, troops involved in the mission that ended with 10 dead passengers and several Israeli soldiers seriously wounded insist the operation was not a failure. One member of the 'Shayetet 13 Naval Special Forces Unit' that led the mission said: "The unusual factor here was the number of passengers on board and the fact that we didn't know that there were about 60 IHH terrorists among them. In the flotillas that preceded the Marmara we encountered peace activists - not terrorists who were paid to kill Israeli soldiers. His feet barely touched the deck before three men jumped him. "I took a blow to the head from a crowbar and my helmet flew off. They came at me with axes, crowbars and hammers. The first thing that went through my head was, 'What's going on here?' We never encountered such violence, it was off the charts. When the third crowbars hit me in the head it finally dawned on me - they were actually trying to kill me. So I grabbed my weapon and shot one of the terrorists."

Ethiopia has decided unilaterally to begin filling the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam's reservoir on the Nile River before coming to a full agreement with Egypt. Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry wrote to UN Security Council members on May 1: "Ethiopia announcing its intention to seize the Blue Nile waters to fill the dam's reservoir in July 2020...would jeopardize the water security, food security, and indeed, the very existence of over 100 million Egyptians, who are entirely dependent on the Nile River for their livelihood." Ethiopia withdrew from USA-sponsored negotiations in February and refused to sign a comprehensive agreement on the filling and operating of the dam. An official said such an agreement was actually reached and brokered by the USA and the World Bank.

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)

11. ANTI-SEMITISM UPDATES:

A previously classified German intelligence report on Wednesday (Jun 3) revealed widespread anti-Semitism among Muslim organizations in the country. The Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV), the equivalent to the Israel Security Agency, noted that a Syrian teacher in Solingen declared during a lesson on June 4, 2018, that "all Jews belong in the gas chamber." 700 cases of anti-Semitic events with a suspected Islamist background were included in the report. The head of BfV said hostility to Jews is "represented by practically all noteworthy Islamist organizations that are active in Germany." The report documented 20 anti-Semitic acts of violence by Muslim perpetrators.

Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney has insisted that the 'Occupied Territories Bill' will not be included in any new program for the government. Coveney reiterated his opposition to the legislation, which would ban trade in Israeli products made in the territories, on the basis of legal advice that it would contravene EU law.

The Sepharade Kol Yehouda synagogue in Côte Saint-Luc, an island suburb of Montreal in Quebec, Canada, was vandalized last Thursday (May 28). Anti-Semitic slurs were graffitied on the walls and Torah scrolls and other religious items destroyed.

Congregation Beth Israel in the Fairfax district in Los Angeles was vandalized with graffiti reading "Free Palestine" as protests against the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis swept the city. Kehillas Yaakov synagogue in Los Angeles was also vandalized with anti-Semitic graffiti. On the same day, the window of a synagogue in Richmond, Virginia, was smashed during protests. The synagogues damaged in LA included Tiferes Tzvi in Fairfax. A number of kosher restaurants, bakeries and stores were ransacked by protesters, looting much of the merchandise and causing extensive property damage. The stores impacted include Ariel Glatt Kosher Market, Mensch Bakery & Kitchen, and Syd's Pharmacy & Kosher Vitamins.

On May 16, 2020, Al-Jazeera broadcast an interview with Dr. Abduljabbar Saeed, Head of the Quran and Sunnah Department in Qatar University's Shari'a faculty. He said: "We will liberate Palestine from the [Jordan] River to the [Mediterranean] Sea, from its northern border with southern Lebanon to Um Al-Rashrash [Eilat] in southern Palestine. Palestine includes all its soil, every grain of its sand. The Prophet Muhammad said: 'Judgment Day will not come until the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them.'...I believe that all the rocks and all the trees will be fighting the Jews along with the Muslims and will call upon the Muslims to kill the Jews. These are Allah's promises and laws that govern us.... Victory is achieved through the blood of martyrs and over the skulls of the enemies."

In an interview in Arabic on May 21 with the Gazan Voice podcast, co-founder of the BDS movement Omar Barghouti explains that "If the [Palestinian] refugees return to their homes [in Israel] as the BDS movement calls for, if we bring an end to Israel's apartheid regime and if we end the occupation on lands occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem, what will be left of the Zionist regime? There won't be any Zionist state like the one we speak about [in present-day Israel]....The Palestinian minority will become a Palestinian majority of what is today called Israel."

No matter what disaster or crisis occurs, it is merely a matter of time until the Jews or Israel are held at fault for it. Jews are blamed for the coronavirus outbreak, even though Jews in Western nations are disproportionately hit harder by the disease than the general population. Now the anti-Semites have spun a whole new tale, that the despicable death of George Floyd in Minneapolis was a result of the police officers being trained by the Israel Police. In response to past critics, the National Black Police Association wrote a letter supporting the training in Israel, highlighting the counter-terrorism tactics they are taught.

Some of those looking to exploit the tragedy in Minneapolis are attacking Jews. They are asserting that Jewish groups that have facilitated trips to Israel by American first responders and police are somehow responsible for killings of unarmed blacks by USA policeman. This is not only untrue, it's a classic example of an anti-Semitic blood libel since it seeks to blame Jews for crimes for which they bear no responsibility. The training Americans get in Israel actually focuses on the antithesis of stereotypical police brutality by seeking to promote community engagement and nonviolent policing that would make confrontations less likely.

BDS leaders have accused Israel of responsibility for Palestinian deaths that might arise from the Covid-19 virus, compared Zionists themselves to the coronavirus, and accused Israel and Jews of deliberately spreading the virus in order to kill non-Jews. The BDS movement promotes itself in terms of Palestinian human rights and justice, using the pretense that its campaign constitutes "non-violent" criticism of Israeli policy toward Palestinians. But the inherent anti-Semitic nature of the movement is evidenced by the anti-Jewish actions and hate rhetoric of the movement's leaders who justify, promote or themselves engage in violent rhetoric and, at times, even physical violence against Israelis, Jews, or Jewish supporters of Israel.

The riots over the killing of George Floyd have turned some Los Angeles neighbourhoods into “war zones”—and some Palestinians are taking advantage of the chaos to wreck synagogues. A number of Los Angeles synagogues have been vandalized or even destroyed during the riots, including one in Beverly Hills. According to Dahan, an Israeli living in Los Angeles, the buildings in his community were not targeted by any of the protesters demonstrating against Floyd's death, but rather by Palestinians who exploited the opportunity. Dahan saw a PLO flag and rioters shouting 'free Palestine.'

Facebook on Friday (June 5) removed a viral photo that falsely accused an “IDF soldier” of killing a “Palestinian” boy. The photo, which was shared more than 25,000 times on Facebook before it was removed, depicted a Chilean police officer crushing a bloodied boy, alongside the caption: “An Israeli soldier kills a Palestinian child.”

Use the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes that will come to convince the Jews that Israel is better than exile (Jer. 31:10). Use the violence and rioting in the USA to call Your people home. Remove from all Jews in exile the anti-biblical concept of trying to heal Babylon (Jer. 51:9-10). As the spirit of anti-Semitism uses the virus to heap blame on the Jews and on the nation of Israel – wake up the Jews in captivity to realize that there is nothing new under the sun (Eccl. 1:9). Make the new government as zealous as You are to gather in the outcasts of Israel (Zech. 8:1-8).

“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)

12. IRAN UPDATES:

Iran released USA Navy veteran Michael White after nearly two years in custody on Thursday (Jun 4) as part of a prisoner deal negotiated with Iran. As part of the deal, the USA has freed dual USA-Iranian citizen Matteo Taerri, a medical doctor imprisoned on charges of evading sanctions. Iran has a history of arresting people with foreign ties and using them as bargaining chips. The State Department is seeking the release of at least three other USA citizens detained in Iran.

In early April, municipal workers at a water pumping station in central Israel noticed a warning from their computer systems - a few pumps were turning off and on without being told to. A piece of Iranian-written code passed through servers in the USA and Europe, and finally to the commercially manufactured software controllers that operated the pumps, according to four Israeli officials and a Western intelligence official. The suspected goal? To trick the computers into increasing the amount of chlorine added to the treated water that flows to Israeli homes. The Iranian cyber attack would have triggered fail-safes that would have shut down the pumping station when the excess chemical was detected, but would have left tens of thousands of Israeli civilians and farms parched in the middle of a heatwave.

Iran is rolling back coronavirus restrictions, despite a surge in new infections. On Tuesday (Jun 2), the health ministry reported 3,117 new infections - roughly the same level as the country's peak when the number reached 3,186 on March 30.

Middle East analyst and blogger "Abu Ali Express" said Tuesday (Jun 2) in an exclusive report that the web page of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was hacked by Israelis. "Abu Ali Express" tweeted that the site, "Khamenei.ir" displayed a screen with a lovely illustration of Shmulik, the typical Israeli kibbutznik wearing an old-fashioned "kova tembel", and holding a flower as peace offering, captioned, "Iranians, We want you to know that the Israelis are hoping and praying for us to be friends again just like before 1979." #shalomfromiran

Officials from the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Digital Diplomacy Department discussed Israel's use of digital diplomacy at an online briefing on Wednesday (Jun 3). The Director of New Media in Persian said the MFA's Persian-language Instagram page currently has 500,000 followers. Instagram is the only major platform not banned by the Tehran regime. The Director of New Media in Arabic said, "We reach 12 million people every week....If we see the comments from people today in the Arab world, Israel is no longer the big problem."

Thank You for PM Netanyahu's foresight and courage to follow through despite the cost (Ezek. 33:7). Anoint Israel to always be on the cutting edge of this very complicated battlefield (Prov. 21:31). Also provide all the finances and brain-power for the Jewish nation to do that (Ex. 31:3; 35:31). Thank You for protecting this nation from Iran's cyber-attack of several weeks ago – in which they tried to release huge amounts of chlorine into Israel's water supply (Psa. 3:8). Since the shields of the earth belong to You, we ask You to supply whatever shields Israel needs to protect itself in the cyber-realm (Psa. 47:9). Give Israel wisdom to shield its computers in all its vital areas – the IDF, hospitals, shipping and transportation, stock market and banking, water, government ministries, agriculture, schools, etc.

"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)

13. UNITED NATIONS UPDATE:

Bulgarian-born Nickolay Mladenov, the UN special coordinator for Middle East peace, said in an interview: "The title on my business card is completely wrong. I mean, there is no Middle East peace process. Most of our work now is

preventive diplomacy, preventing war." Political relations between Israel and the Palestinians are stalled. The Palestinian leadership refuses to meet with USA officials. Israelis are suspicious of European motives, and other potential intermediaries, like the Russians, are focused elsewhere.

USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told the American Enterprise Institute in a podcast on May 29 that the USA may move against the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the very near future. He said, "You'll see in the coming days a series of announcements not just from the State Department, from all across the United States Government, that attempt to push back against what the ICC is up to....This is not a court in the sense of what we would understand here in the United States:...independent, with all the rights and due processes. We also never gave consent, and understand international law, one of the key features of exercise of power by bodies such as the ICC is that you say if you want to be part of that. We never signed up for it....And now this court has become corrupted and is attempting to go after the young men and women of the United States of America who fought so hard, and they did so under the rule of law in the most civilized nation in the world. We will never let that happen. We're working along many fronts to prevent it from happening. They're doing this not just to us, but to Israel, where they're beginning to look into what took place in the West Bank. Again, it's completely inappropriate, it's completely inconsistent with international law....I think that the ICC and the world will see that we are determined to prevent having Americans and our friends and allies in Israel and elsewhere hauled in by this corrupt ICC."

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 Mike Pompeo. May his faithfulness to truth bring him to a place of influence and authority to You and to Israel (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)

14. ISRAEL GOOD NEWS ITEMS:

Israeli tech companies raised over \$300 million in May, and have raised over \$4 billion in the first five months of 2020, despite the Covid-19 crisis.

Israel donated a large shipment of medical supplies to the Philippines on Tuesday (Jun 2) that included medical gloves, surgical masks, medical gowns, N95 filtered face masks, face shields and non-contact thermometers.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has established the country's first "drive-thru" coronavirus testing facilities, after seeking the advice of Israel's Magen David Adom (MDA) emergency service, which operates such facilities. MDA created dedicated software to manage the Congo's drive-thru facilities, which began operation last month. MDA personnel also prepared a training program that incorporates both videos and written procedures. The MDA director-general said: "We have gained extensive experience in obtaining thousands of samples a day efficiently and safely, and now we are happy to share knowledge with other medical entities around the world for the sake of saving human lives."

Israeli start-up 'Sightbit' is using artificial intelligence (AI) tech to alert lifeguards when swimmers are in danger. Sightbit is, in essence, an AI lifeguard; the software acts as an additional lifeguard by flagging threats to swimmers.

Special cameras are used to film the beach's swim areas and algorithms analyze the footage in real-time to flag incidences. The system can also sound alarms when swimmers are in danger.

Researchers led by Professor Ido Kaminer at The Technion, the Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, has developed a one-of-a-kind microscope that has enabled the team to make a breakthrough in quantum science. Professor Ido Kaminer and the team built a quantum microscope that records the flow of light, enabling the direct observation of light trapped inside a photonic crystal.

USA cloud data services company NetApp announced it is acquiring Israeli cloud infrastructure management and cost optimization company 'Spot' for \$450 million. Spot built a system that allows customers to save 80% on their cloud computing costs.

Using innovative 3D printing technology, scientists from the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology have been creating prosthetic hands for amputee children. The finished prosthetic is able to hold lightweight objects and provide the children a better sense of balance. The most immediate benefit is psychological, as the children no longer feel that their amputation makes them unusual and instead have a "cool bionic hand" to impress their friends with.

USA automated tests and measurement company National Instruments has acquired Israeli company 'OptimalPlus' for \$365 million. OptimalPlus develops AI-based big data analytics systems for the semiconductor and automotive industries.

Israel Energy Ministry Yuval Steinitz announced an \$22.8 billion plan to increase solar power use during the next 10 years. The goal is to have solar power production grow 30 percent by 2030. The plan is estimated to cut air pollution by 93 percent compared to 2015. The new target, said Steinitz, is to outpace rising demand and have solar power production grow to 30 percent by 2030, or about 16,000 megawatts. That is roughly the same as total energy production today. He said that most of the funds would pay for building solar energy facilities and other money would go to upgrading the national grid and energy storage. More than 80 percent of the country's electricity would be provided for by solar power according to the plan.

Radiocarbon dating has confirmed the time of construction of Wilson's Arch at Jerusalem's Temple Mount, according to a study published on June 3, 2020, in the journal PLOS ONE by Johanna Regev from the Weizmann Institute of Science. Regev and her colleagues conducted radiocarbon dating of 33 construction material samples directly at the site (generally charred organic matter, like seeds or sticks, present in mortar) and found that the structure was constructed between 20 BCE and 20 CE, during the reign of Herod the Great.

Defense contractor Israel Aerospace Industries performed two tests of its Long-Range Artillery (LORA) weapon system at sea on Tuesday (Jun 2), successfully hitting floating targets 90 km. (56 miles) away and 400 km. (250 miles) away, IAI said. "Under both scenarios, the missile...navigated its course to the target, and hit it with utmost precision."

Photos of USA soldiers in the Syrian desert training with an advanced electronic aiming system on their rifles are the first indication that the Israeli-made device was being field tested by the USA military. The photos showed soldiers using the 'Smart Shooter SMASH 2000' sighting system mounted on their M4A1 carbines. Its fire control system allows the shooter to select a target and lock on, and automatically activates the trigger when a hit is guaranteed.

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)