

# ***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update February 27 2020*** ***(2<sup>th</sup> Adar, 5780)***



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

***Syrian Journalist Praises Israel and the Jews;*** Syrian journalist Thaer Al-Nashef told Al-Jazeera on 11 Feb. 2020, "Israel is not responsible for the progress or the backwardness of Arabs. Arabs are responsible for themselves. But Arabs may benefit from the extensive Israeli expertise because when we look at today's Israel, which is an advanced country, we must ask ourselves: How come the Jews, or Israel, have excelled? These people lived in Europe for 2,000 years, as exiled refugees, in a diaspora as prisoners, and as slaves. Imagine! They then proved to all of humanity that they are not just refugees or slaves, but a people that was able to make miracles out of the impossible." Earlier this month, Al-Jazeera analyst Faisal al-Qassem raised a storm after he wrote on Twitter that "the Zionist enterprise has succeeded, unlike the failed Arab enterprises."

***Arabs in Israel do Not Want to Live in "Palestine";*** Thousands of Arab citizens of Israel have been demonstrating to express their rejection of the idea in the USA peace plan of placing them under the sovereignty of a Palestinian state. The main reason Arabs in Israel are afraid of becoming Palestinian citizens is because they know that the Palestinian state will be anything but democratic. They see how Palestinians living under the Palestinian Authority (PA) in Judea & Samaria and Hamas in Gaza are subject to human rights violations on a daily basis. In Israel, Arab citizens participate in the general elections and have their own representatives in the Knesset. In Judea & Samaria and Gaza, Palestinians haven't held elections since January 2006. Palestinians have not had a functioning parliament since 2007 when Hamas violently seized control of Gaza after overthrowing Abbas' PA regime. Palestinian journalists, human rights activists, political activists, and university students are targeted by the PA and Hamas on a regular basis. The Arab Israelis' protests are seen as a message to the world that they prefer to continue living in Israel and not under another Arab dictatorship.

***Mike Pompeo Wins Israeli Wine Label;*** A winery in the Israeli settlement of Psagot has introduced a special label named for USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. In a statement last week, the central West Bank's (Judea & Samaria) Psagot winery thanked Pompeo, saying he had "recognized the Jewish right to self-determination in our historical homeland" in November 2019. At the time, Pompeo repudiated a 1978 State Department legal opinion that held that civilian settlements in the territories are "inconsistent with

international law,” in a move welcomed by Jerusalem and slammed by the Palestinians as well as much of the international community. In November 2019 the European Court of Justice decided that products made in Israeli settlements must be labeled as such when they are marketed in the EU. The Pompeo bottle is not a new flavor but a special label that will be used on several varieties of Psagot wines.

***Israeli Surgeons Help Burn Victims in Haiti;*** A team of burn and plastic surgery specialists from Sheba Medical Center in Israel, traveled to Haiti last month where they delivered and operated the country's first medical laser. The laser is primarily used to treat pediatric patients suffering from catastrophic burns. Sheba National Burn Center director Prof. Josef Haik and two Israeli colleagues mentored 30 surgeons, nurses, and therapists from six hospitals in Haiti and the Dominican Republic on how to use the laser to reduce and alleviate scarring

***180 Israeli Students Ordered Into Quarantine;*** Students from a school in Be'er Sheva and from a school in the Haifa neighborhood of Kiryat Haim were instructed to remain in quarantine after visiting sites, which were also visited by a South Korean group whose members were diagnosed with the coronavirus. On Wed. 12 Feb. 2020 class members from the Dagan Middle School in Kiryat Haim, along with five teachers and a security guard, visited Masada while the tourists from South Korea were there. At this stage, none of the Israelis had developed any symptoms of the coronavirus. The following day a group of students and teachers from the David Tuviyahu School in Be'er Sheva visited the Tel Sheva National Park at the same time as the South Korean tourist group. At the end of the tour, one of the teachers developed symptoms and, at the direction of the Ministry of Health, he underwent tests to detect the virus, the results of which have not yet been received. The teacher was sent to his home for isolation. The Ministry of Education said that as a result of this situation, a hotline has been opened for discussions with parents and students to be manned by experts in dealing with stress and emergency situations. In a briefing Saturday evening, 22 Feb. 2020, Health Ministry director-general Moshe Bar Siman Tov announced that Israelis returning from South Korea and Japan would be required to self-quarantine for 14 days. Such guidelines are already in effect for those returning from China, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Macau. Over the weekend, South Korea reported 123 new confirmed coronavirus cases, taking the national tally to 556. Five people have died from the illness thus far and South Korean President Moon Jae-in has declared the highest alert level in the country due to the spread of the virus.

***Israel and the Coronavirus;*** The first known case of coronavirus in Israel was reported last Friday 21 Feb. 2020, when one of the 11 Israeli passengers who returned from the Diamond Princess ship, currently under quarantine at Yokohama Port in Japan, tested positive for the disease. As of Sunday 23 Feb. 2020, the Government of Israel reports there are no other known cases of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in Israel. As a precaution, Israel's Ministry of Health has advised that the Israeli Population and Immigration Authority deny entry to anyone who is not an Israeli resident who has been in China, Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, and/or Macau over the prior 14 days (excluding airport connections only). Additionally, the Israeli health ministry announced on Saturday 22 Feb. 2020 that “The directive that applies to China now also applies to South Korea and Japan”. Late Sunday 23 Feb. 2020, PM Netanyahu ordered additional restrictions on the entry of tourists from Australia and Italy and called for a team to monitor the spread of the epidemic. Israeli residents who have been in one or more of these countries over the prior 14 days have been required to remain in home quarantine until 14 days have passed since the date of departure from that country and must register with the Ministry of Health.

***Iran Closes Schools Due To Coronavirus;*** Iran experienced its first coronavirus fatalities on Wed. 19 Feb. 2020 when officials reported the death of two elderly people in Qom, south of Tehran. They were the first confirmed deaths from the virus in the Middle East. Six more deaths were disclosed as of Sunday 23 Feb. 2020. Iran ordered the closure of schools, universities and cultural centers after the coronavirus killed six people in the country, the most outside the Far East. The latest cases take to 43 the total number of confirmed

infections in Iran. As a "preventive measure", Iranian authorities over the weekend ordered the closure of schools, universities and other educational centers in 14 provinces across the country. The government also announced that "all art and cinema events in halls across the country have been canceled until the end of the week" in order to stop infections. Following the outbreak of the virus in Iran, Iraq has suspended the entry of Iranian citizens and prevented the travel of Iraqis to Iran. The United Arab Emirates last month became the first country in the Middle East to report cases of the coronavirus.



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