

# ***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update January 9, 2020*** ***(12<sup>th</sup> Tevet, 5780)***

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The image shows two items: on the left, the cover of a book titled 'THE HOOD OF HIS GARMENT' by Mark D. ... with the subtitle 'TOUCHING THE POWER IN GOD'S WORD'; on the right, a white prayer shawl (kippah) with blue and gold stripes and a gold tassel.

## **[For the Yachad Report Newsletter For January 2020](#)**

***VFI Reports On Soleimani Assassination;*** The USA military in an early morning strike on Friday 3 Jan. 2020 took defensive action to protect USA personnel abroad by killing Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Quds Force. Iraqi militia commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, along with 10 other people, were also killed in the attack. The Iranian Quds Force is a USA-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization and was said to have been actively developing plans to attack American diplomats and service members in Iraq and throughout the region. Soleimani and his Quds Force were responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American and coalition service members and the wounding of thousands more. According to the State Department, 17% of all deaths of USA personnel in Iraq from 2003 to 2011 - 608 American troops - were planned by Gen. Soleimani. He had also coordinated attacks on coalition bases in Iraq over the last several months and approved the assault on the USA Embassy in Baghdad that took place last week. Washington defense officials announced last weekend that the military was sending approximately 3,000 soldiers to the Middle East after thousands of people stormed the compound of the USA Embassy in Baghdad on Tues. 31 Dec. 2019. The USA embassy in Baghdad directed American citizens to leave Iraq immediately.

***Israel on High Alert After Soleimani Assassination;*** On the heels of a USA Drone attack early Friday 3 Jan. 2020 that struck down Iranian Quds commander Qassem Soleimani, Israel's military went on high alert. Army sources admitted to concerns that Iran could strike through its regional allies, which include terror groups, Hezbollah, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad. "They will wait for the right moment to exact revenge, perhaps by firing into Israeli territory through terrorist militias in Syria and perhaps even from Gaza," said one military source. In Gaza, Hamas condemned Soleimani's killing and sent its "dearest condolences" to Iran. Israel has long regarded Soleimani as a major threat. The IDF foiled a Quds Force attack last August, administered by Soleimani, involving multiple drones from Syria. Israel has also accused him of leading efforts to establish a precision-guided missiles program for the Lebanon-based Hezbollah terrorist organization.

***Netanyahu Praises Trump for Soleimani Hit;*** Israel's PM Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday, 3 Jan. 2020 said USA President Trump acted 'forcefully and decisively' in eliminating Iranian Quds Forces leader Qassem Soleimani in a drone attack hours earlier. "Just as Israel has the right of self-defense, the United

States has exactly the same right. Qassem Soleimani is responsible for the deaths of American citizens and many other innocents. He was planning more such attacks, and President Trump deserves all the credit for acting swiftly, forcefully and decisively. Israel stands with the United States in its just struggle for peace, security, and self-defense", said Netanyahu. Israeli opposition lawmaker Yair Lapid also congratulated Trump for killing those responsible for "murderous terrorist acts from Damascus to Buenos Aires." Likewise in the USA former national security adviser, John Bolton tweeted his "congratulations" to the Trump administration for the strike and said he hoped "this is the first step to regime change in Tehran." Ari Fleischer, who served as President George W. Bush's press secretary said that he hoped Soleimani's death would be cheered in the same way as Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden's was. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky, put it this way: "This morning, Iran's master terrorist is dead."

***Dems Not Coping With Death of a Terrorist Mass-Murderer;*** Ilhan Omar one of the liberal "squad" of Democratic freshmen said Friday 3 Jan. 2020 that she and her fellow Democrats are "outraged" that President Trump assassinated Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani (whom she called a "foreign official"), without consulting Congress. "We are outraged the president would assassinate a foreign official, possibly setting off another war without Congressional authorization," Omar tweeted in response to comments made by Texas Republican Senator Ted Cruz. Cruz had pointed out that even the Obama administration acknowledged Soleimani was a terrorist directly responsible for the murder of over 500 USA military men and women. "Why are congressional Dems outraged that he's finally dead?" Cruz asked on Twitter. The administration considered Soleimani as commander of a terrorist network and not a legitimate representative of Iran's government. Another member of "the Squad," Rep. Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, also condemned Trump's mission in Iraq. "We cannot stay silent as this lawless president recklessly moves us closer to yet another unnecessary war that puts innocent lives at risk at home & across the globe," she tweeted. "Congress alone has the authority to declare war, & we must reclaim our responsibility & say no to war with Iran." Looking back, it is noteworthy to recall that former USA president, Barack Obama launched close to 3000 strikes on Iraq and Syria in 2016 - without congressional approval.

***Liberal Democrats Won't Endorse Trump...On Anything;*** The liberal wing of the Democratic Party has no interest in endorsing anything USA President Donald Trump does. In fact, it might be pondered what exactly the Democrats have done since Trump has been in office, but try to impeach Trump. Knowing this, it is no surprise at the mealy-mouthed responses of four Democratic candidates for president at the removal of Iranian Quis terrorist commander Qassem Soleimani: Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren said, "Soleimani was a murderer, responsible for the deaths of thousands, including hundreds of Americans. But, this reckless move escalates the situation with Iran and increases the likelihood of a new Middle East conflict." Former vice president, Joe Biden likewise admitted that terrorist murderer Soleimani "deserved to be brought to justice for his crimes against American troops and thousands of innocents throughout the region." "But", said Biden, "none of that negates the fact that this is a hugely escalatory move in an already dangerous region." (Biden is the man who rallied in the 2012 Democratic National Convention with the words "Bin Laden is dead, and General Motors is alive.") Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders said more of the same regarding Soleimani's death: "Trump's dangerous escalation brings us closer to another disastrous war in the Middle East." Former South Bend Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg had this to say: "Soleimani has blood on his hands from countless operations against American interests, American allies, and American citizens". "But", added Buttigieg, Trump's move "must not be the beginning of another endless war."

***Spare Us! Qassem Soleimani a 'Revered Leader?';*** The Washington Post ran into some trouble over the weekend for referring to Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani as the Iranian nation's "most revered military leader" amid reports of his death. Soleimani is the terrorist murderer whom Secretary of State Mike Pompeo deemed equally as dangerous as ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who was killed last October in a USA military strike. The Washington Post headline sparked a string of negative reactions on social media. Many critics also pointed to the Post's previously mocked headline in Oct. 2019, which referred to deceased ISIS leader Abu

Bakr al-Baghdadi as an "austere religious scholar". They rejected as well the NY Times' recent description of Iraqi terrorists who attempted to raid the USA embassy in Baghdad as "mourners". Meanwhile, on the ground in Iran, as the world reacted Friday to the USA killing of General Soleimani, Iranian resistance groups hailed the move as a "major blow" for the repressive regime in Tehran. They predicted that it will boost the morale of dissidents and bring what they see as the likely downfall of the regime's one step closer. Soleimani was also allegedly responsible for the killing of thousands of protestors in Tehran. All-in-all, he has left behind nothing but a legacy of hatred, death, and oppression.

### ***Heavy Rains Continue to Fill Israel's Kinneret;***

The Sea of Galilee (Kinneret) has risen 42 centimeters (16.5 inches) in total since the beginning of the current rainy season. Last weekend alone the water level in the lake rose five centimeters and currently sits at two meters and 68 centimeters below the upper red line, which is considered the lake's maximum capacity. Precipitation is expected to continue throughout the week.

***New Decade Opens With Israel's Population at 9,136,000;*** On Tues. 31 Dec. 2019, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Israel's population stood at 9,136,000. In the past year, Israel's population grew by 1.9%. Approximately 6,772,000 Israelis identify as Jews - or 74.1% of the entire population - and 1,916,000 as Arabs - 21%. A total of 177,000 babies were born during 2019, and 34,000 people immigrated to the country under the Law of Return. The Jewish Israeli women's fertility rate (3.05) exceeded that of Arab Israelis (3.04) for the first time, reported the CBS on Tuesday. In 2019, 177,000 babies were born in Israel - 74% to Jewish women and 23.2% to Arabs. According to CBS calculations, Israel's population will top 10 million people by the end of 2024.

***Israel Breaks Its Tourism Records in 2019;*** Some 4.55 million tourists visited Israel in 2019, the Tourism Ministry announced on the eve of 2020. Visitor entries increased by 11% compared to 4,120,800 in 2018. The foremost starting places for visitors were the USA (890,000), France (338,200), Russia (296,000), Germany (268,900) and Britain (218,700). In a whopping 51% increase from 2018, some 144,400 visitors arrived from China last year.

***Leviathan Natural Gas Field Starts Flowing For 2020;*** Leviathan offshore natural gas field is the largest energy project in Israel's history. Its resources began flowing on Tues. 31 Dec. 2019, hours ahead of the new decade. Yossi Abu, CEO of Delek Drilling LP, said, "For the first time since its establishment, Israel is now an energy powerhouse, able to supply all its energy needs and gaining energy independence. At the same time, we will be exporting natural gas to Israel's neighbors, Egypt and Jordan, thus strengthening Israel's position in the region." The Leviathan field holds some 22 trillion cubic feet of recoverable natural gas. The gas supply will enable Israel to phase out expensive and polluting imported coal for generating electricity. The Leviathan site is located in the Mediterranean Sea 77 miles west of Haifa.

***Most Israelis Say They Like Their Jobs - But....*** Close to 90% of Israelis claim they are happy with their jobs and lives, though nearly a third live in debt. The numbers don't tally. Some 21% of employed Israelis manage to end the month in the black, while 51% just manage to cover their monthly expenses. The new survey, published this week by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics reveals also that 22% of the same population live in debt most or all of their lives, and another 5% do not manage to cover their monthly expenses at all. Fifteen percent of respondents felt they were poor in the past five years, and 10% felt they were poor within the past year. Just 14% of employed Israelis are "very happy" with their work-life balance. Another 47% say they are "happy" with it, while 28% say they are not happy and 11% are not at all happy with their work-life balance. Meanwhile, even though just 60% of Israelis are happy with their salaries, 88% of Israelis are satisfied with their jobs, and 89% are happy with their lives. Among those Israelis unhappy with their salaries are social workers and teachers (including preschool teachers), over 90% of whom are happy in

their jobs but just 41%-51%, respectively, are happy with their salaries. The survey also showed that 55% of employers offer full compensation for sick days, while 86% offer full compensation for vacation days.

***Israelis Coping With Addiction;*** The latest national public health survey in Israel conducted among adults aged 18–65 reported that 27% of the population used cannabis and 2% other illegal drugs in the past year, with 0.25% reporting heroin use during this period. The Ministry of Labor and Welfare, this week, published the statistics on numbers of Israelis treated for addiction in recent months. The data show that 15,067 people were treated in the treatment centers and communities (11,850 men and 3,217 women). Numbers increased slightly over those from previous years. The most common addictions were to alcohol, cannabis, opiates such as heroin and morphine, cocaine and cheap stimulants. In Israel, the attitude of the establishment and the general public has softened somewhat in recent years regarding the approach to drug use, especially the use of cannabis. On the legal level, the war on drugs policy continues. In reality, however, criminal indictments and penalties have been focused on drug dealers and less on users. In April 2019, Israel officially decriminalized the adult use of cannabis.

***‘Corner Of God’s Altar’ Among Top Archaeology Finds In 2019;*** A horn that was discovered in the town of Shiloh during August 2019 by a team of 200 archaeologists and volunteers won second place on the 2019 list of the Top Ten Discoveries in Biblical Archaeology. The horn is believed to be one of the four corners of God's ancient altar, as described in the biblical book of Kings: "When the news reached Joab, who had conspired with Adonijah although not with Absalom, he fled to the tent of the Lord and took hold of the horns of the altar," reads the passage in 1 Kings 2:28. The tabernacle housing the Ark of the Covenant once stood in the area of Shiloh, according to the biblical account. Binyamin Council head, Israel Gantz, congratulated the archaeological team members for their discoveries and achievements. "Such important findings, give us, again and again, a clear proof of the roots of the Jewish people in our promised land," said Gantz.



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