

# ***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update December 26, 2019 (28<sup>th</sup> Kislev, 5780)***

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## ***For the Yachad Report Newsletter For December 2019***

**German Lawmakers Call for Ban on All Hizbullah Activities;** Hizbullah is a political group with a terrorist wing that represents Shiite Muslims in Lebanon and has close ties to Iran. In a motion adopted on Thur. 19 Dec. 2019 German lawmakers said all activities of Hizbullah, including fundraising, should be banned in Germany. It also petitioned Berlin to persuade other European countries to no longer treat the political organization separately from its anti-Israel terrorist wing, which is already mostly banned from operating in Europe. Mathias Middelberg, the spokesman for Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in parliament, said, "It is unacceptable that Hizbullah is waging a terrorist fight against Israel in the Middle East, which is being financed through worldwide criminal activities. In view of Germany's special responsibility toward Israel, we call on the government to ban all activities for Hizbullah in Germany. The separation between a political and a military arm should be abandoned, and Hizbullah as a whole should be placed on the EU terrorist list," he said. The European Union considers only Hizbullah's military arm as a terrorist organization and not its political arm. However, EU members the Netherlands and the United Kingdom consider all of Hizbullah a terrorist entity, as do the United States, Canada, Israel and even the Arab League. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said, "The Bundestag's resolution is an important step in the international struggle against terrorism, particularly against the terrorist organization Hizbullah and its patron, Iran."

**Trump Criticizes Christian Magazine Calling for His Removal;** The USA evangelical magazine "Christianity Today", called for Donald Trump's removal from office on Thur. 19 Dec. 2019 in the wake of the House vote to impeach him. The President blasted the magazine a day after it published an editorial arguing that he should be removed from office because of his "blackened moral record." Trump tweeted that Christianity Today, founded by the late Rev. Billy Graham, "would rather have a Radical Left nonbeliever, who wants to take your religion & your guns, than Donald Trump as your President." The magazine "has been doing poorly and hasn't been involved with the Billy Graham family for many years," Trump wrote. Some of his strongest evangelical supporters, including Graham's son, rallied to his side and against the publication. Rev. Franklin Graham, who now leads the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association tweeted that his father would be "disappointed" in the magazine. Graham added that he "felt it necessary" following the editorial to

share that his father, who died last year after counseling several past presidents, voted for Trump. The president thanked Graham for the disclosure. Christianity Today “represents what I would call the leftist elite within the evangelical community. They certainly don’t represent the Bible-believing segment of the evangelical community,” Graham told media sources. He wrote on Facebook: “Is President Trump guilty of sin? Of course he is as were all past presidents and as each one of us are, including myself.”

**Turkey Becoming a Hotbed of Hamas Activity Against Israel;** Israel–Turkey relations were formalized in March 1949 with Turkey being the first Muslim majority country to recognize the State of Israel. For many decades, Turkey remained the Jewish state’s closest ally in the Middle East. However, under Islamist–leaning Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s reign as that country’s chief politician since 2002, Turkey’s diplomatic relations with Israel have steadily deteriorated. British media sources reported last week that “Turkey is allowing senior Hamas terrorist operatives to plot attacks against Israel from Istanbul.” The UK Telegraph obtained transcripts of Israeli police interrogations, which showed that “senior Hamas operatives are using Turkey’s largest city to direct operations in Jerusalem, Judea & Samaria, including an assassination attempt earlier this year on the mayor of Jerusalem.” Erdogan ignores frequent Israel requests asking him to stop Hamas from using Turkey as a launch path for terrorist attacks against the Jewish state and instead allows the Islamist group to maintain a permanent presence in the country of 80 million people. According to Egyptian and Israeli intelligence last year alone, a dozen high-ranking Hamas officials moved their offices to Turkey. President Erdogan's support for Hamas is itself an act of aggression against Israel. In 2015 Turkey agreed to prevent Hamas planning attacks from its territory but has never done so.

**UK Study Finds Amnesty International to Be Highly Anti-Semitic;** Amnesty International defines itself as “a global movement of millions of people demanding human rights for all people – no matter who they are or where they are”. However, the UK Jewish Human Rights Watch released a report this week revealing widespread bias and racism inside the Amnesty organization. British anti-Semitism expert David Collier of Jewish Human Rights Watch said that such attitudes against Israel and the Jewish people are keeping the international group from its original mission. The new study claims that Amnesty International has become a tool for spreading institutionalized and anti-Semitic hatred against Israel and promoting policies consistent with the goals of the BDS movement. According to Collier, a controversial action by India is almost certain to receive attention. Persecuted Christians are blatantly ignored. Attacking Israel is top of the list. Pakistan can literally make opposition figures disappear and Amnesty International can rarely even be bothered to yawn. Amnesty’s activity is inherently racist. When directed towards Israel, the cumulative obsession can clearly be labeled anti-Semitic," he said. Collier further noted that that Amnesty knowingly employs anti-Israel and pro-BDS activists in its activities related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, creating a one-sided, biased narrative against Israel. Collier claims that the organization even employs activists who openly support terrorism against the State of Israel. The study, titled 'Amnesty International, From Bias to Obsession,' will be reviewed by UK law enforcement agencies to see if the organization's activities do not violate British law.

**Gaza Christians Flee Hamas Persecution;** Prior to 2007, there were 3,500 Christians in the Gaza Strip. Now, there are fewer than 1,300. There is speculation that the more accurate figure of the endangered Gazan Christian community has dropped to around 500 members. One Christian who fled the Hamas-controlled area has lived for years on the streets of Nazareth. Kamal Tarazi, 60, told media sources that he prefers to stay where he is rather than to return to the Gaza Strip where he had lived his entire life. He said that the moment Hamas took control in 2007, “they started persecuting us, ruining our churches and forcing Christians to convert to Islam.” Having spent two months in a Hamas prison, Tarazi, upon release, applied for a permit to travel to Bethlehem to attend religious ceremonies for Christmas. Once in Judea & Samaria he vowed he would never go back.

**Israeli Device Brings Relief To Migraine Sufferers;** Israeli startup Theranica has developed a medical device for the treatment of acute migraine. Nerivio, as it is called, is worn on the upper arm and uses

smartphone-controlled electronic pulses to stimulate the body's neural pathway at the onset of a migraine. "Migraine is a debilitating disease that demands intervention", said Alon Ironi, CEO of Theranica. "Utilizing the brain's native conditioned pain modulation response has been shown to offer an affordable, drug-free, non-invasive alternative to drug-based medications". Nerivio is FDA approved and is available by prescription in the USA. It will be offered in Israel in April 2020, the firm said.

**Hanukkah History;** This joyous holiday commemorates events that took place in Judea more than 2,000 years ago when the Syrian king Antiochus ordered the Jews to abandon the Torah and publicly worship the Greek gods. This act provoking a rebellion led by Judas Maccabeus, climaxed with the retaking of the Temple in Jerusalem which had been desecrated by the Syrians. The army of Jews won despite their small numbers. In an eight-day celebration, the "Maccabees" (as the rebels came to be known) cleansed and rededicated the Temple (Hanukkah means "dedication"). According to the Talmud, (the comprehensive written version of the Jewish oral law plus the commentaries on it), there was only enough consecrated oil to re-light the candelabra for one day, yet, miraculously, it remained lit for eight days. The central feature of the observance of Hanukkah is the nightly lighting of the menorah, an eight-branched candelabra with a place for a ninth candle used to light the others. One candle is lit on the first night of Hanukkah, and an additional candle is lit on each successive night, until, on the eighth night, the menorah is fully illuminated.

**Doughnuts, Latkes And Fried Apple Fritters;** Many Jewish holidays are celebrated mainly at home among friends and family. Food is always a big part of Jewish festivals and Hanukkah is no exception. For hundreds of years, Jews have traditionally eaten oily foods on Hanukkah, in remembrance of the small jar of oil that miraculously provided fuel for the Temple menorah for eight days. A typical Hanukkah menu sounds as though it were planned by the under-12 crowd,(certainly not the low-fat diet folks): potato pancakes, (latkes) deep-fried in oil, strawberry jam-filled doughnuts (sufganiyot) covered in powdered sugar, fried apple fritters, cheese blintzes, etc. Warm fragrances fill open air-markets in Israel as vendors display row upon row of these winter comfort foods for a few shekels a bag. Jewish mothers preparing and setting this rich fare on candle-lit tables at home try not to contemplate the calories accompanying such shameless indulgence. "Never mind", whisper the unspoken thoughts, "It's Hanukkah. We'll get back to non-gluten and fruit shakes in January

**General Washington: Hanukkah 1777;** We, at VFI, take delight in sharing this inspiring story once again as Hanukkah 2019 approaches: The winter of 1777 was harsh, almost unbearable. The soldiers stationed in Valley Forge had no inkling of why they were there. In their midst was a lone Jewish soldier and it was the first night of Hanukkah. When all of the soldiers in the tent were fast asleep, he took out his Menorah and lit one candle recited the blessings, and sat down to watch the small flame dancing merrily. The General, in person, stood by his side. He looked at him and said gently, "Why are you weeping? Are you cold, my friend?" The soldier jumped to his feet and saluted. Then he said quietly, "I am weeping before my Father in Heaven, sir. Everyone's fate lies in His hands; He controls the fate of millions, the world over. I was praying for your success, General Washington. I came to this country because I was fleeing the persecution of tyrants who have forever oppressed my family, my townspeople and my nation. The despots will fall, sir, but you will be victorious!" "Thank you, soldier!" the General replied heartily and sat on the ground before the menorah. And what have we here?" he asked. This is a candelabra. Jews all over the world are lighting the first candle of our festival, Hanukkah, tonight. This serves to commemorate a great miracle that occurred to our ancestors. They were only a handful compared to the massive armies, but they held out, thanks to their faith in God, and were granted a miracle."

The bright flame ignited a flame of hope in the weary General's eyes and he cried out joyfully, "You are a Jew? Then you are descended from a people of prophets! And you say that we will win the war?" "Yes, sir!" he replied confidently. The General rose, his face glowing with renewed hope. They shook hands heartily. Washington asked the soldier for his name and address and disappeared into the night. On the first night of Hanukkah, 1778, our Jewish veteran was sitting in his home on Broome Street in New York. The first

Hanukkah light was burning brightly on his windowsill. Suddenly, there was a knock on the door. His wife rose to open it wide. To her astonishment, there stood President Washington. "There is that fabulous light, the Hanukkah light," he cried out happily, spotting the candle by the window. "That flame, and your remarkable words, kindled a light in my heart on that dark and bitter night," he reminisced. "We were in a tight situation then, and your words encouraged me so! They spurred me on with new hope. You will soon be awarded a Medal of Honor from the United States of America for your bravery in Valley Forge, but tonight you will receive a personal memento from me." With these words he placed on the table a gold medal upon which was engraved a Hanukkah menorah with one light burning. Upon this medal was inscribed: "As a sign of thanks for the light of your candle. George Washington."

**Turning Olive Oil Waste Into Clean Energy;** Olive trees have been growing in Israel for thousands of years. Today, more 81,000 acres of olive orchards in Israel produce between 15,000 and 16,000 tons of extra-virgin olive oil every year. Olive oil extraction typically leaves around 40% of the olive harvest behind as waste, creating some 80,000 tons of olive pomace in Judea & Samaria and Gaza each year. While the use of the olive oil leftovers is becoming a trend in cosmetics and health goods, a trio of graduates in the Gaza Strip are marketing an innovative energy product, bringing sustainable, affordable energy to the region. Tamer Abo Motlaq, 26, Usama Qudaih, 24, and Khaled Abo Motlaq, 24 have recently founded the Olive Jift Project, a start-up that transforms "jift" – a byproduct of olive oil pressing – into fuel pellets for domestic and industrial use. "Not only do the jift pellets help to disperse this waste, they also prevent over-logging of citrus trees for firewood. And the pellets are more efficient too", said Tamer. "Regular firewood burns for four to five hours while a jift block burns for seven to 10 hours", he said. "The pellets are also cheap, costing about \$150 a ton for the company to make, which translates to about half the local price of a kilogram of firewood". The pellets are already finding success. Having marketed them to local outlets and on social media, demand for the olive jift pellets has already exceeded supply. "We were surprised that despite our production rate of 1,000 kg per hour we often run out of jift," said Tamer. The company hopes to double its production capacity, workforce, and engineering staff next year.

**Non-Jewish Immigrants Outnumber Jewish Arrivals In Israel;** Over 27,300 people have made aliyah from January through October of 2019. Some 28,000 immigrants moved to the Jewish state during all of 2018, a record likely to be surpassed by the end of Dec. 2019. Last year also marked the first time in Israel's history that Jewish immigrants to Israel were outnumbered by non-Jewish immigrants. Such immigrants, coming largely from the former Soviet Union and Baltic states, count Jewish ancestry but are ineligible to marry as Jews under the state-controlled rabbinic court system. According to a recent Israeli media report, 3.3 million people have immigrated to Israel since 1948. Around 44% of them have come since 1990.

**\$150 B. Dollars Worth Of Jewish Possessions Left in Arab Lands;** Thousands of Jewish residents in Arab countries were forced to flee their homes following the creation of the state of Israel. Jewish refugees far outnumbered so-called Palestinian refugees who voluntarily left Israel decades ago - having been counseled to do so by Arab warlords - and now clamor for the right to return by the millions and reclaim land, houses, and Israeli citizenship. Jews, on the other hand, suffered the losses, remade their lives and prospered in other lands, mainly in Israel who absorbed and nurtured them. They have not been standing at Arab doors with their hands outstretched, demanding to be let back in and compensated along with their progeny. A new report published days ago, which was completed with the help of the National Security Council, notes that Jews who were expelled or fled Arab nations in the late 1940s and '50s left some \$31.3 billion worth of property in Iran; \$6.7 billion in Libya; \$1.4 billion in Syria; \$2.6 billion in Yemen; and \$700 million in Yemen's temporary capital of Aden. The parameters examined in the report include rural and urban property, businesses' value, loss of income and potential income, and loss of communal property." Social Equality Minister Gila Gamliel is expected to share the findings with Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu in the coming weeks.

**Prince Charles to Visit Israel in the New Year;** Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, will be in Israel for the first time in an official capacity in Jan. 2020. He is scheduled to attend the World Holocaust Forum at Yad Vashem. No senior member of the Royal House had spent time in Israel in their official capacity until last year when Charles' son Prince William arrived on a state visit. The queen has never visited the Jewish state. However, her husband, Prince Philip, has been to visit his mother's grave on the Mount of Olives. His mother, Princess Alice of Greece, hid a Jewish woman named Rachel Cohen and two of her children during the Holocaust and is recognized by Yad Vashem as a Righteous Gentile. Many believe the lack of UK Royal House visits to Israel was due to a policy adopted following the Zionist movement's use of violence against British nationals when the United Kingdom ruled the Mandate on Palestine – an area comprising modern-day Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. The issues of anti-Semitism and British-Israeli relations had loomed large in the minds of British Jews during the recent general election in which Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn challenged incumbent Boris Johnson for the premiership. Corbyn, a fierce critic of Israel, had promised to recognize Palestine and cease arms sales to Israel if elected. However, Johnson's Conservatives soundly defeated Labour in last Thursday's 12 Dec. 2019 election, gaining 365 of the 650 seats in Parliament to some 202 for Labour.



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