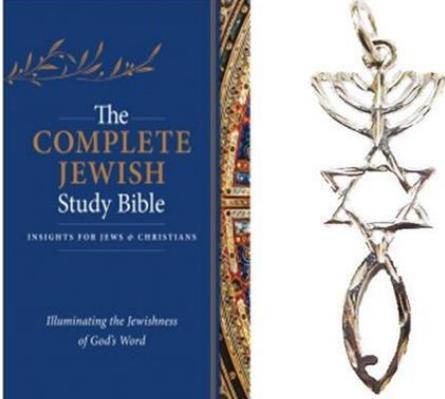


Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update January 17, 2019 ***(11th Shvat, 5779)***

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For the Yachad Report Newsletter For January 2019

IDF OPERATION 'NORTHERN SHIELD' ENDS WITH DISCOVERY OF SIXTH TUNNEL: The Israeli army's mission to locate and destroy terror tunnels built from Lebanon into Israel is wrapping up according to an announcement on Sunday morning 13 Jan. 2019. The effort's grand finale was the discovery of the sixth tunnel, this one said to have been the largest of the bunch. The subterranean menaces were built by the Iranian-proxy Hezbollah terrorist organization, each one originating in the south Lebanon areas specifically forbidden to Hezbollah by UN Security Council Resolution 1701 which ended the 2006 war between the Beirut-based jihadists and the Israeli army. In a briefing to military correspondents last weekend army spokesman described the final tunnel as containing "railroads to transport equipment, lighting equipment and ladders to enter Israeli territory. Stairs were built. A lot of resources were invested in this tunnel." The army is also building a wall along the border that extends beneath the surface deep enough to prevent new tunnels.

MALAYSIA DENIES ENTRY TO PARALYMPIC SWIMMERS FOR OLYMPIC QUALIFIER: Malaysia will not allow Israeli swimmers to enter the country to participate in the World Championship event. The competition scheduled from 29 July to 4 August 2019 is a qualifying event for the 2020 Paralympics in Tokyo. Hundreds of swimmers from 70 countries are expected to compete. PM Mahathir Mohamad said last week Malaysia would deny visas to Israeli swimmers. He challenged the International Paralympic Committee to sanction the country, saying "If they want to withdraw Malaysia's right to host the championship, they can do so," news services reported. Malaysia does not have diplomatic relations with Israel. Entry to Malaysia on an Israeli passport is prohibited. The IPC said it would work to "find a solution" for the Israeli swimmers.

ISRAELI MINISTER VISITS EGYPT FOLLOWING INVITATION FROM CAIRO: Israeli Energy Minister Yuval Steinitz arrived in Cairo on Sunday, 13 Jan. 2019 to attend a regional forum on natural gas after receiving an invitation from the Egyptian government. "Here you have for the first time real economic

cooperation between the axis-of-peace states - Israel, Egypt and Jordan - along with European countries," Steinitz told news outlets. The Energy Minister was accompanied by Energy Ministry Director Udi Adiri. During the talks the ministers discussed increasing energy cooperation between Israel and Egypt, including cooperating in the field of exporting gas from Israel and Egypt to Europe. Minister Steinitz was invited to visit Egypt next May when the establishment of the Mediterranean Sea Natural Gas Organization is expected to take place with participation of Israel, Egypt, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority as well as participation of the EU Energy Commission as an observer. "I thank the Egyptian Energy Minister for the invitation to visit Cairo. This is the most significant economic cooperation between Egypt and Israel since the signing of the peace treaty between the two countries," said Stantz.

NETANYAHU TO VISIT CHAD SOON: Israel's PM Netanyahu is scheduled to fly to Chad for the first time, even before the elections for the 21st Knesset. Netanyahu's visit to Chad is part of a move that is expected to lead to a declaration of renewed relations between the two countries. Chad President Idriss Deby visited Israel in Nov. 2018, where he met with Netanyahu and the two discussed advancing the relations between the two countries towards a full resumption of diplomatic relations. "President Deby and I had an opportunity to discuss the relations between our two countries and how we can cooperate for the benefit of our people and ensure peace and security," said Netanyahu, who hosted the president at his home. He added, "Deby's historic visit to Israel marks a new era of security, cooperation and peace." Deby emphasized the historical dimension of his visit, saying, "This is the first visit by a leader from Chad to Israel, and it can be defined as a historic visit. This visit will allow us to open a new page, a new way in our relations."

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS OWNER ROBERT KRAFT WINS 'JEWISH NOBEL': New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft is the winner of the \$1 million Genesis Prize, the so-called Jewish Nobel. Kraft, 77, will be giving the money "to initiatives combating anti-Semitism and other forms of prejudice as well as attempts to de-legitimize the State of Israel," according to a statement. Genesis Prize co-founder Stan Polovets called the Jewish-American NFL owner and businessman "one of the world's most generous philanthropists." Over decades, the Kraft family has given more than half a billion dollars to causes including health care, education, the Jewish community, Christian organizations and local needs. "This award amplifies my ability to raise both awareness and additional funds to fight anti-Semitism, attempts to de-legitimize Israel and other forms of prejudices," said Kraft. He will receive the award at a gala in June 2019 in Jerusalem.

IDF STRIKES IRANIAN, HEZBOLLAH TARGETS NEAR DAMASCUS: Syrian air defense units fired on enemy targets above Damascus, Syria's state news agency SANA said late Friday 11 Jan. 2019. Video footage showed explosions above the city. Sources in the Syrian opposition reported that the Israeli Air Force attacked the bases of Iranian militias and Assad's regime forces southwest of Damascus. Israeli naval vessels were reportedly off the southern Lebanese coast during the attack. Syrian military reports said that the assault began from the skies of Lebanon around 11:30 pm. Israel has mounted attacks in Syria as part of its effort to counter the influence carved out there by Iran, which has supported President Bashar al-Assad in the war that erupted in 2011. A senior Israeli official recently said Israel had carried out more than 200 attacks against Iranian targets in Syria in the last two years.

DANON TO LEBANON: STOP WHINING ABOUT THE WALL AND ACT AGAINST HEZBOLLAH: Israel will continue to "carry out defensive operations in its own territory and will thwart any threat to its civilians," Ambassador to the UN Danny Danon said Saturday 12 Jan. 2019 in response to Lebanon's complaint about the wall being built on the northern border. Lebanon's Ambassador to the UN, Amal Mudallali, wrote to the United Nations Security Council asking it to act in response to the barrier being built by the IDF on the Lebanese border. "Israel has committed a new violation of Lebanese sovereignty by proceeding with construction of a wall and other installations inside Lebanese territory at points along the Blue Line". According to the Lebanese ambassador, this is a violation of Security Council resolution 1701, adopted after the Second Lebanon War. "Instead of making false complaints, it is time for the Lebanese

government to roll up its sleeves and address Hezbollah's violations, which could lead to the residents of southern Lebanon paying a very heavy price," Danon said. The wall is being built between Kfar Kela and Metula. The first of the Hezbollah attack tunnels Israel discovered in Dec. 2018 began from a residential structure in the south of Lebanon's Kfar Kela, and infiltrated some 40 meters into Metula's orchards. Kfar Kela is home to a Hezbollah military base complete with fighters, about 20 arms depots, fighting positions and observation posts

REPORT: NASRALLAH SUFFERS HEART ATTACK: The Lebanese media reported over the weekend that Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah was hospitalized after apparently suffering a heart attack. A Lebanese journalist said that "an intelligence source confirmed Saturday 12 Jan. 2019 that a senior figure in the Hezbollah organization was hospitalized in the capital of Beirut, and other sources confirmed that it was Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, who has been fighting cancer for years." Nasrallah has not been seen in the media since reports of the exposure of Hezbollah terrorist tunnels in Operation Defensive Shield. In his last public appearance in Nov. 2018, Nasrallah blasted reports of a cease-fire between Hamas and Israel. "We condemn any form of normalization with the Zionist entity," Nasrallah said. "I say to the Palestinian people, do not lose hope over the Arab states' normalization with Israel. The current normalization has put an end to Arab hypocrisy, and removed the mask from the swindlers and hypocrites."

USA TO HOST GLOBAL SUMMIT IN POLAND FOCUSING ON IRAN: The United States plans to jointly host a global summit focused on the Middle East, particularly Iran, next month in Poland, the USA State Department said on Friday 11 Jan. 2019. The gathering will take place in Warsaw from 13 Feb. to 14 Feb. USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the meeting would "focus on Middle East stability and peace, freedom and security here in this region, and that includes an important element of making sure that Iran is not a destabilizing influence." He said the meeting would "bring together dozens of countries from all around the world, from Asia, from Africa, from Western Hemisphere countries, Europe too, and the Middle East of course." The summit will address a range of critical issues including terrorism and extremism, missile development, maritime trade and security, and threats posed by proxy groups across the region. Pompeo stressed that the gathering would address Iran's regional influence.

POMPEO INVITES NETANYAHU TO CONFERENCE FOCUSED ON IRAN: USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has invited PM Binyamin Netanyahu to attend an international conference focused on Iran in Warsaw next month. Pompeo is currently on a tour of the Middle East, with stops in Egypt, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Kuwait. Last week, he gave a speech in Cairo in which he was highly critical of Iran. Pompeo vowed that the USA "will not ease our campaign to stop Iran's malevolent influence and actions against this region and the world. The nations of the Middle East will never enjoy security, achieve economic stability, or advance the dreams of their people if Iran's revolutionary regime persists on its current course." He also reiterated that the USA "fully supports Israel's right to defend itself against the Iranian regime's aggressive adventurism. We will continue to ensure that Israel has the military capacity to do so decisively." Iran's Foreign Minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, blasted the planned Iran conference. "Reminder to host/participants of anti-Iran conference: those who attended the USA anti-Iran show are either dead, disgraced, or marginalized. And Iran is stronger than ever," tweeted Zarif.

IRAN TO FRANCE: BALLISTIC MISSILES OUR RIGHT: Iran on Friday 11 Jan. 2019 called on France to avoid repeating "irresponsible and incorrect" claims about the country's ballistic missile work. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Gasemi said, "Iran's home-grown defensive missile program is the Iranian nation's natural right." The comments came after France called on Iran to immediately stop all activities linked to ballistic missiles that could carry nuclear weapons. "France recalls that the Iranian missile program does not conform to UN Security Council Resolution 2231," said Foreign ministry spokeswoman Agnes von der Muhll. "It calls on Iran to immediately cease all ballistic missile-related activities designed to carry nuclear weapons, including tests using ballistic missile technology," she added. President Hassan

Rouhani last week, announced that two satellites would be sent into space using Iran-made missiles. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has stressed that Iran will continue to produce missiles for its defense and does not consider that a violation of international agreements.

IRAN HAS BEEN CAUGHT CAUSING TERROR IN EUROPE ONCE AGAIN: Last week, the Dutch government confirmed that Iran's intelligence ministry was behind two assassinations in the Netherlands — of Ahmad Mola Nissi in The Hague in November 2017 and Ali Mohamed in Amsterdam two years earlier. In this case, the mullahs allegedly hired Dutch gang members to carry out the murders. As the USA government has repeatedly emphasized, Hezbollah, Iran's terror proxy in Lebanon, has close connections with organized crime worldwide. The Dutch bombshell followed October's 2018 announcement by the Danish government that it had thwarted an Iranian plan to assassinate a leader of a separatist Arab movement. Swedish authorities arrested a Norwegian citizen of Iranian extraction for his alleged role in the plot; he has been extradited to Denmark.

Tehran was also behind a foiled bombing in France last summer. Had the Paris plot succeeded, it could have shattered hundreds of innocent lives in the French capital's urban core. The French government concluded "without any doubt" that Iran's intelligence ministry was behind the attempted attack. The Germans found that Iran was gathering information so it could draw up a list of targets for assassination, should the regime choose to carry them out. The list included many Jews and other supporters of Israel. None of this is new behavior from the lawless Islamic Republic, which has treated terrorism as a central plank of its statecraft from the beginning. As USA sanctions come back into force, the European Union is seeking ways to help Tehran continue to access the global financial system. Put another way: European officials are prepared to indirectly bankroll the very Iranian terrorism they condemn. Can anyone blame Trump for questioning Europe's commitment to its own security?

HOW ISRAEL MAKES THE DESERT BLOOM: The Israeli firm Taranis uses high-resolution imagery from drones, planes and satellites to diagnose problems in fields of crops - among them infestations, diseases, dryness and nutrient deficiencies. Faced with unfriendly neighbors and an arid climate, Israel has had to innovate to survive. Taranis is the poster child of its stunning rise in aggrotech. Over 500 companies operate in the field. A third of them did not exist five years ago. Other countries have bet big on aggrotech, but Israel is ahead of all but America, say investors. "Agricultural parks" using Israeli technology have mushroomed across China. Indian and African officials have also made recent trips to Israel seeking inspiration. Netafim, the world's leading maker of drip-irrigation systems, is worth nearly \$1.9 billion. (Economist-UK)

CHILD WELFARE EXPERT: TOO MANY ISRAELI CHILDREN LIVE IN POVERTY: Israel's leaders frequently say that the nation's children are the future and that nothing is more important, but the state doesn't do enough to give credence to such claims, Vered Windman, head of the legal department of the National Council for the Child, declared on Mon. 7 Jan. 2019. Her frustration was expressed following the presentation to President Reuven Rivlin of the annual statistical report on children in Israel. Speaking at the President's residence, Windman said that the state has failed to close social gaps, and that more than 300,000 children in Israel are at risk. "Over the past year", she continued, "there was a 50% increase in the number of cases of abuse and neglect that were confided to social workers. During the 19 years in which I have been associated with the NCC, budgets for child welfare have been limited by bureaucracy and various national priorities, and there were never sufficient funds for child welfare projects which were invariably given low priority", she said. "As is the unfortunate case every year, there is a very high ratio of children living in poverty. Of the three million children living in Israel, 865,000 are living below the poverty line, and two out of every three haredi and Arab children are living in poverty. Moreover, 340,000 children from low socio-economic backgrounds are directly at risk in terms of neglect and abuse, especially sexual abuse of which there has been a significant increase over the past year," said Windman.

ANNUAL REPORT ON ISRAELI CHILDREN REVEALS GRIM STATISTICS FOR YOUTH: The Director General for the Israel National Council for the Child, attorney Vered Windman, presented the annual State of Child report to President Reuven Rivlin on Mon. 7 Jan. 2019. "The data shows gaps that we cannot and will not accept," Rivlin said. "It indicates that the challenge in creating a safe space in the virtual world is still ahead of us", Rivlin continued. Likewise, Windman marked, "The results should be an important tool in the hands of the policy makers. Israel has failed for another year to defend its children. It does not prioritize its children, not even the children at risk. In face of the upcoming elections and with the harsh evidence the report shows, it is time for the political parties to present to the public a detailed plan to improve the status of Israeli children. How many more children will suffer the consequences of incompetence, lack of acknowledgement and lack of necessary funds? It is time to invest in fences to prevent further collapse rather than picking up the pieces."

SENATE DEMOCRATS BLOCK ISRAEL-RELATED BILL: Legislation reaffirming USA support for allies in the Middle East, including a measure to punish Americans who boycott Israel, fell victim on Tue. 8 Jan. 2019 to a domestic political dispute that has resulted in a partial federal government shutdown. Senate Democrats used the filibuster to block an Israel-related bill they oppose principally because they want to open the government for business before Congress considers other issues. Republicans could not on Tuesday muster the 60 votes necessary to break the filibuster and allow a vote on S.1, a mini-omnibus of four Middle East-related bills that languished in the last Congress, and did not go through. Two of the components relate to Israel: One codifies into law the \$38 billion the United States has agreed to give Israel in defense assistance over the next ten years. The other provides legal protections for states that pass laws targeting the movement to Boycott, Divest from and Sanction Israel, (BDS) including laws that ban government contracts for commercial entities that boycott Israel.

Democrats said the first priority of the Congress must be to reopen the government. President Donald Trump has for three weeks refused to advance spending bills as long as they do not include the \$5 billion he wants to build a wall with Mexico. A number of Democrats also oppose the anti-BDS component of the bill out of concern that it infringes on speech freedoms. Four of the Senate's 47 Democrats voted to advance the bill: Robert Menendez of New Jersey, Doug Jones of Alabama, Joe Manchin of West Virginia, and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona. One of the legislation's fiercest opponents is Independent Jewish Senator Bernie Sanders. Also speaking out against the bill was newly elected Rep. Rashida Tlaib who strongly supports BDS and denies Israel's right to exist.

RASHIDA TLAIB STARTS TERM IN CONGRESS ACCUSING ISRAEL ADVOCATES OF 'DUAL LOYALTY': A freshman congresswoman hostile to Zionism attacked a bipartisan effort to legislate against Israel boycotts in her first week on the job, accusing advocates of the bill of dual loyalty. Rashida Tlaib, a Democrat from Michigan and a Palestinian-American, took to Twitter on Sunday 6 Jan. 2019 to criticize the "Strengthening America's Security in the Middle East Act of 2019." It was the first measure introduced in the new Senate, and wrapped up a host of items left over from the previous Congress into a single bill. Congress's passage of S.1 would have codify a 10-year memorandum of understanding on military assistance with Israel, reauthorize defense cooperation with Jordan, reimpose sanctions on entities financing the Syrian government, and authorize state and local governments to combat the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel. Tlaib – who openly supports the BDS movement, backs a one-state solution and does not believe in Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state – wrote that supporters of the bill "forgot what country they represent". "This is the USA where boycotting is a right & part of our historical fight for freedom & equality," she wrote on Twitter. "Maybe a refresher on our USA Constitution is in order, then get back to opening up our government instead of taking our rights away."

USA JEWISH GROUPS DENOUNCE PALESTINIAN-AMERICAN CONGRESSWOMAN: Leading Jewish groups in the USA denounced a tweet by Palestinian-American Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) on

legislation against boycotts of Israel. Tlaib wrote that the senators who are promoting the legislation "forgot what country they represent". The Jewish Democratic Council responded: "We oppose your charge of dual loyalty. It's wrong, dangerous, and hurts the cause of peace". The American Jewish Committee tweeted a picture of Tlaib hugging a person wrapped in a Palestinian flag and wrote, "Tell us more about dual loyalty. It's particularly ironic for freshman Rep. Rashida Tlaib to make the charge of dual loyalty, since she has vowed to 'be a voice' for her relatives in Judea & Samaria and declared that her 'passion for justice is rooted in my beautiful Palestine.'"

2 REPUBLICAN SENATORS CALL ON USA TO RECOGNIZE ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY: USA Senators Ted Cruz of Texas and Tom Cotton of Arkansas on Sunday 6 Jan. 2019 again called on the United States to recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights. Israel is stepping up its campaign for international recognition of its claim to the strategic plateau. A joint statement by the two Republican senators came on the same day that Israel's PM Benjamin Netanyahu urged visiting John Bolton, the USA national security adviser, to recognize Israel's claim to the Golan. Israel captured the heights from Syria in the 1967 Six-Day War and annexed them in 1981. "Responding to the threat posed by Iran and its proxies requires ensuring that Israel can defend its territory and its citizens from attacks," said Cruz and Cotton. "To support Israel's right to self-defense, Washington should take the long overdue step of affirming Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights." (JTA) Israel captured the Golan Heights in the 1967 Six-Day War, after years during which the Syrian armed forces positioned there bombarded Israel's farms and towns, situated roughly 1,700 feet below, with artillery fire. The Syrians also sought to divert the headwaters of the Jordan River that flowed through the Golan Heights. The Jewish state annexed the territory in 1981, in a move never recognized by the international community - including by the United States - which still regards it as occupied. Following the conclusion of Syria's recent bitter civil war, there remains the presence of Iran in Syria, and its ally Hezbollah operating from next door in Lebanon. Syria, Iran and the Hezbollah terrorist group are among Israel's most dangerous and bitter foes. All of this presents a serious military threat to the Jewish state. Israel continues to hope that the Trump administration will officially recognize its sovereignty over the Golan Heights. Please intercede that this will take place in the very near future.

ISRAELI DEBATE TEAM DEFEATS BEST UNIVERSITIES IN THE WORLD: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem debate team won the World Universities Debate Championship last week in Cape Town, South Africa, in the English Second-Language category. Roy Shulmann and Elaye Karstadt competed against thousands of students from 20 countries and managed, above the rest of the teams, to convince judges of stances on a multitude of current events. In addition to Shulmann and Karstadt's defeat of the Russian, Malaysian and Japanese teams in the final round of the championships, the Tel Aviv University team, made up of Israeli Debating League chairman Amichai Even-Chen and Ido Kotler, made it to the final rounds of the general Open competition, which includes native English speakers from around the globe. They competed against some of the best universities in the world, including Oxford University and Harvard University. Hebrew University debate team chairman, Naama Weiss, said that the Israeli teams are "used to meeting students at the competitions from countries hostile towards Israel." However, Weiss explained that they never feel different. "We actually become friends with them," Weiss said, regarding facing political adversaries in competition. "It is important that we hold discussions with those that disagree with us."

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